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Facilitating College Success among Emerging Hispanic Serving Institutions: Multiple Perspectives Yield Commonly Shared Diversity Goals

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Although colleges must have a full-time Latino student enrollment of at least 25 percent to federally qualify as a Hispanic Serving Institution, colleges with a Latino student enrollment of 15-24 percent are commonly referred to as “Emerging Hispanic Serving Institutions.” As more community colleges approach such Latino student enrollment percentages, the changing demographic presents opportunities and challenges relative to diversity. It is important to equip community college administrators, all of whom are public administrators, to effectively manage their changing institutions and promote student success. Utilizing a qualitative approach, this article analyzes multiple perspectives on factors related to Latino student success. The central findings of this article suggest that, while multiple perspectives exist, there are common areas of consensus relative to promoting cultural competency and fostering Latino student success. First, many Latino students arrive to campus with limited college knowledge. Administrators and faculty can make important progress in increasing college knowledge through specific formal and informal means. Second, administrators, faculty, and students, identified the need to hire more Latino faculty, increase bilingual staff, and provide cultural competency training for all faculty. Third, engaging Latino families and the broader Latino community is critical in promoting Latino student success. Community colleges need to reach out to Latino students’ families directly and include a family-based perspective in their recruitment and retention efforts. This article provides guidance for public administrators in community colleges as they align their educational systems to better meet the needs of Latino students.

The focus on postsecondary completion and the vital role that community colleges play has become an increasingly important part of the national and state higher education agenda. Increasing the educational levels of Latino students is an important factor in increasing U.S. educational attainment goals, as they constitute a significant proportion of the nation’s

college eligible population. Latino educational attainment is crucial because their educational attainment is lower than other groups and the population is rapidly expanding. Only 19 percent of Latino adults have earned an associate degree or higher representing a large equity gap (Santiago 2010).

Utilizing a qualitative case study approach, this article captures the “on the ground” perspectives of faculty, administrators, and students, from two Texas community colleges. The guiding research question is: How can public administrators¹ in community colleges better serve Latino students? Both colleges included in this study are participating in Achieving the Dream², a national non-profit organization dedicated to improving student success at community colleges. These colleges are also adapting to the expanding growth of their Latino student enrollment, which creates new challenges and opportunities to promote student success. These perspectives are useful as public administrators in community colleges, more generally, consider how to most effectively promote student success among Latino students.

The interview and student focus group data yield three primary findings:

- Many Latino students arrive to campus with limited college knowledge. Administrators and faculty can make important progress in increasing college knowledge through formal and informal means.
- Administrators, faculty, and students, identified the need to hire more Latino faculty, increase bilingual staff, and provide cultural competency training for all faculty.
- Engaging Latino families and the broader Latino community is critical in promoting Latino student success. Administrators and faculty in community colleges need to reach out to Latino students’ families directly and include a family-based perspective in their recruitment and retention efforts.

This research identifies key factors that may affect student success among Latino students and offers important formative feedback for other community colleges. To achieve high rates of success for all students, especially Latino students who traditionally have faced significant barriers to achievement, institutions should have a student-centered vision, a culture of evidence and accountability, and a commitment to equity and excellence (Bowen, Kurzwil, and Tobin 2005). Additionally, the recommendations offered in this article take

¹ Throughout this manuscript the term “public administrators” includes administrators and faculty within the community colleges. At times, we report our findings by administrators and/or faculty/staff to differentiate their specific roles and perspectives.

² Achieving the Dream, Inc. is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to helping more community college students, particularly low-income students and students of color, stay in school and earn a college certificate or degree. Evidence-based, student-centered, and built on the values of equity and excellence, Achieving the Dream is closing achievement gaps and accelerating student success nationwide by: 1) guiding evidence-based institutional change, 2) influencing public policy, 3) generating knowledge, and 4) engaging the public. Conceived as an initiative in 2004 by Lumina Foundation and seven founding partner organizations, today, Achieving the Dream is the most comprehensive non-governmental reform movement for student success in higher education history. With 160 community colleges and institutions, more than 100 coaches and advisors, and 15 state policy teams—working throughout 30 states and the District of Columbia—Achieving the Dream helps 3.5 million community college students have a better chance of realizing greater economic opportunity and achieving their dreams (Achieving the Dream 2011).

into account the context and practical constraints that many public administrators face in an era of decreased funding and increased student need. Finally, although colleges must have a full-time Latino student enrollment of at least 25 percent to federally qualify as a Hispanic Serving Institution, colleges with a Latino student enrollment of 15-24 percent are commonly referred to as “Emerging Hispanic Serving Institutions.” As more community colleges approach such Latino student enrollment percentages, it is important for public administrators to learn more about student success relative to this growing population.

Diversity and Public Administration

As the Congressional Research Service details, “With the release of the results of the 2000 census, the growing role of Hispanics in the United States became apparent. Numbering over 35 million at that time—and growing by more than 1.5 annually from both immigration and natural increase—Hispanics are now the nation’s largest minority. If current demographic trends continue, the population of Hispanic or Latino origin is projected to steadily increase as a percentage of the total U.S. population through 2050, rising from 12.6 percent in 2000 (or about one in seven persons) to 30.2 percent in 2050 (approaching one in every three persons) (Shrestha and Heisler 2011, 22). It is important to consider the implications of demographic changes on the way higher education is delivered. How are higher education systems, particularly community college systems that disproportionately serve minority students, considering the organizational implications of increased Latino student enrollment on their ability to effectively educate students?

The impact of these trends is directly relevant to the field of public administration. While much of the research in public administration examines the implication of diversity from a public workforce perspective, it is also important to consider the implications of diversity on public administration more broadly. As White and Rice (2010) detail,

Diversity has the potential of becoming the most important consideration for public service organizations in the twenty-first century. However, this consideration is not confined merely to the workforce. Diversity also includes the production and provision of public services. In other words, it is not just a question of knowing who will be the public servants. Other important questions will need equal consideration: What populations will be served? What goods and services will be provided? How will these goods and services be produced? (4).

Public administrators have an important responsibility to provide public services to multiple, diverse publics. “Achieving ‘diversity success’ means transforming the organization into a multicultural organization” (Ospina 2001). Public sector organizations must be prepared to operate programs to address a more diverse population (Berman, Bowman, West, and Van Wart 2001). As Ospina (2001) further explains, public agencies must serve “a wide variety of citizens, as well as consider the plurality of values, concerns and voices of the larger population.

