

## Establishing Institutions of Higher Education That Serve Latinos

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Higher education institutions are not serving the needs of Latinos in the United States. Latinos remain underrepresented at a time when they are the largest minority in the United States and the fastest growing segment of the population. The federal government over time has responded by providing student financial assistance, sponsoring federally funded Title V, Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) programs for colleges and universities with 25 percent or more Hispanic students, and by supporting various academic and student support programs like TRIO to help Latinos and traditionally underrepresented groups succeed.

Although these efforts have met with some success, they continue to be ineffective in meeting the overall need for access, retention, and graduation of Latinos in higher education. Latinos continue to confront barriers in access. Not only do Latinos confront financial barriers, they also have difficulty integrating socially on college campuses and are severely underprepared academically. Latinos are not persisting in college and completing their academic goals at a sufficient rate. Many institutions admit Latinos but do not do an effective job in keeping them and ensuring that they succeed. Finally, Latinos are not graduating in sufficient numbers. Campuses

## Key Issues Preventing Latinos from Succeeding in Higher Education

### Lack of Participation

A recent report by the California Public Policy Institute stated that "in the next fifteen years, the job market is expected to change so dramatically in California that the demand for educated workers may significantly outstrip the supply." The report estimates that "by 2013, schools would face a shortfall of 686,000 spots" (Baldassare & Hanak, 2005, p. 46).

The report projects that by 2020 California would need 36 percent of its population with some college but instead will have 28 percent. The state will need 39 percent with college degrees but will only have 33 percent. The report states that "the best educated Californians will be among the oldest, as baby boomers head for retirement" (Baldassare & Hanak, 2005, p. 46). But the greatest growth in the state will be among the Latinos, who tend to be "concentrated at younger ages and tend to have low levels of educational attainment" (p. 46).

California's higher education institutions are having difficulty addressing this trend. The higher education participation rates of Latinos in 2005 show that the state is lagging far behind in meeting the needs of this population which consists of large numbers of economically disadvantaged individuals. There were 33,871,000 Californians in 2000. Out of this group there were 10,996,000 Latinos or 32.4 percent of the total population. In 2005, Latinos accounted for 44 percent of school-age children between the ages of five and seventeen. It is estimated that by 2040 Latinos will be 47.8 percent and non-Hispanic Whites will be 30.7 percent of California's population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

Table 7.1 shows in the Fall of 2005 the community colleges should have increased Latino enrollment by 100,000, California

enroll Latinos but are not held accountable for the graduation and completion of degrees.

This is happening at a time when the Latino population is reaching an all-time high in the United States. In the last five years, one out of every two new Americans was Latino, and in the southeastern part of the United States unprecedented growth of the Latino population has occurred. The report "The New Latino South" (Kochhar, Suro, & Tafoya, 2005) focuses on six southern states: Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Each state experienced tremendous growth from 1990 to 2000, exceeding 1000 percent in some counties. The report predicts that by 2007 the population of Latino children, which grew more than 320 percent, will make up 10 percent of the students in the southeastern public schools, and this demographic wave will hit colleges and universities in the region soon thereafter. States with high Latino population, such as California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Illinois, Florida, and New York, face serious budgetary and policy challenges to effectively serve Latinos. These challenges are not being met with long-term planning and policy development. In fact, states are trying to meet the needs of Latinos incrementally and ineffectively by instituting special-funded programs and services on a piecemeal basis. It is time for states to develop comprehensive policies.

This chapter argues for some new definitions to evaluate Latino success in higher education. It recommends some bold initiatives to help meet the higher education needs of Latinos. The chapter examines the role of the states in promoting access, retention, and graduation of Latinos. California, the nation's largest system serving Latinos, serves as a prime example of how state higher education institutions are not meeting the needs of Latinos.

Table 7.1. Latino Current and Projected Enrollments Based on Percentage of Population in CC, CSU, UC in the Fall of 2005

Category	Community Colleges (CCC)	California State University (CSU)	University of California (UC)
Total Enrollment (Headcount)	1,610,000	337,223	209,080
Current Percentage and Number of Latinos within the Total Enrollment	402,500	67,447	25,089
Latino Enrollment Based on 32.4% (current state population)	521,640	109,260	67,742
Latino Enrollment Based on 44% (current 5-17 year old school enrollment)	708,400	148,378	91,995

Source: California Postsecondary Education Commission (2006).

