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In 1990, 176,391 Latino students were enrolled in California community colleges (California Postsecondary Education Commission, 1992). In the same year, only 4,411 Latino students transferred to the University of California and California State University systems. What happens to all of the other students? While all of these students do not intend to transfer, at Rancho Santiago College, for example, at least 50% of the entering Latino students have transfer as their stated goal. California community colleges report that most students do not even persist to their second semester of college. Why this occurs and what must be done to rectify this situation is a major issue throughout the state.

Among Latino students, the women have poorer persistence and retention rates than the men, although they enroll in comparable numbers. Researchers on Latinas in higher education have identified key elements that impair or promote their success. By understanding the relevant issues and creating educational strategies to deal with these issues, community colleges can better serve their Latina students. This project proposes to develop such strategies which can then be shared with other colleges.
This project seeks to address the special learning needs of educationally disadvantaged students, specifically, Latinas. Latina students throughout the state have certain socio-cultural, economic and educational disadvantages that severely limit their ability to succeed in higher education. Unless their needs are addressed, colleges Will be unable to meet the Board of Governor's Basic Agenda Priority item of providing access and success to underrepresented students. Rancho Santiago College proposes to improve its ability to educate Latinas by allocating a small space on campus that will be their own, a Latina Student Center. The center will sponsor events designed to increase their self-esteem and ability to cope with college life, in light of their own cultural backgrounds. This is needed to give them some ownership of the college. By getting them involved in activities sponsored by the Latina Student Center, they will become more committed to the college and to completing their own goals.
The lack of academic success experienced by Latina students is a well-documented problem in the educational literature (cf. California Postsecondary Education Commission, 1987; Chacon et al., 1982; Davis et al., 1983). Although they matriculate into community colleges in fairly large numbers, their rates of attrition remain high. Recent research has investigated the day-to-day life of Latinas on campus to learn how socio-cultural, psychological, and academic barriers are manifest in students as they cope with examinations, the stress of coursework and the prospect of dropping out. A number of investigators have researched both the barriers that impede success (Del Castillo, 1985; Vazquez, 1982; Quezada and Jones-Loheyde, 1984) and the characteristics that contribute to it (Achor and Morales, 1990; Gandara, 1982).

The barriers they identified include sex role conflicts; sex role stereotypes and expectations; lack of parental support for education; first-generation college student's unfamiliarity with college life; levels of language proficiency; inadequate preparation at all educational levels which results in lack of basic skills; antagonistic attitudes and resultant lowered expectations of Hispanics by Anglo educators, specifically stereotypes about abilities and performance in general; and lack of support systems such as adequate orientations and peer networks. One of the important consequences of these barriers is that they act to frustrate, conflict and discourage the individual to such a high degree that she becomes depressed, a circumstance that enhances the likelihood of poor performance and attrition.

Other researchers have investigated the characteristics of successful MexicanAmerican women. They found that the mothers of academically successful MexicanAmerican females stimulated an educational drive in their daughters that encouraged them to be economically independent. These girls also tended to express an immigrant family's "hard work" ethic and came from families who practiced a nonauthoritarian style of discipline. This form of discipline, it was theorized, tended to allow these daughters to reject and thereby overcome the barriers blocking their educational success.

Response to the Problem

Two Latina faculty members at Rancho Santiago College propose to develop a systematic approach to providing services to Latina students in a manner which capitalizes on the findings of the researchers. Having identified both the barriers to success and
key variables that predispose success, these faculty members will:

a) Establish a location on campus, to be known as the Latina Student Center, which will be a place for Latinas to gather, receive orientation information, meet with a counselor specifically assigned to them, get referrals to appropriate support services, and generally network and get to know other students.

b) Develop a series of seminars that bring into the open known barriers to success and instruct Latina students on how to deal with and overcome them.

c) Develop follow-up and early intervention strategies to track student progress and enable intervention when problems arise.

d) Sponsor a series of bilingual seminars and other activities designed for students and parents (especially mothers), to increase their understanding of the educational process.

e) Complete a resource guide for other colleges to use in developing their own services for Latinas.

