Minnesota Network of

Latinos in Higher Education

A Campus Action Model for Building a Latino Supportive Campus

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The Keys to Building a Latino Supportive Campus

*A system of **measuring**, **monitoring**, and **improving** will provide the structure needed to secure campuses that are supportive of Latino students.*

At this time in an information-based global economy, accelerating growth in the Latino youth population, a focus on K-16 educational accountability, and the call for assessing higher education student learning outcomes, we must refocus our attention on promoting Latino student success in institutions of higher education. We need to begin asking, what are we doing in Minnesota higher education to ensure the success of all Latino students? Are Minnesota college and university campuses supportive of Latino students?

Indicators in and of themselves are interesting, but their power comes in the use of these indicators to monitor progress and success with supporting Latino students. Students, faculty, staff, campus programs and organizations, and communities can use indicators to form a common basis for dialogue and effort toward a unified goal of improving Latino student success.

Identifying Indicators of Latino Supportive Campuses

What does it mean to be a Latino Supportive Campus? This may appear to be "in the eye of the beholder." However, we believe that there are important, evidence-based indicators that clearly point to institutions that are Latino Supportive. We know that when Latino students are able to enroll in an institution of their choice, secure a strong education with positive personal and professional experiences, and graduate in a timely manner, it is in large part because of the support of their college or university.

Indicators. What are indicators and why do we need them now? An indicator can provide information about inputs, outputs, process, and outcomes – an *indication* of the status or health of some entity or the achievement of goals. In the language of research, indicators may be measures that are used as variables in explanatory or causal models. Indicators should represent important conditions or results that provide us with evidence to support decisions. Now is the time to identify, measure, monitor, and improve relevant indicators. With the changing demographics, and the importance of higher education to personal, family, and community development, now is the time to improve the success of higher education campuses for Latino students.

Areas of Key Indicators:	**Admissions & Financial Aid, Campus Life, Cultural Environment, Academic Life, Administrative Efforts, Institutional Records**

Many indicators have been identified. We reviewed extensive literature summaries and reviewed a selected set of studies on Latino student success in higher education – these indicators are provided as a starting point. Additional work must be done on each campus to review and identify indicators relevant for its given context. More importantly, the identification of indicators must include a broad prospective and be done through a collaborative process, providing for the input and participation of faculty, staff, students, and community members. This is an absolute necessity because not all of the important indicators for a given campus have been identified.

Selecting and Creating Measures of Important Indicators

Creating a list of indicators is of little use if we do not have strong, meaningful, appropriate, and useful ways to measure them. In this document, we provide examples of measurement tools to capture most of the indicators discussed here. Many of the indicators are direct measures of success, like *graduation rates*. However, others are more difficult to define and measure, such as *campus climate*, which require the selection of existing measures or the careful construction of measures. This may result in the creation of new measures.

Collaborative Effort

The effort to secure Latino supportive institutions should be collaborative on campus, including participation of faculty, staff, and students. Create a routine of seeking input from all parities, formally at meetings, through periodic evaluations, and informally through ongoing conversations and online bulletin-boards or blogs.

In the research literature on Latino student success in higher education, there have been many measures of important indicators developed and studied. In the increasingly public debates on student learning outcomes in higher education, there are also a set of strong measures. Some of these measures are presented below.

In addition to occasional measures, there are existing databases that provide significant sources of information. In Minnesota, the Office of Higher Education regularly collects systematic information from every institution of higher education in the state. The Minnesota College Access Network provides advocacy, technical assistance, and policy resources to improve college access for all Minnesota youth. The Minnesota Minority Education Partnership also works with MOHE and directly with institutions of higher education to collect, analyze, and report data that is useful in supporting the educational achievement of students of color – providing resources and support to member institutions. The National Center for Educational Statistics provides additional sources of information, particularly useful when doing inter-campus comparisons. The Integrated Postsecondary Educational Database System (IPEDS) and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) are important tools providing measures of relevant indicators of student success and potentially for Latino supportive institutions.

Creating a System for Monitoring Latino Student Experience and Institutional Performance

Once measures of important indicators have been identified, selected, or created, they can be used in a system for monitoring performance on each indicator. Any approach to monitor the success of Latino students on campus must be done in consideration with the current system of institutional research and planning. The usefulness of indicators will be maximized if they are integrated into campus planning processes and become part of the ongoing monitoring activities that generate the data to make decisions.

Just as the identification of indicators needs to be done through an inclusive process, the monitoring of Latino student experience and institutional performance must be an inclusive process. By including all members of the campus and community in the monitoring of success, it widens perspectives on what constitutes success and maximizes the effort toward securing greater success. When all members of a campus community are organized around the improvement of a data-driven decision making process, great things can happen.

Setting Campus-Based Targets and Goals for Institutional Success with Latino Students

In order to make real progress and know if and when progress has been made, targets and goals must be set regarding each indicator. Targets and goals provide a means for knowing if the effort toward building a Latino-supportive campus is successful as well as a means for mobilizing that effort across campus. Goals provide a public benchmark and bring a new level of accountability that motivates and mobilizes attention and prioritization of efforts.

There are two important distinctions that can be made in goal setting and they play an important role in how information is used to make improvements in campus-wide efforts. These differences are explained below and examples are provided for the case of enrollment and graduation rates.

Higher Education in Minnesota

Minnesota has a rich and diverse array of post-secondary institutions. The Minnesota Office of Higher Education (OHE) serves a public information purpose to provide guidance to middle school students to plan successfully for college. It is supported by the state legislature and the cooperation of the four "systems" of post-secondary institutions. As of fall 2008, the OHE reports 11 public four-year institutions (4 campuses of the University of Minnesota and 7 State University campuses), 30 public two-year community and technical colleges, 26 private colleges and universities offering associate or higher degrees, 83 licensed private career institutions offering programs below associate degrees, and 11 private graduate and professional schools. For the purpose of this report, we are concerned with those institutions that provide associate degrees or higher.

