O'Brien, E. M. "American Indians in Higher Education." American Council on Education Research Brief, vol. 3, no. 3. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1992.
Tierney, W. G. *Official Encouragement, Institutional Discouragement: Minorities in Academe—The Native American Experience.* Norwood, N.J.: Ablex, 1992.

ALISA FEDERICO CUNNINGHAM *is research analyst at The Institute for Higher Education Policy.*

CHRISTINA PARKER *is research associate at the American Indian Higher Education Consortium.*

Hispanic-serving institutions are playing an essential role as educators of the nation's fastest-growing ethnic group, and they represent a potent political force for the the future.

Hispanic-Serving Institutions: Challenges and Opportunities

Margarita Benítez

This chapter reviews the criteria used to define Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs) in the United States and presents other distinguishing characteristics, such as Hispanics' origins, geographical distribution, academic offerings, and patterns of financing. It discusses the present status as well as the educational needs of the growing U.S. Hispanic population in order to ascertain how effectively HSIs are addressing those needs. In addition, congressional appropriations for minority institutions are compared. The fifty HSIs in Puerto Rico are discussed separately.

Educating Hispanics in the United States

To begin to understand the challenges involved in educating the U.S. Hispanic population, it is important to realize that Hispanics are by no means a homogeneous group. In the United States, the term *Hispanic* and the more recent *Latino* are umbrella terms that cover many national origins, races, and cultures, from the descendants of pre-Columbian inhabitants of the Americas to the offspring of migratory streams to the Spanish-speaking New World from every region of the planet. The Hispanic population of the United States also includes sixth-and seventh-generation U.S. citizens.

Although Spanish is the first language for many Hispanics in the United States, beyond the second generation this is not necessarily the case. Just as more than a unidimensional profile is needed to understand the complex and

This article owes a debt of gratitude to Deborah Santiago, a program analyst with the U.S. Department of Education, who diligently researches and updates data on HSIs.

varied cultural and socioeconomic behaviors of Hispanics in the United States, more than one educational paradigm must be defined for their education.

The continued influx of Hispanics has perpetuated the divide between the dominant Anglo culture and the ethnic and socioeconomic stereotypes of Hispanics as newly arrived, non-English-speaking, illegal aliens. Actually, 64 percent of the Hispanic population in the United States is made up of U.S.–born citizens (President's Advisory Commission, 1996). Although a growing number of Hispanics have achieved economic success in the United States and interact with ease in English-speaking circles, Hispanics are often portrayed in the media and in public discourse as unassimilated, undereducated, child-laden, and menially employed.

It is true that at present most Hispanics fill a demand from certain sectors of the U.S. economy for cheap, unskilled, and temporary labor. They work in agriculture and food processing, the service industries (especially maintenance, domestic work, and custodial services), some sectors of manufacturing, and the underground economy. As in so many of their countries of origin, they appear to be stuck at the wrong end of the wide gap between high-tech, high-paying jobs and menial, low-paying, part-time work. In the present global economy, as in its wealthiest country, an economically integrated world system remains segregated by ethnicity and gender.

Education remains the most dependable key to socioeconomic advancement. A strong correlation exists between schooling and earnings. There is an increasing polarization between the earnings of workers with less than a high school education and those of college graduates (Rivera Batiz and Santiago, 1994).[1] Recent studies show that finishing high school is not enough to make a significant difference in job opportunities and earnings. The real difference is seen after college (Nieto, 1996–1997).

If past performance is any indicator, most educational institutions in the United States are not up to the task of educating the U.S. Hispanic population. Yet Hispanics pose an educational challenge that will not go away. Today, about one out of every ten U.S. inhabitants is Hispanic. In 1996, a third of the Hispanic population in the United States was under fifteen. If present rates of population growth continue, by 2030 one in five persons in the United States will be Hispanic, and Hispanics will make up 25 percent of the total school population, with Hispanics age five to eighteen numbering almost 16 million (President's Advisory Commission, 1996).