Community Colleges and Diversity

The community college is a portal of educational opportunity, individual development, economic power, and social mobility. Community colleges enroll almost 50 percent of all

U.S. undergraduates and they serve particularly high proportions of first generation college students and students of color: they enroll 43 percent of all African-American students, 52 percent of all Hispanics and 52 percent of all Native Americans (American Association of Community Colleges 2009). While their open access policies provide opportunity for millions of students to pursue higher education, research shows that far too few of these students succeed (Bailey, Calcagno, Jenkins, Kienzl and Leinbach 2005). Overall, community college students have low persistence and completion rates. Nationally community colleges experience a 50 percent dropout rate from the first to the second year of enrollment, where low-income students and students of color are often most likely to drop out (McGuinness and Jones 2003). Among students who enrolled for the first time at a two-year college in 2003-2004, only 18 percent attained a certificate or degree within three years. The large majority remained enrolled without a degree (37 percent) or were no longer enrolled at any institution by June 2006 (45 percent) (Berkner, Choy, and Hunt-White 2008). Moreover, completion rates for African-American, Hispanic, Native American, and low-income students are lower than the overall rates, indicating inequitable racial and income gaps (Dougherty and Kienzl 2006).

Students of color, first generation college students, students with lower levels of academic achievement in high school, and students from low-income families are all significantly overrepresented in community colleges when compared with their enrollment in baccalaureate granting institutions (Bailey and Alfonso 2005). The research on postsecondary access and success indicates that low-income students and students of color participate in college at lower rates; are less academically prepared; are less likely to obtain student loans and are less likely to persist, transfer to four-year college, or attain a postsecondary degree (Price 2004). Additionally, students of color, first generation, and low-income students often attend K-12 school systems that are underfunded and resourced. The cumulative inequities create steep road blocks to future educational success (Harvey 2008).

The focus on postsecondary completion and the supporting role that community colleges play has become an increasingly important part of the national and state higher education agenda. Because Latino students constitute a significant portion of the nation's eligible college population, improving outcomes among this group is particularly important. Specifically, community colleges have become integral components of Latinos' educational pathways (Martinez and Fernandez 2004). Latino students are more likely than students from other racial or ethnic groups to begin their postsecondary education at a community college (Adelman 2005). However, only 21.7 percent of Latino adults (ages 18-29) have earned an associate or bachelor's degree, compared to 32 percent for blacks and 49.1 percent for whites (U.S. Census Bureau 2008). This constitutes a large equity gap. Increasing successful college completion among Latino students is imperative to closing educational equity gaps nationally.

More than 1100 community colleges in the United States provide open admissions, developmental education to address areas of college preparation deficiencies, affordable tuition, and a solid commitment to their community-based instructional mission. Their relative low cost and accessibility make them especially important for low-income students, students of color, and first-generation college students. Additionally, community college graduates tend to perform very well once they transfer to a 4-year institution, often far better than students who attend only four-year institutions (Provasnik and Planty 2008). Put simply, any attempt to promote large increases in students of color and low-income students achieving a college education is largely affected by the success of community colleges in the areas of

recruitment, retention, and graduation.

Profile of the Texas Community Colleges in this Study

The two Texas community colleges included in this study have a significant Latino student population and have identified Latino student success as an area of focus within their institution. While both community colleges were selected due to their significant Latino student population and their expressed commitment to promote Latino student success, faculty and administrators at both colleges conveyed they did not view their college as a “model” for Latino student success. Rather, they are most appropriately viewed as two community colleges that have identified promoting Latino student success as a priority. Administrators and faculty at both colleges cautioned that much work remains in promoting Latino student success, and in many ways, they are still in the early stages of this important work. Importantly, their commitments to this work and experiences to date are instructive for other public administrators involved in student success.

Both colleges participated in this study confidentially. Throughout this article, they are referenced individually as “College A” and “College B.” Table 1 provides a demographic comparison of College A and College B. College B is significantly larger than College A, enrolling 18,201 students compared to 3,916 students. The overall graduation rates of both colleges are low (7 percent and 9 percent respectively). In 2010, 24 percent of the associate degrees and 22 percent of the certificates were awarded to Latino students at College A. College B awarded 23 percent of its associate degrees and 15 percent of its certificates to Latino students in 2010. For community colleges, the associate degrees and certificates awarded to white students far exceeds that of Latino students. Only one in four Latino students is awarded a degree compared to one of every two white students. These figures are similar to overall college graduation patterns in Texas where 26 percent of college graduates are Hispanics compared to 54 percent of whites (IPEDS 2009).

Table 1. Community College Demographic Comparison

Characteristic	College A	College B
Total Undergraduate Enrollment (N)	3,916	18,201
Undergraduate Attendance Status (%)		
Full-time	31	27
Part-time	69	71
Undergraduate Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity (%)		
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0
Asian/Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	3	16
Black or African American	18	20
Hispanic/Latino	19	22
White	54	36
Non-resident Alien	0	1
Race or Ethnicity Unknown	4	4
Undergraduate Enrollment by Gender (%)		
Female	61	55
Male	39	45
Undergraduate Enrollment by Age (%)		
24 and under	63	62
25 and over	37	38
Undergraduate Retention Rate^a (%)		
Full-time students	59	68

Part-time students	52	55
Undergraduate Graduation Rate^b (%)	7	9
2010 Associate Degrees Awarded by Race/Ethnicity (%)		
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	.4
Asian/Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	4	17
Black or African American	21	17
Hispanic/Latino	24	23
White	48	37
Non-resident Alien	1	2
Race or Ethnicity Unknown	.3	4

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences 2009. IPEDS College data 2009-2010. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

NOTES: ^aRetention Rate – the percentage of first-time students who began their studies in Fall 2008 and returned in Fall 2009.

^bGraduation Rate – for full-time, first-time, degree/certificate seeking undergraduates that complete their program within 150% of normal time.

Methods

Data for this study were collected primarily through semi-structured interviews with public administrators (defined as community college administrators, faculty and staff), as well as focus groups with Latino students at both colleges. The data were collected from June to August 2011. The interviews were intended to capture faculty and administrators' perspectives on the challenges facing Latino students at their institutions, the programs and services these two colleges are using to support student success of Latino students, and their lessons and experiences.