The state designates 26 institutions within the category of private college and university. However, the Minnesota Private College Council includes 17 members, and is typically attributed to encompass the traditional private colleges in Minnesota. Colleges that are not in this organization include Martin Luther College, Crossroads College, North Central University, Northwestern College, Pillsbury Baptist College, Crown College, College of Visual Arts, Oak Hills Christian College, and Presentation College-Fairmont. While North Central, Northwester, and Crown have 1000 to 2000 students, most of the others have less than 200. In data reported below, only the 17 MPCC member schools are included.

The Minnesota OHE serves an important role in the collection and dissemination of information on Minnesota institutions of higher education. We obtained enrollment information in several forms for this report, particularly to provide a basis for setting enrollment targets and goals in Section 5. The OHE produces a Basic Data Series each year reporting enrollment by institution (campus) for enrollment by race, gender, undergraduate/graduate status, full-time/part-time status, and new entering student status. These reports are on the web.

Identifying Latino Supportive Institutions

The long-range goal of developing a system of indicators, and the measuring monitoring, and improving cycle, is to identify and recognize those institutions that are success in supporting Latino faculty, staff, and students – where we are focusing on Latino students with this volume. By recognizing such institutions, we can begin to share information on best practices, successful efforts, and raise the level of expectations for institutional performance. Evidence suggests that institutions that make an effort to learn about the experiences and backgrounds of their students are able to tailor programs to students' needs in a more effective manner (Padilla, 2007).

Based on a common set of indicators, Minnesota colleges and universities can be held accountable to their Latino students and communities. Progress and success on these indicators can be used to gauge the effort and success of individual campuses, because the indicators are evidence based and grounded in empirical research.

This report focuses on student success, but a comprehensive approach to building Latino supportive campuses includes equivalent efforts for Latino faculty and staff.

First Steps

Create a Culture of Evidence. In order to make strong, evidence-based decisions, develop a campus-wide commitment to the identification and use of information necessary to understand Latino student experiences, including campus conditions, services, and factors leading to success.

Define Success. What does it mean to be a successful student on this campus? What does it mean to be a campus that supports Latino students? What metrics of success do we currently have in place and where are the gaps?

Collaborate. Not only is buy-in necessary, but the initial planning stages should include all parties with an interest in the success of Latino students on campus – students, faculty, staff, administrators, local associated organizations. The decisions about constitutes valuable information for planning purposes should be made collaboratively.

Collect and Share Data Over Time. Colleges and Universities collect large amounts of data. Much of this data is housed in a data warehouse within the office responsible for institutional research. Some of this data is reported to the MN Office of Higher Education and the National Center for Educational Statistics. Less is shared with departments, programs, and individual faculty, staff, and students. As more and more data are collected, avenues must be created to routinely share this information with the organizations and individuals that can make direct use of it to improve the experiences and success of Latino students on campus.

Provide Venues for Dialogue. The collection and reporting of data is useless if there are not opportunities for it to inform dialogue. Dialogue needs to be supported. Does the institution provide opportunities for members of the campus to contribute to meaningful discussions regarding the success of Latino students on campus – the Latino student experience? Opportunities for administrators, faculty, staff, and students to hold meaningful discussions among themselves and with each other must be created and nurtured.

Improve. Through the development of a culture of evidence, real improvements become possible. The ultimate goal of a data-driven decision making effort is the achievement of goals and objectives – the improvement of Latino student experiences and successes – the improvement of Latino supportive institutions.

Identifying Indicators of Latino Supportive Institutions

An **indicator** *can provide information about inputs, outputs, process, and outcomes – an indication of the status or health of some entity or the achievement of goals.*

Researchers examining indicators important to the success of Latino students on campus have identified a large number of programs, characteristics, conditions, and efforts that make a difference. It is important to take this empirical evidence seriously and put in place a system to measure and monitor performance on these evidence-based indicators. However, we recognize that student-personnel professionals, faculty, students themselves, and others also have identified indicators that are important, given the specific contexts of their campus and have personal and professional experience regarding what works. Both sources of knowledge and experience are important to develop a comprehensive approach to ensuring success of Latino students on campus – evidence-based indicators and professional experience-based indicators must be brought to the table to ensure success of all students.

Indicators and Sources of Evidence

What does it mean to be a Latino Supportive Institution? This may appear to be "in the eye of the beholder." However, we believe that there are important, evidence-based indicators that clearly point to institutions that are Latino Supportive. We know that when Latino students are able to enroll in an institution of their choice, secure a strong education with positive personal and professional experiences, and graduate in a timely manner, it is in large part because of the support of their college or university. There is a strong empirical evidence basis supporting a mounting list of indicators of success.

The National Postsecondary Education Cooperative commissioned a report for the National Symposium on Postsecondary Student Success on "What Matters to Student Success: A Review of the Literature" (Kuh, et al., 2006). This comprehensive review of the literature broadly defined student success. In doing so, the authors constructed a review to inform policy and decision makers at all levels, from federal and state governments, to

postsecondary institutions, to families, K-12 schools, and individual students. The review documented student background characteristics and precollege experiences; in-college student behaviors, activities, and experiences; and institutional conditions, policies, programs, practices, and cultural priorities. Although this report did not focus on Latino students, it includes many studies or reports addressing issues related to Latino student success, as well as indicators that function successfully for Latino students.

In a recent report to the Lumina Foundation, Padilla (2007) reviewed the literature on what we know about Latino student access and success in postsecondary education. Within that report, he summarized 135 findings, describing important factors and their role in securing success of Latino students such as demographics, immigration, family, language and culture, race and identity, K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions, access and awareness of higher education, preparation, regulators and the role of tests, transfer issues, finances and resources, special programs and interventions. In addition, institutional climate was a major factor, including issues related to gender, equity, transition and adjustment, stress and coping, fitting in, mentoring, and specific notions of success.

Excelencia, a non-profit research and policy organization located in Washington DC, has a mission of promoting success of Latino students in higher education by providing models of analysis of the educational status of Latino students and promoting educational policy and institutional practices that support their success. In a recent publication (Santiago, 2008), *Excelencia* selected 6 Hispanic-serving institutions (25% or more undergraduate Hispanic students) that are among the top institutions nationwide in degrees awarded to Latino students (including California, New York, and Texas). The primary factors noted in their efforts includes institutional leadership (focused attention, vision, goal of informed institutional change), academic support (strengthening developmental education, cohort support programs, academic advising), community outreach, and data use (using data to support programs and institutional decision making).