Although Hispanics are the fastest-growing minority in the United States, their numbers at all levels of the educational system in this country have not kept pace with their population growth. Dropout rates for Hispanics are higher and dropping out occurs earlier than for most other groups. According to the 1996 report of the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, "40 percent of 16– to 24–year-old Hispanic dropouts left school with less than a 9th grade education, compared with 13 percent of white dropouts and 11 percent of black dropouts" (p. 36). Another national report points out that in 1995 the disparity between whites and Hispanics with regard to high school completion was 27 percent, while it was 5 percent between whites and blacks.

Disparities in college completion rates between whites and Hispanics are also growing. In 1992, the gap between the proportions of Hispanic and white high-school graduates who completed a college degree was 15 percentage points. In 1996, the gap was 21 percentage points (National Education Goals Panel, 1996).

Nevertheless, within less than a decade, Hispanic enrollment in postsecondary institutions practically doubled, from 520,000 in 1992 to 1,045,600 in 1997. Hispanics make up nearly 8 percent of the nation's fifteen million students in postsecondary institutions, up from 4.5 percent in 1985. More than half of Hispanics in postsecondary education are concentrated in about 177 institutions with 25 percent or more Hispanic enrollment (U.S. Department of Education, 1998).

In 1993, Hispanics earned only 6 percent of all associate degrees, 4 percent of all bachelor's degrees, 3 percent of all master's degrees, and 2 percent of all doctorates granted in the United States. These percentages have barely changed since the 1980s. Only 946 of the 43,261 doctorates awarded in the United States in 1994 went to Hispanics (President's Advisory Commission, 1996).

An Introduction to Hispanic-Serving Institutions

The term *Hispanic-serving institution* is a relatively recent educational classification that is not yet uniformly defined. The most frequently used criterion to identify HSIs is a Hispanic student enrollment of 25 percent or more. Yet depending on which definition is used, the list of HSIs in the United States can vary from as many as 768 institutions to 131 institutions (U.S. Department of Education, 1997a).

The most important, but also the most restrictive, legal definition of a Hispanic-serving institution is found in Title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA), as amended. Title III authorizes federal aid programs to institutions that serve large numbers of needy and underrepresented students. To be eligible for Title III aid, an institution must meet the following criteria:

- Cannot be for-profit
- Must offer at least two-year academic programs that lead to a degree
- Must be accredited by an accrediting agency or association recognized by the secretary of education
- Must have high enrollment of needy students
- Must have low-average education expenditures (Title III, Section 312, HEA)

In addition to meeting these criteria, to be recognized as an HSI an institution must

- Have at least 25 percent Hispanic undergraduate full-time-equivalent (FTE) student enrollment
- Provide assurances that no less than 50 percent of its Hispanic students are low-income individuals *and* first-generation college students

Table 5.1. Number of Institutions That Meet the Title III HSI Program Eligibility Criteria

	Number of Institutions
Are not-for-profit institutions	284
Are at least two-year institutions	212
Meet other institutional eligibility criteria	173
Have Hispanic full-time-equivalent enrollment of 25 percent or more	131

Source: U.S. Department of Education, 1997, p. 2.

- Provide assurances that an additional 25 percent of its Hispanic students are low-income individuals or first-generation college students (Title III, Section 316, HEA)

Table 5.1 illustrates how the list of Hispanic-serving institutions shrinks as each of these criteria is applied.

In its present form, Title III specifically mentions and provides for two types of minority-serving institutions: historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and HSIs. A comparison between the defining criteria and congressional funding patterns for HBCUs and HSIs is discussed later in this chapter.

Entities such as the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans and the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities employ criteria that are similar to but less exacting than Title III to identify HSIs. They define HSIs as accredited degree-granting public or private nonprofit institutions of higher education with at least 25 percent Hispanic student enrollment. This definition increases the number of HSIs from 131 to 177, based on Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System data for 1995–96. This definition does not have legal status, however. Federal agencies and other funding sources tend to rely on existing statutes when developing policy directives and funding priorities. At present, the only statutory reference to HSIs is the HEA Title III definition.