Only by addressing these issues and taking steps to overcome the known barriers will Latinas experience success at a rate that is comparable to other students.
Rancho Santiago presently has 3,432 Hispanic women enrolled in college credit classes (Spring, 1993). This represents 13% of the entire student 'Population. The college is located in the city of Santa Ana where over 80% of the high school students are of Hispanic origin. The vast majority of Santa Ana high school graduates who go on to college matriculate to Rancho Santiago College. On a statewide basis there are an estimated 90,000 Latinas enrolled in community colleges.
Objectives

a) By May 15, 1994, develop a system for providing support services, access to resources and networking activities to 200 Latina students to encourage more involvement in campus life as a means for improving retention.

b) By May 15, 1994, improve Latina students’ ability to overcome barriers to their educational success by developing the curriculum for eight seminars that address the issues considered most important to their success and present these seminars to 160 Latina students.

c) By May 15, 1994, provide individual counseling and group counseling for 75 Latinas students experiencing difficulty in college which results in 80% completing the semester with a 2.0 grade point average or better and persistence to the next semester of a 70% rate.

d) By May 15, 1994, increase parent involvement with their daughter’s education as a means of improving student success by including 50 parents in organized activities.

e) By September 1, 1994, improve other community colleges’ ability to serve Latina students by preparing and disseminating a resource guide for community colleges that highlights the accomplishments of this project.
The Project Director and Co-Director are two Latina faculty members who have overcome many of the barriers described above. The Director, Mary Castellanos, recently completed her doctorate in Clinical Psychology. She has counseled Latinas and other underrepresented students for fifteen years. Co-Director, Marguerite Albanez, is an English faculty member specializing in study skills. She is the President-elect of the Latina Leadership Network of the California Community Colleges. They will be supported by a Student Services Assistant. The assistant will staff the LSC, perform clerical duties, maintain a database of the students served, make referrals and schedule appointments and facilities.

The first step of this project will be to convene an advisory committee. The members will include faculty and staff who currently provide services and instruction to Latinas. It will also include a student representative and one from the community. Their purpose will be to help plan activities, evaluate the progress and outcomes of the project and keep the rest of the college community informed about Latina programs. This project seeks to avoid duplicating existing programs. Rather, the goal is to enhance current efforts and to fill gaps where no services exist.

The Latina Student Center will be located in the Johnson Student Center, which also houses EOPS, Financial Aid, Job Placement, the tutoring center, student lounge and cafeteria. The hours of service will be determined but it is expected that some hours will be available for drop-in, while others will be reserved for private counseling. A bulletin board will display LSC-sponsored and other activities. The center will open by the first week of school in the fall.

Eight seminars will be developed and offered that address issues specific to Latinas. They will be led primarily by the Director and Co-Director, although other faculty or community members with particular expertise will be asked to participate. At least 20 students will attend each seminar, which will be 2-3 hours in length.

The Project Director will counsel at least 25 individual Latina students each semester. She will help them develop an Educational Plan and provide other guidance as needed. She will meet with each student a minimum of three times per semester. In addition she and other Latina counselors will hold group counseling sessions every month.
Two activities will be held each semester for students and their parents. One will be an informal, open house-type activity. The other will be a lecture/discussion that will cover issues related to being the parent of a college student. The lectures will be presented in Spanish/English.

This project is requesting second year funding to complete the final objective - the development of a resource guide for other community colleges. To be completed by September 1, 1994, the resource guide will include a description of the development of the Latina Student Center, an outline of the curriculum developed for the seminars, a bibliography of relevant materials, and an analysis of the outcomes. This will be disseminated to all community colleges.
Objective One - A centralized location for support and networking will be established that will be open to Latina students at least 19 hours per week. Center staff will be able to provide counseling assistance, referral to services, plan activities and follow-up. A sign-in sheet and questionnaire will enable evaluation of the services.

Objective Two - The curriculum for eight, three-hour seminars will be designed and approved by the advisory committee. These seminars will be practical and will concentrate on improving self-esteem, enabling Latinas to identify the problems that hinder their success and providing the tools to deal with the challenges of college and life. Evaluation results will be used to revise the curriculum when needed.

Objective Three - A counselor will be identified to work specifically with Latinas to act as a mentor and advisor. The counselor will follow the students closely to improve retention and persistence. Group counseling will enable the counselor to help a larger number of students.

