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Culturally Relevant Practices that "Serve" Students at a Hispanic Serving Institution

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Abstract As institutions not founded to "serve" Latina/o students, Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) must actively change their curricula and programs to meet the needs of their diverse population, including Latina/o, low income, and first generation students. Using a case study approach, including interviews and focus groups, this study examined culturally relevant practices at one HSI, including the ethnic studies curriculum and student support programs. Specifically, findings highlight how the Chicana/o Studies department and the Educational Opportunity Program have historically served underrepresented students and the ways in which such programs are embedded within the structures of the institution. This study has implications for HSIs and other institutions enrolling and serving diverse populations.

Keywords Hispanic Serving Institution · culturally relevant practices · ethnic studies · Chicana/o Studies · Educational Opportunity Program

The significance of minority serving institutions is obvious as they currently enroll 3.5 million students of color, which equates to 40% of all undergraduate students of color in the U.S.

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(Cunningham, Park, & Engle, 2014). Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), in particular, are essential points of access as they now enroll 60% of all Latina/o[1] college students (Calderón Galdeano, & Santiago, 2013). Defined by the federal government as postsecondary institutions that enroll 25% or more undergraduate Latina/o students, HSIs have been criticized for being strictly enrollment driven (Contreras, Malcom, & Bensimon, 2008; Malcom, 2010; Santiago, 2012). The assumption is that, despite demographic changes in the student population, the organizational structures of these institutions are largely unchanged, making it difficult to truly "serve" Latina/o students who have distinct needs based on a history of discrimination in the educational system. Furthermore, it is difficult to determine what it means to "serve" Latinas/os as they are a heterogeneous group, varying by country of origin, socioeconomic background, generational status, language preference, immigration status, and academic preparation.

The purpose of this study was to document how culturally relevant practices, including the ethnic studies curriculum and student support programs, at one four-year HSI in the Southwest serve Latina/o students. Using a case study design and the organization as the unit of analysis, we specifically highlight how the Chicana/o Studies department and the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) are essential to the organizational structures of this particular case. Beyond their relevance to the large population of Latina/o students on campus, they are essential to serving other underrepresented groups, which is important since HSIs enroll a large percentage of low income students (de los Santos & Cuamea, 2010) and first generation college students (Núñez, Sparks, & Hernández, 2011; Salinas & Llanes, 2003). While Chicana/o Studies and EOP are not the only programs that can serve diverse populations, the findings in this study highlight their essential role at this particular institution and may have application to other institutions as well.

Literature Review

One of the problems with determining how well HSIs serve their students is that few studies have defined what this means. Scholars have implied that retention and graduation are the most effective ways to determine if HSIs are serving their Latina/o students (i.e., Contreras et al., 2008; Crisp, Nora, & Taggart, 2009; Flores & Park, 2013; Garcia, 2013), while others suggest that HSIs support students by enhancing non-cognitive outcomes (Cuellar, 2014), sense of belonging (Maestas, Vaquera, & Muñoz Zehr, 2007), and cultural connections on campus (i.e., Dayton, Gonzalez-Vasquez, Martinez, & Plum, 2004; Guardia & Evans, 2008; Sebanc, Hernandez, & Alvarado, 2009). Beyond these findings specific to HSIs, others have documented the ways in which all institutions may serve Latina/o students.

One way is to provide interdisciplinary curricula that allows multiple perspectives to emerge while enabling students to see themselves within the curricula (Banks, 2010). The benefits for students who participate in curricula that are culturally relevant are extensive at both the secondary and postsecondary levels (see Sleeter, 2011), with students showing improvement in academic engagement and achievement (Altschul, Oyserman, & Bybee, 2008; Brozo & Valerio, 1996), personal empowerment (Carter, 2008; O'Connor, 1997; Vasquez, 2005), and continuation to and succeeding through higher education (Chavous et al., 2003). At the university level in particular, Chicana/o Studies courses have positive

[1] The term Latina/o is used to refer to the contemporary inclusion of both females and males who self-identify as Chicana/o, Latina/o, or Hispanic, while the term Hispanic is only used in reference to the federal designation of HSIs. The term Chicano (without the "a") is used to reference the historical use of the term.

effects on students' critical cultural thinking (Muñoz, Jaime, McGrill, & Molina, 2012), sense of belonging and academic self-confidence (Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005), and transition to college (Núñez, 2011). These findings indicate that offering Chicana/o Studies and ethnic studies courses may be one way for an institution to become more Latina/o-serving. Unfortunately, despite their ability to alter individual student perspectives, these programs are often found on the periphery of the institution where their contributions are ignored and challenged (Aguirre, 2005).