Profile of Hispanic-Serving Institutions

Whether 131 or 177 schools within the higher education community of more than 3,000 colleges and universities qualify as HSIs, the most frequent type of institution among HSIs is a public two-year community college that is greatly dependent on state and federal funds, and that has a limited budget and almost no endowment. Information gathered by the U.S. Department of Education shows that

- The total revenues of HSIs are 42 percent, or $5,742, less per FTE student than at other institutions.
- Endowment revenues at HSIs per FTE student are 91 percent less than at other institutions.

- HSIs spend 43 percent less on instruction per FTE student than other schools.
- HSIs spend 51 percent less on academic support functions (such as libraries, curriculum development, and so on) per FTE student than other schools.
- HSIs spend 27 percent less on student services (guidance, counseling, financial aid administration, and so on) per FTE student than other schools.

These expenditures constitute a greater percentage of the overall expenditures of HSIs, however, than of other schools (U.S. Department of Education, 1997b).

It is no exaggeration to describe the financial condition of a large number of HSIs as precarious. Many HSIs are underequipped and understaffed, and they are unable to do competitive hiring, develop baccalaureate or graduate programs, maintain modern research facilities, or offer high-tech learning and working environments.

In light of these problems, some questions may be raised about the quality of instruction and the possibilities for student and faculty advancement at HSIs. Do HSIs have adequate resources to face up to the difficult task of educating a student population that lags behind in practically every academic indicator? Are Hispanic students better off at HSIs than at other institutions that are stronger financially and academically?

To address these questions, it is important to consider the characteristics of the Hispanic student population. At present, the typical Hispanic student is enrolled part-time in an associate or nondegree program near his or her home, receives federal student aid mostly in the form of Pell grants, and must work in order to stay in school. Hispanic students usually take longer than whites to complete a degree and are 33 percent more likely than whites to drop out before obtaining the bachelor's degree (U.S. Department of Education, 1997a).[2] Financial factors—both tuition costs and availability of financial aid—and nearness to home are major considerations for Hispanic students when choosing a school. Thirty-one percent of 79,000 Hispanic students surveyed as part of the UCLA American Freshmen Survey stated that money was "a major concern," while only 17 percent of other students thought so. Forty-five percent of Hispanic freshmen cited financial aid as a reason for their choice of school, and 33 percent considered it a "very important" factor (Pinto Alicea, 1997).

HSIs are both relatively inexpensive and close to home for Hispanic students. Despite all their respective limitations, the rate of completion of Hispanic students at HSIs is higher than at majority institutions. "Whereas 32 percent of all Hispanic students in higher education are enrolled at [Title III] HSIs, Hispanic students at HSIs earn 47 percent of the associate degrees and 48 percent of the bachelor's degrees awarded to Hispanic students nationwide" (U.S. Department of Education, 1997a, p. 2).

The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education, a monthly journal, annually publishes a list of the top one hundred schools that grant the highest number of bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees to Hispanics according to the National Center for Education Statistics. HSIs figure prominently in the bachelor's

degree category but lose ground at the master's level and practically disappear from the doctoral listing. As noted earlier, most HSIs offer only undergraduate degrees, and most are two-year institutions.

HSIs have begun to use statistics like the ones mentioned earlier to request increased government funding as well as to gain credibility as a successful educational alternative for minorities. It is not always mentioned that a large number of HSIs also serve other minority populations. More than 65 percent of the students enrolled at HSIs belong to diverse minority groups; they are not exclusively Hispanic (U.S. Department of Education, 1998).

The Growth of HSIs and of the Hispanic Population in the United States

The development of most HSIs has taken place within the last three decades. This development is closely related to two extraordinary quantitative increases that have brought about qualitative changes in education in the United States: a large increase in federal funding, and a dramatic increase in the Hispanic population of the United States. The great boom in need-based federal student financial aid that followed the passage in 1965 of the HEA allowed more students to access postsecondary education. Far more important than Title III to the development of HSIs and other minority institutions were the programs created under Title IV of the HEA. Title IV established the Basic Educational Opportunity Grants, which later became Pell grants, as well as college work-study and guaranteed student loan programs. Federal student grants, along with the movement for open admissions, were the keys to the gates of higher education for U.S. minority populations.

