

NISTS 2021

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Research Spotlight

Best Practices for Serving Hispanic Transfer Students from a Community College to a Four-Year Institution

Diversity and Inclusion

This session will discuss best practices for academic advisors and higher education professionals working with Hispanic/Latino(a) students. The presenter will share results of a qualitative study she conducted where she investigated the factors that impacted the college transfer experiences for this underrepresented student population. An overview will be given of the barriers and challenges Hispanic students face during their transfer and overall undergraduate journeys.

Jennifer Bravo, *Director of Transfer & Transition Services*

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BEST PRACTICES FOR SERVING HISPANIC TRANSFER STUDENTS:

FROM A COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO A FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTION

Presented by Dr. Jennifer Bravo Candelaria





INTRODUCTION

Dr. Jennifer Bravo Candelaria

Currently serving as the Director of Transfer and Transition Services at Florida International University (FIU)

❖ 23 year of experience in higher education

In the areas of:

Academic Advisement, Pre-Admissions Counseling, Student Recruitment, Enrollment Management, Freshman & Transfer Orientations, Founding Director of The Honors College Dual Language Program, Grant Manager and Faculty.



FORMAT OF PRESENTATION

Part I: Introduction

- Importance of increasing college degree completion for Hispanic/Latino students
- Qualitative Study
- Research & Findings

Part II: Best Practices

- Best practices: Working with Hispanic students who want to transfer from a community College to a four-Year Institution
- Best practices: Working with incoming Hispanic transfer students @ four-year institutions

Part III: Conclusion





<https://www.studyfrenchspanish.com/spanish-speaking-population-world/>



Importance of Increasing College Degree Completion for Hispanic/Latino(a) Students

- The Hispanic community will be the largest minority group in the United States by the year 2060. (Pew Hispanic Center, 2009).
- By the year 2060, it is predicted that the percentage of Hispanics living in the U.S. will be approximately 119 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015), comprising 28.6% of the population.
- It is vital for the social mobility and economic progress of Hispanics to earn a post-secondary education and have the necessary skills to be successful contributors to the national and global economies.
- According to HACU, "17.2% of Hispanics have at least a bachelor's degree and 5.0% and advanced degree in comparison to 38.1% and 14.3% for non-Hispanic white."

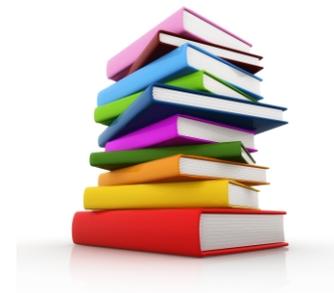


QUALITATIVE STUDY

Dissertation Title: *A Qualitative Study of the Factors Impacting the College Transfer Experience of High Achieving Hispanic Graduates*

Criteria of participants:

- ✓ High Achieving Hispanic Alumni that graduated with a 3.5 with their Associate in Arts degree from Miami Dade College and then transferred to a four-year public institution in Florida
- ✓ Graduated with their bachelor's in less than six years
- ✓ Students were all Hispanics born outside the USA
- ✓ Students that participated were born in the following countries: Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Peru and Venezuela
- ✓ Fully bilingual in English and Spanish.



QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Purpose of the research was to find, from the student's perspective, what factors High Achieving Hispanic transfer students perceived were crucial to graduating with an Associate in Arts degree and a bachelor's degree in less than six years:

- ❖ Transfer process from a community college to a four-year public institution in Florida
- ❖ Barriers they encountered in the process
- ❖ What factors they felt contributed to their success both at the community college and then as a transfer student in a four-year public institution
- ❖ Recommendations for administrators wanting to improve transfer process for Hispanic students



PSYCHOSOCIOCULTURAL (PSC) FRAMEWORK FOR LATINA/OS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Psychological

Social

Cultural



Persistence

Gloria, A. M. & Rodriguez, E. R. (2000). Counseling Latino university students: Psychosociocultural issues for consideration. *Journal of Counseling and Development* 78(2), 145-154 & Castellanos, J., & Gloria, A. M. (2007). Research considerations and theoretical application for best practices in higher education: Latina/os achieving success. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 6(4), 378-396.



QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

Themes that developed from the research findings:

- Academic transition and experiences
- Family support
- Failure was not an option
- Peer support
- Student organizations
- Cultural and ethnic identity
- Financial challenges



QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

Recommendations made by study participants:

- Create a university culture that promotes listening to student's needs
- Create a welcome center for transfer students
- Develop mentoring programs that would pair transfer students with current students to ease the transfer experience
- Providing students with internships during their undergraduate education that would provide actual work experience for students prior to their graduation from their bachelor's degree.

The suggestion that impacted me the most was the statement several participants shared: the importance of being heard by the institution's staff and administrators.



BEST PRACTICES: WORKING WITH HISPANIC STUDENTS WHO WANT TO TRANSFER FROM A COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO A FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTION



- Begin the transfer conversation on day 1. Every time you meet with a student pursuing an AA, ask about their transfer plans.
- Research local public and private colleges/universities in the area that your community college is a feeder to:
 - Do they have a transfer admissions office or transfer center?
 - Do they have transfer guides?
 - Do they have transfer scholarships?
 - Do they have an honors program/honors college?
- Assign homework that engages student in transfer process
 - *Examples of homework assignments to work on before your next advising session:*
 - ✓ Research transfer institutions in the area 3 to 5 depending on location
 - ✓ Research transfer institutions out of the area where other students that have attended your community college have transferred to
 - ✓ Ask students to assist you in creating a transfer two-year plan
 - Scenario: An engineering student. What do they need to take at your community college in order to be transfer ready for their dream school?
 - Be specific:** What courses do they need? GPA? When can they apply? What about scholarship opportunities?



- Motivate the students. Let them know that they have what it takes to be successful.
- Conduct transfer workshops after the students complete 30 credits or their first year at your community college
 - Review transfer deadlines
 - Review financial opportunities (merit scholarships, transfer scholarships and information on filling out the FASFA form as a new student in another institution)
 - Pair students that might be interested in applying to the same transfer institution so that they have a buddy transferring with them.



➤ BEST PRACTICES: WORKING WITH INCOMING HISPANIC TRANSFER STUDENTS @ FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS



- Review transfer communications at your institutions
- Create strong relationships with the staff working at your local community colleges and/or feeder institutions into your institution
- Develop a transfer checklist for your university website. Review the checklist and websites regularly.
- Create a small group of transfer advocates at your institution
- Conduct surveys and focus groups of transfer students on an annual basis
 - Review comments made by students on surveys and focus groups and take those statements seriously and when possible implement their suggestions



CONCLUSION

Recommendations:

- Train staff working with Hispanic students on the PSC Framework created by Gloria and Rodriguez (2000).
- Build strong relationships with your counterparts (community colleges, state colleges, private, and public universities)
- Create a transfer friendly environment for not only Hispanic students but **ALL** transfer students

Lastly, college students are college students; regardless of their ethnicity or race, they are trying to adjust to post-secondary education, looking forward to graduating, and entering the workforce.



REFERENCES

- ❖ Bravo Candelaria, J. (2019). *A Qualitative Study of the Factors Impacting the College Transfer Experience of High Achieving Hispanic Graduates* (doctoral thesis). Available from Pro Quest Dissertations and Theses database.
- ❖ Castellanos, J., & Gloria, A. M. (2007). Research considerations and theoretical application for best practices in higher education: Latina/os achieving success. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 6*(4), 378-396.
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- ❖ Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities. (2018). *2018 fact sheet Hispanic higher education and HIS's*. Retrieved from https://www.hacu.net/hacu/HSI_Fact_Sheet.asp.
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