Another way to serve Latina/o students is through programs that support their academic and social integration (Chaney, Muraskin, Cahalan, & Goodwin, 1998). Numerous programs enhance the retention of Latina/o college students, including College Assistance Migrant Program, ENgaging LAtino Communities for Education, and Adelante (Hernandez & Lopez, 2004-2005; Oseguera, Locks, & Vega, 2009). *Excelencia in Education* (2014) annually highlights exceptional programs for serving Latina/o students, ranging from those that enhance developmental math and English skills to those that provide mentoring and tutoring to underrepresented groups. Empirical research shows that Student Support Services (a TRiO program) has long-term positive effects on enrollment in college as well as postsecondary achievement in terms of grades, credits earned, and retention (Chaney et al., 1998; Olive, 2008; Ward, 2006). Other studies have documented the positive influence of TRiO programs on the recruitment and retention of Latina/o, low income, and first generation students (Brown, Santiago, & Lopez, 2003; Jehangir, 2009). These findings suggest that offering students support through programmatic efforts may be essential to serving diverse students at HSIs. Unfortunately, as these programs are often funded by soft money grants, many do not become institutionalized, making it difficult to serve the populations they are intended to benefit.

Research Setting

Naranja State University (NSU, a pseudonym) is a large, public master's granting institution that is part of a system of state institutions. It is compositionally diverse, with enrollment in 2012 reaching 35% Latina/o, 29% White, 11% Asian American, 6% Black, and 19% other. NSU was founded in the late 1950s with the intention to serve the residents of the rapidly growing region. Although enrollment quickly soared during the 1960s, students of color were largely missing. In 1968, Black and Chicana/o students stormed the administration building demanding that the institution provide a culturally relevant curriculum, hire faculty that represent them, and establish programs that support them from matriculation through graduation. Amid this tumultuous climate, EOP, the Chicana/o Studies department, and the Pan-African Studies Department were established.

Latina/o student enrollment, however, continued to be dismal, representing less than 1% of the student population by 1970. By the 1990s, however, the student demographics of the institution began to shift as a reflection of the changes in the surrounding region, which showed a steady increase in self-identified Latina/o residents. By 2000, NSU reached the 25% threshold for becoming a federally designated HSI. With this new status, NSU received two HSI grants from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Shortly thereafter, it received its first multi-year Department of Education Title V Developing HSIs program grant. In the intervening years, the institution has continued to apply for HSI grants and has successfully secured additional funds. Considering this history, we believe that NSU was an ideal setting for this study.

Research Method

We employed a case study design that allowed us to scrutinize the institution's current practices for serving Latina/o and other underrepresented students within a bounded context (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, the case study enabled us to conduct an in-depth investigation of the institutional structures within a specific setting by using multiple sources of data and multiple types of analyses (Yin, 2009).

The main source of data came from interviews and focus groups. Once the use of human subjects had been approved, the first author conducted a series of 60-90 minute in-depth, semi-structured interviews with selected administrators, faculty members, and student affairs staff as well as focus groups with students. These interviews allowed us to understand how participants interpret the world by having them answer a number of set questions in addition to more loosely structured prompts (Merriam, 2009). The goal of the interviews and focus groups was to understand how participants determine what it means to serve Latina/o students, with an emphasis on the organizational structures. Specifically, they were asked to describe how they see themselves represented in the organization and to illustrate the ways the organization is reflective of a Latina/o-serving mission. They were encouraged to talk about elements such as curriculum, pedagogy, and support programs.

A purposeful sampling technique was used in order to ensure a diverse sample and to guarantee information-rich cases that yielded in-depth understanding and insight (Patton, 2002). Potential participants were identified through the institution's website and organized by position and the first author's perception of their race/ethnicity. Student participants were identified through the campus's listing of student organizations as well as staff informants. The sample consisted of 88 participants. Table 1 provides a summary of the participants by race and position. All participants either chose their own pseudonym or were assigned one.

We also used two additional sources of data – documents and non-participant observations. We reviewed historical documents maintained through online campus archives, a history book specifically written about the institution (not included in the reference list in order to maintain anonymity of the site), campus websites, and archives from local and campus newspapers (available online dating back to the institution's founding). In reviewing the documents, we sought to enhance our understanding of the themes that were arising in the data, including the importance of organizational structures in place for serving Latina/o students.