Before 1965, those gates had not been open. A study commissioned by the Association of American Colleges and Universities acknowledges that "into the 1960s, the nation's system of higher education was *de facto* almost completely racially segregated, basically either all-white or all-black with at best a 1 to 2 percent variation at some major institutions. As late as the fall of 1970, nearly 87 percent of college students in the United States were white. Nine percent were black and the combined total of Asian Americans, American Indians, and others was a mere 2.2 percent. The curriculum at majority institutions was as 'white' as the student body" (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1995).

No mention is made in this passage of Hispanics in the United States, of their particular educational needs, or of institutions and programs geared to address those needs. Yet Hispanics are, and have been for some time, the fastest-growing minority in the United States. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there were 6.9 million Hispanics living in the mainland United States—3 percent of the total population—in 1960. This number has more than quadrupled in less than three decades. The latest U.S. census estimate available at this writing put the mainland count at 29.57 million Hispanics. Another 3.78 million Hispanics live in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.[3]

The geographic distribution of HSIs follows that of Hispanics in the United States. The states of California, Texas, Florida, New York, New Mexico, Illinois, Arizona, Colorado, and New Jersey and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico are where the largest concentrations of Hispanics live. Not surprisingly, that is where HSIs are found. Tables 5.2 and 5.3 illustrate the distribution of HSIs by state.

Not all HSIs were originally founded as Hispanic-serving institutions. Migratory and demographic shifts have redefined the student population at many campuses throughout the United States. This means that HSIs were not necessarily designed or staffed with a Hispanic student population in mind. It may be argued that the fact that an institution enrolls large numbers of Hispanic students need not imply or assure that it is geared to their educational needs. A closer examination of individual institutions is required to ascertain their effectiveness, taking into account their missions, student populations,

Table 5.2. Institutions with 25 Percent or More Total Hispanic Enrollment (Headcount Only), by State/Location

State/Location	*Number of Institutions*	*Percent of Total*
Arizona	22	2.9
California	280	36.5
Colorado	16	2.1
Florida	58	7.6
Illinois	32	4.2
New Jersey	18	2.3
New Mexico	38	4.9
New York	39	5.1
Puerto Rico	120	15.6
Texas	116	15.1
Total	**738**	**96.3**

Source: U.S. Department of Education, 1997a, p. 3.

Table 5.3. Institutions with FTE Undergraduate Hispanic Enrollment of 25 Percent or More, by State/Location

State/Location	*Number of Institutions Eligible*
Arizona	2
California	21
Colorado	3
Florida	6
Illinois	6
New Jersey	2
New Mexico	10
New York	8
Puerto Rico	50
Texas	23
Total	**131**

Source: U.S. Department of Education, 1997a, Attachment G, p. 1.

academic offerings and achievements, faculty and staff profiles, student support services, funding sources, and funding priorities.

Nevertheless, keeping all of these issues in mind, it is still fair to say that HSIs as a group are presently at the front line of American postsecondary education. They are dealing with the population mix that will dominate the twenty-first century, and they appear to be doing better than any other group of institutions at meeting the educational needs of Hispanics. Whether their efforts and resources suffice to meet the challenge of educating Hispanics in the United States is another question. HSIs at present are seriously underfunded, and most do not go beyond the undergraduate level. That is not sufficient to serve the needs of the population, or of the nation in the future.

Many HSIs are part of community college systems and are assigned their mandates and funds by a central administrative office, which in turn answers to city authorities or state legislatures. Thus the level of funding most HSIs receive is tied to the political process at the local, state, and federal levels and may ebb and flow according to the clout and networking skills of the representatives of Hispanic communities.

A Comparison of Congressional Funding Patterns for HSIs and HBCUs

At present, the only minority institutions identified by ethnic group under Title III are HBCUs (Title III, Part B) and HSIs (Part A, Sec. 316). Significant differences exist between those statutes in terms of criteria for eligibility, the type and size of awards, and the funding history and funding projections for each group.

