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AN EMERGING HISPANIC SERVING INSTITUTION LOOKS TOWARD THE  
FUTURE: A CASE STUDY ON A COLLABORATIVE, COMMUNITY-BASED  
SYSTEMIC CHANGE EFFORT AT AN URBAN LAND-GRANT COLLEGE

---

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the Morgridge College of Education

University of Denver

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

---

by

Eric Dunker

2012

Advisor: Dr. Nick Cutforth

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Author: Eric Dunker

Title: AN EMERGING HISPANIC SERVING INSTITUTION LOOKS TOWARD THE FUTURE: A CASE STUDY ON A COLLABORATIVE, COMMUNITY-BASED SYSTEMIC CHANGE EFFORT AT AN URBAN LAND-GRANT COLLEGE

Advisor: Dr. Nick Cutforth

Degree Date: June 2012

### **Abstract**

Many higher education organizations face the issue of structural isolation (Ruben, 2004) based on a lack of integration and functional coordination between faculty, staff, and students. Community-based research (CBR) offers higher education a more collaborative, wider reaching avenue of organizing a variety of stakeholders around social change. The CBR model is an atypical change model due to its interdisciplinary, participatory, and collaborative structure that values multiple sources of knowledge and focuses on social justice action. As opposed to serving as the 'experts' who were performing research on a community of people, academics and community members who utilize CBR focus on the importance of co-learning, capacity building, findings to benefit all partners, and a long-term commitment to reduce social disparities. Taken in the context of higher education, CBR allows students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders to work together as partners around areas that involve social justice issues.

This dissertation highlights an instrumental case study that took place between 2006-2012 involving an Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution and its effort to use principles similar to those found in CBR around organizational change. Themes that were identified in the study include cynicism/fear, sustainability, participatory action, commitment to social justice, transparency, and interdisciplinary spirit.

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## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

#### **Background of the Problem**

Community-based research (CBR) brings together a mix of people from very different worlds and requires that they engage in conversations to accomplish a challenging and complex task: designing and executing a research project. (Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoecker, & Donohue, 2003, p. 9)

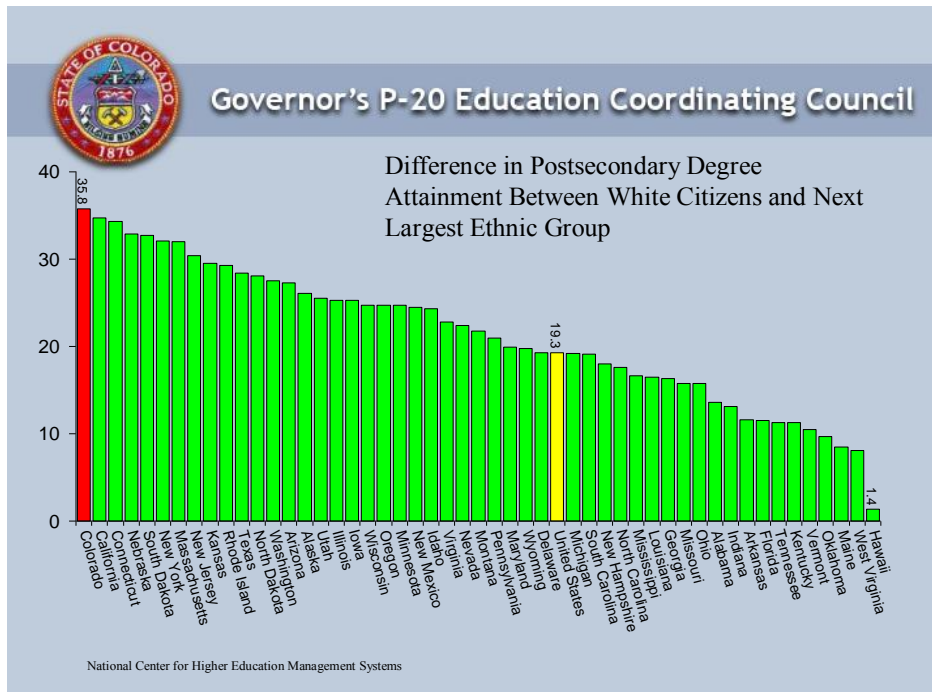
Colorado has been experiencing an educational achievement conundrum that has reached a serious crossroads due to the current lack of funding and sustainable infrastructure in state k-12 and post-secondary education (Kelderman, 2009). The Colorado conundrum describe the phenomenon of Colorado's high rate of adults with bachelor's degrees, compared to Colorado's extremely low rate of in-state high-school graduates who go on to college (Harbour, 2006).

The conundrum lies in the fact that Colorado is one of the most educated states in the nation, yet one of the worst when it comes to educating its own citizens (Frosch, 2008). More specifically, Colorado ranks second in the nation in adults per capita over the age of twenty-five with a bachelor's degree but has the highest bachelor's degree attainment gap between Caucasians and Latinos in the nation with an over 35 percent difference (Table 1.1) (National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2010). An alarming achievement gap is also found among graduating high-school seniors in Colorado, where Latino high-school graduates rank 40 percent and 32 percent points

below Caucasian students in relation to college readiness in English and math, respectively (ACT, 2011).

**Table 1.1**

**Difference in Postsecondary Educational Attainment**



Colorado ranks 49<sup>th</sup> in state per capita higher-education funding (NCES, 2007) and 47<sup>th</sup> in sending and graduating in-state students from college (Redding, 2008). This situation has made it especially difficult for public colleges and universities that primarily serve in-state students to develop infrastructures to help tackle this issue (Harbour, 2006).

The Colorado conundrum could most likely be explained as a by-product of a migrated, educated Caucasian workforce and an inadequate in-state educational system (Bell Policy Center, 2005). This is supported by Colorado ranking 45<sup>th</sup> in the country in relation to percentage of native-born population with a post-secondary degree (NCHEMS, 2007). At the same time, between 1995 and 2000, Denver had the second

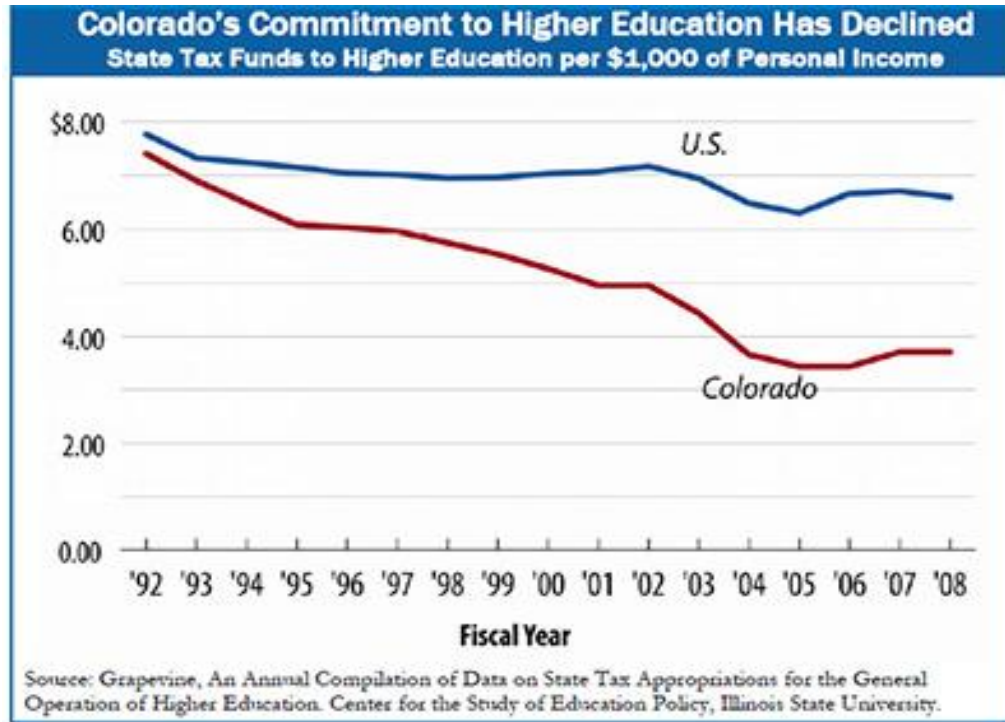
highest migration rates for college-educated adults for any city in the country (Bell Policy Center, 2005; US Census, 2000). Merisotis (2012) explained the Colorado Paradox:

The state ranks among the highest in the proportion of the population with a college degree, but among the lowest in the proportion of state residents who complete college.... Relying on other states [to educate Coloradans] is no longer a viable strategy, so graduating more residents from college is vital for Denver's and Colorado's economic future.

Fowler (2009) made the distinction between equality of opportunity and equality of results. Since citizens (or non-citizens, such as undocumented students) under the age of eighteen in the U.S. have access to public education, many assume that any inequality in educational achievement is due to individual effort rather than systemic shortcomings in the educational system (Fowler, 2009). In Colorado's case, since the state boasts its high rate of adults with bachelor's degrees, there has been an underlying assumption that the state invariably has a solid educational infrastructure that promotes educational opportunity to its citizens. Due to perhaps an assumption that the state is doing well in relation to educating its citizens, based on Colorado's high ranking in adults with bachelor's degrees, tax-cutting initiatives like the taxpayers' bill of rights (TABOR) were passed in Colorado, further crippling the state government's capacity to support education (Harbour, 2006). This notion is supported by the fact that, in 1984-2004, Colorado had the steepest decline in state appropriations to higher education (67%) than any state in the country (McLendon, Hearn, & Mokher, 2009).

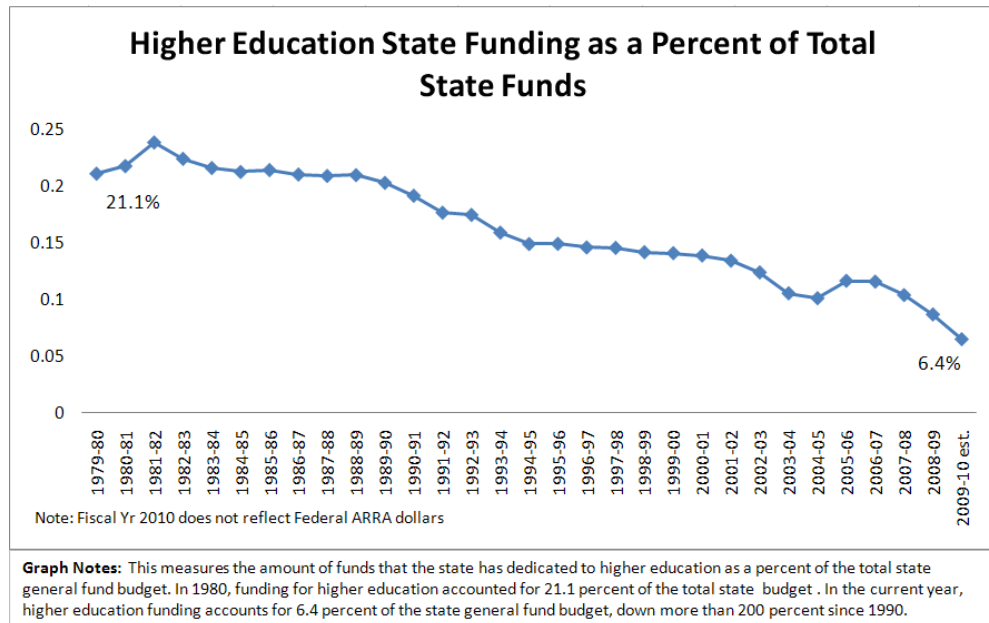
**Table 1.2**

**Colorado State Appropriations for Higher Education Compared to U.S. Since 1992**



**Table 1.3**

**Higher Education State Funding in Colorado Over 30 Years**



If the bachelor degree attainment gap between Caucasians and Latinos is ever going to narrow in Colorado, then Metropolitan (Metro) State College of Denver will have to play a major role. Metro State College is an urban, four-year, non-residential public college charged with serving the surrounding seven-county Denver Metro area, which comprises 93 percent of its students. The Denver area has a fast-growing Hispanic/Latino population, which almost doubled 1990-2000, according to the 2000 U.S. census. The college currently serves 23,000 students, including more students of color than any other in-state, public, four-year college in Colorado (Colorado Department for Higher Education, 2010). Especially significant is that Colorado is projected to see a 31 percent increase by 2014 in jobs that require a bachelor's degree (NCHEMS, 2010). Without serious post-secondary reform, the Colorado bachelor-degree attainment gap will only widen and further reduce sustainable employment and economic opportunities for its citizens of color. (See table 1.4 below.)

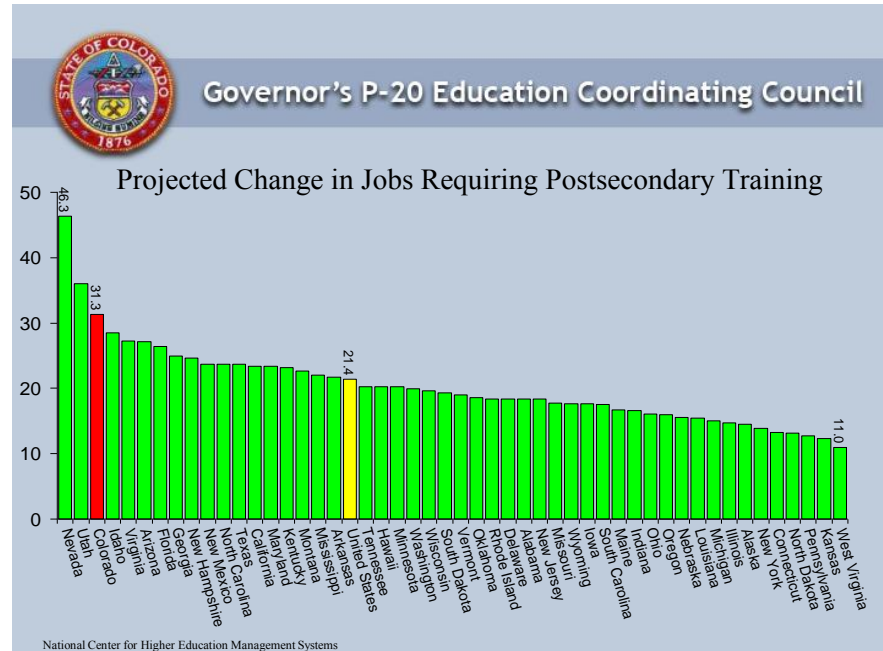
Many leaders at Metro State College of Denver, including the president and associate vice president of enrollment, publicly acknowledged its historically poor retention rates, graduation rates, and relatively unstable infrastructure, stating that they are unacceptable for a postsecondary sustainable enterprise and require tackling the complex issues surrounding the Colorado Paradox (Brough, Door, & Jordan, 2009). The president of Metro State College, Dr. Stephen Jordan, was quoted during an interview with a local news organization:

We were providing an opportunity to fail – knowing some students were likely to drop out and leave with debt, and saying, “That’s too bad.” Now, we want to

create opportunity. The student is making an investment in this. We have a responsibility to help share their success. (Poppin, 2009)

**Table 1.4**

**Percentage Change for Jobs Requiring Post-Secondary Education**



Even though Metro State College of Denver had the lowest tuition and lowest admissions standards of any four-year public college in Colorado, it was also the lowest funded per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) and possessed the lowest graduation rates and first-year student retention rates of any four-year college in Colorado (Colorado Department of Higher Education, 2010). It was clear that Metro State College had become an accessible institution without adequate resources or tangible pathways to success for its students.