State University by 40,000, and University of California by 42,000 to just keep pace with current state population trends. More alarming is that the pipeline of students coming through the state's high schools will increase the numbers of eligible Latino students and California's public higher education systems will have to double, and in the case of UC triple, their enrollment to meet this need.

**Lack of Sufficient Undergraduate and Graduate Students**

Participation of eligible students seeking higher education is not the only challenge facing California higher education. Perhaps even more serious is the continued inability of the systems to

Table 7.2. Degree Attainment for Major Ethnic Groups (California)

Degree Attainment	Asian/Pacific Islander			American Indian			Latino			Total Number Obtaining	
	White	Black	Other	Indian	Latino	Other	Degrees	Degrees	Degrees	Degrees	
High School Diploma	11%	42%	7.9%	.8%	38%	.3%	338,967				
Bachelor's	22%	52%	5%	.9%	19%	1.1%	112,043				
Graduate/Professional	16%	63%	6%	.7%	13%	1.3%	41,086				

Sources: California Department of Education (2004-05) and California Postsecondary Education (2004-05).

graduate sufficient numbers of undergraduate and graduate students commensurate with the state's population needs.

Black, Latino, and American Indian students have significantly fewer bachelor's and graduate/professional degrees than the total population. Latinos, who account for almost 50 percent of school-age children in California, are particularly far behind. Degree attainment for California's major ethnic groups in 2004 as a percentage of their population demonstrates just how far students of color are behind (see Table 7.2).

Of course the K-12 system accounts for much of this failure. Thirty five percent to 50 percent of Blacks and Latinos do not complete high school (Kantorwitz, 2005). Even with these large numbers of non-high school graduates, there still are many disadvantaged Blacks and Latinos who are eligible for the University of California and California State University systems. However, with the rising costs of college and the inability of California higher education institutions to guarantee space, access is denied to eligible disadvantaged students.

**Rising Costs of Higher Education and Federal/State Declining Revenues**

The rising cost of higher education was discussed by Jennifer Washburn in her 2004 article "The Tuition Crunch: For Low-Income

recession" funding will be even more scarce (Katsinas & Palmer, 2004, p. ii).

### Strategies to Address Access and Graduation of Latino Students in the Twenty-First Century

California's state legislative and education leaders are debating what course of action to take over the next twenty-five years. If California higher education is inadequate, what do we replace it with? Should we follow the example of other states such as Texas where the top 10 percent of the students are guaranteed admission and support at the University of Texas at Austin?

The key to addressing the needs of Latino students and the long-term future of the state's economy lies in the development of strategies that are unconventional and that do not follow the classic formula of California higher education. There are new realities in higher education that must be taken into consideration.

#### Tapping the Resources of Alternative Institutions of Higher Education

California and other states must recognize that they cannot educate the expanding population of students by relying solely on public institutions and delivering education in the same way. States must recognize the fastest growing higher education providers: for-profit, technology-driven institutions such as the University of Phoenix and National University. They deliver BA, MA, and in some cases Ph.D. programs through intensive and short-term courses that accommodate the working adult. They also deliver much of their education online using web technologies, as does the Western Governors University. This approach has much to offer, particularly for students who have to work to support their families.

Transfer and articulation agreements between community colleges, state colleges, and universities with these institutions

Students College Is Increasingly Out of Reach." Her article revealed that in 1979 students from the richest 25 percent of American homes were four times as likely to attend college as those from the poorest 25 percent; by 1994 they were ten times as likely. . . . Since 1980 tuition and related charges have increased at more than twice the rate of inflation, rising by nearly 40 percent in real terms in the past decade alone" (Washburn, 2004, p. 140).

These increases were not offset by the nation's student financial aid system. "In 1975-1976 the maximum federal Pell grant award (for low income students) covered 84 percent of the cost of attendance at a public four-year college; by 1999-2000 it covered only 39 percent. This is part of a broader shift to a system dominated by loans, which has left a generation of students struggling to finance heavy debt. Hardest hit are low-income students, whose numbers are expected to increase dramatically over the next decade. From 1989 to 1999 the average debt of the poorest 25 percent of public-college seniors grew from \$7,629 to \$12,888 in constant 1999 dollars" (Washburn, 2004, p. 140). The consequences of the average debt forces students to work long hours, attend school part time, and opt for two-year as opposed to four-year programs. All of these factors diminish their chances to obtain a baccalaureate degree. This is particularly troublesome because research demonstrates that the transfer rate for disadvantaged students from two-year to four-year universities and colleges is approximately 10 percent (Washburn, 2004).