The eligibility criteria for HSIs under Title III are different than those for HBCUs. In the case of HBCUs, the congressional intent was to remedy past injustices and acknowledge and support the efforts of these institutions to educate blacks in the United States under very difficult conditions. Congress therefore established an entitlement program for HBCUs, with eligibility criteria including that the school be accredited and established prior to 1964 with a mission to educate black Americans.

Ninety-six institutions qualify as HBCUs under Title III. All of these schools receive annual awards based on formula allocation. By law, the minimum award for an individual HBCU is $500,000. In the case of HSIs, the 131 institutions that are currently eligible face a competitive grant process. Maximum annual awards are capped at $350,000. At present, 37 HSIs (28 percent) were awarded funds under Title III, Part A, Sec. 316. Congressional appropriations for HBCUs have remained stable since 1995, at $108.9 million. Appropriations for HSIs have decreased 10 percent since 1995, from $12 million dollars to $10.8 million in 1996 and 1997.

Proponents of HSIs feel that these institutions are being shortchanged in congressional funding compared to HBCUs. As this chapter is being written, the reauthorization of the HEA is making its way through Congress, with efforts to increase funding for HSIs a prominent agenda item for their

supporters. These efforts have caused some friction between representatives of HBCUs and HSIs. An article in *The Washington Post* provides an example of the tensions that have been raised: "'They can get everything they want under the current structure. They don't need a separate part in the law,' said Henry Ponder, president of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, which represents black colleges. 'I know Hispanics have had an unfavorable history in terms of discrimination, but it in no way compares to what has happened to African Americans'" (Fletcher, 1998, p. A10).

To engage in a public comparison of past and present sufferings, or to take from one set of institutions to assist the other, would likely be disruptive and unproductive for both HBCUs and HSIs. Cooler heads on both sides are exploring ways to bring together minority institutions in collaborative efforts. Some people have suggested the use of a statutory language that refers to poor or underserved areas rather than to specific ethnic groups. Other alternatives may also be explored. How this conflict is played out will have important repercussions for both HBCUs and HSIs.

The Case of Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico represents a distinct though often unrecognized pillar in the foundation of educational support for Hispanics.[4] A separate discussion of the HSIs in Puerto Rico is important to understanding their role both as access providers to students in Puerto Rico and as a critical component of the U.S. higher education system.

In 1966 there were 36,895 students enrolled in higher education institutions in Puerto Rico. The state-supported University of Puerto Rico (UPR) served 24,000 of them, while all private institutions combined enrolled 12,000. Twenty years later, in 1986, total university enrollment in Puerto Rico stood at 158,848 students, with private institutions accounting for two-thirds of the enrollment, or nearly 100,000 students. Registration figures for 1996 show UPR with 62,342 students, and approximately 104,727 students enrolled in private postsecondary institutions.

The boom of the private sector in Puerto Rico, like the development of HSIs in the United States, is directly linked to the infusion of need-based federal student aid that began in the late sixties. Per capita income in Puerto Rico is significantly lower than in the United States; therefore, the application of federal poverty standards to Puerto Rico makes many people eligible for federal assistance. The availability of financial aid allowed more students to access postsecondary education. This influx was particularly important for private institutions in Puerto Rico, which are largely dependent on tuition revenues because they lack state funding. The availability of Pell grant aid was significant in increasing their enrollment.

Almost half of the institutions that qualify as HSIs under Title III are found in Puerto Rico. Of course, in Puerto Rico Hispanics are not a minority

population. All Puerto Rican institutions effectively have 100 percent Hispanic enrollment. The data for Puerto Rican institutions is sometimes included and sometimes excluded from U.S. educational statistics. For instance, the fact that Puerto Rican institutions produce more Hispanic graduates at every level than any institution stateside is not generally recorded. Conversely, the use of Puerto Rican data can give the impression that more is being done to educate Hispanics in the continental United States than is actually the case. When the fifty HSIs from Puerto Rico are subtracted from the 131 Title III HSI count, the number of HSIs in the United States becomes very small in comparison to the Hispanic population.