The MNLHE received a small research grant from the University of Minnesota Office of Public Engagement, which provided the funds to support a graduate student to complete a literature review targeting specific issues related to Latino student success in higher education. There is a strong research base providing evidence for the use of indicators in identifying elements known to be associated with and to impact student success on college campuses. This research basis forms the structure from which the indicators were identified in this project.

Accountability in a Culture of Evidence

In 2005, US Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings created the *Commission on the Future of Higher Education*, with the goals of making colleges more affordable and accessible for all students and more accountable for student outcomes. The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant colleges (NASULGC) created the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) to encourage self-report at a national level of institutional information on student enrollment, retention, graduation; measures of student engagement, and direct measures of student learning.

Given the national attention to higher education accountability, Educational Testing Service (ETS) produced a three-part series on assessment for postsecondary student learning: *A Culture of Evidence*. In this series, ETS provides an overview of assessment issues in higher education, reviews currently available assessments, and describes a process of evidence-centered design approach to accountability. The focus of this series is to create a culture of evidence in support of data-driven decision making on college campuses. A culture of evidence is a central factor in building coalitions and campus-wide discussions on campus regarding factors contributing to and improving Latino student success. It provides the support necessary to bring evidence, data, and information into the conversation, engaging multiple audiences in the conversation.

Selecting a College

As will be seen below, there are indicators related to recruitment and enrollment. These indicators tend to ignore the college selection process. *Excelencia*, in their report *Choosing Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs): A closer look at Latino Students' College Choices* (Santiago, 2007), they explicitly examined Latino students' college choices. They argued that the concentration of enrollment of Latino students near their homes leads to the formation of HSIs (although most did not know they were at and HSI. They also found that affordability and factors related to campus climate may determine choice for some. For Latino students at HSIs, cost (with limited concern about financial aid), proximity to home, and access to campus (approachable and helpful faculty and staff, ease of getting around campus and getting information) determined choice. For those not at HSIs, financial aid, campus prestige, and academic programs were important. They also reported that HSIs tend to be less expensive, more accessible, and located in areas with higher Latino populations. A great deal has been learned through study of issues related to access and selection (see Padilla, 2007), including perceived cultural congruence – the congruence between individual cultural values and the public values colleges and universities display in their communications.

Identified Indicators

From the sources reviewed above, we have identified a set of "known" indicators. These indicators cover a wide range of activities, including (a) admissions and financial aid; (b) academic life; (c) cultural environment; (d) on-campus life; (e) campus efforts; and (f) institutional research. These indicators form the basis for a checklist we have created as a tool to start the conversation on campus and serves as a way to begin an inventory of efforts to ensure success of Latino students on campus. These indicators are also accompanied by a brief description, followed by a series of questions that a campus can ask to assess the degree to which each indicator is relevant and monitored on campus.

Indicators Yet to Be Identified

The research literature includes a large number of relevant, important, meaningful, and useful indicators for ensuring the success of Latino students on campus. However, we recognize that many of the conditions, contexts, programs, and efforts that make a difference in the success of Latino students have not been studied empirically or found themselves in the research literature. Many of us that work with Latino students on college

campuses know what works, even if it isn't in the literature. During the development of campus-wide efforts, members of the community must participate in the identification of additional indicators that are known to be important, but have not yet been studied or reported in the research literature. Every campus should review the list of indicators and begin the process of open dialogue, review, and ongoing consideration of what efforts are currently underway on campus to ensure success of Latino students.

From personal and professional experience, faculty, staff, students, and community members from each campus should identify and develop descriptions of the efforts that make a difference in the success of Latino students on campus. This will ensure a comprehensive approach to ensure success of Latino students.

One such indicator is "Policies regarding Recruitment & Support of Undocumented Students" which is not (yet) found in the research literature. We know this is incredibly central to the issues of recruitment, enrollment, and persistence of undocumented Latino students. Similar indicators should be identified, documented, and added to the system of measuring, monitoring, and improving.

Indicators of Latino Supportive Institutions

The research literature includes a large number of relevant, important, meaningful, and empirically supported indicators that have been found to be related to Latino student success in higher education. These are the first areas where we should look to secure Latino student success on our campuses and build efforts to create supportive campuses. However, as described throughout this report, there are other indicators that must be uncovered in each campus that are based on personal and professional experience – those things that we know work with our students on our campuses. The key idea is to determine *What Works* and mobilize resources and efforts on campus in a collaborative inclusive way to build Latino supportive campuses at all Minnesota colleges and universities.

Here we outline a core set of indicators, largely based on the review of the literature, and a brief description. These are the indicators that make up the initial Indicator Checklist found in the Appendix. As additional work is done on this list of indicators and additional indicators are identified on Minnesota campuses, this list will grow.

The following indicators are provided as a way to start the process of identifying relevant indicators for a given campus. The indicators here are followed by a set of questions that are intended to describe the indicator, provide examples of how to thinking about relevant data to measure the indicator, and a guide to developing a comprehensive system of measuring, monitoring, and attaining Latino student success.

INDICATORS

Admissions & Financial Aid

- Comprehensive Admission Program
  - How does admissions view standardized test scores? What is the role of additional supporting information? What is communicated in terms of admission criteria? Does the campus recognize the limited access to college preparatory curriculum of Latino students?
- Comprehensive Financial Aid Program
  - Is the campus able to formulate a comprehensive package to meet full financial need? How are the benefits and risks communicated about each aid option? How does cost compare to the range of Latino family income? Is the balance of financial support sources supportive of Latino students?
- Transfer Support
  - What is in place to secure seamless transfer from 2-year to 4-year programs? Are course and credit requirements described so students know which courses will transfer and count?
- Latino Student Recruitment Plan
  - Are there Spanish-speaking staff available to communicate with Spanish-speaking family members? Are opportunities for Latino student support communicated in recruitment events? Are families given reassurances about opportunities for their involvement in continuing to support their Latino college students? Are the full range of financial aid options communicated in a timely manner—prior to the point the student decides to apply to a college?
- Policies regarding Recruitment & Support of Undocumented Students
  - Does the institution have legal support and policies in place that specify how campus resources can support undocumented students? Is there a process that is integrated in the current system of student support for undocumented students to seek and secure financial assistance? Are support systems communicated to undocumented students—are they described as a comprehensive plan for support to secure academic success and graduation?