Although the specific titles vary somewhat by institution, at each college the research team typically interviewed the college President, Chief Academic Officer, Director of Student Services, Director of Institutional Research, counselors/advisors, members of the faculty, and with Latino students. A purposive sampling approach was used allowing us to conduct interviews with those in key leadership positions and faculty and staff that work most closely with Latino students. We provided the colleges with a list of key leadership positions

within the college and requested that they identify other faculty and staff who work most directly with their Latino student population. Our goal was to obtain the perspectives of the college leadership team and faculty who have the most knowledge about the Latino student needs at their institution. We conducted individual and small group interviews for a total of 23 persons interviewed. Most interviews lasted about an hour. At each community college, we conducted two focus groups with Latino students—one with male students and one with female students. The community colleges identified Latino students to participate in the focus groups. The goal was to have focus groups that were representative of the Latino student population in both age and gender and student engagement. We asked students questions across multiple topics including: how they selected the community college they are attending, their perceptions of the college (in particular, how the college promotes student success), overall campus climate, and their perceptions of other factors influencing student success. We conducted a total of four focus groups ranging in size from three to nine; a total of 26 students participated. Each focus group was 90 minutes.

The qualitative approach of this research is designed to capture faculty, staff, and student perspectives on factors related to Latino student success. Qualitative case study research is an important methodology for public administration scholarship. It provides practical information that can be used to guide organizations and practitioners. Because so much of what public administration seeks to accomplish is predicated on the understanding of constructed social reality, qualitative research in general and case study methodology in particular can provide insight to scholars and practitioners (Stivers 2008). It is important to underscore that although this research focuses on Latino student success, the Latino community is complex, diverse, and non-monolithic. The Latino population is diverse in terms of ethnic identity, citizenship status, parental citizenship status, and family structure. Additionally, we interviewed Latino and non-Latino faculty at both community colleges. In many instances, Latino faculty and students explained, in their own words, some of the issues they continually observe and are concerned about within their own communities, as well as issues Latinos commonly confront within educational systems in the United States, generally defined. We retained their original language and expressions in specific quotes. The experiences shared in this article may be most useful for community colleges that traditionally served very few Latino students, but are now experiencing a significant increase in Latino student enrollment. Although learning about these experiences may be valuable to other schools, community college administrators will need to invest the time in learning about their specific Latino student population, who may or may not have experiences similar to those captured in this article.

Findings

Using content analysis of semi-structured interviews, grant-related reports, and other material shared by the colleges during the site visits, three key themes emerged. The themes focused on the college knowledge of incoming Latino students, representation of Latinos among community college employees, and connecting to the local Latino community. Tables 2 and 3 provide an overview and frequency of the topics discussed by college administrators and faculty and Latino students, respectively.

Table 2. Frequency of Topics Discussed by College Administrators and Faculty

Heavily Discussed	Moderately Discussed	Infrequently Discussed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latino student support and engagement • Latino students lack of college knowledge • Engaging the families of Latino students • Need to hire more Latino faculty (role models) • Latino student success needs to be a priority of Institution /Senior Administrators • Need to dedicate resources to Latino community outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latino student gender differences in approach and value of education • Increasing cultural competence of faculty and staff • Need to create trust within Latino Community • Strategy of becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) • Racial tensions between African Americans and Latinos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement gaps of Latino students • Focusing on College’s Minority Male population • Financial Aid issues for Latino students

NOTES: Heavily discussed indicates a topic was discussed in over 70% of the interviews; moderately discussed indicates a topic was discussed in 40-70% of the interviews; infrequently discussed indicates the topic was discussed in fewer than 40% of the interviews.

Table 3. Frequency of Topics Discussed in Student Focus Groups

Heavily Discussed	Moderately Discussed	Infrequently Discussed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barriers to enrollment and navigating college system • Latino student gender differences in approach and value of education • Being perceived by college as a monolithic group • Familial support or lack of support to go to college • Discomfort in interacting with faculty • Need for more Latino faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to dedicate resources to Latino community outreach • Need for self-determination • Role of family in their support of education • Reasons for attending college • Financial Aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extracurricular activities • Balancing life • Specific program of study

NOTES: Heavily discussed indicates a topic was discussed in over 70% of the students in the focus groups; moderately discussed indicates a topic was discussed by 40-70% of the students in the focus groups; infrequently discussed indicates the topic was discussed in fewer than 40% of the students in the focus groups.

College knowledge

Many Latino students arrive to campus with limited college knowledge. College knowledge is a general term used to describe the basic norms, structures, requirements and expectations associated with college, such as registering for classes; study skills; time management; navigating financial aid; and college academic expectations. Acquiring college knowledge can be particularly challenging for first-generation college students who do not have parents familiar with the norms and expectations of college. Administrators and faculty can make important progress in promoting college knowledge and student support through both formal and informal efforts.

Many of the Latino students we interviewed indicated they had not considered college when they were in high school and subsequently entered college with limited college knowledge. Several of the students in the focus groups “happened” upon college, rather than having college enrollment as a specific goal during high school. As one Latino student commented, “For me, going to college wasn’t always in my plans. It was not until my senior year that I had a strong influence that knew a lot and helped me get started.” Once enrolled in college, many Latino students found they lacked college knowledge regarding critical aspects such as financial aid, advisement, and course scheduling.

Providing opportunities for student engagement and support from faculty can make a significant difference in building a student’s college knowledge. As one faculty member noted, “I can get them to the front door of the class, but if they do not have that support they go sideways . . . It is getting them in and getting them in early.” Bridging the gap in college knowledge for Latino students needs to occur at the beginning of a student’s higher

educational experience before this lack of knowledge negatively affects the student's potential for college success. Faculty, administrators, and students discussed the importance of formal and informal approaches in increasing college knowledge among Latino students. Students recognized and shared the significance of having the support of faculty, staff, and programs that helped guide them through their educational experience. As one student shared:

We all know who [faculty and staff] care and who do not care and tend to be around those who care. We use that positivity to get through the things we don't think we can [get through]. There is always someone here who will help us.

Both community colleges offer a variety of programs designed to impart college knowledge and promote student success. Some programs have a specific focus on Latino or minority issues; whereas others are universally designed. For example, College B has an African American and Latino Male Student Services (AALMSS) mentoring program. The program serves as a resource for an array of areas from information on purchasing books and supplies to information on employment, interviewing skills, networking, and perspectives on manhood and family roles. As one of the AALMSS administrators explained, he works "with students on male issues and their role in the household or the school."