In 1974, federal student aid grants to Puerto Rico totaled $9 million. In 1994, federal student aid to students in Puerto Rico equaled well over $300 million and is currently nearing the $400 million mark.

Puerto Rico is today the fourth largest recipient of federal student aid under the U.S. flag, surpassed only by the vastly more populous states of California, New York, and Texas. Close to 90 percent of students enrolled in the private sector and between 75 percent and 80 percent of students at public institutions currently receive federal student aid.[5] Puerto Rico ranks number one in the United States in dependency on Pell grants for the support of postsecondary education: in 1992–93, 31 percent of funds devoted to postsecondary education in Puerto Rico were Pell grant funds.

From a Puerto Rican perspective, the depth and frequency of the budget cuts inflicted on public universities in the United States in this decade is astounding. A double-digit percentage budget cut in one year, totally unthinkable in Puerto Rico, was not unusual in the mainland United States, and often was the prelude to additional cuts. In Puerto Rico, the state university system is assured by law of 9.33 percent of all state revenues; in 1995, New York State devoted 4.4 percent to higher education—including funding for State University of New York, City University of New York, state student aid, and private institutions (Hines and Higham, 1997). Of course, New York State spends many more millions on higher education than Puerto Rico does. The percentages are nevertheless an indication of the enormous public support that higher education enjoys in Puerto Rico.

The educational resources of Puerto Rican institutions are, as a rule, not being channeled toward meeting the challenges of educating the U.S. Hispanic population. There are, however, some pioneering programs that seek to widen the range of educational and professional opportunities for Hispanics in the United States by building on their bilingual capacities and on the academic options that Puerto Rico has to offer.

More and more, Puerto Rican universities are moving to expand their spheres of influence beyond the island of Puerto Rico. Through consortia, exchanges, and collaborative agreements with specific agendas and timetables, joint research initiatives, frequent scholarly meetings, the development of new academic programs that focus on the region, and the creative use of telecommunications, Puerto Rican universities are asserting their presence and their competence in the Caribbean, in Latin America, and to a smaller but still significant degree, in the United States.

Conclusion

HSIs represent a large and growing force in American higher education. Demographic projections indicate that Hispanics are the nation's fastest-growing minority group, a position that is likely to add significantly to the political clout of HSIs in the future.

The future presents both challenges and opportunities for HSIs. The challenges concern limited funding, competition with other minority-serving institutions—particularly HBCUs—for federal funding, and a diverse student population. But the opportunities are also several: increasing access for educationally disadvantaged Hispanic students, greater opportunities at the graduate level, and enhanced student services. The direction in which HSIs will go may ultimately depend on a combination of greater financial resources and political commitment to meeting the educational needs of the nation's Hispanic population.

Notes

1. For Puerto Ricans, known as the poorest of the poor among U.S. Hispanics, the 1990 poverty rate was 22.3 percent for those with a high-school education and 40.1 percent for those without one. For Puerto Ricans with education beyond high school, the poverty rate was 13.9 percent for those with some college education, 8.4 percent for those who had completed college, and 6.4 percent for those with more than a bachelor's degree.
2. As of 1994, 48.1 percent of white students who had entered college in 1989–90 had attained bachelor's degrees, compared with 32.4 percent of Hispanic students. The percentage for completion of an associate degree by 1994 among students who had entered college in 1989–90 was 18.4 percent for white students and 15.6 percent for Hispanics.
3. The date for the estimate of the U.S. Hispanic population is November 1, 1997. The date for the Puerto Rico population estimate is July 1, 1996. Information provided by Debbie Niner, Ethnic and Hispanic Branch, Population Information, U.S. Census Bureau, January 1998.
4. University enrollment figures in this section are culled from *Compendio estadístico de las instituciones de educación superior en Puerto Rico*, a yearly publication from the Puerto Rico Council on Higher Education. Data on federal student aid to Puerto Rico comes from reports released by the U.S. Department of Education, the Office of the Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico in Washington, and a 1997 study on economic assistance programs for higher education published by the Puerto Rico Council on Higher Education. See also Malave, 1996.
5. Percentages vary from institution to institution, and from campus to campus.