Academic Life

- Academic Advising
  - Does the institution provide academic support services, academic skills workshops, and opportunities for students to access academic guidance/advising services? Does the institution monitor student academic progress and offer services to students that appear to be struggling? Is there a Bridge program to develop college-success skills? Are Latino student with disabilities aware of student disability services and accessing those services?
- Measurement of Student Learning Outcomes
  - Has the campus identified important student learning outcomes, such as academic subject-matter knowledge, critical thinking, problem solving, communicating, use of technology, campus engagement, or others? How is the campus measuring student learning outcomes? Are the results disaggregated for Latino students? Is outcome information made widely available and communicated to campus offices that provide support services?
- Access to Faculty
  - Are faculty making themselves available to students on campus? Do Latino students seek out the support and contact with faculty? Are there formal or informal opportunities for Latino students to obtain a faculty mentor early in their college career? Are there opportunities for informal interaction with Latino students and faculty? Does the campus with mentoring programs monitor the quality of the program, including elements of personal, interpersonal, and professional development? Are mentors diverse?

- Student Research Opportunities
  - o Does the institution provide research opportunities with faculty support? Are there on-campus and off-campus research opportunities? Are students provided with information and incentive to participate in research opportunities? Is there an effort to monitor the quality of research opportunities, including level of Latino student involvement and success?
- English Language Support
  - o Does the campus have opportunities for English language learners or those looking to improve their spoken or written English skills?
- Internship Opportunities
  - o Does the institution provide Latino students ways to develop their professional background, knowledge, and skills? Does the campus have business connections that provide professional opportunities, internships, site visits, or professional mentoring? Are the professional internship opportunities available in diverse fields with diverse professionals?

Cultural Environment
- Cultural Competency among faculty
  - o Does the campus communicate expectations for faculty regarding cultural competency? Are there opportunities on or off campus for faculty to develop their cultural competency? Do faculty participate in these opportunities? Is there an incentive structure to encourage participation? Are faculty engaged with Latino students and committed to student success?
- Cultural Competency among staff
  - o Similarly with campus staff and administrators, are there expectations, opportunities, and participation goals for the development of cultural competency among staff? Are staff engaged with Latino students and committed to student success?
- Multicultural Activities & Programming
  - o Does the campus house and support diverse student organizations? Does the institution provide and support speakers, lecturers, and campus events that address cultural issues – or is most cultural programming the result of the efforts of minority or ethnic student organizations?
- Multicultural Curriculum
  - o Is there a multicultural component to the curriculum, either as specific courses that address issues of multicultural plurality, comparative studies, or special topics courses? is there a goal to infuse multicultural aspects into the entire curriculum, as appropriate, by providing support to faculty to identify and include aspects of multiculturalism in their fields?

Campus Life
- Campus Climate re: Diversity
  - o Does the campus measure and monitor campus climate regarding diversity issues? Is there recognition of student diversity on campus in a way that recognizes the contribution of diverse students to the mission of the institution? Are there clear mechanisms of support for Latino students that face or experience racism in any way?
- Mentoring
  - o Do students know what mentoring is? In addition to faculty mentorship, are there other mentoring programs available to Latino students on campus? Is there a student peer-mentoring program in place? Are mentors diverse? Is there evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of the mentoring programs?
- Opportunities for Family Involvement & Continued Support
  - o Is there recognition of the important role of family support in Latino student success on campus? Are there opportunities for families to participate in events on campus? Is there communication with Latino families regarding opportunities and ways to provide support to their college students? Does the campus engage in outreach efforts to the Latino community?

- Student Activities (organizations)
  o Are there active diverse student organizations on campus? Is the financial support (if any) for these organizations based on their goals and mission rather than number of members? Do Latino students participate in non-Latino student organizations? Do Latino students seek and obtain student leadership roles in Latino-based and non-Latino student organizations?
- Student Engagement
  o Does the campus assess student engagement (e.g., use the NSSE) and are the data available for Latino student engagement? Are Latino students engaged in campus opportunities related to learning and personal development?
- On-Campus Housing
  o Do Latino students live in on-campus housing (if available, what percent live on campus)? Does residential life have specific resources or support staff that work with Latino students or provide opportunities for Latino students to be involved in residential programming?
- Physical Grounds & Campus Art/Images
  o Does the campus physical environment, website, printed materials, and displays of art or other images reflect a recognition of culture and diversity on campus and in the word? Do campus architecture, maps and guides, and signage facilitate access around campus?

Administrative Efforts
- Institutional Leadership
  o Is there clear and strong institutional leadership committed to the success of all students, with explicit concern stated publically for Latino student success? Does the campus vision and priorities include Latino student success? Is there leadership in central administration, and within departments, programs, and offices across campus?
- Community Outreach
  o Does the campus provide resources to build community support? Are there regular avenues of communication that involves area and regional Latino communities? Are Latino students involved in the production of campus publications? Are there collaborative activities that bring Latino community members to campus, involving them in decision making, planning, and student support activities?
- Reporting & Communication
  o When the institution collects performance data or evaluation results for campus programming, including teaching, research, and service activities, is this information shared widely on campus? Is this information disaggregated for Latino students – do we know how Latino students are performing relative to campus activities? Are Latino students involved or do they participate in events when the campus releases performance data or results?
  o Does the campus produce a Campus Profile of Latino Student Support and Success?

Institutional Research
- Latino student Enrollment
  o What is the level of enrollment of Latino students on campus? Is this monitored over time? What are the trends in enrollment? Is there an enrollment goal for the campus? Is there commitment to enrolling Latino students on campus? Is this information widely available, shared with important campus offices and organizations, and used for planning and decision making?
- Latino student Persistence & Graduation
  o What is the level of persistence of Latino students on campus? Is persistence information available by department or program area? What is the completion/graduation rate for Latino students? Are there goals for persistence, retention, and graduation for Latino students? Is this information widely available, shared with important campus offices and organizations, and used for planning and decision making?