Another program at College B, Rising Star, is open to all students who meet the eligibility criteria. As explained in Textbox 1, Rising Star provides direct financial resources. Beyond the financial supports; however, the program also serves as an important networking resource for students, with the connections continuing beyond the community college experience. A staff member explained, "In the program it has always been once a rising star, always a rising star." Many Latino students are enrolled in the program and view it as an important source of support. As an administrator at College B noted:

It [Rising Star] is open to all students who meet the criteria, but for some reason other minorities do not apply as often as the Hispanic students. They recruit each other. Students in the program tell their friends and relatives about the program.

Other venues, such as sports, can also promote college knowledge among Latino students. The coach of College B's soccer team is clearly committed to student success. As he explained, "My day is diverse in terms of meeting students that need any sort of academic advising. As the head men's coach, I am constantly going to [local] high schools to recruit and hold open tryouts on campus to encourage local kids to come." The varied assortment of opportunities—formal programs, clubs, and athletics—all facilitate the same outcome of student support and engagement. The challenge for community colleges is ensuring all students are touched in some manner by these supportive structures; there are some students who still slip through the cracks. As a staff member explained:

We are seeing that it is not the ones who join the clubs, come to class, and make the good grades, it is the ones in the background who don't know how to ask for help, who are not necessarily failing, but are not at the A level either. We are trying to cast a wider net and get those students that need a little more mentorship, work with them more one-on-one and figure out the help that they do need.

College A recently announced its desire to become a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), which, if obtained, will allow the institution to access and compete for additional resources to better serve Latino students. HSIs are defined by the U.S. Department of Education as any accredited, degree-granting institution whose full-time equivalent undergraduate enrollment is at least 25 percent Hispanic. HSIs are determined by their undergraduate student enrollment rather than their mission or desire to serve Latino students. Receiving HSI designation provides colleges with Title V grant funding that can be allocated toward colleges to better serve Latino students, and promote student success generally. The HSI designation brings benefits to the institution at large, with funding available for projects that range from student support programs to classroom technology. By setting the institutional priority of becoming an HSI, this community college is also demonstrating to the community its desire to access additional external resources to better meet the needs of their Latino student population.

While formal programs provide an invaluable resource in promoting college knowledge and fostering student support, faculty, administrators, and students alike underscored the importance of informal, relationship-based approaches as well. As the President of College B explained, “We believe that it is all about the relationship . . . so you balance the rigor with the relationship and we think that is a very powerful combination.”

Many of the student and faculty comments below align with academic research regarding the positive impact of faculty-student interactions on student success. Previous studies identify having a relationship with faculty or staff as positively influencing Latino student retention (Hernandez 2000, 2002). For example, Latino college students who perceive a student-centered faculty and have opportunities for faculty interaction were more likely to adjust to college. Relationships with minority faculty in particular were the most significant dimension of social integration in affecting grade point average (Hurtado, Carter, and Spuler 1996; Mayo, Murguia, and Padilla 1995). Several of the faculty and students we interviewed also felt strongly that faculty-student interaction is a key factor in Latino student success.

As one faculty member remarked, “It makes a huge difference when they [students] know that someone is holding them accountable and cares.” Once faculty have a better understanding of student needs, they are often able to identify resources within the college that may offer needed supports. Another professor noted, “Another thing is when a student fails a test, they are ready to give up, especially with Hispanic students. They just want to walk away . . . we have a program where if a student is doing badly, I send them to a life coach to help them.”

Faculty can serve as a critical asset by taking the time to communicate. The importance of mentorship and a strong support system were recurring themes among faculty and administrators. As a faculty member at College B explained:

Faculty are encouraged to have as much outside interactions with students as possible. Trying to make sure they are engaged with students at least via email—taking the time to make inquiries with students who may disappear from class to encourage them to come back.

While faculty-student communication and informal relationship building is generally important in promoting college knowledge and student success, Latino students

specifically articulated a cultural hesitation to approach faculty. Reluctance to communicate with faculty was a recurring theme reported by Latino students. Many students expressed their reluctance and fear to speak up or ask questions of faculty. As one student explained, “Culturally, that’s how it goes. The teacher would have to reach out to us. We don’t want to look ignorant, so we don’t ask.”

During the focus groups, other Latino students directly encouraged their peers to recognize the importance of communication to their own academic well-being. As one student advised her peers, “The best thing you can do is go to the instructor so he can see that you really care.” Another student further emphasized the point to her peers, “You really do have to talk to the instructor. As long as they see that you’re trying, they will help.”

Some Latino students linked their reluctance to speak up with previous negative faculty or staff experiences at the community college. They expressed skepticism of some staff members being willing to share helpful information with them. As one Latina student detailed:

I went to the advising center about the CLEP³ and they were reluctant to hear about the CLEP test and to tell me about the resources that they had for the CLEP. I was told by an instructor that I could not talk to the students about the CLEP. I was pretty surprised. I thought that the only reason was financial. If the students take of advantage of this, they would not have a job. That is not fair. They are holding us back.

Another student agreed, stating, “Well, I read that it is a well-kept secret and that the college doesn’t want students to know about it. When I took my Spanish CLEP, there were hardly any Hispanics there taking it—the majority was Anglo.”

Alternatively, students who were able to connect with faculty and staff in the college reported a much more positive experience. In general, these students felt much more connected to the college and perceived a more supportive environment. As one Latina student commented, “I have an anthropology professor who would give up her Saturdays to help us prepare for a test. I think it is amazing when you find a professor who will not only teach you, but impact your life.”

Need for more Latino faculty; cultural competency training for all faculty

Although the Latino student population at both colleges is significant, there are very few Latino faculty at either college. As one Latino faculty member noted, “There is something about Hispanic students taking a class from a Hispanic person. Sometimes they need that in the beginning . . . something that is familiar because there is a lot of fear when they go to college.” As this same Latino faculty member explained, role models for Latino students are particularly important, especially for those who come from families where education is not highly valued or supported. “We need to have role models and this is so important. We don’t have the social mirrors for these students.” Latino students often find it difficult to imagine obtaining a better life. Having faculty role models to visually demonstrate this possibility can offer a powerful image of realized educational success. Another Latino faculty member

³ The College Level Examination Program (CLEP) allows students to test out of taking introductory college level courses. <http://clep.collegeboard.org/>

discussed being able to relate personal experiences and decrease social distance. As this faculty member explained, “I relate a lot of my personal experiences in class to reach my Hispanic students. I have a lot of parallel issues and if it is not me, then it was my mother or some of my relatives. That helps to break some of those barriers.”