The first author also made non-participant observations in order to understand the culture of the site, which allowed for the collection of data in a public setting without disturbing the

Table 1 Participants by position and race (n=88)

	Latina/o	Black	Asian American	White	Total
Central Administrators	1	1	0	4	6
Faculty					
Administrators	2	0	1	1	4
Professors	7	1	0	11	19
Student Affairs Staff					
Administrators	0	1	0	2	3
Coordinator/Counselor	8	3	0	4	15
Students	29	5	5	2	41
Total	47	11	6	24	88

normal interactions of the people within the setting (Merriam, 2009). This process provided insight about topics that participants were not willing to share in an interview or did not have the insight to discuss (Patton, 2002). With each visit to the campus, time was spent in high-traffic areas such as the student union and an open quad where student organizations host programs, attendance at appropriate events, and observation of classes. Detailed digital and written field notes were maintained with each observation.

Data Analysis

The audio recordings of the interviews, focus groups, and digital field notes were transcribed verbatim and imported to HyperRESEARCH 3.0.2. The historical documents were converted to text files and also imported to HyperRESEARCH 3.0.2. The data reduction phase, in which major themes, concepts, and evolving issues were identified (Miles & Huberman, 1994), included open coding the four sources of data using the organization as the unit of analysis. During the open coding process, we looked for ways to categorize the concepts and themes that arose (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). We then identified axial codes (those that connect concepts and themes to one another) by comparing emerging codes to one another (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Once the codebook was established, we used HyperRESEARCH 3.0.2 to run a series of reports to determine the coding density. In order to describe and explain what was going on more thoroughly, we used a series of data displays, or “visual formats that present information systematically, so the user can draw valid conclusions and take needed action” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 91). Matrices, which allow the researcher to view multiple lists of codes and themes through the use of defined rows and columns (Miles & Huberman, 1994), allowed us to organize the way various codes interacted with one another and to develop crude scales that illuminated the processes emerging within themes. We then aligned all four sources of data in order to triangulate the findings.

Findings

The data revealed two important themes about serving diverse students at a HSI: (1) the historical presence of culturally relevant curricula and programs and (2) the embedding of culturally relevant curricula and programs within the structures of the institution. In this section we describe these themes with an emphasis on the Chicana/o Studies department and EOP.

The Chicana/o Studies Department

The historical presence and size of this department at NSU is the first indicator of its central role on campus. The department was established at the apex of the Chicano Movement of the 1960s and recently celebrated its fortieth anniversary. Under pressure from students, faculty members, and the community, the department was created in order to teach students about Chicana/o history, art, politics, and culture with an emphasis on humanitarian principles, identity, and the holistic development of students. Since its founding, the department has broadened its reach to students across campus and now offers between 160-170 courses each semester, including Spanish, art, freshmen composition, music, theater, American history, constitutional issues, critical thinking, bilingual education, and counseling (to name a few). It has grown to one of the largest such departments in the country, employing 27 full-time, 8 emeriti, and 28 part-time faculty members and now offers a major, minor, and master’s degree.

Beyond its history and size, the department is embedded within the structures of the institution in such a way that it has become the "norm" on campus. Acceptance of previously innovative ideas as the normative behaviors at the institution is a clear indicator that institutionalization has occurred (Kezar & Sam, 2013). One academic counselor, for example, said that she no longer has to worry about whether or not there are courses on campus that are relevant to diverse students. She said that as a counselor at a different institution she was never certain that students could enroll in courses that would be relevant to their racial and ethnic background. At NSU, however, she has the luxury of choosing from numerous courses that are offered through Chicana/o Studies.

To become the norm on campus, however, NSU took steps to institutionalize the department. One way they did this was to allow the department to offer courses that meet the general education requirements. In fact, one faculty member said that a large majority of students who take classes through Chicana/o Studies are not majoring in Chicana/o Studies, meaning that they take courses simply to meet their general education requirements. Furthermore, many first-year students take a series of required courses through Chicana/o Studies.