- Latino student Recruitment, Applications, Admits
  - Does the campus track the number of Latino students that are contacted, provided information, or actively recruited? Does the campus monitor Latino student applications as a cohort – following and tracking the number of applications that make it through the admissions process and tracking the reasons why Latino students are not admitted? Does the campus account for the number of Latino students who are admitted versus the number that enroll and reasons for non-enrollment? Is this information widely available?
- Time to completion
  - Does the campus track time to completion for Latino student by department or program? Is there an effort on campus to attend to the time to completion? Is there a campus goal regarding time to completion?
- Latino Diversity
  - Is there recognition on campus that Latino students are not monolithic – recognizing the diversity of Latino students in terms of gender, national origin, language, and other important individual characteristics? Does the campus monitor the diversity of Latino students in terms of the diversity of the Latino communities in its area or region? Does the Latino composition on campus reflect the diversity of students from Latino communities that apply to the campus for admission?

Selecting and Creating Measures of Important Indicators

*Measurement is the process of assigning a **numeric value** to indicate the quantity of the thing we wish to measure. The most important aspect of measurement is to provide evidence that the measure is meaningful, appropriate, and useful – in effect, its **validity**.*

Measurement is a quantitative activity. However, we know there are important qualitative sources of information that can inform our understanding of the contexts in which Latino students find themselves on our campuses. Measurement provides us with the evidence to make statements about the state of that context or the conditions of educational experiences among students. The measurement tools we have available to us can be classified as standardized or not, national or local instruments, and formal or informal. Most importantly, the measures must be useful, with evidence to support each use. Validity is a key characteristic of all quality measurements – requiring that the inferences and uses of the results of our measurements be meaningful, appropriate, and useful. In order to defend the use of measurement information for decision making, we must have evidence to support each use (evidence to suggest that it is appropriate to use results for a given purpose).

Standardized Measurement Tools

In their series, *A Culture of Evidence*, Educational Testing Service reviewed several published tools to provide measures of broad student outcomes on college campuses. These standardized instruments tend to be national in focus, providing national norms for comparison purposes. Campuses are now adopting many of these tools in the national call for the measurement of Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes and including them in accreditation reports. Campuses that are progressively monitoring student learning outcomes are using this information to improve programming, curriculum development, and student services on campuses.

In the *Culture of Evidence* series, the ETS researchers identified 12 of the most common assessments of postsecondary student learning which are commercially available. These assessments cover a range of outcomes, including (a) workforce readiness and general educational skills, (2) subject specific knowledge, (3) soft skills including ability to work collaboratively and foster positive professional relationships, and (4) student engagement. Most instruments are useful in the settings of technical colleges, community colleges, and 4-year colleges and universities. Exceptions to this include the MFTs and NSSE which are designed for 4-year programs and the CCSSE which is designed for 2-year programs.

Overview of Standardized Student Outcomes Assessments

Assessment Instrument	Student Learning Outcomes			
	Workforce Readiness/ General Educational Skills	Domain-Specific Knowledge	Soft Skills	Student Engagement
Area Concentration Achievement Tests (ACAT®)		☑		
College Basic Academic Subjects Examination (*College BASE*)	☑			
Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency™ (CAAP)	☑			
Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)	☑			
Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)				☑
iSkills™ (formerly ICT Literacy)	☑			
Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress™ (MAPP™)	☑			
Major Field Tests (MFTs)		☑		
National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)				☑
Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS)	☑			
WorkKeys®	☑			
WorkKeys® (*Teamwork*)			☑	

Source: Millet et al. (2007).

The recommendation for selecting a measurement or assessment tool requires a collaborative effort so the following questions can be answered to provide useful information to the widest-audience possible:

Before Selecting a Measurement Tool

1. What kinds of statements would we like to be able to make about Latino students' and our campus' level of support?

2. What evidence of support do we already have (e.g., program evaluations), and what conclusions can be drawn from these data?

3. What decisions about Latino student support can we draw from existing evidence, and how can we support and supplement these decisions with data from new assessments?

Modified from Millet et al. (2007).

Selecting Measures of Important Indicators

Creating a list of indicators is of little use if we do not have strong, meaningful, appropriate, and useful ways to measure them. When selecting tools to measure outcomes, it is important to consider the following factors. The first factor is the most critical.

Selecting a Measurement Tool

1. Does the tool provide the desired information – measures what we what measured?

2. Is there comparative information provided (perhaps a national sample as a reference) to help us gauge our performance relative to similar schools?

3. Is there information provided to compare the performance of Latino students on our campus to those of other campuses?

4. Is there evidence of reliability and validity provided in documentation for the measurement tool?

5. Is the campus interested in using this measure to monitor performance of all students? Can the results be disaggregated for Latino students?

Creating Measures of Important Indicators

Although there are several standardized tools available, as described above, many indicators are not represented in currently available tools. It is important to identify important indicators for which no measure is currently used on campus and no measure is readily available. These indicators then can be defined as relevant on campus and a team can be assembled to create a measure to gather the information needed on that indicator.

In some cases this may include the design of a scale or a survey in some form. There are a few critical steps that must be followed when engaging in instrument development.

Developing a New Measurement Tool

1. The indicator must be clearly and completely defined in ways that others on campus would agree and find useful.

2. A draft instrument must be developed (for example, a written survey).

3. The instrument must be reviewed by all stakeholders on campus (faculty, staff, students, and possibly community members).

4. The instrument should get expert review, from a survey expert and possibly a measurement or research methods expert. This includes "sensitivity" review – include reviewers that examine the instrument specifically for issues related to culture, language, gender issues, or other factors that may be relevant given the index being measured.

5. The instrument <u>must</u> be piloted, to identify any unforeseen problems. A final edit should be done prior to administration.

6. Timing and administration method must coincide with the purpose and intended uses of the information.

7. Reporting should be done in a way that makes the information accessible to the widest possible audience. It would be a good idea to have the report reviewed by the same individuals who reviewed the instrument before it was administered.