According to Gorski (2006), multicultural education and social justice are “an institutional matter, and as such, can be secured only through comprehensive school reform” (p. 3). In 2007, the president of Metro State College of Denver assembled a



large-scale, college-wide taskforce charged with forming recommendations as the college moved toward becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI); this was projected to happen by 2015. Metro State College was, thereby, considered an Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution (Santiago & Andrade, 2009). During this effort, President Jordan made it clear that Metro State College would shift from providing students with an opportunity to “fail” to an infrastructure that provides an opportunity for “success” (Santiago & Andrade, 2009). While HSI status, a federal designation for colleges with a student population of at least 25 percent Hispanic/Latino, opens up a college for some federal Title V funding, Metro State College of Denver did not want to wait for the designation before they began to make systemic changes at the college.

Due to Metro State College of Denver’s overwhelming lack of resources, as well as its acknowledgment of a need for systemic improvement in all functional areas, they adopted a collaborative, interdisciplinary, and participatory approach similar to the principles and framework of community-based research (CBR) to form and operationalize the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce. According to Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoecker, and Donohue (2003), the concept of CBR is aligned with the historical mission of land-grant universities, which were intended to be “regional institutions shaped by and responsive to local conditions, local problems, and local needs” (Strand et al., 2003, p. 2). CBR incorporates three main principles:

- CBR is a collaborative enterprise between academic researchers and community members.

- CBR validates multiple sources of knowledge, and promotes the use of multiple methods of discovery and dissemination of the knowledge produced.
- CBR has its goal social action and social change for the purpose of achieving social justice. (p 8)

Community-based research offers higher education a more collaborative and wide-reaching avenue of organizing a variety of stakeholders around social change. However, also CBR presents a unique challenge to higher education institutions. Many higher-education organizations face the issue of structural isolation (Ruben, 2004), based on a lack of integration and functional coordination between the faculty and staff. According to Ruben (2004), many faculty members in higher education have little to no operational involvement in areas such as enrollment services, student life, and personnel training. Likewise, many nonacademic administrators or classified staff members rarely get involved in curriculum issues (Ruben, 2004). By contrast, Metro State College of Denver's CBR approach to the Emerging HSI Taskforce allowed them to begin tackling the Colorado Paradox in a collaborative and interdisciplinary manner.

In respect to the first principle of CBR, each Emerging HSI Taskforce subcommittee at Metro State College of Denver was co-chaired by an academic faculty member and either a non-faculty administrator or staff member. According to Birnbaum (1988), the most collegial departments or organizations place less emphasis on job status and hierarchy and focus more on common commitments and collective responsibilities. The Emerging HSI Taskforce committee was open to any student, staff, faculty, or administrator at Metro State College of Denver who wanted to join. The committee was

involved at the very beginning of the research process, all the way through forming the fifty-five recommendations and into the implementation phase. As for principle two, Metro State College of Denver faculty, administrators, classified staff, and students were considered intellectual equals by structural standing on the committees. Finally, in respect to the third principle of social action and social change, the taskforce centered their energy on tackling the issue of the Colorado Paradox and the historical “opportunity to fail” for students at Metro State College of Denver.

In the conclusion section of Morrison, Howard, Johnson, Navarro, Plachetka, & Bell’s (1997) published community-based research project, they wrote: “Moreover, universities need to consider being partners in promoting community involvement and interdisciplinary work” (p. 533). While others have made similar pleas to the academy (Emerson, 1837; West, 1989), most universities are hardly in a condition to follow through based on the internal organizational disconnect many find themselves in. For colleges and universities that have a charged mission to serve the underserved, an internal change strategy based on the principles of CBR may be the first step in a long road toward reinventing the university’s role in the community.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Recent calls for an increased focus on higher-education institutions toward civic engagement (Kellogg, 1999; Spellings, 2009; Strand et al., 2003) typically have focused on external relationships between higher education and the community. Metro State College of Denver lives within its own paradox. It possesses the identity of both an institution of higher education and an underserved community organization. Hundreds of PhDs fill the ranks of faculty, while the college offers accredited bachelor’s (and more

recently master's) degrees to students who fulfill the appropriate requirements. At the same time, Metro State is an institution that (a) provides its services to historically underserved populations (i.e., students of color and first-generation college students), (b) possesses a 20 percent graduation rate (the lowest among its peer institutions), and (c) is the lowest-funded four-year public institution per FTE in the state.

Metro State College of Denver has a local (99% of students are in-state), community-based focus to provide accessible post-secondary education to thousands of students in the Denver metro area. The institution has admitted that it has failed to deliver its services in an effective way. In a proactive response to the challenging issues posed by the Colorado Paradox, combined with diminishing state appropriations and support, Metro State's main avenue for systemic change would have to come from within the institution. Instead of taking a discipline-specific approach, in which admissions professionals would work on areas such as recruitment policy, academic faculty would work on areas involving curriculum policy.

Therefore, Metro State College of Denver's Emerging HSI Initiative involved intentional collaboration across disciplines and position titles. This process also involved acknowledging and validating multiple sources of knowledge irrespective of position title or employment status, and also centered on the social-justice issues stemming from the Colorado Paradox and educational achievement gap.

### **Significance of the Study**

The purpose of this case study (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003) was to investigate the organic community-based research approach of Metro State College of Denver's Emerging HSI Initiative and its impact on the college and individuals on the taskforce as

the college moved toward becoming an HSI. The community-based research (CBR) model is an atypical higher-education change model due to its intentional, interdisciplinary, participatory, and collaborative structure that values multiple sources of knowledge and focuses on social-justice action. As such, this model is in direct contrast to the traditional, discipline-specific, silo-based structure that is common in higher education (Ruben, 2004).

This study determined the extent to which the CBR model might be useful to other traditionally underserved institutions that serve a high rate of urban college students in higher education, when they consider engaging employees, students, and community members in a systemic change process. In addition to the many recommendations for systemic institutional change and improvement, this study analyzed the impact of the CBR approach of the Emerging HSI Taskforce to help bring to the forefront issues of inequality involving post-secondary opportunities (Fowler, 2009).

### **Research Questions**

1. How was the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce conceived? (a) What were its aims and goals? (b) How was the taskforce implemented and operationalized?
2. How effective was the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce in creating a more collaborative and social action-oriented organization?
3. To what extent and by what ways were the three principles of community-based research utilized in the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce from its conception to implementing the recommendations?

4. As state appropriations for public higher education continue to fall, what are the implications of the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce effort at Metro State College of Denver for (a) systemic change in higher education and (b) the field of community-based research?

### **Study Scope and Limitations**

The Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce initiative involved a case within a bounded system (Metro State College of Denver). This case study involved the collection of multiple sources of data over a four-year time span (2007-2011). The data included (a) qualitative interviewing of committee members, (b) taskforce documents including the final report, (c) personal reflections from the my own involvement on a committee, and (d) analysis of the context behind Colorado's higher-education climate.

According to Stake (1995, p. 8), the focus of a case study is more on the “particularization” of the case itself, rather than its generalizability toward other cases. Because this was a single, instrumental case study (Stake, 1995), this dissertation primarily focuses on the inner workings of the community-based approach that Metro State College of Denver used for its Emerging HSI Taskforce. This research also took place four years after the final Emerging HSI Taskforce report had been completed; therefore, many taskforce members had to reflect back over a large time period. This dissertation also has no comparison study or comparable case study analysis in the literature. Therefore, the effectiveness of this study's model was limited to the experiences of the domain and circumstances over the four-year time span at Metro State College of Denver.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of Literature**

#### **Theoretical Framework and Overview**

For this qualitative case study, I used the principles of community-based research (CBR) as a theoretical construct to investigate the effectiveness of the CBR infrastructure of the Emerging HSI Taskforce in a multicultural landscape from its initial formation through over four years after its final report was handed in (Strand et al., 2003). Based on the lack of any mention about CBR principles in the final Emerging HSI report, it is assumed that the Emerging HSI Taskforce organizers did not knowingly take the specific principles of CBR and apply them to the group. However, it is hypothesized that the community-based approach utilized by the taskforce is similar to the principles of CBR. These principles, which include action research and participation-action research, social justice, collaboration, knowledge sharing, and community organizing are analyzed in this literature review.

This review of the literature begins with analyzing some historical criticisms regarding the role (or lack thereof) of active learning in the field of education. The notion that active, engaged learning is disconnected from higher education is an important element to the study, and it follows Strand et al.'s (2003) assertion that higher education is failing to civically engage its stakeholders toward lives of social responsibility and civic engagement. This literature review then continues with an historical overview of

CBR, followed by a detailed analysis of the three main principles of CBR, which highlight the major theoretical framework used to analyze the effectiveness of the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce.

The literature review then highlights two published CBR projects and outcomes, along with a case study that focused on collaboration as a catalyst for systemic reform in a particular institution of higher education. The literature review concludes with an historical overview of Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), along with an overview of Metro State College of Denver's designation as an urban land-grant institution. The theoretical framework in this chapter includes Ruben's (2004) models of traditional silo structures in higher education as well as the cross-functional approach model used by Metro State College of Denver in support of the community-based research approach.

### **Education as an Active, Democratic Process**

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1837), in his American Scholar commencement speech to Phi Beta Kappa at Harvard, challenged the professorate to move from “parrots of other men’s thinking” (passive) to “men thinking” (active) (p. 54). In that speech, Emerson wrote: “There goes in the world a notion, that the scholar should be a recluse, a valetudinarian ... as unfit for any handiwork or public labor, as a penknife for an axe” (p. 61). According to Emerson (1837), people are brought into a world of wonder and promise, but eventually turn into hopeless, uninspired men who feel disillusioned by a system in which they feel powerless. In Emerson’s rhetoric, America is a place where the individual can play a part in shaping the world he or she wants to live in.



As hinted in Emerson's speech, higher education is an industry and organization rooted in European tradition and bureaucracy. This, Emerson argued, is based on a reliance on the European sense of self, which relied on direction from the state. Emerson presented an intentional challenge to the leaders in the industry to be mindful of the roots of how men privilege knowledge and scholarship (through books), and to form a more American system of scholarship, which includes ingenuity, freedom, action, and individuality. Emerson was, in a sense, challenging the academy to separate itself from its European roots and to become leaders of promoting knowledge through action.

Some critics of Emerson, such as West (1989), said that Emerson did not challenge the power and systems of the new American democracy that failed to create equitable opportunities for all citizens. However, on the surface, Emerson presented a clear challenge regarding the notion of knowledge as an active process open to all *men* (emphasizing Emerson's focus on men) rather than a passive process privileged by few in the academy.

John Dewey (1916), in *Democracy and Education*, promoted the idea that students have the ability to create new knowledge through facilitating complex problem-solving that allows students the freedom to explore new ways of thinking. Education, in Dewey's opinion, is where the notion of democratic participation can best be learned and facilitated. Dewey promoted the concept of formal education as a response to an increasingly complex, growing society.

Dewey also said that learning is enhanced in community, rather than in isolation. According to Dewey (1916), in formal education a society is more equipped to provide

resources at appropriate times to children at their various ages and points in development. However, some downfalls of the formal-education landscape of which Dewey warned have taken hold of the modern American educational system (Duckworth, 2006; Eisner, 1994). Dewey (1916) wrote:

Why is it, in spite of the fact that teaching by pouring in, learning by a passive absorption, are universally condemned, that they are still so entrenched in practice? That education is not an affair of “telling” and being told but an active and constructive process, is a principle almost as generally violated in practice as conceded in theory. (p. 38)

Emerson’s (1837) and Dewey’s (1916) ideas regarding the nature of active learning and participation in a democratic society through education are often emulated by many modern-day curriculum theorists. Their ideas, however, have fallen victim to the narrowing of curriculum and pedagogy in American schools due to a focus on standardized test scores, dry content, and surface-level achievement-oriented learning (Duckworth, 2006; Eisner, 1994; Nieto, 1999). Eisner (1994) wrote:

The sentient human is not simply a passive material that, like moist clay, receives the impress of the empirical world, but is an active agent that selects and organizes aspects of that work for cognition. (p. 26)

Eisner (1994) wrote that our current educational system aims for high scores on standardized tests that require lower-order thinking skills. Since our educational system is designed with a utilitarian approach for the masses, in which the content and curriculum are for only a privileged few, the curriculum is formed by a top-down, bureaucratic structure that offers little flexibility or creativity for the teachers or students to actively teach and learn.

The current American educational system, according to Eisner (2002), assumes that all students begin at the same place. Even though this is never the case, as Eisner suggested, the American educational system would still fall short, because it assumes that all communities are similar (i.e., based on standardized tests that are used to measure success that all students in all communities must take). It is no wonder, according to Nieto (1999), that gross inequalities stemming from few teachers of color, severely under-resourced schools, and high drop-out rates for students of color continue to persist. Many issues faced by Metro State College of Denver can, perhaps, be seen as a byproduct of many of the inequalities and failure of our current educational system.

An important question to consider is whether or not community-based research (CBR) and the traditional social-science fields are mutually exclusive. If the role of social science is to research issues affecting society as a whole, why then does CBR need to exist? Greenwood and Levin (2005) argued that social scientists in academia are just as guilty as others in the profession for allowing the educational system to remain disconnected from society at large. According to Greenwood and Levin, social scientists have aligned their discipline with traditionally accepted concepts of knowledge and scholarship in higher education, rather than aligning with the very subject of their discipline: society.

In this sense, the principles of community-based research are alternative processes that can be implemented in our schools and communities to facilitate validating multiple sources of knowledge and to foster community participation (including teachers, students, and community members) in shaping the aims and curriculum of schools. Strand et al.

(2003) offered a useful table (Table 2.1) which contrasts the approaches of traditional academic research with that of CBR.

