UFE Latina/o Student Outreach & Retention Initiative—

Building a Better P-20 Pathway Through Curricular & Faculty Development

**Overview**

The following brief represents not only a UFE response to the current enrollment decline but represents our commitment to social justice and equitable student access to higher education. Historically, Evergreen has sought to meet the needs of underrepresented Native American and African American students through formal institutional initiatives and programs. However, in a report written by Theresa Aragon in 2010 (see link: [Hispanic\_Latina\_o Student TESC Report\_Aragon](http://www.ufevergreen.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Hispanic_Latina_o-Student-TESC-Report_Aragon.docx)), the College has historically struggled to recruit, retain and graduate Latina/o students. Recently, TESC’s Latina/o student population has ranged from 5.4% in 2010 to 7% in 2013[[1]](#footnote-1).

And yet, nationwide, 2010 U.S. Census data finds that over the past decade the Latina/o population grew from 35.3 million to 50.5 million. This accounted for more than half of the nation’s population growth. Nearly one-quarter (23%) of American children are Latina/o. It has been projected that by 2035, one in three children will be Latina/o (NCLR, 2011). In Washington state, the Latina/o population increased from 7.5 to 11.2 from 2000-2010. By 2011, Washington Latina/os under the age of 18 were the largest minority group enrolled in the public schools. In 2012, our local counties also showed increases in the Latina/o population:

Latina/o Population as Percentage of Total in Local Counties**[[2]](#footnote-2)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| County | Total Population 2011 | % Latina/o2008 | % Latina/o2012 |
| Lewis | 75,901 | 7.9% | 8.9% |
| Mason | 61,019 | 6.6% | 8.2% |
| Pierce | 807,904 | 7.8% | 9.4% |
| Thurston | 256,591 | 6.1% | 7.4% |

**UFE Response—Create a P-20 Latina/o Pathway**

Therefore, the UFE proposes that the College support a Latina/o student outreach and retention initiative by generating a long-term strategic plan and infrastructure that includes the faculty as a major participant in such an effort. *Such efforts also reflect data collected during our fall guild card campaign where faculty prioritized some of their interests regarding, for example, job security/multi-year contracts for adjuncts, ongoing professional development for faculty (i.e. institutes), and curriculum planning support and (i.e. planning unit coordinators).* It is through this initiative, among others, that we hope to address some of these targets.

During the 2014 winter quarter, the College administration charged a Hispanic/Latino work group (comprised of administrators, Student and Academic Support Services staff and faculty) to explore Latina/o recruitment and retention strategies. In March 2014, members of the work group attended the American Association of Hispanic Colleges and Universities Conference in Southern California (travel and registration funded by TESC). In a report back to the TESC Hispanic/Latino work roup and the provost, some attendees recommended that, in order to be eligible for Title V funding, we seek a long-term goal as a federally recognized Hispanic Serving Institution (with a Latina/o population of 25%). However, the administration has rejected this recommendation because it does not feel this designation is attainable given our local demographics.

And yet, other enrollment recovery and strategic investments (veterans, international students, government workers) ideas were also introduced at an April 16, 2014 Town Hall meeting by TESC President Les Purce (see: http://www.evergreen.edu/budget/4-16-14-town-hall-summary.htm). Budget balancing strategies (such as requests for enrollment recovery funds from the Washington legislature) will be presented by President Purce at the next Town Hall meeting on May 21. Of these “asks,” it remains to be seen how the college will develop an identity as one who serves the fastest growing student population in the U.S. and in its public schools—Latina/os--without providing curricular input and professional development for its faculty.

Given our faculty’s expertise and responsibilities connected to curriculum, instruction, research and community/service learning, we propose that the faculty continue to support a Latina/o student recruitment and retention initiative that reflects the college’s emerging identity as Latina/o serving institution which targets, at minimum, Washington state’s Latina/o current demographic of 11.2%, **We seek to contribute to this initiative by addressing the following working conditions:**

1. Involve the faculty (*continuing and adjunct*) in pertinent roles to support the students with the development of culturally relevant curriculum and cross-cultural training across Oly-day programs and EWS through **faculty development** (summer institutes*)* and **grantsmanship** which reflects the needs and career interests of Latina/o students and their communities[[3]](#footnote-3);
2. In order to support struggling students, the design and instruction of **academic skills modules** embedded within programs (summer institutes);
3. The implementation of a **TESC faculty K-12 outreach and mentorship** program in collaboration with local Latina/o serving schools and CCBLA in Thurston, Mason, Lewis, and Pierce Counties (i.e. the identification of place-based school/community partnerships through the academic year);
4. Expose TESC Latina/o students to research, through the **support of participatory action research projects and academic conference outreach** efforts (e.g. American Association of Hispanic Colleges and Universities, The Latino Youth Summit, National Association of Chicano Studies, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, National Association of Multicultural Education, the American Educational Research Association, etc);
5. **Develop a case conference model** **in which faculty and student support staff teams collaborate** and meet with students to strategize and develop problem-solving plans when students underperform. In this way, faculty and staff can develop an inventory of student barriers, and identify support networks and strategies to better assist them;

*It must be noted that this initiative does not supplant other college-wide efforts to assist Latina/o students (such as Student Advising, First Peoples’ Advising, TRIO, Key Services, Upward Bound programs, CCBLA and the TESC Latino/Hispanic Work Group), but seeks to strategically* ***collaborate*** *with them.*

Such a partnership will enable students, community members, and educators to share long and short-term program objectives, strategize how to evaluate such objectives, develop an implementation plan, and identify resources to support Latina/o student needs. This initiative will help us collectively explore how to foster a *Latina/o* *college-bound culture, shape Latina/o student perceptions about higher education opportunities at Evergreen, and align K-12 outreach activities with recruitment and retention goals informed by our curriculum planning and pedagogy.*

1. TESC Institution Research & Assessment http://www.evergreen.edu/institutionalresearch/factpage.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. U.S. Census and Pew Research Hispanic Trends Project

 http://www.pewhispanic.org/states/county/53041/ [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Culturally relevant pedagogy is a term used to describe “a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Participating in culturally relevant pedagogy essentially means that faculty create a interdisciplinary curriculum that links students’ home, community and school lives, while still meeting the expectations of state, college, and district curricular requirements. Culturally relevant teaching utilizes the backgrounds, knowledge, and experiences of the students to inform educators’ curriculum and instruction. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)