The rising cost of higher education and the decline of federal support for low-income students are further exacerbated by the decline of state's resources. The Center for the Study of Education Policy at Illinois State University states that "in most states, higher education is the largest discretionary item in the entire state budget, and the competition is fierce for scarce state tax dollars. State directors report that Medicaid is the key driver to state budgets [and with] increases in K-12 funding and revenue shortfalls due to

NHU graduates students with bachelors in computer science, liberal studies, and fifth-year teacher credential programs. This institution graduated more Latino teachers in 1999 than did the University of California at Los Angeles. It is a testament to the ability of a small focused institution to make significant gains for specific disadvantaged populations. This is also the case for historically Black colleges and universities who graduate 17 percent of the Black graduates in the nation but whose alumni account for 75 percent of Blacks in law and medical professions (Cruz, 2001).

States need to invest in these types of alternative institutions and should provide funding for new institutions that have a specific mission to serve the learning needs of Latino students.

**Opening the Doors to Foreign Institutions of Higher Education**

States should open their doors to foreign institutions of higher education. For example, southwestern states should develop seamless articulation and accreditation agreements with Mexican higher education institutions. Students can study in Mexico or in a Mexican-financed institution located in a border state. This would quickly expand capacity to serve more students and address the need of educated students coming from Mexico to obtain certification in medicine, law, teaching, nursing, and a host of other occupations in the state.

#### **Federal Government's Role: Changes in Title V, Hispanic-Serving Institutions**

Supporting special-purpose institutions to meet the needs of the nation's Latino population should be the focus of the federal government's Title V program; Hispanic-Serving Institutions. Created in the 1990s, Title V was established to support institutions of higher education that had a population of 25 percent or more of students who are of Latino descent.

The goal of the legislation was to find a way to fund higher education institutions that were impacted by Latinos and to ensure

must be expanded. The free flow of students between these institutions with California public higher education institutions should be guaranteed as students often attend two to four institutions of higher education to complete their baccalaureate degrees.

#### **Establishing Institutions That Specifically Serve the Needs of Latinos**

Another strategy is for states to support the development of small semi-private colleges that wish to address the learning needs of the disadvantaged and particular communities. There is a movement in California to build institutions of higher education to specifically serve disadvantaged Latino students. Modeled after the historically Black colleges and universities, these institutions are struggling to establish viable high-quality institutions of higher education that serve the learning needs of second language (English) learners. Most notable is the National Hispanic University (NHU) in San Jose, California. Started in 1980 in a one-room building, the NHU now serves 750 students in east San Jose, has a \$25 million capital campaign, owns 7.5 acres of land, and has been accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The NHU provides wide access to the disadvantaged. The admission criterion is that a student simply has a high school diploma or general education diploma and possesses a 2.0 grade point average. There are no admission examinations.

The struggle of this tiny institution to gain funding, accreditation, and acceptance in the higher education community has been difficult. But against all odds it has survived and prospered because local corporations saw the potential in an institution that served the learning needs of the fastest growing minority in the Silicon Valley. These corporations realized that barely one percent of the Silicon Valley workforce was Latino and that the public higher education institutions in the area were not graduating Latinos at a sufficient rate to meet their workforce needs.

- Include specific mission, vision, and value statements that promote Latino access, retention, and graduation
- Calculate Latino faculty and staff composition as a percentage of total faculty and staff population of the college
- Establish comprehensive partnerships with the K-12 sector to ensure Latino success in secondary education and to ensure students are prepared to succeed in higher education institutions

When revising Title V, it is imperative to rename these institutions Hispanic-Serving Institutions to Hispanic-Graduating Institutions (HGIs). After all, the key is the ability of Latinos to acquire the certificates and degrees to participate in the nation's economy.

### Economic Implications

People say why can't Latinos do what the Italians, Irish, and Polish immigrants did? Why can't they simply integrate into the economy and over time accumulate socioeconomic stability? One important difference is that the United States no longer provides the economic foundation to advance. Earlier immigrants could get a farm land, manufacturing jobs, and other occupations without a high school diploma and later until the 1950s, with just having a high school diploma.