**Table 2.1**

**A Comparison of Traditional Academic Research and Community-Based Research**  
(Strand et al., 2003, p. 9)

	<b>Traditional Academic Research</b>	<b>Community-Based Research</b>
<b>Primary goal of the research</b>	Advance knowledge within a discipline	Contribute to betterment of a particular community; social change, social justice
<b>Source of the research question</b>	Extant theoretical or empirical work in a discipline	Community-identified problem or need for information
<b>Who designs and conducts the research?</b>	Trained research, perhaps with the help of paid assistants	Trained researchers, students, community members in collaboration
<b>Role of the researcher</b>	Outside expert	Collaborator, partner, and learner
<b>Role of community</b>	Object to be studied (community as laboratory) or no role	Collaborator, partner, and learner
<b>Role of students</b>	None, or research assistants	Collaborators, partners, learners
<b>Relationship of the researchers and the participants-respondents</b>	Short-term, task-oriented, detached	Long-term, multifaceted, connected
<b>Measure of value of the research</b>	Acceptance by academic peers (publication, for example)	Usefulness for community partners and contribution to social change
<b>Criteria for selecting data collection methods</b>	Conformity to standards of rigor, objectivity, researcher-control; preference for quantitative and positivistic approaches	The potential for drawing out useful information, sensitivity to experiential knowledge, conformity to standards of rigor, and accessibility,; open to a variety and combination of approaches
<b>Beneficiaries of the research</b>	Academic researcher	Academic researcher, students, community

<b>Ownership of the data</b>	Academic researcher	Community
<b>Mode of presentation</b>	Written report	Varies widely and may take multiple and creative forms (for example, video, theater, written narrative)
<b>Means of dissemination</b>	Presentation at academic conference, submission to journal	Any and all forums where results might have impact: media, public meetings, informal community settings, legislative bodies, and others

### **Community-Based Research Overview**

CBR is a partnership of students, faculty, and community members who collaboratively engage in research with the purpose of solving a pressing community problem or effecting social change. (Strand et al., 2003, p.3)

Community-based research, as defined by Strand et al. (2003), typically arises out of a campus-community partnership. Thus, the CBR model usually involves faculty and students from a college campus who are partnering with a community partner considered to be underserved. In the case of Metro State College of Denver and the Emerging HSI Taskforce, the “community” is defined as the greater campus community outside of the traditional faculty ranks. It is important to note that Strand et al. (2003) suggested that community in the context of CBR also can include educational institutions that have been historically underserved.

Strand et al. (2003) wrote that community-based research had developed around three major forces: (a) widespread criticism of higher education’s disconnect from communities, (b) concern around the increasingly narrow view of research from the professorate, and (c) the recognition that colleges needed to take a more active role in developing the civic capacity of students. While Strand et al. (2003) did not go into great

detail about the major forces influencing CBR, the writings of Emerson (1837), Dewey (1916), Eisner (1994) Duckworth (2006), and Nieto (1999) has provided grounded insight into major criticisms of American education, in support of CBR's theoretical structure.

### **Historical Influences on Community-Based Research**

Strand et al. (2003) pointed to three historical influences of community-based research. These include: (a) a popular education model that emphasized the involvement of people in educating themselves for social change, (b) an action research model used by academics in conjunction with major social institutions, and (c) a participatory research model that emphasized the involvement of people in doing their own research for social change (p. 4).

The popular education model, according to Strand et al. (2003), is most often associated with the work of Paulo Freire (1970). It also can be traced back to the phenomenon of the settlement house movement, which began in the early twentieth century when some wealthy young women moved into poor communities to provide services to the underserved (Strand et al., 2003). The Hull-House project in Chicago involved neighborhood residents as research partners when mapping land patterns. This model became a large part of the social service agenda for the Hull House movement. Strand et al. (2003) also wrote that the Highlander Folk School in the Southeast U.S., which emphasized a popular education model in which people were encouraged to generate their own knowledge, was also a huge influence on the origins of the modern community-based research (CBR) movement.

The action research model, the second basic influence on CBR, can be traced back to the action model of social psychologist Kurt Lewin (1948), which focused on democratic relationships between managers and workers in an effort to increase productivity (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Strand et al., 2003). However, this model is seen as a more conservative influence on CBR (Strand, et al., 2003). This is primarily due to the lack of focus on the placement of equal value on community participation and on the failure to challenge existing power relationships.

The participatory action research model, according to Kemmis & McTaggart (2005), entails three main traits: (a) shared ownership of research projects, (b) community-based analysis of social problems, and (c) an orientation toward social action (p. 560). Greenwood and Levin (2005) noted that participatory action research directly challenges the divergence of theory and practice in the social sciences. In the case of the traditional social sciences, critics have argued that the typical claim in neutrality or objectivity only further justifies the interests of people already in power. This is noted as the final major influence on CBR.

Strand et al. (2003) discussed an example from the early 1970s when scientists found that teams of students and village workers, who were studying issues such as unemployment and socioeconomic causes of malnutrition, actually were more effective in eliciting information from the research subjects than the scientists themselves. The scientists concluded that their own privileged way of conducting research and disseminating knowledge had only reinforced the model tied to western domination and influence.

## **Collaboration**

CBR's purpose is to create or discover knowledge that meets a community-identified need, but the role of community members goes beyond simply identifying the research topics or question. Ideally, CBR is fully collaborative—that is, where community people work with professors and/or students at every stage of the research process: identifying the problem, constructing the research question(s), developing research instruments, collecting and analyzing data, interpreting results, producing the final report, issuing recommendations, and implementing initiatives. (Strand et al., 2003, p. 6)

In community-based research, everyone involved in the process is considered both the researcher and the learner. This includes the traditional academics, students, and community partners. According to Strand et al. (2003), traditional research that consults community members typically provides those individuals with limited, task-oriented roles. This is in opposition to the long-term, multifaceted relationship with community partners in the CBR process. Strand et al. (2003) made it clear that the CBR process does not necessarily devalue the academic expertise or traditional research training that many professors or students can bring to the table. Their training and skill sets can offer the community new ways of approaching research. Rather, the collaborative nature of CBR respects the knowledge-base of community partners.

Strand et al. (2003) suggested that a full 100 percent collaboration on every phase of a CBR project, while desirable, might not be perfect in practice. For instance, (a) researchers could be unwilling to give up their roles as the traditional experts, (b) students may appear insensitive with community partners due to a lack of experience in the community, and (c) community partners may lack the time and resources to fully partake in the CBR process. Even though the issue of full collaboration among all partners at all stages might not be appropriate in some instances and may be difficult to



measure, collaboration is still an important and critical goal of successful CBR partnerships. Strand et al. (2003) offered ten principles of successful community-campus partnerships at three different stages (see Table 2.2).

**Table 2.2**

**10 Principles of Successful CBR Partnerships at Three Different Stages (p. 29)**

<b>Entering Partnerships</b>	<b>Conducting Partnerships</b>	<b>Outcomes of Partnerships</b>
1. Share a worldview	4. Share power	8. Satisfy each other's interests or needs
2. Agree about goals and strategies	5. Communicate clearly and listen carefully	9. Have their organizational capacities enhanced
3. Have trust and mutual respect	6. Understand and empathize with each other	10. Adopt long-range social change perspectives
	7. Remain flexible	

### **New Approaches to Knowledge**

In order for the collaborative nature of community-based research (CBR) to be effective, the knowledge, background, and experience that each party brings to the project must be equally valued. Most importantly, this second principle brings the voice of a population that traditionally has lived on the margins of research to the forefront of the process (Strand et al., 2003).

CBR requires acknowledging the validity of the local knowledge generated in and through practice in community settings and weighing this alongside institutionalized, scientific, and scholarly professional knowledge familiar to faculty and students. CBR answers the question, "Whose knowledge counts?" (Strand et al., 2003, p.11)

Due to the validation of multiple sources of knowledge in using CBR, unconventional methods and criteria that help to disseminate the sources of knowledge and its applicability to a CBR project are widely used. However, Strand et al. (2003)

cautioned that it is imperative to “eschew rigorous methodological rules or protocols” (p 12). Since CBR focuses and validates the local knowledge-base, partners typically choose methodologies that are more sensitive to the perspective of their participants. Therefore, qualitative methods tend to be more prevalent than the traditional researcher-controlled environment.

Community organizations and researchers rely on tangible results that can support their efforts around social justice (Strand et al., 2003). It is critical for successful CBR projects to incorporate multiple research methods that will produce data that is meaningful to the community partners. This most often involves the use of more open-ended questions and informal interviewing.

In addition, results of such a study must also be synthesized in a way that is comprehensible to the neighborhoods and community organizations. Strand et al. (2003) wrote that while the CBR process challenges traditional power structures of how knowledge is validated, this process also encourages academic researchers to challenge their own assumptions about knowledge and research and is especially challenging for people who are used to publishing research results in traditional academic journals. Therefore, flexibility and open-mindedness of all community partners and researchers are paramount to the CBR process (Strand, et al., 2003).

According to Eisner (1994), knowledge is dependent on experience that can be both lived and borne out by the imagination. The traditional concept of knowledge is only privileged if it can be empirically tested. Eisner wrote: “In more conventional usage, the term knowledge is restricted to a ‘warranted assertion’ of which there are two kinds:

analytic and synthetic” (p.31). The analytical assertion of knowledge, according to Eisner, are those assertions borne out of logic, such as “two plus two.” The synthetic proposition is a more general assertion about empirical conditions that only a community of those considered “competent” can validate (the academy). While Eisner (1994) did not dispute this view of knowledge as invalid, he suggested that it is short-sighted.

Biologically speaking, according to Eisner (1994), our concepts are formed through our senses as we experience the world around us. Thus, Eisner’s view of knowledge as experience seems to validate the second principle of community-based research regarding knowledge-sharing and equal value being placed on what every community partner can bring to a CBR project. If an academic is working in an environment that he or she has only read about rather than have lived, collaboration and knowledge-sharing with a community partner or partners are crucial.

According to Greenwood and Levin (2005), traditional working definitions of knowledge in higher education tend to be grounded in explicit form in the context of words, numbers, and figures (p. 49). They wrote:

We intend to create a different picture by expanding the understanding of what counts as knowledge to include bridging concrete practical intelligence and reflective and value-based reflectivity. (p 49)

CBR is not defined as either a purely quantitative or qualitative approach (Strand et al., 2003). Since the overall intention of CBR is to obtain information that will contribute to a social-change effort, methodologies vary from project to project. Thus, knowledge through the lens of action research is seen as contextual (Greenwood and Levin, 2005).

Due to the complexities of some CBR projects, professionals from multiple disciplines may be called upon to assist in conducting research. However, no matter what the domain or discipline, community partners with local knowledge must be fully utilized as part of the CBR team (Strand et al., 2003). The research problems and questions to be investigated must be derived using the knowledge-base and expertise of the community partners in an effort for the entire CBR team to look more holistically at the issues at hand.

In an example of comprehensive or systemic institutional higher-education reform, using Eisner's concepts of knowledge, any reform would not be fully comprehensive that did not include the classified workers, students, entry-level administrators, and community members as equal partners along with upper-level administrators and faculty. According to the final Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce report (2008), these groups were present in various capacities throughout the Emerging HSI Initiative process. The degrees to which their difference perspectives and voices were valued and used in the taskforce were analyzed in this case study.

### **Social Action or Social Change**

While the community-based research (CBR) process focuses on the authentic collaboration and knowledge-sharing of all participants, the main goal of CBR is to produce social action or social change (Strand et al., 2003). The information generated in a CBR project, through enactment of the first two principles of CBR, ultimately should better equip universities and community organizations to create more targeted missions, increase awareness, and mobilize resources. Strand et al. (2003) wrote:

The ideal form of social change that CBR seeks to contribute to is to alter some aspects of the political, social, or economic institutional operations or cultural context that give rise to a problem. (p. 81)

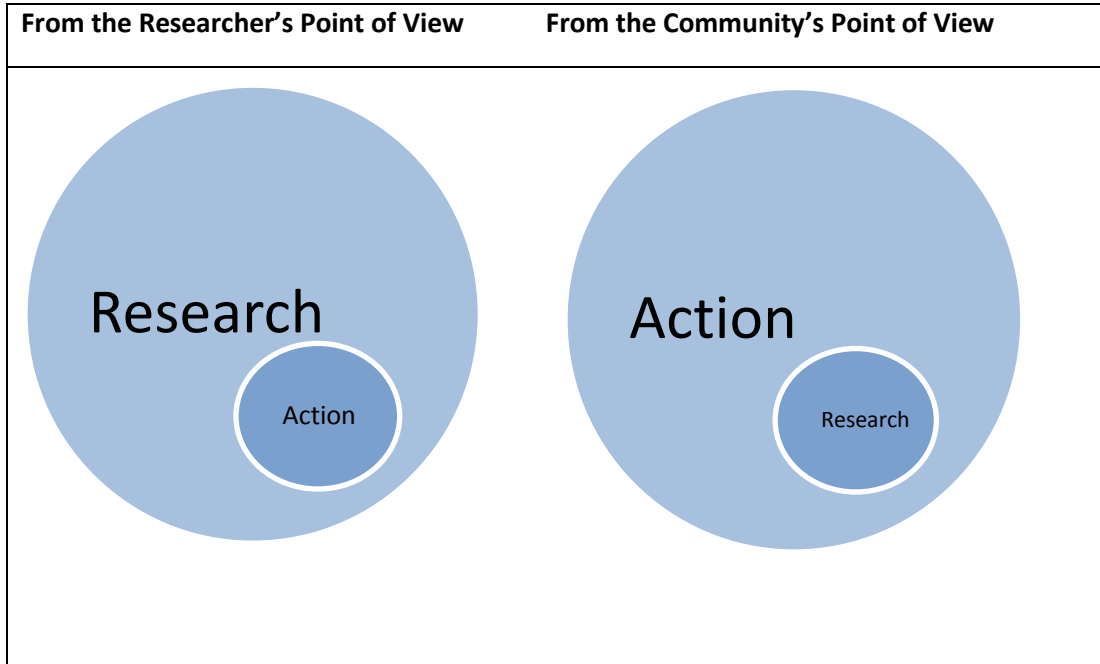
While many CBR projects address smaller aspects of larger social agendas in communities, the goal of these projects is to generate momentum toward broader social agendas as well. Perhaps most importantly, a successful CBR project helps to empower others, build stronger capacities within the community, and mobilize other pressing social issues.

Strand et al. (2003) identified five steps in the social-change model or action area of CBR, distinguishing this process from traditional research methods: (a) choosing a problem, (b) identifying resources and solutions around a problem, (c) developing a plan, (d) implementing the plan, and (e) evaluating. In addition, Strand et al. (2003) lay out five steps for the research aspect of CBR: (a) identifying the research question, (b) choosing a research design and method, (c) collecting the data, (d) analyzing the data, and (e) reporting the results.

Strand et al. (2003) cautioned academic researchers, who wish to take on a CBR project, about the importance of partnering with experts in the community who can organize at the grassroots level as well as educators who can relate to and connect with the people in the community. In contrast to traditional research, in which the validation and publication of results are the end goal (Greenwood & Levin, 2005), a successful CBR project is only seen as successful if the research and information compiled help the people in the community take action toward their social-justice goals (Strand et al., 2003). Thus, the action derived from the research takes precedence. Strand et al. (2003) illustrated this fundamental difference (see Table 2.3).