> And so the ability to introduce freshmen, and not just Chicano students, to faculty and themes that are germane to the culture – but to really, just kind of find a way to remove from the marginalization that often happens with ethnic programs, move it out of the margins to the center and make it a part of the fabric of an institution. So I think that's a very powerful way in which the campus takes Chicano Studies and Central American Studies and Women Studies and puts them right in the center of the psyche of an incoming freshman. (Rosario, Latina academic administrator)

As a result of this institutionalization, students who enroll in these courses are exposed to a multicultural curriculum that expands their worldview (Núñez, Murakami-Ramalho, & Cuero, 2010). Benito (Latino journalism major), for example, said that taking Chicana/o Studies courses has changed his perspective on what it means to be "Chicano."

> I had to do Chicano Studies classes for my minor and I hated it. I didn't want to at first, because I had an idea about what "Chicano" was, because I'm Mexican and they tell us, "Oh, Chicano is not educated," or whatever. But there is [sic] so much culture and so much things [sic] behind it. When I got there I was like, "Oh this is kind of cool," and I have learned a lot of stuff. So I ended up taking more [classes] than I was supposed to take.

As a native of Mexico, Benito had preconceived notions about Chicanas/os being uneducated. His time in Chicana/o Studies courses, however, has made him more conscious of Chicana/o history and politics and has broken down his stereotypes.

Although respondents talked about the significance of Chicana/o Studies at NSU, they were critical of the fact that the department is the *only* place on campus where people can find connections to Latina/o culture. Eva (Chicana professor) expressed her concerns about this when she said, "So it's all within our department, we work hard, we really work hard and we work, you know, beyond what other departments do and other faculty do to give the students the things that they need." Students agreed with this sentiment, talking *only* about Chicana/o Studies when asked about culturally relevant experiences in the classroom. Oscar (Mexican American sociology major), for example, said:

> I mean the only thing I see that is Latino based is the Chicano department because I know there was a lot of influence during the Chicano Movement and its relevance to the movement itself…but other than that, you don't really hear about it.

While this particular department has been institutionalized in a way that is beyond what other campuses may have done with their ethnic studies departments, such comments raise the question of whether only one department should be responsible for providing culturally relevant curricula.

Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)

Like the Chicana/o Studies department, EOP's history reflects its relevance, which influences NSU's ability to support underrepresented students. A statewide law was passed in 1969 requiring that all institutions within the SU system establish an EOP, a state-funded program that was founded as a commitment to affirmative action. For more than forty years, EOP at NSU has provided low income, first generation college students with the support necessary to excel in postsecondary education. The program annually enrolls between 3,000-3,500 students from disadvantaged backgrounds, providing them with financial assistance, academic advising, mentoring opportunities, and transitional assistance. While the EOP traditionally serves low income and first generation students, Latina/o students have greatly benefitted from the program.

> [Historically] there was such an emphasis on trying to diversify this place and [there were] people who were just fiercely committed to try and do it, and because one of our largest populations in ["The Valley"], which is our primary service area for Latinos – that you can tell that the models that [EOP] used, that the things that they did, and they still continue to do when possible, were aimed specifically on Latinos. (Esperanza, Latina counselor)

Although students of color initially had to fight for inclusion, the institution's continued commitment to EOP indicates its obligation to inclusivity. By supporting these efforts, NSU provides Latina/o students and others with the academic and social support they need, which is essential to their retention (Oseguera et al., 2009).

NSU institutionalized EOP by incorporating a "satellite" model in which there is a central EOP office as well as decentralized offices in each of the eight academic colleges. The satellite offices each have a director as well as fulltime academic advisors and office administrators. They are responsible not only for serving EOP students in the particular college but also for advising all students in that college, whether they are EOP eligible or not. Like the Chicana/o Studies department, campus leaders have strategically placed EOP at the center of campus by "scaling-up" the program and using it as a model of excellence for advising and supporting all students.

> The illustration of [scaling-up a program] is the EOP here. In my view, virtually everything that we have done over time in the academic advisement area and in dealing with students from a holistic perspective and in training faculty in a certain perspective was born out of – in fact the work that we did in the EOP program. And then when we made an organizational decision to move EOP from a centralized program out into the colleges, we then took those skill sets and those particular dimensions out there and that now defines the advising and developing culture. (Morgan, Black central administrator)

In scaling-up the program, EOP has essentially become the driving force behind advisement on campus, which is important for serving a diverse population. By infusing EOP across the institution, it has become a part of the normal operating procedures of the campus, which is an indicator of institutionalization (Kezar & Sam, 2013).