While some senior administrators expressed the difficulty in recruiting and retaining Latino faculty, other administrators and faculty expressed skepticism of this perspective. As a faculty member at College A explained, “People argue they cannot find Latino faculty. I don’t buy that excuse. The Latino population is 17-18 percent in the US and much higher in Texas.”

Students across the four focus groups expressed the desire to have more Latino faculty and staff at their community college. In general, they feel Latino faculty and staff are more welcoming than non-Latino faculty. As one student commented, “As far as other departments— admission and advising—I see how they treat Hispanic students and it’s not welcoming.” Another student agreed: “Most of the most welcoming experiences are with Hispanics.” Yet, another student expressed, “I know this is horrible to say, but someone who looks like you just makes you feel more comfortable.” Students suggested the need to add more Latino faculty and staff, especially in the area of recruitment, admissions, and advisement.

Several students expressed frustration in Latino students constantly being perceived by faculty and staff in the college as one monolithic group with common ties to Mexico. As one student commented, “Everyone thought that Hispanic means that we are all from Mexico—that Latin equals Mexican only. This is a problem.”

The importance of role models for minority students is well documented in the literature. Minority students are more likely to succeed if they have mentors or role models in their schools (Sedlacek 1989). In a qualitative study of Latino students, the researchers reported that for many of the students, mentors provided access to information they would not have been privy to, particularly for first-generation college students (Arellano and Padilla 1996). It is important to note that non-minority faculty can also serve as role models. While ethnically matched role models are successful in contributing to academic success, so are cross-ethnic role models. The primary variable seems to be individual student satisfaction with the level of personal contact with their instructors (Hernandez and Lopez 2004; Padilla and Pavel 1994).

Students in the focus groups also discussed the relationship between gender and culture. For male students, work and money are important drivers in their decision to attend and stay in college. Across the focus groups, male students expressed a direct relationship between college and money, with a particular emphasis on current versus future earning potential. Many males who already earn a living wage may not have as much interest in college. As one Latino student commented, “They [Latino males] don’t see the importance of coming to college. They started making good money as a welder and now he doesn’t mention coming back to college.” Another remarked, “[My brother] is working in the plants making \$18-21 an hour. Nothing I could tell him would make him come to college.”

Many female students reported their family members expect them to help take care of other family members, especially male family members. Female students report an expectation from other family members to operate in more traditional roles. As one Latina student expressed, “I don’t have any brothers, but I have a lot of male cousins and they depend on us to make their food.” Another student agreed, stating, “There is a lot of male

complacency. My son is in tenth grade and I have to practically sign him up for everything. We need to stop babysitting them.” A few male students also recognized this: “I think the main issue is that when the girls have children, they are more likely to take care of their children and work rather than pursue higher education.”

Additionally, Latino students expressed gender differences in terms of economic motivators. Whereas Latino male students were strongly motivated by short-term economic factors, Latina students expressed the importance of self-determination in realizing longer term goals. They largely view their pursuit of a college education as an individual goal, which will require certain sacrifices, but yield long-term investments. Understanding gender dynamics within Latino culture is also an important aspect of promoting cultural competency. Latino culture often transmits a definition of gender-related roles and behaviors. It is incumbent that college administrators are sensitive to these issues in order to identify and understand the ways in which Latino men and women may make meaning of their experiences in college (Hernandez and Lopez 2004).

In addition to the need for more Latino faculty, some administrators and faculty noted the need for more bilingual staff and a broader understanding of Latin American culture. This is particularly important for recruitment. As a staff member at College A explained, “We need to hire not necessarily Hispanic people, but people who are bilingual. They have taken the bilingual requirement out of the position. This is a problem. This is essential to reach the population.” A faculty member from College B agreed. “We need someone who is versed in the many variances of the Latin American experience in terms of the students we serve—from Mexico to Argentina—sometimes we think about this just from a monocultural point of view. This individual needs to understand these complexities and be knowledgeable of what it means in the entire spectrum of this population.”

Faculty and administrators also expressed the importance of professional development for faculty. Increasing the cultural competence of faculty and staff in general is very helpful in promoting an understanding of Latino students. Through communication and relationship building, students view faculty as more accessible. They become more comfortable approaching faculty to discuss academic concerns, personal or financial challenges, or educational experiences in general.

Several of the administrators and faculty we interviewed noted the importance of faculty understanding the complexity of situations often encountered by Latino students. As the President of College B explained, “In truth, our students have great potential, but many times they have obstacles in their path. Faculty need the skills to recognize those issues and step in. If you didn’t grow up facing these challenges, then we are oblivious.” As one administrator noted, the background of many Latino students is very complex. These complexities may serve as a barrier in engaging students to consider the long term.

To get them to say that they are going to college for 4-6 years – they cannot even fathom that. They think they could get shot or get in a fight and die tonight. We have to figure out a way to get them to realize that they are not going to fight because they have so much to lose . . . If you get them to buy into that, you are set.

Another faculty member commented, “The teacher has to be aware of who the student is and what the socioeconomic background is and even though it is not supposed to matter, it does matter. People forget that real life happens outside of these walls.” Socio-

cultural factors can shape college student success. Many times these factors are invisible to the campus community. Although one should not assume that all Latino students share the same background, understanding socio-cultural factors is important (Hernandez and Lopez 2004).

Recognizing the importance of culturally competent faculty, College B offers intercultural competency training to faculty and staff. It is designed to promote cross-cultural understanding. Faculty and staff at College B complete intercultural competency training each year and it is strongly endorsed by the college's senior leadership. As the college president explained, "That is a requirement. If faculty and staff do not complete intercultural competence or the professional development, their contracts are not renewed."

Most recently, College B has enhanced its intercultural competency training by introducing a new session—The Framework for Understanding Poverty. Based on a book by the same title and supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, this framework is designed to provide an inspection of the social and economic class structure of the United States and seeks to provide those living in middle class with a better understanding of the challenges that face those living in poverty. As a staff member at College B explained, "It is [sic] excellent information on learning about people who grow up in poverty, being able to understand them, understanding their situations and the obstacles kids deal with on a daily basis." Building upon this theme, a faculty member at College B noted, "We developed a board game based on Monopoly called Studentopoly. It was created to open the door to discuss poverty. The game is set up to illustrate the cycle of poverty."