In today's economy this is impossible. Only 4 percent of the United States' new jobs will be in manufacturing, and inexpensive agricultural land no longer exists in areas where Latinos reside. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2003) estimates that "employment is expected to increase from 145.6 million to 164.5 million in 2014 or by 13 percent. The 18.9 million jobs that will be added by 2014 will

that access, retention, and graduation of Latinos would increase. There are over 100 institutions of higher education participating in Title V. The majority of these institutions are two-year community colleges with a significant proportion of institutions in Puerto Rico.

Along with the federal strategy to support Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) came the development of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU). This organization is comprised of HSIs as full members and non-HSI sister institutions as affiliates. The organization has been responsible for developing partnerships with federal agencies (such as the Department of Agriculture) and private corporations (such as Southwest Airlines) to foster support for HSIs.

So far HSIs have had limited success. Although these institutions enroll Latinos, they still have difficulty in providing greater access, higher retention, and better graduation rates of Latinos in higher education. Many of these institutions enroll Latinos only to have them leave one year later without completing certificate or degree objectives. Unlike special-purpose institutions like the National Hispanic University, HSIs do not have a mission statement to serve the needs of Latinos. They just happen to be located in communities with large Latino populations and are awarded federal funds accordingly and not because they necessarily have the will or vision to serve Latinos.

It is important for HSIs to reevaluate their purpose. I suggest that funding be based on criteria beyond the simple 25 percent enrollment rule. The criteria I believe that would ensure these institutions serve Latinos more effectively are the following:

- Calculate retention and persistence rates of Latinos as a percentage of the total student population attending the college
- Calculate graduation rates of Latinos as a percentage of the total student population of the college

not be evenly distributed across major industrial and occupational groups. Overall the employment in manufacturing will decline by 5.4 percent or 777,000 jobs." The major avenue for economic success is to obtain a baccalaureate degree or occupational certificate. In fact, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, college graduates will earn over \$1 million more over their working careers than do people with only high school degrees (Tinto, 2004). This is why institutions of higher education must reform their mission, purpose, and delivery of education to meet the needs of Latinos and the future economy.

### Reforming Public Higher Education

I propose four reforms that public higher education needs to make in order to better serve Latinos and other disadvantaged groups.

#### Delivery of Instruction

Higher education systems must provide flexible delivery of instruction. Changing the rigid sixteen-, seventeen-, or eighteen-week semesters, accepting course work from other sister colleges and universities, giving credit for life experiences, and using problem-based and project-based learning are effective modes of instruction that make learning possible for many learners, particularly the disadvantaged. College courses should be offered at the high school. Accelerated high schools that are placed in college campuses where students can complete a high school diploma and an associate of arts or transfer program credit simultaneously should be encouraged.

#### Curriculum

In 2004, UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute (Astin, 2004) studied 400,000 high school students and found that 34.3 percent of high school students study six or more hours per week compared to 47 percent in 1987. High school students

are entering colleges and universities less prepared. Colleges and universities must revise their freshman and sophomore year offerings to compensate for these deficiencies. English, mathematics, social sciences, and humanities must be able to adopt curricula that emphasize basic skills, composition, critical thinking, and the development of behaviors and attitudes that promote college success.

English as a second language instruction should be incorporated in college courses so that students who are learning English are also learning science, social studies, literature, and art. In this way students whose command of English is deficient do not have to take time-consuming remediation courses prior to enrolling in freshman courses. Team teaching and cocurricular ESL and freshman courses can be facilitated by creating learning communities. These learning communities require block scheduling and students working with each other over a course of a year. The learning community establishes relationships between students, teachers, and counselors that are consistent and operate within the learning requirements of specific subjects.

Finally, the movement for colleges to identify and assess student learning outcomes has much to offer. The key question in the student learning outcome movement is how do you know if the student learned what you taught? It's like the old joke of a teacher who tells a friend, "I taught my students how to whistle." But when the friend asks if he's heard the students whistle, the teacher states, "I said I taught them how to whistle. I didn't say they learned how to whistle."

#### Student Support Services

Latino and other disadvantaged students require a comprehensive set of support services to ensure their success. First-generation and low-income college students often lack the information, skills, behaviors, and academic preparation to be successful in colleges and universities. States need to further support federal programs

However, the current fiscal crisis and the inclination not to raise taxes make this commitment difficult to pursue. What then must states do to address the education needs of Latinos?

There are three new revenue streams that states could tap to subsidize these needed changes.