References

Association of American Colleges and Universities. *The Drama of Diversity and Democracy: Higher Education and American Commitments.* Washington, D.C.: Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1995.

Fletcher, M. A. "White House Backs Plan to Aid Hispanic-Serving Colleges." *Washington Post,* Feb. 1, 1998, p. A10.

Hines, E., and Higham, J. R. *State Higher Education Appropriations, 1996–97.* Denver: State Higher Education Executive Officers, 1997.
Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education, Apr. 18, 1997, pp. 6–21.
Malave, H. "Ambiente actual de los Programas de Asistencia Económica de Puerto Rico," Seminario de Planificación Estratégica para la Reautorización de 1997, San Juan, Puerto Rico, June 1996.
National Education Goals Panel. *The National Education Goals Report: Building a Nation of Learners.* Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1996.
Nieto, S. "Barriers to Latino Education." *Latino Review of Books,* 2, Winter 1996–97.
Pinto Alicea, I. "ACE and UCLA Survey of 350,000 First-Year Students: Latinos Cite Money as Major Concern." *The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education,* Apr. 18, 1997, p. 4.
President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. *Our Nation on the Fault Line: Hispanic American Education.* Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1996.
Puerto Rico Council on Higher Education. *Compendio estadístico de las instituciones de educación superior en Puerto Rico.* San Juan: Puerto Rico Council on Higher Education, 1996.
Puerto Rico Council on Higher Education. *Analisis de los Programas de Asistencia Económica Para Estudios Universitarios.* San Juan: Puerto Rico Council on Higher Education, 1997.
Rivera Batiz, F., and Santiago, C. E. *Puerto Ricans in the United States: A Changing Reality.* Washington, D.C.: National Puerto Rican Coalition, 1994.
U.S. Department of Education. "Hispanic-Serving Institutions: An Analysis of Higher Education Institutions Eligible for the Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program, Title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as Amended." Unpublished paper, 1997a.
U.S. Department of Education. "Justification for Strengthening the HSI Program Under Adarand." Unpublished paper, 1997b.
U.S. Department of Education. "Fact Sheet: Title III Institutions." Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1998.

MARGARITA BENÍTEZ is vice president of Equity Research Corporation in Washington, D.C., and former chancellor of the University of Puerto Rico, Cayey College.

Despite their distinct purposes, minority-serving institutions have many areas of common interest and concern. This chapter proposes an action agenda for future cooperation and collaboration among these institutions.

Collaboration and Cooperation Among Minority-Serving Institutions

Rosario Torres Raines

Minority-serving institutions (MSIs) are among the oldest and newest colleges and universities in the United States. From the historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) established as early as the mid–1800s to the growing tribal college movement organized in the 1960s and the emerging MSIs of the 1990s that educate Hispanics, Asian Americans, and other ethnic groups, these colleges and universities represent a dynamic force in American higher education.

The postsecondary education of racial and ethnic minorities in the United States has developed primarily as a result of several factors: each group's direct political or social initiatives; philanthropic patronage, often from nonminority organizations and individuals; and legislation providing direct federal aid to such designated institutions. Although racial and ethnic groups are characterized by unique histories that mark their educational achievements—as well as by special relationships to federal and state governments—many of the challenges that have confronted these groups are similar. In the past, their common problems have tended to divide rather than unite them in presenting a collective front when demanding a greater share of the nation's academic resources. Today, more integrated solutions are needed to respond to the changing demographics of the country. In many cases, these solutions can best be addressed by minority-serving colleges and universities throughout the nation.

This concluding chapter explores both the convergent strengths that MSIs have brought to bear on the educational needs of racial and ethnic minority students and the divergent perspectives that have tended to generate competition for scarce resources among these institutions. This systematic exploration