



NEWS

El Camino College | Public Relations & Marketing Department
16007 Crenshaw Blvd., Torrance, CA 90506
Contact: Ann M. Garten, Director, Community Relations
Telephone: (310) 660-3406 | E-Mail: agarten@elcamino.edu

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El Camino College First Year Experience Program Gains National Attention for Student Success

The pioneering First Year Experience (FYE) program at El Camino College recently won accolades for its success in both enrolling and graduating Hispanic students.

The results were recently released in the report, "Modeling HSIs: Campus Practices That Work for Latino Students," released by Excelencia in Education, a nonprofit policy group.

The report focuses on 12 Hispanic-serving institutions in California, New York, and Texas, and is the third in a [series](#) on Hispanic-serving institutions, a federal designation granted if at least 25 percent of an institution's undergraduates are Hispanic. The successful colleges and universities demonstrated the use many strategies, such as increasing community outreach and bolstering academic support to help students.

At El Camino College, the highly successful First Year Experience was highlighted as a program that regularly boasts top graduation and retention rates. Students in the First Year Experience participate in learning communities (programs in which groups of students take multiple classes together), and also receive help from peer and faculty mentors.

"The basic ingredients we use for student success are personalized services, counseling, and access to faculty," said Cynthia Mosqueda, FYE counselor, faculty member and acting coordinator.

"I know several graduates have come back to tell me, 'whenever I have a question I know I can always get help here at FYE.' They might be looking for career advice, or they might need guidance in their university work. We are happy to offer such a great resource for so many people."

Designed to help students be successful in their first year of college life, the El Camino College First Year Experience program provides a supportive environment of educational and career services. Participating students have access to: early registration, orientation, FYE bilingual counselor, learning community courses, strategies for success in college, FYE faculty, field trips, and peer mentors.

One of the First Year Experience's strategies for increased classroom participation outlined in the report covers training faculty members in how to correctly pronounce non-English names to make students feel welcome.

The El Camino College program uses both strong leadership and savvy use of resources, two keys to success detailed in the report. Many of the FYE practices have now become standard at the college, as excellent ways to serve all students.