**Table 2.3**

**Differences in Perspective on the Role of Research** (Strand et al., 2003, p. 82)



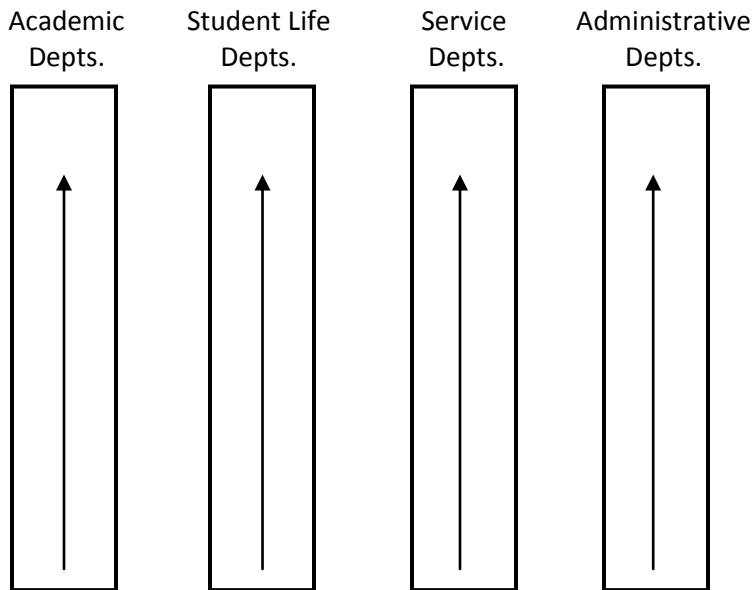
**Silo Structures as Barriers to Change in Higher Education**

According to Manning, Kinzie, & Shue (2006), a functional silo is defined as a department or service developed around a specialty area or focus that has its own administration, budget, and a singular reporting line. Departments or services developed around a specialty area can see themselves as separate, rather than as related to other departments on the campus. This can create a culture of disconnect among departments, faculty, staff, and students. Higher-education organizations are often structured in the silo format (Ruben, 2004). Ruben (2004, pp. 225-227) presented two illustrations of a traditional silo-structure organization (Table 2.4) versus a cross-functional organization (Table 2.5).

**Table 2.4**

**Traditional Silo Structures in Higher Education**

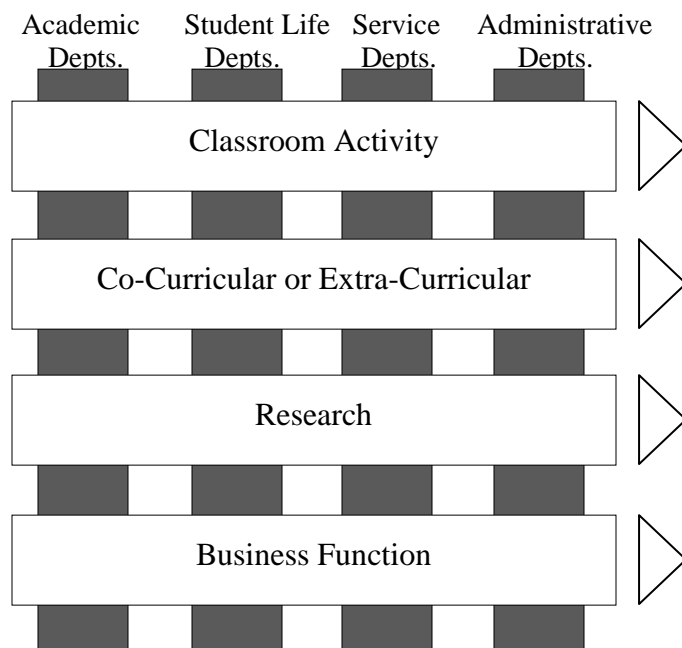
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**Table 2.5**

**Cross-Functional Approach in Higher Education**

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Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, and Associates (2005) wrote that student success cannot be enhanced by the efforts of single office units acting in isolation of one another. With the increasingly large numbers of students who have widely differing needs and demographics, collaboration across departments, units, and personnel is essential for the enhancement of student success. Kuh et al.'s (2005) project, known as the Documenting Effective Educational Practice (DEEP) study, sought to identify best practices at colleges that performed well in the areas of student engagement and graduation rates.

Student engagement was measured in the form of five clusters: (a) level of academic challenge, (b) active and collaborative learning, (c) student interactions with faculty members, (d) enriching educational experiences, and (e) supportive campus environment. The DEEP study used data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which is administered to over 600 colleges annually (Kuh et al., 2005). The DEEP study concluded that the twenty campuses that had demonstrated the highest engagement and graduation rates did not work in functional silos or administrative-based models. Rather, they operated in a more cross-functional manner (Table 2.4).

It is important to note that the DEEP study (Kuh et al., 2005) did not focus on organizational change; rather, it focused on existing effective organizational culture. The DEEP study is relevant to this dissertation research because it equated similar principles found in CBR, such as collaboration and knowledge diversity, as keys to effective high-impact practices in higher education. Kuh et al. (2005) concluded:



- DEEP campuses encourage and reward cross-functional activities focused on student success.
- DEEP campuses tighten the philosophical and operational linkages between academic and student affairs.
- DEEP campuses harness the expertise of other resources.
- DEEP campuses make governance a shared responsibility.

DEEP campuses form partnerships with the local community. (pp. 311-312) For example, some of the most identified departments within student services include Financial Aid, Registration, and Admissions (Komives, Woodward, & Associates, 2003). Although these offices typically work under the umbrella of student services and have some overlap, in a functional-silo approach these offices most often work separately within their specific domains and do not collaborate on a regular basis.

Colleges in the DEEP study (Kuh et al., 2005) worked with organizational models that encouraged collaboration between functional areas, rather than recognizing each specialty as a separate function. Senior leaders were held accountable to model the way to create a collaborative and highly effective organizational culture. Although Metro State College of Denver's administrative model was set up as a functional silo, this dissertation case study has analyzed how the Emerging HSI Taskforce structure and CBR model allowed for cross-collaboration and interdisciplinary development within a functional silo-structured organization.

## **Applications of Community-Based Research in Higher Education**

According to Kezar and Eckel (2002), organizational change research in higher education tends to be mostly theoretical. They argued that there is a lack of tangible case studies about organizational change at actual institutions of higher education. There are no published research studies on CBR approaches within an internal higher-education organization that has a systemic change focus toward creating more tangible pathways for students of color. In the Kezar and Eckel study (2002), one of the few published organizational-change studies performed on actual institutions of higher education, rather than analyze specific approaches used, mostly focused on how culture effects institutional change.

However, there have been published studies using the CBR approach in areas such as public health, community organizing, and social work. This section first describes a case study that focused on the effects of collaboration on curriculum reform at a particular institution. Then this literature review analyzes three particular CBR/CBPR studies, keenly focusing on how each of the studies used the three main CBR principles. These published studies are important to this dissertation because of their focus on action research and the collaborative nature and knowledge-sharing of research partnerships.

### **Collaboration as a Catalyst in Curriculum Reform (2010)**

Oliver and Huyn's case study (2010) analyzed the use of collaborative engagement as a change strategy in an institutional curriculum-reform process. Their study examined the four-year process and focused on relationships between faculty and administrators as partners in the reform effort. However, this particular study did not use

or reference community-based participatory research. While the study alluded to the use of administrators alongside faculty in the curriculum-reform process, it did not mention the role of students, alumni, classified staff, or any community partner. The authors mentioned a lack of research on specific institutional reform efforts as a challenge, and they only focused on generalized theories of organizational change in their literature review.

According to Oliver and Huyn (2010), barriers to collaboration in relation to curriculum reform include power struggles related to academic disciplines, resources, time, and shared-governance. The authors concluded that administrators and faculty seemed to agree that a curriculum is better defined as a process, rather than by its content; that the process is a shared responsibility. Thus, their review focused on examining the curriculum as a holistic process. The curriculum committee had been a voluntary taskforce that extended an invitation to every campus faculty and administrator. Faculty or administrators from departments participating in the curriculum reform had stated that the process greatly enhanced both intra-departmental and inter-departmental collaboration. One faculty member described his department as

...one of the more unified departments on campus now. And I contribute that totally to the curriculum review process; it really got us talking about what was going on in our courses, because nobody really knew what the others were teaching. (Oliver & Huyn, 2010, p. 12)

In addition to the enhanced sense of community and connection that the faculty and administrators felt toward one another, the taskforce participants believed that this process had increased their loyalty and created a culture of trust at the institution. That study seemed to echo Morrison et al.'s (1997) analysis, in its call for universities to

consider promoting interdisciplinary work through enhanced collaboration of inter-departmental faculty.

### **Community-Based Participatory Evaluation Research Study (2009)**

Puma, Bennett, Cutforth, Tombari, & Stein (2009) conducted a case study using a community-based participatory evaluation research (CBPER) model, along with two community partners to determine if the services the partners were providing were effective for their clients. In this project, the three principles of community-based research analyzed were: (a) full collaboration of all partners, (b) valuing each participant's knowledge-base through an equitable division of labor, (c) and a keen focus on social justice (in this case, delivering effective community services to historically underserved populations).

This study used a mixed-methods methodology based on information the community partners felt they needed. Puma et al. (2009) concluded that promising practices stemming from this partnership included: (a) creating a sustainable support system between the university and community partners, (b) collaboration in all phases of the project, and (c) value added for all partners based on the information and research obtained. The authors suggested that while different parameters present each CBPER project, this particular study contained important lessons for further study based on the clear collaboration between the partners, which had created mutual trust, direction, and support.

Puma et al. (2009) discussed some downfalls of their study, such as a restricted timeframe which affected the quality of the mixed-methods research. The authors also

stated that there had been insufficient focus on program theory, as well as some unforeseen barriers to key clients (refugees) who had participated in the study. While there was collaboration during all phases of the CBPER project between the university and community partners, the community partners had failed to include refugees (part of their clientele) when forming their research questions. While it is important for full collaboration between a university and its community partners, it is equally important for the community partners to include the various stakeholders of their organizations when planning a project; this is something the university partner has less control over because they are not the experts on how the community organization delivers its services. Therefore, Puma et al. (2009) suggested facilitating potential barriers to all partners in relation to the programmatic focus on a study before it begins. In this case, more time could have been spent on the theoretical construct of the study, along with increasing collaboration in the community in an effort to gain a more holistic view of the task at hand.

#### **A CBPR Study Addressing Health Disparities (2006)**

Wallerstein and Duran's (2006) study focused on the challenges and growth of community-based participatory research (CBPR) in the context of the research-community relationship. The Wallerstein et al.'s (2006) study used CBPR in the domain of integrating education and social action to improve health and to reduce health disparities. According to the study, CBPR proposed a set of principles similar to those proposed by Strand et al. (2003), which included a focus on the importance of co-

learning, capacity building, findings to benefit all partners, and a long-term commitment to reduce social disparities. Wallerstein et al. (2006) wrote:

CBPR, however, is not simply a community outreach strategy but represents a systematic effort to incorporate community participation and decision making, local theories of etiology and change, and community practices into the research effort. (p. 313)

Wallerstein et al. (2006) emphasized that issues related to participation and control in CBPR are rarely static; that even when projects are initially driven by the university, there is always the potential goal to work toward a mutually beneficial relationship and community-driven agenda. Wallerstein et al.'s study tracked changes in a grant-funded partnership with two native tribes. Based on the authorship of the grant and control over the funds, the university initiated the CBPR project. The tribes assisted the university by writing the grant; however, it took several years for the tribes to take ownership of the process.

The transfer of ownership and initiative between the university and community partners took place after the university had transcribed the data results from the study and disseminated it among the tribes. During the first and second years of the grant, the community partners were encouraged to participate in the formation of the research questions and the frameworks for conducting the research in the community. Wallerstein et al. (2006) wrote:

It wasn't until the second year, however, until the tribal committee members began to realize they were in the "driver's seat" as they saw that their earlier discussions and questions were transformed into the specific interview and focus group instruments. Yet, they also expressed concern about the burden of extra time commitment and drain away from their other responsibilities, especially as they began to participate as interviewers in the data collection, along with the university research team. (p. 314)

It wasn't until the third year, when both the university and community partners were synthesizing the research, that the community partners took ownership of the CBPR project. The tribal partners even changed the committee name to that of a local research team.

This study provided an example of both the challenges and rewards of conducting CBPR. While the study was conducted using CBPR in the context of a university-community partnership as part of a grant to improve health disparities in tribal communities, the results of the study are applicable to the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution case study because of the documented timeframe regarding the balance of ownership and participation between the university and community partners.

### **Historical Context of Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs)**

While the principles of community-based research were used as the theoretical model for analyzing the Metro State College of Denver's Emerging HSI Initiative, it was also important to understand the background of HSIs and their role in providing post-secondary pathways for Latino students in America. While other designated colleges, such as historically Black colleges and universities and tribal colleges are designed to serve specific populations, HSIs have the flexibility to serve all community members and still receive federal resources; thus, helping all students and community members regardless of their race or ethnical background (Hurtado, 2003).

The theoretical makeup of HSIs, according to Laden (2004), can be explained through the context of a critical multicultural perspective. As higher-education institutions take the social and cultural differences of students into account, the

institutions must restructure in an effort to reduce alienation and to strive for greater equity. The critical multicultural perspective considers that a systemic historical bias against racial-minority and low-income students has been embedded in these institutions. Thus, this paradigm shift is helping to transform institutions from operating with a mono-cultural framework to one that is multicultural in nature.

The concept of the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) came in the 1980s from the formation of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities organization (HACU), the main lobbying organization for HSIs (Santiago, 2006). However, unlike HBCUs and tribal colleges, almost every HSI began as a predominantly white university (Hurtado, 2003). During the first congressional hearing in 1983 on HSIs, two major themes developed:

1. Latino students lacked access to higher education, and many who had begun degree programs did not complete them.
2. Latinos were concentrated at institutions of higher education that received limited financial support to improve their quality of education. (Santiago, 2006, p. 6)

During the reauthorization of Title III of the 1992 Higher Education Act, Congress included federal funding for accredited non-profit colleges that had an Hispanic population of at least 25 percent (Santiago, 2006). This officially created federally recognized HSIs. Since then, HSIs have been included in Title V reauthorizations and have been awarded over 500 million dollars.

While HSIs, according to Santiago (2006), only represent about 6 percent of all institutions of higher education, in the United States they enroll close to 50 percent of Latino students. There are now over 242 two-year and four-year colleges with a



designated HSI status, and many more designated as Emerging HSIs. An Emerging HSI is a college or university that possesses a 15 percent to 24 percent Latino/Hispanic student population.

By virtue of the surrounding community's demographics, Emerging HSIs are projected to become full HSIs within ten years or less (Santiago & Andrade, 2010). Metro State College of Denver falls into this category. While the main purpose of HSI funding is for post-secondary institutions that serve at least 25 percent Latino students to improve their educational quality, Metro State will not be eligible for any federal funding through Title V until they become a recognized HSI.

### **The Urban Land Grant**

In order to better understand Metro State College of Denver's vested interest in becoming an Hispanic Serving Institution, it is important to reflect on the significance of the land grant; specifically, the urban land grant. The Morrill Act of 1862 and the second Morrill Act of 1890 both influenced the growth and development of many land-grant universities (Caple, 1998). About 1900, legislatures began to support the idea of a university as a symbol of state pride. Most of the land grants were given to states to build flagship universities on a designated area of previously unoccupied land. This is a primary reason why most flagship universities are located outside of the main urban centers in their respective states (Caple, 1998). The role of the land grant was to increase access and to help states provide their citizens with educational opportunities so they, in turn, could be more productive and provide the state with more skilled workers.

The subsequent growth of higher education through the public land-grant institutions created through the Morrill Acts was intended to provide more educational opportunity for citizens of the United States. However, until the 1940s, higher education was still dominated by white, upper-class males (Thenlin, 2003). In a report to Congress in 1947, President Harry Truman envisioned permanently expanding access and affordability to higher education. Subsequently, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, also known as the GI bill, was introduced (Thenlin, 2003). It increased access for underrepresented populations and changed the face of higher education.