Beyond advising, other EOP support programs have become institutionalized on campus. One EOP program director, for example, said that the campus regularly adopts and replicates EOP initiatives. She gave the example of an academic early warning system, which gives

faculty members the opportunity to alert EOP if a student is having difficulty. The EOP advisors can then contact students and assist them as needed. In initiating some of the recent federally funded HSI grants on campus, the director and coordinators of these programs have also turned to EOP for best practices. Rather than re-inventing the wheel, they have strengthened current EOP efforts and replicated the programs that are working to serve Latina/o students.

Campus administrators are also supportive of EOP, which is vital to creating a multicultural organization (Cox, 2001). Central administrators, including the Provost and the Vice President of Student Affairs, raved about EOP. One academic administrator stressed that, like the Chicana/o Studies department, the program is not on the margins of the campus, which is a result of the institution's commitment to the program. Moreover, participants working within EOP satellite offices stated that campus administrators are supportive of the program. One director said that the funding provided by both the EOP central office as well as the deans of the academic colleges is an indicator that the program is not likely to be cut anytime soon. She stressed, however, that EOP supporters have historically fought for the current model. This history of activism should not be ignored or forgotten.

Implications for Practice and Policy

Our findings have implications for policy and practice that are not only pertinent to HSIs, but also to other institutions enrolling and serving diverse populations. While the historical presence of the Chicana/o Studies department and EOP are essential to NSU's ability to serve Latina/o and other underrepresented students, we will focus on the second theme, embedding culturally relevant curricula and programs into the structures of the institution, which is applicable to all institutions, despite their history.

Serving Students through Curricula

The voices of Latina/o students and other underrepresented groups have been largely excluded from the formal curricula at institutions of higher education, even at HSIs (Cole, 2011). This exclusion is harmful to all students as they continue to be taught about the hegemonic experiences and histories of dominant groups (Banks, 2010). HSIs and other postsecondary institutions that are striving to be more multicultural must evaluate the content that is being taught and the ways that students are being evaluated in order to ensure that diverse perspectives are being considered (Chesler, Lewis, & Crowfoot, 2005; Milem, Chang, & Antonio, 2005). By including a diverse perspective, the curricula has the ability to affirm the existence of Latina/o and other underrepresented groups while validating their experiences (Rendon, 1994). This study provides examples of how ethnic studies curricula can be institutionalized in order to better serve diverse students.

First, institutions should make ethnic studies courses a part of the general education requirements for graduation. By allowing students to take ethnic studies courses that will meet these requirements, students are more likely to enroll in these courses. This is particularly important since Chang (2002) found that diversity courses have the ability to change White students' racial attitudes and views towards people of color. Numerous other benefits exist for incorporating diversity into the college classroom, including increasing students' cognitive development (Bowman, 2010), improving democratic citizenship (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002), enhancing perceptions of the overall climate for diversity (Mayhew, Grunwald, & Dey, 2005), and decreasing racial biases (Chang, 2002; Denson, 2009).

A second way to institutionalize ethnic studies is to make it a department. As seen in this case, the Chicana/o Studies department at NSU was established as its own department, unlike some other colleges and universities that simply offer Chicana/o courses within other departments (Rochín & Sosa-Riddell, 1992). University of California, Davis and Los Angeles, for example, were still fighting for departmental status in the 1990s, more than twenty years after the initial introduction of these programs to their campuses (Rhoads, 1998; Rochín & Sosa-Riddell, 1992). Meanwhile, NSU's Chicana/o Studies department had already grown to one of the largest in the country, and the School of Humanities (which houses Chicana/o Studies) had already appointed a Mexican American dean and associate dean by the late 1980s. Departmental status gives ethnic studies programs the ability to thrive and expand their influence on campus.

A third way to institutionalize ethnic studies curricula is to encourage other departments on campus to offer courses that address multicultural issues within their programs (Anderson, MacPhee, & Govan, 2000). Even further, Milem et al. (2005) suggested that institutions make culturally relevant curricula part of their overall goals for learning by incorporating diversity and multiculturalism across the campus (Milem et al., 2005). Rather than expecting ethnic studies programs to do all the diversity work on campus, they should be used as models and looked to for guidance and expertise on how to effectively teach diverse students.