Identifying Campus-Specific Measures & Thinking Creatively

Most campuses of higher education in Minnesota have many assessments underway. Nearly every campus seeks accreditation from an accreditation agency to certify the quality of its programs (in some cases, several accreditation agencies to certify specialty areas and various certificate/licensure programs). Many campuses also conduct campus-wide or sample-based assessments to evaluate the impact of its programs or special services. It would be useful in this effort to identify current assessment and measurement practices on campus, to create a list of sources of information that is already collected and available. These assessment activities may be related to student learning outcomes, broadly defined, or to specific outcomes anticipated by specific programs on campus. The various systems, institutions, departments, and programs may all have different assessments in place.

Gathering this information and pulling data for Latino students will help support the effort to measure, monitor, and attain the goal of building a Latino supportive campus.

Minnesota Data & Resources

Several Data Sources are available based on Minnesota institutions of higher education and K-12 system. These sources not only provide reports and data online, but accept special requests for additional or related data. Here we provide a sample of some of the sources and the kinds of reports and data that can be obtained readily online.

Minnesota College Access Network (MCAN)

The MCAN is an advocacy network dedicated to securing access to higher education for all students in Minnesota by providing technical assistance to strengthen college access programs and connect important partners in an "access network". MCAN produces reports and policy statements regarding access to higher education in Minnesota, conducts an annual conference, and provides resources to students, families, educational institutions, and organizations involved in improving educational achievement and access. The report *College Access Matters: The Opportunity for College Access Programs in Minnesota*, provides an inventory of access opportunities in communities throughout Minnesota as well as policy targets for future investment to maximize opportunities for improved access to higher education.

The MCAN website can be found at http://www.mncollegeaccess.org

Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)

The Minnesota Department of Education is primarily concerned with the provision of and condition of K-12 education in the Minnesota. Perhaps the most important information available at the MDE site is about academic performance of students in schools and districts throughout Minnesota. This information can be obtained at the school or district level and disaggregated by race and ethnicity. It provides includes information about graduation rates and trends, that could support enrollment planning and recruitment targets. Finally, there is a page at the MDE site that provides information regarding postsecondary college preparation.

The MDE website can be found at http://education.state.mn.us/mde

Minnesota Minority Education Partnership (MMEP)

The MMEP is a nonprofit collaborative founded in 1987 that has as its mission the success of students of color in Minnesota schools, colleges, and universities. MMEP works in collaboration with students, communities of color, educational institutions, the business community, government agencies, and nonprofits to develop programs and policies that enhance the academic success of students of color. To support this mission, it generates reports and holds workshops and an annual conference that addresses issues relevant to the academic success of students. These publications include the *State of Students of Color Report*, published each 2 to 3 years, documenting achievement trends of students of color in Minnesota Pre-K through post-secondary education programs.

The MMEP website can be found at http://www.mmep.net

Minnesota Office of Higher Education (MOHE)

The MOHE coordinates a public information initiative supported by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, the University of Minnesota, the Minnesota Private College Council, the Minnesota Career Colleges Association, and the MDE. The website includes a wealth of information on students, financial aid, institutions of higher education, and current and new programs and initiatives geared toward improving access to and success in higher education. As an example, the Latino student enrollment data presented below in Section 5 was obtained from MOHE. In addition, they publish an annual report called the *Basic Data Series*, which contains annual and five-year summaries of enrollment data by institution based on headcounts, part-time/full-time status, gender, year in program, and other information.

The MOHE website can be found at http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/

National Data & Resources

National data sources are available that provide national comparative data and in some cases, data for specific states and institutions of higher education. These data sources are publically available at websites where users can download reports and databases. In some cases, there are specially designed data analysis tools to pull specifically designed data from large datasets to answer specific questions. For example, the graduation rate information for the four systems of higher education in Minnesota was obtained from data available online through a special analysis tool at the National Center for Educational Statistics.

Here we provide a brief introduction to a couple of these sources with a description of the kinds of information available.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

The NCES is located within the US Department of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences. It is the primary federal agency for collecting and analyzing data related to all levels of education in the nation. At the NCES, you can find access to several large databases and large survey programs. Two that are particularly useful in the context of building Latino supportive campuses are introduced here.

The NCES website can be found at http://nces.ed.gov

> **Integrated Postsecondary Educational Database System (IPEDS)**
> IPEDS is the core postsecondary education data collection program for NCES, based on a system of surveys designed to collect data from all postsecondary education institutions in the nation. The IPEDS includes information about: Admissions, Room and Board Costs, Graduation Rates, Accreditation Status, Student Financial Aid, Enrollment and Completion.
>
> IPEDS can be found online at http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/

Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS)

BPS is a longitudinal survey following students who first begin their postsecondary education about their experiences during and transitions throughout their postsecondary programs, as well as their experiences in the labor force and family formation. Transfers, persisters, dropouts, and vocational completers are also included. The study began in 1990 with over 10,000 students.

PBS can be found online at http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/bps

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

The NSSE is housed at Indiana University Bloomington, was begun with support from the Pew Charitable Trusts, and is supported by institutional participation fees. The NSSE obtains, on an annual basis, information from hundreds of four-year colleges and universities nationwide about student participation in programs and activities that institutions provide for their learning and personal development. The results provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending college. Survey items on The NSSE represent empirically confirmed "good practices" in undergraduate education. That is, they reflect behaviors of students and institutions that are associated with desired outcomes of college. In the spring of 2008, 15 Minnesota colleges and universities participated in the NSSE. The NSSE has been used for:

- Assessment and improvement
- General education reform
- Benchmarking
- Alumni outreach
- Accountability
- Grant writing
- Institutional research
- Institutional advancement
- Accreditation & self-studies
- Faculty and staff development
- Retention
- Communication with students
- Institutional communication
- State system performance reviews

Information on registering to participate can be found at
http://nsse.iub.edu/html/registration.cfm

Information about using the NSSE can be found at
http://nsse.iub.edu/pdf/Using_NSSE_Data.pdf

Monitoring Progress of
Important Indicators

When data are collected, they must be infused into a system of public presentations, reports to relevant groups, and discussions around campus. All campus members should participate in the **monitoring** *of performance and progress on important indicators.*

S haring information on important indicators creates an environment of collaboration and inclusion. To move this process ahead, each stage in the process in building a Latino supportive campus must be an open and collaborative effort. Through sharing information, integrating that information into campus planning efforts, and employing a data-driven decision making approach, we can more effectively monitor the performance and progress of important indicators.