Objective Four - By inviting parents to the campus and including them in educational activities, their fears will be diminished and their support of their daughter's goals enhanced. At least four activities will include parents.

Objective Five - A resource guide will be available to other community colleges. It will include a discussion of issues that are important to the success of Latinas, a curriculum outline of the seminars developed, a calendar of events, a description of the development of the RSC Latina Student Center, the evaluation findings, and suggestions to others about developing a similar program.

b) Impact of the Project

The overall outcome of this project is to develop a climate on campus that promotes the educational success of Latinas. By establishing a center, Latinas will have a place where they know that others like themselves, or others with their best interest in mind, meet to offer support and guidance. The feeling of isolation and uncertainty that often accompanies first time college students will be alleviated as the students get involved with center activities.

Students who participate will be able to take advantage of more of the resources on campus.
The retention and success of underrepresented students is a primary goal of all community colleges in the state. Hispanic women are considered to be among the most underrepresented and underserved students because, although they matriculate in large numbers, very few complete their goals. This approach to serving Latinas will provide other colleges with a model to follow as they improve their services to Latinas.

c) Potential for Continued Support

Rancho Santiago College is committed to improving the retention rate of Latinas. This is evidenced by the commitment of space (which is at a premium at RSC) to house the center and furniture and computer equipment for it. The college will maintain this facility beyond the grant period. A tenured counselor will be assigned to serve Latina students on an ongoing basis. She will use some of her time, with the assistance of other Latina faculty and staff, to plan and offer ongoing seminars and activities. After the grant period, student workers will be hired to staff the LSC. It will be an excellent training opportunity because the responsibilities will be diverse.

d) Potential for Adaptation to Other Institutions

The program at RSC is replicable by other institutions because RSC has laid out the ground work for others to copy. The establishment of a Latina Student Center can be done with a minimum of space and personnel resources. Latina faculty and staff on most campuses already see the need for making these services available. Small portions of existing staff time could be used to set up the program. Since these are not additional students an existing counselor could be assigned to counsel only Latinas, as is the case at RSC. The college and the community are full of individuals anxious to assist Latinas by making presentations at seminars. College student workers could provide excellent support to their program.
The program will be evaluated by using the following:

Objective One - The Latina Student Center

1. pre- and post- survey of student involvement in campus life
2. sign-in sheet to track number of students visiting LSC and their purpose for visiting the center.
3. minutes of the advisory committee meetings
4. records of referrals made by other campus services
5. calendar of events

Objective Two - the Seminars

1. pre-survey identifying educational barriers affecting students
2. attendance sheets
3. post-seminar evaluation forms
4. curriculum outlines
5. examples of promotional materials

Objective Three - Counseling

1. individual student files
2. educational plans
3. number of counseling contacts
4. sign-in sheet for group counseling
5. evaluation-of-services form
6. completion rates for each semester
7. grade point averages for each semester

Objective Four - Parent Involvement

1. copies of letters and promotional materials
   2. evaluation of lecture /discussion
   3. guest book

Objective Five - Resource Guide

1. list of individuals to be sent guide
2. evaluation forms
b) The problems that were encountered will be identified and documented. They may include:

1. acceptance by RSC staff
2. use of the LSC
3. attendance at seminars
4. adequacy of space
5. parental participation
6. adequate personnel allocation

c) The most effective processes in implementing the project will be identified and documented. They may include:

1. seminars
2. individual counseling
3. group counseling
4. publications
5. advisory committee

d) Recommendations will be made based on the outcomes of the above-mentioned evaluation methods. The recommendations will be included in the resource guide, as will other evaluation results.
The resource guide, as described above, will be sent to the members of the Latina Leadership Network, the president of the Academic Senate at each college and the top student services administrator at each college. They will be asked to complete an evaluation of the resource guide.

In addition, the Project Director and Co-Director will make presentations at three conferences, the annual Latina Leadership Network Conference, the annual EOPS conference and the Chancellor's Spring Conference.

The resource guide, as well as the final report, will also be sent to the Chancellor's Office. The Project Director and Co-Director will be available to answer questions from individuals interested in establishing a program on their campus.
[No information provided in this document for this section.]