With the advent of the GI Bill and America's increasing population after World War II, a need for urban colleges sprang up to provide a more regional focus (Thenlin, 2003). Unlike the land grants of the 1800s, where undeveloped land had been given to build flagship universities, between 1950 and 1970 many states and cities decided to build commuter-style campuses in existing urban areas in order to keep up with the demand for higher education (Thenlin, 2003). The modern junior college, multi-campus system, regional college, and community college were all created during this time. The majority of these campuses were created as open-access institutions, essentially meaning that as long as a student had a high-school diploma or GED, he or she was eligible to attend.

Most public institutions created between 1950 and 1970 were financed through state appropriations at much lower rates than land-grant and flagship institutions, even though the public colleges could rely on grant money or out-of-state tuition for additional revenue streams (Thenlin, 2003). This resulted in an unintended consequence for

community and regional colleges; they had to do “more with less” (Thenlin, 2003, p.18). Since most state appropriations for higher education are based on a college’s full-time equivalent (FTE) number, most colleges (both existing and those that were newly created) that were supposed to work in conjunction with one another became engaged in an aggressive competition for students. Thus, while enrollments have been booming since the 1990s, many regional four-year colleges and two-year community colleges, in conjunction with the local, state, and federal governments, have failed to build an infrastructure that can sustain this growth (Thenlin, 2003).

In the context of social justice, many regional, urban land-grant colleges have far fewer resources to serve less-prepared students (Saxton & Boylan, 1999) than public state-flagship or land-grant research universities. Due to the open-admission policies of most urban land grants, many of these institutions spend a considerable amount of their budget on remedial education (i.e., pre-college level classes) to help their students reach college-level skill sets in reading, writing, and math (Saxton & Boylan, 1999). Furthermore, students of color are often placed in remedial classes at disproportionately higher rates than white students. It can be argued that many of these educational inequities in higher education simply serve as an extension of America’s K-12 system (Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2003).

### **Metro State College of Denver’s History As an “Urban Land Grant”**

An historical background of Metro State College of Denver illustrates its Latino/Latina community roots. The town of Auraria, Colorado was founded in 1858 by northern European gold prospectors. By the 1920s, it had become a thriving

Latino/Latina community in Denver, following migration patterns after the Spanish American War (Kronewitter, 2005). While the town of Auraria incorporated with the Denver central business district in the later 1800s, its identity remained with the name of Auraria.

After a major flood in 1965, the Denver Urban Renewal Project decided to relocate the current residents of Auraria and to build a tri-institutional campus that would include an extension of the University of Colorado (University of Colorado at Denver), a community college (Community College of Denver), and a regional baccalaureate college (Metro State College of Denver) (Kronewitter, 2005). Forty-five years later, Metro State College of Denver is on the path to becoming an Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), allowing the college the opportunity to serve a community that was so important to the area's historical development. The final Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce report (2008) states:

Further, the mission of the larger HSI initiative is to equitably educate the residents within the geographical area Metro State is legislatively intended to serve including Hispanics. Our vision of success is to create the means by which Hispanic students can reach their full potential through increased recruitment, matriculation, and graduation while at the same time ensuring all students are likewise assisted through the HSI efforts. (p. 1)

## **Chapter Three**

### **Research Method**

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Recent calls for an increased focus on higher-education institutions toward civic engagement (Kellogg, 1999; Spellings, 2009; Strand et al., 2003) typically have focused on external relationships between higher education and the community. Metro State College of Denver lives within its own paradox. It possesses the identity of both an institution of higher education and an underserved community organization. Hundreds of PhDs fill the ranks of faculty, while the college offers accredited bachelor's and, more recently, master's degrees to students who fulfill the appropriate requirements. At the same time, Metro State is an institution that (a) provides services to historically underserved populations (i.e., students of color and first-generation college students), (b) possesses a 20 percent graduation rate (the lowest among its peer institutions), and (c) is the lowest funded four-year public institution per FTE in Colorado.

Metro State College of Denver has a local (99% of students are in-state), community-based focus to provide accessible post-secondary education to thousands of students in the Denver metro area. The organization has admitted that it has failed to deliver its services in an effective way. In a proactive response to the challenging issues posed by the Colorado Paradox, combined with diminishing state appropriations and

support, Metro State's main avenue for systemic change would have to come from within the organization.

Instead of taking a discipline-specific approach, in which admissions professionals would work on areas such as recruitment policy and in which academic faculty would work on areas involving curriculum policy, Metro State College of Denver's emerging HSI initiative has involved intentional collaboration across disciplines and position titles. This process also has involved the acknowledgement and validation of multiple sources of knowledge irrespective of position title or employment status; the process also has centered on the social justice issues stemming from the Colorado Paradox and educational achievement gap.

### **Research Questions**

1. How was the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce conceived? (a) What were its aims and goals? (b) How was the taskforce implemented and operationalized?
2. How effective was the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce in creating a more collaborative and social action-oriented organization?
3. To what extent and by what ways were the three principles of community-based research utilized in the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce from its conception to implementing the recommendations?
4. As state appropriations for public higher education continue to fall, what are the implications of the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce effort

at Metro State College of Denver for (a) systemic change in higher education and (b) the field of community-based research?

### **Qualitative Research and Case Study**

According to Creswell (2007), qualitative research is more useful when the researcher wishes to explore a group or system that cannot be measured accurately in a controlled setting using predetermined variables. A case study, one of the five major qualitative methodologies (Creswell, 2007), is utilized when researchers wish to gain an in-depth understanding and meaning of a particular situation or case. The focus is more on the process of a particular case as opposed to specific outcomes that may have arisen from the case. A qualitative case study focuses on a bounded system with events that take place over time in the natural environment and also involves multiple sources of information.

According to Stake (1995), a bounded system is likely purposive and involves an integrated system. Stake wrote: “The parts do not have to be working well, the purposes may be irrational, but it is a system. Thus people and programs clearly are prospective cases” (p. 2). While Stake (1995) considered the case study more of a choice of inquiry of what to study rather than a methodology, Creswell (2007) defined a case study as a methodology based on the unique design and case-based themes and descriptions that can develop. In addition, Merriam (1988) suggested that case studies are also particularistic, descriptive, holistic or heuristic, and inductive in nature.

This case study of the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce Initiative is an instrumental case study, because (a) it focuses on the unique situation that a case

itself provides, (b) focuses on a single issue or concern, and (c) only involves one bounded case (Creswell, 2007). Stake (1995) suggested that an instrumental case study focuses on a particular case in an effort to gain an understanding of a phenomenon or theoretical concept. In this case, the framework of community-based research (CBR) was analyzed in the context of an institutional systemic change process in an urban, post-secondary public institution.

In addition, this case study is what Merriam (1988) considered historical in nature. Historical case studies utilize primary source materials and involve a description of the bounded system's evolution over time. According to Merriam, an historical case study involves more than a mere descriptive and chronological history of an event. An historical case study also includes contextual analysis that involves assumptions behind a phenomenon that took place and its impact on an institution and/or the participants. Thus, an historical case study includes a mix of both description and interpretation.

### **Transactive Voice**

According to Eisner (1998), to interpret or make meaning in qualitative research, a researcher must possess a sense of awareness about the particular situation that is to be researched. Creswell (2007) stated: "The researchers' interpretations cannot be separated from their own background, history, context, and prior understanding" (p. 39). Since I had a personal role in the Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce as the chair of the Curriculum Subcommittee, I used Eisner's notion of the transactive voice (Eisner, 1998). Eisner suggested that the transactive voice, as opposed to the objective account or



subjective account, is most appropriate when conducting qualitative research. In Eisner's words:

Since it is mediated by our mind, the world cannot be known in its ontologically objective state. Since what we know about the world is a product of the transaction of our subjective life and postulated objective world, these worlds cannot be separated. (p. 52)

In an effort to maintain validity and reliability of the research, I followed Eisner's criteria when appraising transactive accounts. This included coherence, consensus, and instrumental utility (Eisner, 1998).

Coherence in qualitative research is determined by issues such as tightness of argument, the usage of multiple sources of data, and structural corroboration or triangulation of data. Stake (1995) suggested that in order to triangulate data, one must "present a substantial body of uncontested description" (p. 110). In order for one to gain consensus, other readers, participants, researchers, or experts would have to concur on the consistency of what was reported regarding their experiences. Simply put, instrumental utility involves the potential usefulness of a study (Eisner, 1998). A good qualitative case study can make meaning of a broader, multivariate situation and can provide a useful context for people who could undertake a similar study in the future (Yin, 2003).

### **Narrative Structure**

Merriam (1988) argued that a case study is only effective beyond academia if it is written with the intended audiences in mind, that one must focus on a major theme or message desired to communicate. In the case of the Emerging HSI case study, I focused on the usefulness of a community-based research (CBR) approach in the context of institutional change in an urban land-grant institution. I wrote the case study using

Creswell's (2007) embedded, rhetorical-structure format. In this format, the case-study researcher had attempted to frame the case from a broader picture toward one that was narrower. This was also my intention in describing the greater context of the Colorado Paradox compared with Metro State College of Denver's role in the community.

Creswell also cautioned case-study researchers to be cognizant about the amount of mere description used in a report. Therefore, I attempted to evenly balance my own description along with the analysis and interpretation. Due to CBR's focus on social change, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing (Strand et al., 2003), throughout my report, I have focused on the descriptive chronology of events surrounding the Emerging HSI Taskforce along with embedded analysis of the central themes of community-based research.

### **Role of the Researcher – A Personal Disclosure**

I served as a full-time administrator at Metro State College of Denver between September 2005 and July 2010; I also served as the chairperson of the HSI Curriculum Development Subcommittee, elected by my peers. I believe that my experience as a twenty-seven-year-old, nonacademic student-affairs administrator in charge of a college-wide curriculum committee was a direct result of the collaborative, interdisciplinary nature of the HSI Initiative. Based on my experience and research into traditional silo structures in higher education, I believe that my interdisciplinary and community-based nature of task-force initiatives was an atypical model and approach toward producing systemic change.

Due to my participation in the task force, this case study reflects my experiences at Metro State College of Denver. However, I believe that, through the utilization of multiple sources of data, I have been able to present a valid and transactive account of the Emerging HSI Taskforce through the theoretical lens of community-based research (CBR). Many of the primary sources used in the Emerging HSI Taskforce, including the final report, are open for public scrutiny on the Metro State College of Denver website, which highlights the HSI Initiative.

### **Data Collection Procedures for the Emerging HSI Case Study**

#### **Human Subjects Approval**

I applied for the institutional research board's (IRB) approval through the Metro State College of Denver and the University of Denver in April 2011. Approval to use human subjects for this study was granted by both colleges in June 2011.

#### **Site Location**

Due to my personal history and positive relationship with several colleagues at Metro State College of Denver, I collected data about the campus August through October 2011. The college had published many primary sources for public readership from the Emerging HSI study; therefore, I had access to multiple sources of data.

#### **Data Sources**

The data were collected and analyzed mainly from primary sources and interviews from the Metro State College of Denver Emerging HSI Taskforce Initiative. The sources of the data (Table 3.1) include the following:

**Table 3.1**

**Data Sources**

<b>Source #</b>	<b>Type of Source</b>
Source 1	The final 384 page HSI taskforce report and recommendations that was published and submitted in February of 2008.
Source 2	Official presentation material, official letters or communication to taskforce members, and meeting minutes from the time period from April of 2007 to February of 2008.
Source 3	Retrospective observations from my personal experience on the HSI taskforce as a non-academic administrator in the role as chair of the HSI Curriculum development subcommittee. Many of these observations include various subcommittee meeting notes, emails, and reflection. I personally saved all meeting notes, agendas, and emails.
Source 4	Qualitative interviews with 6-8 original taskforce members (see the participant section below).
Source 5	Metro State College of Denver institutional press releases, newspaper articles, and institutional data from February 2008 (just after the final report was handed in) to the present time (summer of 2011).
Source 6	Data from the recent 2010 census.

**Participants**

I utilized purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2005) in this case study. Seidman (2006) suggested that the aim of purposive sampling is to select participants who reflect the wide range of the population under study. I selected individuals from the Emerging HSI Taskforce based on (a) the diversity of representation (i.e., staff and faculty), (b) accessibility, and (c) their ability to provide valuable insights relevant to this case study.

In addition, each of the following participants (Table 3.2) provided their informed consent and were provided with pseudonyms to respect their privacy and confidentiality:

**Table 3.2**

**Participants and Roles**

Participant A	Associate Vice-President for Enrollment for Metro State College of Denver and Co-Chair of the main Emerging HSI Taskforce.
Participant B	Participant B: Associate Vice Provost (and faculty member) for Metro State College of Denver and Co-Chair of the main Emerging HSI Taskforce.
Participant C	Participant C Assistant Dean, College of Letters Arts and Sciences and faculty member, Co-Chair of the HSI faculty and staff development subcommittee
Participant D	Participant D, former chair, faculty senate, professor of Criminal Justice, and member of the HSI Curriculum Development subcommittee
Participant E	Participant E, former Director of Admissions (no longer with the college). Co-Chair of the HSI Recruitment, Retention and Student Development subcommittee
Participant F	Participant F, Co-Director of Alumni Affairs, member of the HSI steering committee.
Participant G	Chair of Chicano Studies, Co-Chair of the HSI Public Relations subcommittee

**Supplementary Questions and Purpose of the Interview**

Seidman (2006) wrote: “At the root of in depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (p. 9). In order to further understand the complexities of the Emerging HSI Taskforce at Metro State College of Denver, it was important to interview key committee

members from various backgrounds or departments at the college. I used Seidman’s (2006) approach for in-depth interviewing by developing open-ended questions to help reconstruct each participant’s experience with the HSI Taskforce. While I used the questions listed below as a guideline for each interview, I did not intend for the interviews to be formal or “questionnaire-oriented” (Eisner, 1998, p. 183). Rather, as Eisner wrote: “The aim is for the interviewer to put the person at ease, to have some sense of what he or she wants to know, but not to be either rigid or mechanical in method” (p. 183). The main interview questions are highlighted in Table 3.3 below.

**Table 3.3**

**Participant Interview Questions**

Question 1	How did you become involved in the Emerging HSI Taskforce?
Question 2	What did you hope to gain from participating?
Question 3	What was your role on the committee?
Question 4	Why do you believe the taskforce was conceived the way it was? (a) Was this taskforce similar or different than other committees or taskforces that you served on? Why or why not?
Question 5	What did you believe to be the aims and goals of the taskforce? Upon reflection, in what ways do you believe that these aims and goals were played out or were not played out?
Question 6	How did you feel about the structure of the roles on the committee?
Question 7	How did your subcommittee approach research or opinions in forming the recommendations? Did your voice feel valued? Why or why not?
Question 8	Do you feel like the general Emerging HSI Taskforce, your subcommittee, and you individually made a difference in moving Metro State College of Denver forward? Why or why not?
Question 9	Do you feel like the effects of the Emerging HSI Taskforce are being

	felt today at Metro State College of Denver? In your opinion, do you feel like the work is sustainable? Why or why not?
Question 10	If you had to do the committee or taskforce all over again, what would you do differently?
Question 11	How do you feel like your work on the committee impacted your professional development?
Question 12	Is there anything that I have not asked you that you would like to share?