Understanding Institutional Research & Planning

What processes currently exist on campus to produce institutional research in support of institutional planning? For many campuses, this is tightly related to accreditation processes and demands. It is important to place any new effort to build a Latino supportive campus within the current framework of campus planning. In the literature on organizational learning and development, a leader or entrepreneur in the organization can facilitate the adoption of a new initiative or successfully promote the inclusion of new processes and ideas. Through gaining the support of campus leaders and key program staff, the goals and objectives of building a Latino supportive campus can be woven into institutional research and planning efforts so that they become part of the regular business of the campus – integrated in the standard operating procedures and "institutionalized". It will be critical to integrate the indicators of Latino student success into existing and future campus research and planning.

Student Initiatives

So far, this report and the processes is outlines have focused on campus-based efforts, primarily through the involvement of faculty, staff, and administration. One challenge with great potential for promoting the objectives of this process is to find a way to involve students and the Latino community by providing them with a way to organize and voice their concerns, ideas, and involvement. Providing a mechanism to support student and community initiatives is directly related to the core goal of building Latino supportive campuses – Latino student success.

Within the indicators are activities such as campus climate regarding diversity, mentoring, opportunities for family involvement, student engagement, and student activities, all of which can be facilitated through support of student initiatives. Who better to involve in an effort to build stronger support systems for students than students themselves. These efforts cannot possibly achieve their maximum potential without mechanisms to directly involve students. Each campus should create a way to support student-led initiatives in ways that are consistent with the processes outlined in this report, ensuring student involvement and inclusion at every step.

Creating an Inclusive Monitoring Process

Monitoring is the next step, after collecting information about important indicators. The ability to monitor progress and performance on important indicators requires high-quality collection of the information in a way that facilitates effective monitoring. To create a monitoring process that effectively and efficiently moves the campus toward success in supporting Latino students, the following are recommended.
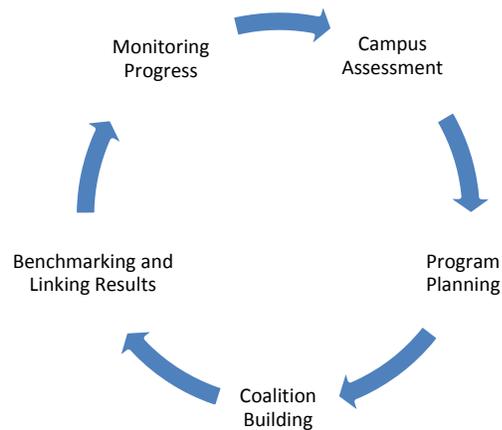
Creating a Monitoring Process

1. Conduct regular data collect on important indicators (by semester or annually).

2. Sample students in a way that ensures representatively. For small campus-based populations, attempt to gather a census of all students.

3. Use instruments that have been verified to be of high quality.

4. Use a variety of sources of information, ideally, more than one measure of each important indicator.

5. Identify appropriate targets or comparison groups – such targets could be normative, relative to other students on campus or similar campuses; or targets could be criterion-based where specific goals are set through a policy decision. These methods are described in Section 5 below.

Data-Driven Decision Making

The process of using data to inform decision making, by explicitly adopting a policy of using data to make decisions and not making decisions without data, is at the heart of data-driven decision making (DDDM). Typically, that process can be described through cycles of data collection and data use portrayed in the figure below.

The Data-Driven Decision Making (DDDM) model provides us with a framework for clarifying objectives and goals, identifying the indicators and measures, collecting the data and relevant information, determine what information might still be needed, and possible activities, practices, and policies that can promote institutional success.

Monitoring Progress

Campus Assessment

Program Planning

Benchmarking and Linking Results

Coalition Building

Again, finding ways to involve students in the process and to allow students the freedom to develop initiatives on their own, is consistent with the overall mission of building Latino supportive institutions.

Setting & Attaining Campus Targets & Goals for Latino Student Success

*To close the loop on a system where we collect data and information on our performance, it is important to have performance standards for assessing our own success. Setting **high goals** will give us targets toward which we can strive.*

Targets and goals that are meaningful, appropriate, and useful provide the motivation for progress. They can unite and organize efforts, mobilize resources, and inspire innovation. Greater progress can be gained by increasing that motivation through collaboration and shared values. It is critical that a collaborative and inclusive process be used to set targets and goals for Latino student success on campus. This begins by defining success. What does a successful Latino student look like? This question must be answered by recognizing the variety of ways Latino students achieve success on our campuses. Through goal setting, providing venues for open and shared dialogues and mechanisms for collaboration, the attainment of campus-based goals for building a Latino supportive campus can be accelerated.

Report Cards and Scorecards

Bensimon (2004) designed a *Diversity Scorecard*, providing a process for campuses to identify and develop their capacity to achieve equitable results for ethnic minority students. The Diversity Scorecard provides the tool necessary for establishing indicators, report data, and provide the means for addressing educational outcome inequities. Evidence is reported and summarized in four areas, including access, retention, achievement, and institutional support.

The Texas Association of Chicanos in Higher Education (TACHE) created a *Latino Scorecard on Texas Higher Education Institutions*, scoring each institution on a set of indicators including the following: instructional resources, graduation rates, faculty diversity, student diversity, equity in student/faculty representation, affordability based on tuition given family income,

and access based on Latino enrollment given regional population. Each indicator was reported as a ratio; the ratios were standardized; the standardized indicator scores were summed to create an overall score through which institutions were ranked (Vega & Martinez, 2007).

It is possible that once a commitment to building Latino supportive campuses is secured on Minnesota campuses of higher education and the MN Network of Latinos in Higher Education promotes the mission of the Network on their respective campuses, we can begin the conversation of creating a MN Report Card for Latino Supportive Campuses, of which student success would be one factor – including faculty and staff success is an important goal of the Network as well.