The college's emphasis on promoting cultural competency is widespread. As a faculty member remarked, "Our plan is to have 30 sessions in the Fall and to have all 1,400 of our employees to go through the program. That is the major part of the grant." Faculty at College B view these professional development resources as critical to promoting an understanding of structural inequities that undergird a variety of present-day college outcomes. "That is part of the focus on professional development. A lot of people are miseducated about the historical aspect of structural inequity and are in disbelief when you talk to them about it."

Importance of community engagement

Engaging Latino families and the broader Latino community is critical in promoting Latino student success. Community colleges need to directly include these groups in their recruitment and retention efforts. Both colleges discussed the need to engage with their respective community and to have a presence that goes beyond the confines of their institutional walls. The community college's relationship with its service area is important to maintaining its vitality and serving its core mission. The growth in the Latino community within the service areas of both colleges requires the colleges to engage and interact differently. In particular, they realize the importance of a family centered approach, as opposed to an individual student focus.

Nearly all of the students cited family relationships, expectations and values as strongly influencing their ability to succeed in college. About half of the students indicated their families supported them in going to college and viewed college as a positive step. Students with strong family support systems found their support very motivating. "They all support me and I'm an example. My siblings want to do the same now." Many students indicated their parents clearly expressed to them that they wanted to see their children have a

better life. “My parents are supportive. My dad said, ‘If you don’t go to college, then a shovel is waiting for you.’”

The other half of the students indicated that their families were indifferent toward college or did not view education as particularly valuable. As one Latina student noted, “In general, the vast majority think that you get out of high school and you form a family. The expectation for education is low.”

Many students felt current college recruitment practices are often distant, impersonal, and less than engaging. As one Latino student explained, “There is a disconnect between a pamphlet and action. They [students] could feel that everyone is given a pamphlet, but when you hear it from a friend, it is different.” These student comments support the need for community colleges to offer more cultural competency training for faculty and staff, so employees of the college better understand the complexity of their Latino student population.

Serving Latino students and meeting their cultural needs requires community colleges to be relationship-centered to design recruitment and instructional efforts that not only engage Latino students, but their families as well (Martinez and Fernandez 2004; Rendon 1999). Administrators and faculty at both colleges discussed the decision to pursue higher education as being largely a family decision within the Latino community. It is simply not enough to have a relationship with the high schools in their service area. Also, they must engage the family to build a relationship and create trust. This means the community college has to operate differently to meet the needs of their Latino students. A faculty member at College A emphasized the familial nature of education by noting, “It is essential that we reach the parents. It’s the parents and the culture.” Another administrator at College A underscored the importance of involving family: “Even when the student is fluent in English, their family members may not be. So, if we can get their family more involved, that will support the student’s success. Family may be the most effective unit intervention for Hispanic students.”

Some of the most important components of the college’s outreach to Latino families include: countering concerns related to immigration, providing clear pathways to college access, and emphasizing the importance of education for Latino students and their families. As one faculty member at College B shared:

“We have a lot of undocumented people who can still come here, but they don’t even know that. For five years now, we’ve been working with the ESL students in the high schools. Here in Texas they can pay in-state tuition and even qualify for some state funds.”

Another faculty member at College B stated:

“We have to fight the misconception that students who are not citizens cannot apply for scholarships. We try to get past that.”

Faculty and administrators recognize the importance of engaging the Latino community, disseminating information, and providing a road map to college access for non-citizens. Both colleges commented on the need to provide assistance to Latino families in completing financial aid applications, especially for students whose parents are undocumented or who do not have a social security number. One advisor at College A commented, “They are afraid to disclose any type of household information. They fear they

will be reported.”

Beyond legal considerations, faculty and administrators also discussed the need to demonstrate the worth of college to many Latino families. A senior administrator at College A commented, “In this area, we have migrant workers. Trying to convince the family that education is important is difficult because of work and the immediacy of their needs.” Another faculty member at College B provided a concrete example of her approach to addressing family-related concerns about the overall benefit of college and associated costs.

There are too many Hispanic students who want to get an education and have to battle their parents over it. It is the poverty mindset: ‘It would be nice to get an education, but that is not for us.’ I would run into that when I was doing presentations. Or, the ‘it would be nice to get an education but we don’t have the money.’ The Hispanic community is very adverse to student loans.

This specific example may be useful in identifying a particular area of the college process—such as financial aid and student loan applications—that may be viewed with fear or skepticism by some Latino families. The ability to finance a college education remains a major barrier for many Latino students. Several researchers have reported the role of finances in determining the persistence or withdrawal of Latino students (Arbona and Novy 1990; Cabrera, Nora, and Castaneda 1992; Hernandez 2000; Nora, 1990; Padilla, Trevino, Gonzalez and Trevino 1997).

Some creative ways both community colleges are reaching out to Latino families is through community-based outreach and reaching Latino parents through their GED and ESL classes. As the President of College B explained:

“We do a lot of work with the high schools in our area. That is probably the largest feeder. Then we go into the community churches and the various segments in the community. We try as much as possible to have people on our campus. Once they get here, they have the chance to see the campus and the resources here.”

Both colleges discussed working with their local school district to host special presentations, holding workshops in Spanish for both students and their parents, and providing opportunities for campus visits. A faculty member at College A shared, “I am the contact person for the Hispanic students. I work with them in the high school. I give my business cards to the parents—not just the students.”

The colleges host efforts specifically targeted toward Latino students and programs that traditionally reach Latino students. For example, College A reaches out to first generation college students, many of whom are Latino, through their Upward Bound Program. College A President shared:

“We have a long standing Upward Bound program. We have a significant number of Hispanic students participate. [In] last year’s graduating class, five out of 12 of the students were Hispanic. We have a program called “Dolo” which is similar to a bridge program. We invite Hispanic students to come to campus to participate in a program that is put on by COM alumni that are Hispanic, who are in the world of work or at a four- year college. The program is for Hispanic students who are still in high school to encourage them to finish and complete an application for higher

education and work. It is a one day program and we invite all Hispanic students in the service area.”

Another faculty member at College A shared that their Dolo program is designed to provide students information about the campus and going to college. “We help students by giving them a tour of campus, information about financial aid, advisement, and just going to college period. We provide workshops on cultural diversity and setting goals. It’s like a college day for Hispanic students.”