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

Stake (1995) suggested that many case studies incorporate an analysis of documents such as newspapers articles, annual reports, minutes of meetings, and institutional data sets. These sources of data are used in addition to the traditional interviews or observations that highlight most qualitative studies. These documents, according to Stake (1995), must be analyzed and coded in the same way that one would approach a transcript from an interview or observation. Seidman (2006) urged that a qualitative researcher use caution when analyzing data until all interviewing and data collection have been completed.

Therefore, I was especially careful in this study not to begin analyzing the data from my interview sources until I had completed the entire interview process. Prior to designing my interview questions, I did, however, analyze non-interview documents from the Emerging HSI Taskforce in an effort to inform and shape the questions; because, once the interview portion of a study begins, wrote Seidman (2006), it is important not to change the course of the study based on an incomplete analysis of the initial pieces of data.

Creswell (2005) stressed the importance of utilizing all sources of data at each stage or form of data analysis when attempting to present a chronology of events.

Merriam (1988) stated that interview transcripts, observations, or notes must first be “unitized” (p. 132). In order for a set of information to qualify as a unit, it must follow two specific sets of criteria:

1. The unit must be heuristic.... That is .... the unit must reveal information relevant to the study and stimulate the reader to think beyond the particular bit of information.
2. The unit should be must be able to stand on its own. Essentially, the unit must be able to be interpretable in the absence of any additional information.

(Merriam, p. 132)

Merriam (1988) offered several examples of how to begin placing units of information into categories to represent major themes or concepts. For instance, she suggested using index cards, computer programs that assist with transcription, and coding units within the margins of actual documents. Regardless of the approach used, it is critical to ensure that units are coded into factors like the who, what, when, and where (Creswell, 2005).

Stake (1995) suggested that there are four main forms of data analysis and interpretation in case-study research. These forms include (a) categorical aggregation, (b) direct interpretation, (c) establishing patterns, and (d) developing naturalistic generalizations. With categorical interpretation, Stake (1995) stated that a case-study researcher needs to collect and compare multiple instances from the data in an effort to



make meaning of the particular themes. As opposed to categorical aggregation, case study-research uses direct interpretation of one instance in the data and makes meaning of it independently from the rest of the data. The case-study research can begin to look for patterns among the coded instances from the data. Yin (2003) suggested that we use comparison tables or graphs from the data to help establish patterns between instances from the data. Finally, Stake (1995) suggested that, while single-case studies are difficult to generalize, people can still learn through the conclusions and patterns that were established by the uniqueness of the case itself. People who study single-case studies can make their own meaning and apply the lived experience and phenomenon of the case to other events that they feel are applicable.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Along with much qualitative work, case study research shares an intense interest in personal views and circumstances. Those whose lives and expressions are portrayed risk exposure and embarrassment, as well as loss of standing, employment, and self-esteem. (Stake, 2005, p.459)

According to Stake (2005), a qualitative case-study researcher has an ethical priority to protect the identities of the people interviewed as well as to keep them abreast of drafts, quotes, and interpretations. I strictly adhered to all rules and regulations regarding human subjects, in accordance with both Metro State College of Denver's institutional research board and the University of Denver. All documents analyzed for this case study were either available to the public or obtained through written permission from Metro State College of Denver.

## **Challenges and Limitations**

The major activities of the Emerging HSI Initiative unfolded between 2006 and 2009. I had access to documents such as the final taskforce reports, meeting minutes and agendas, and internal news articles. Plus, I was a member of the taskforce and able to interview several taskforce participants. Therefore, after completing the major activities of the HSI Initiative, I decided to conduct this case study.

Participants were identified using the purposeful sampling strategy. I did not conduct formal observations as one would if there had been an intent to conduct this study from the beginning of the taskforce. Consequently, each study participant had to draw from memory, ranging back over a period of three to four years; and some participants had trouble recalling some specific events that had taken place.

I was not able to interview any of the students who had participated in the Emerging HSI Initiative because they had already graduated from the college by the time I conducted the study. Although I was able to contact a student who'd had a major role, he stated that he was not emotionally prepared to participate in an interview due to his wife's recent armed forces deployment and other life-transition issues. In addition, I was not able to interview any community activists who participated in the Emerging HSI open forums.

While some challenges did exist in the process of conducting this study, the research was aided by both the transparent nature of the Emerging HSI Initiative (i.e., abundance of available data sources) and the willingness of the participants who were interviewed. Also, the co-chairs of the Emerging HSI Initiative had preserved multiple

sources of data from the project through the domain of a public website. In addition, they granted me use of the final, almost 400-page Emerging HSI report, which was not otherwise available to the public.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Findings**

#### **Introduction**

The first half of this chapter describes the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Initiative in detail from its conception to its status as of January 2012. Seven participants deeply involved in the Emerging HSI Taskforce were interviewed for this study (see Table 3.2 in chapter three).

Other documents that informed this study include internal publications from Metro State such as meeting minutes, observations (since I was part of the Emerging HSI Initiative), and institutional research data from the college. Portions of the data have been interwoven using a holistic analysis (Yin, 2003) throughout the story of the Emerging HSI Initiative in an effort to provide context, clarity, and data triangulation.

The second half of this chapter analyzes and describes salient themes that emerged out of this unique case. Creswell (2007) suggested that it is important to generate relevant themes in an effort to understand the complexity of a case, but he cautioned not to use a thematic analysis to generalize beyond a case that is being studied.

The Emerging HSI Taskforce report is a living, breathing document that has been utilized by Metro State since its initial publication in February 2008. According to many participants in this study, the taskforce helped to culturally transform Metro State from an institution that historically was passive about student efforts and success into one that

explicitly and intentionally carries out its mission with a focus of social justice.

According to the co-chairs of the Emerging HSI Taskforce:

The mission of the larger HSI Initiative is to equitably educate the residents within the geographical area Metro State is legislatively intended to serve, including Hispanics. Our vision of success is to create the means by which Hispanic students can reach their full potential through increased recruitment, matriculation, and graduation while at the same time ensuring all students are likewise assisted through HSI efforts. (Bonacquisti & Torres, 2008)

The Emerging HSI Taskforce gave Metro State an opportunity to be constructively critical about its historical shortcomings, while providing it with the ability to capitalize on its strengths to build a more sustainable infrastructure for the future.

While Metro State historically has been one of the most accessible institutions in Colorado, many participants in this study suggested that the college consistently has fallen short in areas of student academic success and retention. Participant A, one of the co-chairs of the taskforce, stated:

We had modified open admissions. We allowed them to come in. They weren't being successful. We had policies in place that were allowing them to not be successful. And we kind of said, "Oh well, they just couldn't cut the mustard. We'll go recruit more." We continued to churn our students.... We [the taskforce] exposed this churning and tried to have strategic initiatives against that to really support students through to graduation. I absolutely believe that the taskforce made a difference.

### **Origins of the Emerging HSI Taskforce: July 2005–April 2007**

This is the story of the Emerging HSI effort at Metro State College of Denver. This case study traced the Emerging HSI effort from its origins in 2005 through to the winter of 2012. The Metro State College of Denver board of trustees hired Dr. Stephen Jordan as the new president of the college in July 2005. According to Participant A:

The board hired President Jordan. They stated that one of the goals for him was to transform Metro State into becoming an Hispanic Serving Institution, and that became the platform for him.

President Jordan stated that he would like Metro State to become an HSI by 2010, which would involve moving the population at the time from 13 percent Latino students to 25 percent Latino student enrollment in just five years. This goal would later change to 2018 after consultation from Participant A in this study as the Emerging HSI Initiative progressed during its first year.

During his welcome-back-to-campus speech in September 2006, the president publically stated for the first time that Metro State intended to become an HSI. He said, “We intend to be the four-year institution of choice for the fastest growing population in the seven county metro region” (Jordan, 2006). According to the final Emerging HSI report, this catapulted the Emerging HSI project into Phase I and resulted in a year-long behind-the-scenes brainstorming effort on how best to achieve HSI status.

When Participant A joined the college in January 2006 as the Associate Vice President for Enrollment, she started to hear of the president’s Emerging HSI goals. However, she felt that the Emerging HSI effort needed to be part of a larger strategic enrollment plan that would necessitate a campus-wide buy-in. Participant A suggested that President Jordan was receptive to her idea and, during the fall of 2006 and the winter of 2007, she approached Participant B with her plan. Participant A said:

We felt confident that we needed to have a long-time and well-respected faculty member to help with this initiative, and that’s how I approached Participant B.... [The] credibility and the respect he has garnered from the Metro State community and the Denver communities are unmatched. His participation would be invaluable in helping us to gain support and momentum for the [Emerging] HSI Initiative.

Participant B had been an active advocate for Latinos in higher education since 1969. He developed the first Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) at the University of Colorado Boulder (CU) in the late 1960s in response to the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King. He mentioned that the 1960s-1970s marked the transition of integration for students of color into predominantly white institutions, such as CU. This period also marked the beginning of Participant B's life-long personal and professional journey of advocating for students of color in higher education. He was an active leader in developing culturally relevant pedagogy and curriculum in Denver Public Schools, and he frequently mentioned the difficulties faced by Latinos in relation to education in the United States. He said, "There was a lot of antipathy from people who kept saying, 'Well you know, you let the Mexicans in, the academic standing of CU is going to decline.'"

At the time of the Emerging HSI Taskforce conception, Participant B was the Associate Dean of the College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences and a long-time tenured faculty member in English and Chicano studies. He excitedly discussed the Emerging HSI Taskforce:

It was like a dream come true. All of a sudden, I had this in my hands what I wanted for decades, literally for decades. The president and board were saying, "Go out and recruit a whole bunch of Latino students and figure out a way to keep them here in our programs."

The president and board also recruited Participant C, who was the director of the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) at Metro State as well as a tenured faculty member in anthropology. Participant C recalled being recruited by Participant B based on

their positive, long-lasting relationship and because of Participant's C success with the CAMP program:

I was involved with a lot of Latino students through the years and having seen the success of our (CAMP) students. We have high retention and a GPA that is higher than the college average. I felt that CAMP was a segue into HSI. Seeing the success of our own students, I felt that I could contribute to the success of the HSI effort as well.

Participant C also recalled being marginalized as a young Latino student in the 1970s. He wanted to make sure that Latinos are taken seriously in their pursuit of education. He said:

It's all about providing opportunities and opening doors for students, where so many have been told by high-school counselors and faculty that they weren't suited for this. I went through that at South High School here. Same thing, you know. "You'll make a good mechanic."

Participant C felt that prior diversity efforts had been half-hearted in nature, and he suggested that many colleges that had undertaken diversity efforts seemed to do so based on motives that were not authentic, such as ensuring compliance with civil-rights laws and attempting to satisfy public pressure. In Participant C's opinion, diversity efforts that lack the heart to positively affect students of color simply are not sustainable. He felt a sense of hope, however, that the Emerging HSI effort would be different.

The co-chairs also recruited the Chair of Faculty Senate, a tenured professor of Criminal Justice, as Participant D; and they recruited the Director of Admissions and Outreach as Participant E. Three other faculty and staff members (Dean of Professional Studies, Associate VP of Communications, and a tenured faculty member in Finance) also contributed to the HSI effort, although they were not interviewed for this study.



Participant D suggested that he wanted to join the Emerging HSI Taskforce both because he was interested and because of his role on the faculty senate. He said:

I wanted to learn more about what it meant to be an HSI institution. Some of the faculty members were concerned about the direction, so I wanted to be able to answer those questions, and I wanted to learn more about the program and have a voice.

Participants A and B both felt it was important to intentionally recruit these additional leaders at the college because of their early support of the Emerging HSI platform. Thus, these five initial members of the Emerging HSI Taskforce, in addition to President Jordan, formed an exploratory steering committee. They met several times during the winter of 2006–2007 to discuss how to formally launch the strategic Emerging HSI Initiative.

The exploratory committee felt that no matter how the Emerging HSI Taskforce would be implemented, it needed to be of a large-enough scale to afford as much buy-in as possible from the campus and surrounding community. The committee eventually decided to launch the HSI effort with an all-college meeting where they would formally present and discuss the plans for the Emerging HSI Taskforce. To achieve the maximum buy-in, the taskforce felt it was important to open membership to anyone at the college who was interested. Participant E said:

If we get a buy-in from across campus, it would actually be a living, breathing, dynamic document and not something that gets put on a shelf and ten years later someone says, “Oh, I was on that committee; that was nice.” Doing this in a collaborative, cross-campus interdisciplinary way would make a difference versus other billions of committees I had been on, where you spent a lot of time and didn’t really get anything accomplished.

Participant A also felt that inclusive representation from all areas (faculty, administration, classified staff, students, and community members) was critical to the Emerging HSI effort. She said, “Metro State is such a research-strapped institution that it would not be productive to turn down anyone that wanted to help. So that was a big reason why we kept it as inclusive as possible.”

Therefore, the exploratory committee planned a large kickoff event in April 2007 to introduce the Emerging HSI effort, which would allow any interested college community members to nominate themselves or others to participate. The full Emerging HSI Taskforce would formally convene that summer, focused on six central themes: Assessment, Curriculum Development, Recruitment and Retention, Faculty Grantsmanship, Public Relations, and Campus Climate. Participant A had suggested that these subcommittees reflect these major divisions of the college, as well as the all-encompassing nature of the Emerging HSI Taskforce.

The exploratory committee not only believed that the Emerging HSI Initiative would inspire Metro State toward a brighter future, but that it would culturally transform the college into one that provides a more sustainable infrastructure for students, faculty, staff, and the community. After almost a year of meeting behind the scenes, the committee felt confident to move forward with their first public event.

### **Going Public with HSI: April 19, 2007**

After a period characterized by several emails and word-of-mouth advertising about the initial April 2007 event, the HSI Taskforce convened the first open forum on April 19 in a town meeting titled, “Why HSI?” Approximately 120 faculty and staff

attended. The President of the Faculty Senate (Participant D) opened the meeting and discussed the importance of Metro State in living up to its responsibility of educating its students.

President Jordan followed Participant D with a speech describing the benefits of HSI status at Metro State. He reiterated his charge from the board of trustees to reach HSI status. After describing what HSI status meant, he pointed out several troubling facts. For example, he mentioned the Colorado Paradox: “Our state does a poor job of sending its own residents to college, especially those from low-income families and students from families of color” (Jordan, 2007). He added that that the state was graduating fewer than 50 percent of high-school students of color, that one of every five citizens in Colorado was Latino, and one of every two births was Latino.

We have a civic obligation and an economic imperative to educate our low-income and minority students. Otherwise, this fast-growing segment of the population will be qualified only for low-wage jobs when today’s educated baby boomers retire, as they are doing in record numbers. (Jordan, 2007)

President Jordan also was vocal about Metro State’s historically low graduation rates and the low retention rates of students attending the college, and he described the potential of the HSI Initiative to dramatically improve these results.