Setting Appropriate & Meaningful Goals

There are many ways to set goals and targets for which we strive to achieve. These can be done through individual or group-level policy decisions, consensus or aggregated judgments of what constitutes success, or other methods by which we identify an appropriate comparison or reference by which we judge our own success. There are two classifications for the kinds of goals and targets (inferences) that we have to consider, including norm-referenced goals and criterion-referenced goals.

Norm-Referenced Goals & Targets

One way to think about setting goals is to identify relevant and meaningful comparison groups or organizations. Comparisons can be internal: Are we doing better this year than last year? Comparisons can be external: Are we doing better than other schools in Minnesota? These are norm-referenced goals: How are we doing compared to the norm – compared to our peers? How is Latino student participation in campus activities compared to other student groups? How does the Latino graduation rate compare to other groups?

These questions refer to how one campus is doing relative to others (the reference is to the norm). These goals are relevant and meaningful in building awareness of relative performance. In some cases, the important aspect of performance is relative. However, these types of interpretations do not give us information about how well a campus is doing in and of itself – how successful the campus is in terms of its potential.

Criterion-Referenced Goals & Targets

Another way to think about setting goals is to identify relevant and meaningful targets to achieve, without regard to the performance or success of other groups or campuses. What is an appropriate enrollment target for Latino students? What Latino student graduation rate would we consider to be successful? How many Latino students should participate in campus activities? What Latino academic achievement level should we strive to achieve?

These questions refer to how the campus is doing relative to some absolute level of performance (the reference is absolute level of success as defined by the campus, not dependent on the performance of other groups or campuses). These goals are relevant and meaningful in creating a shared sense of what level of performance constitutes success.

Example: Goals for Enrollment

One way to think about setting goals for enrollment of Latino students is to identify relevant and meaningful comparisons. Comparisons could be internal: Are we doing better this year than last year? Comparisons can be external: Are we doing better than other schools in Minnesota? These are norm-referenced goal: How are we doing compared to the norm – compared to our peers? Alternatively, the goal could be set in a criterion-referenced way, based on some standard the institution determines is appropriate, typically through some policy-based decision. This is to simply set a goal, without regard to the performance of peer institutions.

Data from the Minnesota Office of Higher Education (described in Section 3) was analyzed for fall 2007 undergraduate enrollment, as reported by each campus in the state. The total enrollment by system and the total Latino enrollment by system are reported below. When setting enrollment targets, this could be done in one of several ways:

1. Using the average (or 75th percentile for example) enrollment rate for the System (e.g., State Universities) as a target enrollment rate for your campus (norm-referenced);

2. Look outside your particular system and base your enrollment target on the performance of other systems or the state average (norm referenced); or

3. Determining that some absolute enrollment rate (e.g., 4.5%) is appropriate given historical trends, population of surrounding area, or population of applicants (the criterion-referenced goal).

More specific enrollment targets could be set within a given campus by evaluating current enrollment and enrollment trends by other factors, including degree seeking status, full-time/part-time status, class standing, and even gender. These tables for fall 2007 undergraduate enrollment by MN higher education system are provided in the Appendix.

Fall 2007 Undergraduate Enrollment

Minnesota Higher Education Systems	Total Enrollment	Total Latino Enrollment	Latino Enrollment Rates		
			Average	Minimum	Maximum
State Universities	51,968	684	1.3%	0.4%	3.3%
Community & Technical Colleges	98,696	2,414	2.5%	0.2%	6.2%
University of Minnesota	42,077	905	2.2%	1.1%	2.5%
Private Colleges & Universities	40687	979	2.4%	0.7%	5.8%

Source: MOHE, 2008.

Example: Goals for Graduation

Similarly to setting enrollment goals, we can think about setting goals for graduation of Latino students, by identifying relevant and meaningful comparisons. And just as with enrollment goals, comparisons could be internal: Are we doing better this year than last year? Comparisons can be external: Are we doing better than other schools in Minnesota? These are norm-referenced goal: How are we doing compared to the norm – compared to peers?

Data from the IPEDS (described in Section 3) through the National Center for Education Statistics was analyzed to compute three-year averages from 2004 to 2006 undergraduate total and Latino graduation rates, as reported by each campus in the state. The total enrollment by system and the total Latino enrollment by system are reported below. When setting graduation targets, this could be done in a way that was described in the three points above for setting enrollment targets.

However, we believe that norm-referenced goals for graduation rates for Latino students fall short of the goal to build Latino supportive campuses. One possibility, and a strong tendency, is to strive to achieve similar graduation rates across subgroups – an equity principal is used to set goals. This, in our eyes, is not sufficient. Given the arguments presented earlier for the establishment of the MNLHE and the purpose for this report, the only goals we can support and defend on all grounds is to set graduation rate targets of 100%. **All Latino students** admitted to higher education campuses in MN should graduate.

The numbers of Latino students on MN campuses varies a great deal, but are relatively low. In most cases, we know most if not all Latino students on our campuses individually. Because of this, we could identify and target individual students with the support system and services that we know will help make them successful. But we are also pragmatic. We know there are students (Latinos and others) who are not well prepared and do not fit in their chosen field, program, or campus. College drop-out is inevitable, because selection and fit will never be perfect. But to strive for anything less than 100% completion will allow us to slow the development of efforts to support EVERY Latino student on our campuses.

Fall 2007 Undergraduate Graduation Rates

Minnesota Higher Education Systems	Total			Latino		
	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Minimum	Maximum
State Universities	45%	26%	54%	32%	0%	45%
Community & Technical Colleges	29%	10%	59%	24%	2%	73%
University of Minnesota	56%	32%	59%	42%	0%	46%
Private Colleges & Universities	69%	40%	90%	60%	33%	86%

Note: Graduate rates are based on 3-year averages from 2004-2006.
Five 2-year schools were excluded from analysis due to missing information.   Source: IPEDS, 2008.

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Appendices

I.   Indicator Checklist

II. Student-Level Indicators: A Literature Review

III. Latino Enrollment in MN Colleges and Universities:
     Data Summaries

IV.   Latino Student Campus Experience Survey