Additionally, both colleges encourage their GED students and English as a Second Language (ESL) students to consider academic programs at the colleges for themselves and their children. As an administrator at College A shared:

“We encourage our ESL/GED students to come to College [A]. [A staff member] does an absolutely awesome job. He goes to the classes or we schedule a tour when they get a [College A] ID, so they feel like they are part of the college . . . He gives them personal information and serves as a contact.”

As Latino parents become more directly involved with their local community college, they are more willing to bring their children to the college because of the relationship and bond already established through the Adult Education programs.

Another creative approach includes celebrating cultural holidays and hosting festivals to promote community-college interaction. Faculty and administrators discussed the activities their colleges host to embrace and interact with the community. For example, the colleges host international festivals, celebrations for Hispanic Heritage month, and other cultural holidays like Cinco de Mayo. College A has the distinction of hosting the first college celebration of Cinco de Mayo in the United States. As the event’s founding faculty member explained:

“Yes, the Cinco de Mayo Festival originated here at this college. We started it in 1974 . . . I established it for two reasons—to make the presence of the college felt in the community and vice versa. We went to churches where Hispanics congregate. We talked to the pastors and priests. We went to two Baptist Hispanic congregations. We were able to promote enrollment—we want you to come.”

The same faculty member also shared:

“We are going to have a Columbus Day program—that will bring in all [Hispanic] student populations. We’re all impacted by Columbus. And, that will bring in the Hispanic world—the Day of the Race. It is not called Columbus Day, but the Day of the Race. We will have Columbus Day/Day of the Race during college hour.”

By engaging the community in fun cultural events, the colleges build relationships and demonstrate that they are providing a welcoming and supportive environment that values Latino culture.

Although faculty and administrators recognize the importance of outreach within the Latino community and familial engagement, they have also experienced its difficulty. They cited limitations in their efforts, noting Latino outreach efforts are largely initiated by individual faculty members, rather than at the institutional level. Administrators and faculty from both colleges discussed the lack of budgetary resources to make more resources available in Spanish. They noted that it is not sufficient for information to be provided in Spanish, but information also needs to be accompanied by staff resources to share the information in an accessible manner. As one faculty member explained:

“We need to get someone out in the Hispanic community that can speak Spanish—someone who understands the college terminology and can break it down for uneducated families. We want to reach them at their level and not intimidate them.”

Although language is an important consideration, community college administrators need to understand the diversity within the Latino community and not employ a singular outreach approach. Clearly, the Latino experience in the United States has been profoundly shaped by immigration. While the vast majority of Latinos are either immigrants or the children of immigrants, one should not assume all Latino students come from immigrant households who are not fluent in English (Suarez-Orozco and Paez 2002). While some Latino students’ parents may not be fluent in English, others may be fluent in English, but unfamiliar with college systems and processes. Still, others may be very familiar with college systems and processes and very supportive of educational attainment. It is important for community college outreach efforts to understand the complexities within the Latino community and not design a singular method to reach all Latino families.

Another important challenge at College A is the racial tension between the African American and Latino community. As one faculty member shared, “They [Latino community] do not think they [College A] are for the Hispanics. The people I have spoken to see a big push to increase enrollment and to hire African Americans. They have not seen that happen for Hispanics.” [College A], under the leadership of [college president], has made strides to repair the community relationship and move past racial tension to promote the success of all students.

A few Latino students also expressed concern that College A places too much emphasis on African American students and provides limited support to Latino students. Given the changing demographics of the US and the rapid increase in the Latino population, some students indicated colleges do not seem to be focusing on this changing trend. Rather, colleges continue to focus on African American students. A Latina student explained, “They [the college] seem to focus more on African American students but they do very little as far as seeing the needs of Hispanic students.” This underscores an important challenge for colleges to respond effectively and operate systems that are inclusive of all minority students, rather than one particular group. As Williams and O’Reilly (1998) suggest diversity can sometimes result in group conflict. These dynamics require “careful and sustained attention to be a positive force in enhancing performance” (120).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Although faculty and administrators at both colleges readily concede much work remains in their efforts to promote student success among Latino students, their experiences to date offer

useful insights for the public administration community. To achieve high rates of success for all students, especially Latino students who traditionally have faced the most significant barriers to achievement, institutions should have a student-centered vision, a culture of evidence and accountability and a commitment to equity and excellence.

Administrators at each community college will need to consider the appropriate mixture of formal programs, professional development, bilingual staff, mentoring, and student-to-student support. The major findings from this study include:

- Student engagement and Latino faculty role models are important.
- Communicating college knowledge both formally and informally is important to student success.
- Senior leadership must move the issue forward.
- Involving the family is an important component of Latino student success.
- Becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution provides helpful resources to promote Latino student success.
- Both senior leadership and faculty involvement are key to creating a unified institutional response to promoting the success of a growing Latino student population.
- Building strong relationships with the Latino community will also increase the cultural knowledge and understanding of community college administrators, faculty, and staff.

Student engagement and Latino faculty role models are important. The pervasive opinion held by administrators, staff, and students was the importance of students being supported and engaged during their academic experience. This is particularly critical once a student first enrolls in classes and during the early semesters of his or her academic career. Designing interventions to disseminate this information and promote a comfortable environment for students to ask questions is important.

Communicating college knowledge both formally and informally is important to student success. Community colleges should consider the alignment of their support and engagement efforts with their specific student population. Community college administrators might develop an inventory of their formal college knowledge resources. Then, they can develop a matrix to track the “take up” rate of these resources by sub-groups of students. What formal college knowledge resources are regularly utilized by Latino students? African American students? How do these formal resources vary by groups of students? Such an inventory can identify important gaps in formal college knowledge dissemination. Colleges can use this information to better align formal resources with student needs.

Senior leadership must move the issue forward. While promoting student success among Latino students necessitates a well-planned effort, senior administrators are critical in conveying a clear message regarding priority and importance. Community colleges need to examine their diversity plans and develop and monitor clear goals for each of these areas. Staff job descriptions in the areas of recruitment, advisement, and student outreach should include bilingual language requirements sufficient to serve the needs of their local population.

Becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution provides helpful resources to promote Latino student success. Public administrators in community colleges may need to review the criteria to receive designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution. Given the significant growth

in the Latino population, community colleges that previously did not meet the criteria may find this is no longer the case.