Participant C then shared the success of the CAMP program and how to implement that infrastructure on a larger scale aligned with the Emerging HSI effort. When interviewed for this study, Participant C reflected on the transferability of the CAMP program’s success:

It shows that if we’re provided with adequate support systems, retention support, and all these other things—yes, they can perform.... Having been involved in

migrant education since 1981, I can tell you that even under adverse conditions like at CU Boulder, students were able to perform.

Then the Dean of the College of Professional Studies (not a participant in this study) described how a new faculty development center would provide professional development for the faculty, and he explained that HSI status would provide grant resources for the center. Following this, a professor of the Finance Department (not a participant in this study) outlined the financial implications of achieving HSI status. Then Participant A discussed the resources that would be provided to participants on the taskforce in relation to the research and development of recommendations. At the end of these presentations, President Jordan invited people to self-nominate or to nominate a colleague into one of the taskforce's six subcommittees.

#### **Addressing Dissent within the Metro State Community: April–July 2007**

While many members of the Metro State community expressed their ardent support of the Emerging HSI Initiative, others expressed concern. These concerns included protecting other minority populations (e.g., would HSI benefit only Hispanics?) as well as an historical bias about potential negative changes that would occur by focusing more on the access and success of minority students. Participant G said:

What I saw was resistance, and that was pretty natural to me. I expect resistance when you introduce something new to what people perceive to be a stable system; and what happened is, I think there were folks that didn't understand it.... At the core, you had to go out and educate people about what it meant.

Participant C recalled an incident when a professor at Metro State had sent out an email from an academic department, expressing his belief that the standards of the college would be lowered. Participant C said that the professor's email implied:

“...because we would be opening the floodgates for Hispanic students coming in ... by implication, Hispanic students being inferior or lower productions and all those negative stereotypes attached to that.”

In response to this message, the professor's department chair asked Participant C to make a presentation to the faculty and staff of the entire department. Participant C then explained that the Emerging HSI Initiative and its associated goals would not result in lowering Metro State's standards. He talked about the history of HSIs and the type of success that schools offering HSIs had had with Latino students. Participant C expressed surprise at some of the misconceptions held by many faculty and staff members about the Emerging HSI Initiative; but he also felt that this incident strengthened the taskforce's determination to make the HSI Initiative as far reaching as possible in an effort to educate the community. After this meeting, the professor who had sent the original email sent a formal letter of apology to the Emerging HSI Taskforce.

Participants B and C had expected this type of resistance based on their own experiences when advocating for Latinos in higher education. Participant B recalled a situation when he had been attempting to start a Chicano Studies program when he was affiliated with California Polytechnic State University in the 1970s:

People used to make fun of Chicano studies. At Cal Poly, I was part of a Chicano Studies program and was pushing for an ethnic studies program. One of my colleagues from the faculty development center called it a Mickey Mouse Program. At the time, I reacted like you'd expect, that you know, "Well, I don't like you either." So, when we started this [Emerging HSI Taskforce], any difficulties that might have come up, if I wasn't prepared to deal with them, then I was never going to be.... I have to say we have had a very difficult history, I mean Latinos. We had a very difficult history at Metro before this. It was very bad. I tell people and I mean it seriously. At one time, I was probably the most

disliked person on campus at Metro State.... But I had really argued for a lot of the things that this HSI Initiative seems to just say.

As the Chair of Faculty Senate, Participant D was also surprised about the faculty members' misconceptions about the Emerging HSI Initiative:

There was some anxiety among the faculty and probably, too, for the students that going to an HSI would cause us to disregard some of the other minority groups. But I thought I was better able to answer those questions and try to alleviate those concerns when they came up. So I was learning, I was playing, I think ... a dual role.

Participant E echoed the sentiments of the other taskforce members regarding the anxiety that the HSI discussion had created on campus during the spring semester of 2007:

I think the Emerging HSI Taskforce had to be conceived the way it was because there were people on campus who weren't so sure about this goal of becoming an HSI and they were worried that we were only going to focus on Latino students to the detriment of other students that we were going to limit opportunities. They were suspicious. There were reservations and suspicions and fears. So, we had to do it in a democratic, collaborative, cross-campus way in order to get people to buy in.

Participant F agreed, saying that the taskforce had to both address and engage people who wanted their voices heard. She said, "No one could say, 'You didn't ask me, you didn't allow me to do X, Y, and Z, and how dare you move forward without my input.'"

### **Phase II of the Emerging HSI Taskforce Begins: July 2007**

Between the April 19 all-college meeting and the summer of 2007, the initial Emerging HSI Taskforce compiled all volunteer requests and began planning for the first full Emerging HSI Taskforce meeting in July. This also marked the beginning of Phase II of the Emerging HSI Taskforce. Whereas Phase I had encompassed the informal,

exploratory time period of the Emerging HSI Taskforce (July 2005–July 2007), Phase II would encompass the formal, public activity of the taskforce (July 2007–February 2008).

President Jordan wrote each volunteer a letter (Appendix F) explaining the nature of the Emerging HSI Taskforce and thanking them for their commitment. The letter invited them to a large kick-off meeting that would take place the morning of Friday, July 27, 2007.

The initial exploratory committee of the Emerging HSI Taskforce decided to give the full taskforce five months to conduct research and to draft the respective recommendations that the taskforce was called to formulate. The exploratory committee felt that having a concrete deadline (as opposed to ongoing committee work with no deadline) would help the participants to focus on the task at hand.

The exploratory committee also decided that, when possible, there would be a faculty and non-faculty co-chair model for the full taskforce and the subcommittees. The participants in this study later said that this model did help to reinforce the collaborative and interdisciplinary nature of the Emerging HSI Initiative. For example, Participant A, a former engineer by trade, had spent several months thinking about how to design an infrastructure for the taskforce to allow for consistency and formality while, at the same time, be flexible enough not to hinder any individual or group's creativity. She said:

As the co-chair, before we launched, it took a couple of months to even think about how we might structure this, then preparing for the big initial kickoff [in July]. I literally thought about it at night, dreaming about what kind of structure, what kind of process would help support. So, once upon a time as an engineer, and knowing that we had to have a solid infrastructure in order to support the foundation, it took me months of sleepless nights thinking about what might work—and, thankfully, it worked.

Based on Participant A's and B's leadership and representative diversity, the exploratory committee decided that Participant A and Participant B would become the co-chairs of the formal Emerging HSI Taskforce. Participant B said that this arrangement had increased the scope of their effectiveness as co-chairs:

We balanced each other out remarkably well. I think we would be hard-pressed to get two people who were ... almost like symbiosis. She is very good at quantitative analysis, while my background is in English, so I can write pretty well. So, whatever weakness I had, she was able to balance it very well and I think that kind of balance was indicative of having someone on the student affairs side partner with someone from the academic affairs side.

Participant F believed that the tone for the taskforce had been set in the April meeting and she had gone to the July meeting with a sense of purpose. She said, "It was never really about me and what I gained [from participating]. It was to move our students forward, to increase and improve access for our students and their educational experience."

Participant G, a faculty member and chair of the Chicano Studies Department, had a long history in the Latino community as an advocate for education. He shared why he had chosen to participate with the Emerging HSI Taskforce and the Public Relations Subcommittee:

I felt that because of my experience in community organizing and being a social justice advocate and all of the issues that were paramount to this initiative that I could be a good linkage into the community.... I could then play the role back and forth in terms of providing access to groups, providing information from some of the work I was doing, make suggestions, and so forth.

On July 27, sixty-five volunteers of faculty, staff, and students attended the big kick-off event for the full Emerging HSI Taskforce. Each person came to the first meeting having already pre-selected his or her subcommittee. Participant A and



Participant B, the co-chairs, opened this large gathering by thanking the volunteers for their willingness to participate. They reiterated that this committee was supported and charged all the way up to the board of trustees. They emphasized that the activity and mission of the Emerging HSI Taskforce would be overt, transparent, and far-reaching. They suggested that the current post-secondary infrastructure in Colorado had been failing students of color, as evidenced by the Colorado Paradox. Therefore, this taskforce had a social justice imperative to help create more equitable conditions in relation to post-secondary opportunities for students of color in Colorado.

Each volunteer was given a three-ring binder with a timeline, agenda, and seventy-five pages of research materials organized by the initial steering committee. These documents included demographic statistics from other HSIs, along with best-practice research and detailed retention and graduation statistics from HSIs across the country. Participants A and B explained the contents of the binder and also stated, to the delight of the audience, that funding would be provided to send delegations to perform site research at various HSIs in Illinois, California, and Texas. The co-chairs then introduced the subcommittee themes in more detail, attaching theme names.

- *Assessment: Building a Culture of Evidence*
- *Recruitment, Retention, and Student Development: Creating a Culture of Academic Success*
- *Public Relations: Promoting a Tradition of the “Urban-Land Grant Institution”*
- *Campus Climate: Enhancing a Culture that Respects Diversity*

- *Faculty and Staff Development, Grantsmanship: Enriching our Faculty and Staff*
- *Curriculum Development: Expanding Academic Excellence.*

At this point in the meeting, the volunteers split into their subcommittees. Most of the committees had an even mix of faculty and staff and were between eight and thirteen people; each committee also had one or two students. Participant B reflected on the diverse, interdisciplinary representation of the subcommittees:

The big difference here is that it was made of representatives from across the campus, many different departments, and I don't mean just academic departments. I mean administrative departments and different centers, programs, classified staff, exempt staff, and faculty.... So it wasn't dominant in one area or the other. There was, again, representation from all over.

Each subcommittee was given the flexibility to come up with as many eventual recommendations as they wished. The co-chairs emphasized that they wanted the research and dissemination process to be organic and for each subcommittee to have creative freedom; they also emphasized that it was important to write the recommendations as concrete deliverables. Participant A suggested that most committees she had been on in the past had focused more on identifying problems than coming up with solutions. She said:

What I didn't want is that we were very attuned to the problems. This document had to be focused on, "Yes, this is the problem, and here is my recommended solution for it".... So I didn't want it to become just looking at the problems. You need to be focused on the solutions to combat those issues.

Participant G felt that the subcommittees' structure was inclusive, action-oriented, and asset-based. He reflected on how he had been taught, during his work as a mental-health professional, to examine research:

Because of community mental health, I was trained to look at the glass half-empty. When I worked in asset-based community development ... I remember struggling with it because of my training. The paradigm in asset-based community development is ... let's look at what people bring to the table, not what their shadows are.

The co-chairs of the Emerging HSI Taskforce emphasized that any method of dissemination, whether based on life experience, book research, or research conducted during on-site visits, would be acceptable in relation to writing proposals and recommendations. Participant B said that the taskforce had focused on utilizing multiple methods of inquiry:

We insisted on research, the whole task force insisted on ... we were going to go out and do research, both book-type research and on-the-ground research and we had to, therefore, kind of suspend what we thought was the best approach until it was either confirmed or not by that research.... So the research was very important.

The co-chairs said they also would allow people who could not fully commit to the committee to be able to submit proposals; also, that it was imperative for Emerging HSI Taskforce members to spread the word so that Metro State community members who were not on the taskforce, as well as outside community partners, could still participate. Participant A felt that an inclusive, all-encompassing spirit would achieve the most buy-in, even if it was difficult to manage. She felt strongly that the college had one opportunity to maximize the effectiveness of this initiative, and she was adamant about leaving no stone unturned. She said:

I didn't want anybody to ever come back and say, "Well, you never asked me, so I don't buy into it." So buy in was a big thing. So I developed the processes for people to be able to develop, write, and submit a proposal for consideration, even if they didn't have time to commit to the whole year-long event.

When the subcommittees congregated, they were charged with forming a mission statement and electing co-chairs. The only formal structure they were provided was the HSI strategy proposal guideline (Appendix B), which outlined the structure for the proposals to be written. This document included (a) areas for the goal(s) of the recommendation, (b) implementation strategies or policies to support the goal, (c) measureable outcomes of the goals, (d) timeline, (e) area or people in charge of the deliverable, and (f) any resources necessary for implementation (e.g., funding, materials, staff).

While the subcommittees were encouraged to have a diversity of representation as chairs (faculty and a non-faculty), this was not mandated. The Public Relations, Campus Climate, Faculty and Staff Grantsmanship, and Assessment subcommittees all had a faculty and non-faculty chair model. The Curriculum subcommittee had a non-faculty member (myself) as the sole chair. Two administrators co-chaired the Recruitment, Retention, and Student Development Subcommittee; one co-chair reported to Academic Affairs, the other reported to Student Affairs. Participant B reflected on the subcommittee chair process:

Some people took positions and responsibilities in the subcommittees that you normally wouldn't expect. You [myself] were the chair of the curriculum subcommittee and you had a bunch of tenured professors right around you, including me.... You would expect somebody else to be the chair because of their role in the college, but I think it happened just primarily with people stepping up and doing the work.

It was in the subcommittees that the main research activity took place, so the co-chairs Participants A and B felt it was important to shift the energy and focus from the full taskforce to the subcommittees. Each subcommittee chair was asked to become a

member of the larger steering committee that met weekly, in an effort to ensure representation of each Emerging HSI subcommittee. The full Emerging HSI Taskforce (all 65 members) met once monthly in an effort to report and share common findings (Appendix G). The steering committee met once weekly every Friday. Each subcommittee was left to its own preferences as to how often to meet; some met every other week, some weekly.

### **Community Outreach and Controversy Over In-State Tuition: August 2007**

While invitations to participate on the full Emerging HSI Taskforce did not extend outside of the Metro State community, taskforce members used personal and community connections to highlight the Emerging HSI website and invited community members to submit proposals (even if they weren't on the Emerging HSI Taskforce).

*The Denver Post* published an article August 2, 2007, stating that the Colorado Community College system, CU Boulder, and Colorado State University had been providing in-state tuition to students who were Colorado residents but had undocumented parents. However, the article highlighted that Metro State, along with several other colleges in Colorado, did not. This caused an immediate uproar in the Latino community and threatened to damage any goodwill that had been built through the years between Metro State and the Latino community. While Metro State believed it was following state policy, it was unaware that other colleges had interpreted the law differently. In a campus-wide email (also published in the final HSI report to the campus in August 2007), President Jordan wrote:

As president of Metro State, I see a need to work toward a clear and unequivocal revision of state policy that would allow all true Colorado residents, regardless of

their parents' immigration status, to be treated the same way. This is fair and just for all Colorado citizens, and it is also socially and economically imperative for the future of Colorado. Whatever the attorney general decides the state of the law is now, Metro State will advocate for what it should be. (Jordan, 2007)

Even though Metro State believed it was following state law, the public relations fallout made it appear that Metro State had been less Latino friendly than other institutions that had interpreted in-state tuition laws differently. The co-chairs of the Emerging HSI Taskforce immediately made this issue the first agenda item at the steering committee meeting August 10, 2007, and the topic dominated the meeting.

The steering committee decided that Metro State's Emerging HSI Taskforce would have an open-forum meeting with Latino community leaders later in the month to address this issue. The taskforce members had come to an agreement to support the president in pushing the state attorney general to make a firm decision on the issue in order to provide clarity to all institutions. Metro State took an open stance in advocating for in-state tuition for all Colorado residents with undocumented parents.