The findings of this study are also significant for policy issues, particularly when it comes to federally funded HSI grants. The federal government must consider the importance of programs such as Chicana/o Studies and recognize their ability to make campuses more inclusive and inviting to Latina/o students. Current requests for proposals for HSI competitive grants place more value on the creation of STEM programs and the retention of STEM students (US Department of Education, 2013), while little emphasis is centered on the importance of providing culturally relevant curricula for students. Campus administrators, policy makers, and the federal government should think more critically about how to transform organizational structures around ethnic studies programs, which may ultimately have positive effects on the success of Latina/o and other underrepresented groups in postsecondary institutions.

Mainstreaming Support Services

Providing support from initial enrollment through graduation has long been recognized as important for increasing the retention and persistence of all students. Since the social movements of the 1960s, Latina/o students have fought for equal representation on campus and support via campus programs. As a result, national programs such College Assistance Migrant Program and ENgaging LAtino Communities for Education as well as regional programs like Puente and Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement have been proven effective for supporting Latina/o students (Oseguera et al., 2009). This study provides suggestions for better serving underrepresented groups on campus.

First, institutions must move beyond offering stand-alone support programs and instead infuse the programs into the core structures of the institution. While these programs are often found at the fringes, this study revealed the importance of developing a more comprehensive model for serving and advising students. By moving programs, like EOP, that have proven to be effective for serving underrepresented populations to the center of campus, institutions can reframe their commitment to serving the populations that need the most support. Furthermore, they can learn from programs, such as TRIO, that have been successfully serving underrepresented populations for more than fifty years.

Second, administrators must stand behind programs that have historically served underrepresented students. While it would be ideal for campuses to employ a compositionally diverse

administration to make important decisions about supporting students of color (Chesler et al., 2005), it is not essential. At NSU, for example, one of the strongest advocates of EOP was the provost, a White male who is deeply committed to serving underrepresented students. Campus decision-making must also align with the institution's commitment to serving diverse populations (Hurtado, Alvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, & Arellano, 2012). For NSU this was critical, as a campus-wide decision was made to move EOP to the center of all advising practices.

A third way to institutionalize support programs for underrepresented students is to fund these programs through the campus's operating budget. While state and federal governments have traditionally funded programs like EOP and TRIO, institutions cannot rely on these sources for continued support. As argued by Chesler et al. (2005), "money is an essential critical resource, since its allocation generally reflects organizational leaders' sense of what is central to its mission and culture and what is not" (p. 65). By making EOP funding a line item on the campus's budget, NSU institutionalized the program while sending a strong message about its commitment to supporting low income, first generation students.

Beyond institutional practices, policy makers must realize that support programs for students of color are good for all students (Lee, Williams, & Kilaberia, 2012). When funding and budget decisions are made at the state and federal levels, these types of programs should not be placed on the chopping block and left to die. Instead, they must be maintained and preserved, recognizing that they can be used as a model for serving all students. As institutional effectiveness is increasingly being measured by systems that place value on graduation, we must also recognize the programs and services that help students succeed in postsecondary education.

Limitations

A case study presents several limitations worth noting. The generalizability of the findings is probably the most common concern because the case is typically bound to one unique situation (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2009). Furthermore, the population of HSIs is so diverse by institutional characteristics, type, and control (Núñez, Crisp, & Elizondo, in press) that it is difficult to generalize findings to all HSIs. This study, therefore, is not intended to be generalizable to all HSIs, but instead is generalizable only to the ideologies that guided the study (Yin, 2009). By this we mean that we only intended to provide data to support what we already know about supporting Latina/o, low income, and first generation students through culturally relevant curricula and support programs.

Another limitation is that the data were collected at one point in time, meaning the study is not historical or longitudinal. As such, we cannot make claims about the institutionalization process of the curricula and programs that have come to serve Latina/o and other underrepresented groups on campus. Furthermore, by focusing on the organization as the unit of analysis, we cannot make claims about the learning, growth, and development of students within the curricula and programs highlighted as that is beyond the scope of the study. Despite these limitations, this study provides evidence of good practices from which we believe that all institutions interested in enrolling and serving diverse populations can learn.

Conclusions

While HSIs were not founded to serve Latina/o students, institutions must face the realities of the changing demographics of today's college students while finding ways to better support

populations that have been systematically oppressed and historically discriminated against in postsecondary education. We can no longer assume that the organizational structures of our current institutions will adequately meet the needs of underrepresented students. Instead, we must find ways to serve them through curricula and programs that place their needs at the center. Although we recognize that Chicana/o Studies and EOP are not the only ways to serve Latina/o and other underrepresented students, this study provides evidence that embedding these programs into the structures of the institution can have an effect on its ability to serve these students.

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