*Taxing Free Trade Agreements to Support Educational Development.* When the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was signed, a group of educators called for a \$1.00 tax for every \$1,000 of goods and services coming across the border. The idea was that NAFTA must have a companion education engine to support the trade taking place between the United States and Mexico. This tax would ensure that K-12 and higher education institutions could support the citizenry in the southwestern United States and northern Mexico. Residents from both sides of the border breathe the same air, buy the same goods, drink the same water, and attend the same educational institutions.

*Create a State Educational Endowment by Selling State Assets.* This is not a new idea. Most states own land, warehouses, buildings, and a host of other assets that they can sell and put revenue into an endowment fund. This fund would provide the needed start-up capital to build smaller public and private institutions that are meeting the specific needs of learners. It would target resources to innovative delivery of instruction, curriculum reform, and technology.

*Corporate and Individual Tax Credits Earmarked for Education.* Corporations should be encouraged to provide support for the state's educational infrastructure. Education trust funds can be supported by employers matching dollar for dollar employee contributions toward these trust funds. The state would provide tax credits to corporations that establish these trust funds. Like Arizona, other states could provide tax credits to individuals who place funds into education trust accounts for their children. These credits can be up to a specified amount such as \$825 per couple or \$400 per individual. These education trust accounts can only be used to

such as TRIO that include intensive high school motivational and preparation programs such as Upward Bound. In addition Talent Search programs that identify and inform disadvantaged students about how to apply and secure a place in a college or university need to be expanded. Student support services that provide tutoring, counseling, and supplemental academic instruction are essential to furthering academic and social success on campus.

### Technology

Colleges and universities should use technology to teach classes, grade examinations, collect written work, and provide a forum for students to engage each other. The combination of online and face-to-face classroom activity has proven to be effective for many students, particularly students who work, raise families, and have limited time to study during the day. Online courses also allow students to hear lectures or discussions later and to catch points missed in the original learning activity.

Technology will not be effective for Latino students until colleges and universities find ways to provide desktop or laptop computers to all of their students. There are several colleges and universities that have found ways to do this. Leasing, semester computer loans, financial aid funding of computers, and low-cost volume purchasing are some of the avenues colleges and universities can use.

### New Revenue Streams to Finance Public Higher Education Reform in California

All of these ideas—supporting alternative institutions, reforming current public higher education, and supporting student participation in higher education—require a bold financial commitment of the state. This is not unlike the commitment California made in 1960 when it decided to invest billions of dollars in higher education. The will and foresight to invest again must be energized.



support tuition, fees, and books when a student enters an accredited college or university.

### Conclusion

Latinos will be the majority by 2040 in many southwestern states, but the states' higher education systems are not prepared to serve their educational needs. Policy and planning in many states inadequately address the K-12 and higher education needs of the future's largest citizenry. What are the public policy needs of this burgeoning population?

Unfortunately higher education institutions are not asking that question. They believe that if they give more of the same to Latinos, they will succeed. This is not the case. We need bold initiatives in institutional and financial development. We need to get more institutions of higher education committed and funded to meet the education needs of the nation's largest minority. We need to expel old traditions and build new alliances with special-purpose and foreign institutions. We need to change federal policy to ensure that funds going to Hispanic-serving institutions are being used to increase the graduation, retention, and persistence rates of Latinos. We need to find new revenue streams that promote investment over the long term. In short, we need to make a national commitment to the nation's future by investing in Latino higher education.

## Part III

### A Bright Future Necesita Un Grito Fuerte

The need for higher education to change systemically is presented in Chapter Eight, where the focus is on providing leadership that can help to sustain a paradigm shift within Latino communities. Many of the characteristics of current and future Latino communities as described in Chapter Eight by Acevedo are also found in other communities across the United States. The commonalities found in most of our local communities remind us that what is recommended in this book as worthwhile for Latinos in higher education is also beneficial to the United States as a whole. Leadership, vision and planning, education, economic development, and technology are societal factors nurtured in higher education and transmitted to graduates. In Chapter Eight, Acevedo points out that the value of getting a higher education is becoming ever more important, and the stakes of not acquiring an advanced education keep getting higher, not just for individuals but for entire communities and generations.

Because the stakes keep going up, not just for individuals but entire communities as well, Gomez in Chapter Nine states that Latino leaders have come to the conclusion that a bold and ambitious plan is long past due. To try to capture the magnitude of the new plan, we christened this new plan *un grito fuerte*, in honor of the Catholic priest, Father Miguel Hidalgo at Dolores, Mexico, who sounded the bell for independence on September 16, 1810,