Both senior leadership and faculty involvement are key to creating a unified institutional response to promoting the success of a growing Latino student population. Despite the complexities involved in better serving Latino students, faculty and administrators at both community colleges emphasize the importance of getting started and moving forward. Administrators at both colleges counseled against allowing resistant faculty to stymie progress. As the president of College B emphatically explained, “Responsible risk taking is one of our core values. What isn’t acceptable is to sit back and do nothing.”

Involving the family is an important component of Latino student success. A clear theme across nearly all of the administrators and faculty was recognizing the important role of family in Latino student success. These findings suggest community colleges need to specifically consider the importance of a family-centered approach to Latino student recruitment. An important starting point is to assess the college’s current level of involvement with the Latino community. Developing a solid relationship with the Latino community is an important factor in ultimately promoting student success in community college. This enables community colleges to promote the importance of education in multiple venues—for example, through middle school experiences and reaching parents through ESL and GED classes.

Building strong relationships with the Latino community will also increase the cultural knowledge and understanding of community college administrators, faculty, and staff. This will facilitate a deeper understanding of the complexities of the Latino cultures, rather than approaching Latino students as a monolithic group. Structuring college institutional support systems in clear relationship to cultural processes can prove to be a strong force in Latino student success in terms of student recruitment, retention, graduation, and transfer to a four-year institution.

Based on these findings, there are several important recommendations. In a general sense, faculty and administrators at both colleges cited budgetary concerns in making more college resources available in Spanish. Community colleges may consider recruiting student interns from four-year colleges and universities majoring in Spanish, mass communications, education and/or marketing to assist in developing more bilingual resources for the community college.

As community colleges enhance their focus on Latino student success, it is also important for faculty and administrators to consider the demographic composition of their entire student enrollment to avoid unintentionally pitting one minority student group against another in the allocation of community college programs and resources. Importantly, public educational systems validate and transmit the dominant culture. Traditionally, the institutional structures within higher education promote the language and values of the dominant group. A monocultural approach will not be effective in promoting an inclusive approach to student success. Designing such an approach necessitates careful discussion, consideration, and understanding of the specific student population each community college serves. Creating a safe space for discussion and dialogue about Latino student success is important for all involved. It is a huge milestone for students, faculty, parents and community members, to talk openly about race, ethnicity, and culture and to ask questions about potentially sensitive subject matter. At times, this process can be difficult and uncomfortable. However, working through this context can ultimately lead to a sense of empowerment and

yield significant accomplishments for public administrators and the populations they serve.

More specific recommendations include designing appropriate student success interventions. Table 4 provides an overview of multiple initiatives designed to promote student success and how they can be implemented from either a universal or targeted approach. Universal approaches are open to all students; targeted approaches are specific to a particular population. Importantly, targeted universalism permits the combination of both approaches, which some scholars suggest is the best approach because it provides targeted resources within a universalist framework, thereby eliminating the concerns associated with stigmatization (see, for example, Skocpol, 1995). As Powell, Menendian and Reece (2009) explain:

"An alternative to either a straight universal program or a solely particularistic program is to pursue what we call "targeted universalism." This is an approach that supports the needs of the particular while reminding us that we are all part of the same social fabric. Targeted universalism rejects a blanket universal which is likely to be indifferent to the reality that different groups are situated differently relative to the institutions and resources of society. It also rejects the claim of formal equality that would treat all people the same as a way of denying difference (11577).

Table 4. Student Success Initiatives (Example Universal and Targeted Applications)

Type of Support	Definition	Universal Application	Targeted Application
College Readiness Programs	The program helps to improve the academic success of high school students who are making the transition to college.	Open to all students who place into two or more developmental courses	Offer bilingual instruction, Latino role models, and provide families opportunities to get involved
Community Outreach/Engagement	College materials and information sessions designed to inform the community about the programs offered at the college	Materials and information sessions offered in English only	Materials and information sessions offered in Spanish
Financial Aid Counseling	Programs designed to help students navigate filling out financial aid forms and assist them in learning about all types of available financial aid	Open to all students	Offer bilingual counseling that is open to Latino students and their families
First Year Experience (FYE)	Comprehensive approaches designed to improve success rates and increase retention of first-year students; FYE programs may include interventions focused on streamlining the admissions process, increasing financial aid uptake, community outreach, student success courses, and targeted orientation and advisement.	Open to all FY students or FY students who place into developmental course work	Offer Latino student support groups, have Latino instructors teaching FY courses or serving as FY counselors
New Student Orientation	Introducing students to many aspects of the college including student life, academic policies, and the honor code.	Open to all new students	Offer student orientation in Spanish and invite families to participate
Professional Development	Approaches to professional development designed to engage faculty and staff improving student success; may include for example, workshops, trainings, and site visits to other colleges.	Workshops and programs focused on: teaching techniques, new instructional programs, or on student success in general	Focus workshops and programs on cultural competency – understanding the challenges facing different student groups, particularly Latino students
Student Success Courses	Student success courses are designed to assist students in achieving academic success by providing them with knowledge such as creating a plan for their education, study skills, time management skills, and connecting students to campus resources. The courses are designed to address a number	Make course mandatory for students needing to take a developmental course	Offer student success courses for different groups: Minority Males – focusing on the barriers that often impede student success Recruit more Latino and/or bilingual instructors to teach

Type of Support	Definition	Universal Application	Targeted Application
	of barriers to student success.		student success courses Include role models from Latino community as speakers in student success course
Supplemental Instruction	Offer additional course assistance through peer instructor. The goals of Supplemental Instruction are to improve grades in targeted courses, reduce the attrition rate of those courses, and to increase graduation rates.	Available to all students in specified developmental or gatekeeper course; Generally optional	Add supplemental instruction to courses considering Latino student progression patterns; Hire bilingual Supplemental Instructors;
Tutoring	Individualized or group assistance with course work	Available to all students by subject	Offer tutoring services in Spanish

For example, supplemental instruction provides additional course assistance through peer instruction in order to assist students in mastering course materials. While this is an important support for all students, community colleges can consider Latino student progression patterns to assist in identifying which courses to target. They can also hire bilingual supplemental instructors.

While the specific elements will vary from college to college, approaching student success among Latino students needs to be based upon an intentional, well developed effort. By better understanding the experiences of Latino students, community colleges can structure their operations to more effectively promote Latino student success. For public administrators concerned with promoting social equity in the provision and delivery of public services, community colleges are important government organizations that offer venues of opportunity to an increasingly diverse public.

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