Participant B volunteered to write an op-ed in the *Denver Post* about Metro State's advocacy for Colorado residents with undocumented parents; and Emerging HSI Taskforce members were encouraged to contact key leaders in the state legislature and to advocate for in-state tuition for these students. The following week, the state attorney general issued a statement clarifying that state colleges could provide in-state tuition to Colorado residents who had undocumented parents but themselves had already attended and graduated from a Colorado high school. Participant B felt that the media was now portraying Metro State as proactive and in a more positive light due to its strong advocacy for in-state tuition for Colorado residents with undocumented parents.

Participant G, a leader in the Latino community, believed that this potential public-relations issue created opportunities for positive discourse between Metro State and the Latino community. Both Participants B and G received phone calls from concerned leaders in the Latino community, stemming from the in-state tuition issue. This led to the realization that Metro State had not done enough in the past to build authentic relationships with the Latino community. Participant G described what had happened:

Participant B and I talked and I said, “Why don’t we see if we can work on this within the HSI framework?” I had seen Metro State become an open system, meaning that they fed off the environment. . . . I said, “What I’d like to do is let’s call a meeting of key people in the Latino community and allies and advocates here at Metro State and let’s talk about it.” Several leaders agreed to come in . . . and we had this big meeting and it was contentious. Contentious in a positive way, though, because I believe that when people really use dialogue in an effective way, it can be so productive.

Much of the first month of Phase II in the Emerging HSI Taskforce became focused on how to rebuild trust and goodwill with the Latino community. As Participant G had said, Metro State would use its Emerging HSI effort as its platform in attempting to reconcile with the community and to promote the initiative’s mission. Without the Emerging HSI Initiative’s large scope, diversity of representation, and strong organizational framework, he felt that the willingness and platform to have the open meetings with the Latino community would not have occurred.

***Emerging HSI Meeting with Latino Community Leaders: August 29, 2007***

The first meeting with leaders in the Latino community took place on August 29, 2007; it was attended by twenty-nine HSI taskforce members and fifteen Latino community members from organizations including La Raza, the state legislature, Denver

City Council, the Democratic National Convention, the Latino Leadership Council, the Denver Public Schools Board of Education, and the Denver Mayor's Office. President Jordan was absent from this meeting due to travel; according to many participants in the study, his absence led many community members to question Metro State's commitment to building an authentic relationship with the Latino community.

Participant G facilitated the August 29 meeting and presented each person with a full meeting agenda (Appendix H). He opened with a welcome and asked the participants to introduce themselves. After that, Participant A discussed Metro State's history of tuition classification and stated that the college wanted to heal perceptions regarding its interpretation of the in-state tuition classification. She also introduced the tenets of Metro State's Emerging HSI Initiative and described the college's role in serving and supporting the Latino community. Participant B then opened the floor to comments and asked the Latino community leaders to address the recent issues regarding the in-state tuition controversy. Many of the Latino community leaders expressed outrage and distrust of Metro State College of Denver. Based on the published meeting minutes in the final Emerging HSI report (2008, pp. 351-355), the comments included:

The miscommunication was upsetting.

It is a black eye against Metro State, and it will take a long time to get over.

An affordable college like Metro State has taken this misstep in policy. It is unsettling.

Metro State has failed to communicate with my magazine publication in spite of our efforts to make contact with the college. Until today, Metro State has failed to reach out to the Hispanic community.



Why doesn't Metro State have billboards on Federal Blvd. advertising to Latino children? There are liquor billboards, but no college billboards.

Metro State needs to fix this problem now! They need to be proactive and aggressive in the community. It needs to come from Dr. Jordan. It will help students to become comfortable to come to Metro State.

Metro State got disconnected in the mid 90s. There needs to be a re-establishment between Metro State and the Hispanic community. Metro State needs a better relationship with the Latino community leaders. They must advertise broadly that Metro State serves Latino students.

Shame on Metro.

I have not seen an apology from Metro State, and I don't think it will come. It is our right to be here.... We'll break more doors down for our children.... We are not going away. We have cleared the air, but we still have a fight. We need to work together to make Metro State accessible to all students.

While the tone of the open forum was contentious, it provided an open dialogue between Metro State and the Latino community for the first time in several years.

Participant G stated that many of the Latino leaders had said they attended out of concern for the children of undocumented immigrants and they felt that Metro State should have advocated for these students earlier. He said: "People that don't have legal status live in fear of deportation. That's a real emotional, psychological fear that they live with, right? So I felt that they felt like we should talk about that and we did."

Participant G thanked the community members for their honest feedback, then led them in a discussion of relevant themes that Metro State could begin to address. The themes included:

- Develop outreach strategies with immigrant advocacy organizations, nonprofit leaders, and legislators.
- How could Metro State build confidence in the community again?

- How could Metro State become an advocate?
- How could Metro State become more transparent?
- How could Metro State achieve redemption?
- How could Metro State provide safety and assurance for students currently attending the college as well as those aspiring to attend in the future?

Once these themes were established, the co-chairs of the Emerging HSI Taskforce began to bring the meeting to a close. They assured the community leaders in attendance that Metro State would more aggressively advocate for all of its students in the future and that, while the college had made a mistake of not addressing the in-state tuition issue earlier, they did not want that to damage Metro State's historical, current, and future commitment of serving the seven-county region.

Participant B noted that Metro State was the only college in Colorado to have a Chicano Studies major and concluded that the volunteers in the room from the Emerging HSI Taskforce were all educators who were working hard to establish a welcoming and hospitable environment for all students. Participant A assured those in attendance that Metro State was serious about doubling the amount of Latino students at the college over the next ten years, through the Emerging HSI Initiative, stating that the taskforce wanted to establish Metro State as the college of choice for Latinos in Colorado. Participant A also stated that the core values of the Emerging HSI goal were retention and graduation success. Many of the Latino community leaders in attendance thanked the taskforce members and co-chairs for presenting the meeting and said they wanted the Metro State president to address the leaders face-to-face in the future.

*Second Major Meeting with Latino Community Leaders: October 2, 2007*

During the follow-up August 31, 2007 steering committee meeting, the Emerging HSI Taskforce spent the majority of the time debriefing the recent meeting they had had with the Latino community leaders. Many steering committee members who had attended the August 29 meeting said they appreciated the open and transparent communication and felt that some healing had taken place.

The Emerging HSI steering committee decided to hold another meeting with the Latino community leaders and, this time, to be sure the president would attend. They also decided that Metro State would follow through with many of the Latino leaders' recommendations, such as placing advertising billboards on Federal Boulevard (a main thoroughfare on Denver's west side) and actively working in partnership with the Latino community on education reform and advocacy.

At the second meeting, held on October 2, President Jordan spoke about the lack of clarity regarding the in-state tuition issue and pledged that Metro State would work closely with community leaders and the state legislature to assure that a clarifying bill would be passed. The community leaders then had a direct dialogue with the president. While there are no published minutes of the October 2 second meeting with the Latino leaders and the president, the participants in this study said that many of the same Latino leaders from the first meeting had attended the second. Regarding both meetings, Participant G later said:

I got calls. People [Latino leaders] were saying, "Wow, that was good. We're glad that we came. What's next?" And I said, "We'll get in touch with you." So what we decided to do was to have a second meeting, and we did. At that time, President Jordan came.... I think his presence gave the message that, "Gosh, he

really wants to work on this, he's open"... I think it gave them the message that maybe we're going to learn now to work together. And so people began to feel more comfortable.

Participant G added that, while the in-state tuition issue was contentious and potentially damaging for Metro State, he felt it had occurred at the right time because the Emerging HSI Taskforce was just getting underway and this issue allowed Metro State to rebuild its relationship with the Latino community in a way that would not have been possible without the existence of the Emerging HSI Initiative.

*Initial Subcommittee Meetings: August-October 2007*

The first order of business for the chairs of the subcommittees was to facilitate a mission to guide their work. Since there was no prescribed method for how the subcommittees would proceed, the first meetings helped the members share their views and experiences with each other. Participant C said:

I think that all of us felt valued; because, in our meetings, we would submit our recommendations and we would take everybody's written recommendations and verbally discuss them and take it seriously in the construction of the documents. So it was done by group consensus on how we accomplished what we did.

Participant E echoed that sentiment and felt that the subcommittee structure allowed for a diversity of representation. She also said that this helped to broaden the scope of her own subcommittee's mission statement:

People felt like they were included. Once they saw more what it was about, it reduced some of the fears, and some of the suspicions, and some of the resistance to the idea.... Once people on the subcommittee realized that it wasn't just going to be about research, [that] their experience would also be valued ... then I think we got a little more buy in.

Each subcommittee formed a specific mission and reported to the steering committee meetings in late September 2007. Table 4.1 highlights the six subcommittee mission statements.

**Table 4.1**  
**Subcommittee Mission Statements**

<b>Subcommittee</b>	<b>Mission</b>
Curriculum	Review, evaluate, and develop curricula that will attract, retain, and graduate Latino/a students at Metro State. A strong curriculum should prepare all students for success in their education, career, and life through a high-quality educational experience.
Faculty and Staff Development and Grantsmanship	Provide an opportunity for faculty and staff to grow professionally and cultivate the knowledge, ability, skills, and expertise to acquire a deep understanding of multicultural competence.
Campus Climate	Address the issues within the workplace and learning environments, ranging from cumulative to subtle to dramatic, that can influence whether an individual feels personal safe, listened to, valued, and treated fairly with respect at Metro State. The vision involves making all individuals (regardless of one's ethnicity, culture, gender, religious background, sexual orientation, and/or ability) feel valued and supported at Metro State.
Recruitment and Retention	The Recruitment and Retention subcommittee will use research based best practices in the recruitment and retention of a diverse student body, input from the campus and community, and our own professional experiences to identify and address needs for students (specifically Hispanic). The goal is to increase Hispanic enrollment to 25% and to retain diverse students to graduation from Metro State.
Assessment	The mission of the Assessment Committee is to address how assessment is a central element of the HSI initiative at Metro State. To this end, the committee encourages the collection and interpretation of disaggregated data that measure the impact of HSI-related activities in the areas of recruitment, faculty and student development and retention efforts leading to graduation to benefit Latino and, therefore, all students enrolled at Metro State.
Public	The mission of the Public Relations subcommittee is to develop

Relations	strategies to educate, inform and communicate with communities, collaborators and partners in developing a positive image for the Hispanic Serving Institution initiative.
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Based on the scope of the subcommittees and their missions, the chairs were able to divide the work to reflect the members’ interests and expertise. For example, the Curriculum subcommittee comprised two sub-groups: Majors and Minors, and General Studies Curriculum Development. Because I was personally involved as the chair of the Curriculum subcommittee, I here highlight some activities from that group to provide context into subcommittee work of the Emerging HSI Taskforce.

***Curriculum Subcommittee Example of Divided Roles***

The General Studies Curriculum Development Group focused on the curriculum within the first 30 credits (i.e., the first year for a full-time student). The group decided to focus on remedial education and general-studies requirements, because a large percentage of Metro State students had been placed into math, reading, and/or English remedial classes based on their placement scores, with students of color being overrepresented. However, because Metro State was not legislatively allowed to offer remedial classes, many students had found themselves dually enrolled at both a community college and Metro State during their first year. This had made it difficult for Metro State to track and retain these students because of the lack of control over the curriculum at the community college. The General Studies subcommittee examined how the HSIs they would visit had managed this issue, especially since those institutions’ remediation rates were similar or higher than Metro State’s.

The Majors and Minors subcommittee focused on the declared major/minor aspect of a student's career. They discussed how they should analyze the percentage of Latino students in each existing major at Metro State. Their resultant needs analysis concluded that Latino students had been dramatically overrepresented in undeclared status and underrepresented in fields such as technology, education, and science. This was the first study of its kind to be performed by Metro State. This data informed the college that it had not been sufficiently advising Latino students regarding their major/minor status. The data also informed the college that there had been large gaps in demographic representation, according to one's study major (Appendix M). The Majors and Minors subcommittee then further examined these issues: (a) during their HSI site visits (e.g., how the data were different or similar to other HSIs), and (b) by reviewing published journal articles regarding areas of specialization that were attractive to and needed by Latino students, such as data from the Pew Hispanic Center on expanding careers for Latinos.

### **Subcommittee Reporting**

After each subcommittee reported its various activities at the weekly steering committee meetings, each chair was provided feedback through open discussion among all of the members. The chairs took this feedback back to their subcommittees to help build their missions, goals, and ideas. Many participants in this study stated that they were impressed with the level of cooperation and camaraderie between the faculty and the staff of the taskforce. Participants B and C said:

And that means that those of us, for example, on the academic side, we know we had to listen to and pay attention to and respect people who weren't faculty.

Maybe I shouldn't even have to say that, but I do, because I mean there is a pretty good hierarchy in higher education. So I sensed very quickly that the faculty didn't know what was involved in recruiting, even those who advocated for increased recruitment. (Participant B)

Actually, I had not seen it (faculty, staff, classified, and students working together) to this extent because, for the most part, faculty are segregated from staff.... This was the first time that we had such a large-scale effort where we saw participation by both.... For example, my co-chair was classified staff... She put in a lot of effort and work in getting things done. I think it was an education for her, too, because I remember in my discussions with her that I had given her a number of books to kind of enlighten her on the efforts.... There was more equal status within these committees. (Participant C)

The initial discussions and explorations of all the subcommittees would be examined further during the upcoming HSI site visits in California and Illinois.

#### **Site Visits to HSIs: October–November 2007**

The Emerging HSI Taskforce steering committee announced in July 2007 that they would support site visits at select HSIs in California and Illinois. The details and locations of the site visits were discussed during the August and September steering committee meetings. In structuring the site visits, Participant A focused on providing an intentional and meaningful experience for the participants of the Emerging HSI Taskforce. She said:

I pulled the data on HSIs that had similar income history profiles but higher graduation rates, and made some recommendations that these were HSIs that we should visit.... We wanted to develop intentional questions that were consistent so that every group was asking similar questions of their various counterparts, so that we [would come] back with apples-to-apples comparatives as we were developing our recommendations.

The Emerging HSI Taskforce sent a delegation to Illinois to attend the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) conference from Oct 19-22, 2007. The delegation performed site research at Northeastern Illinois University, an HSI located in



Chicago. The Emerging HSI Taskforce made plans to send two delegations to the Los Angeles area, where there was a heavy concentration of HSI colleges and universities; these site visits included California State University, Los Angeles, California State University, Dominguez Hills, California State University, Fullerton, and California State University, San Bernardino. Each delegation performed site-visit research at two sites.

The Emerging HSI Taskforce wanted one to two members from each subcommittee to attend each trip. Ten participants attended the Illinois trip; thirteen attended the California trip. Participants on both trips included a mix of faculty, staff, and one student each. In addition to the Illinois and California trips, the taskforce conducted phone interviews with an HSI in Texas at University of Texas, San Antonio.

Every HSI visited had been contacted ahead of time and agreed to allow the Metro State delegation to visit and conduct interviews. The co-chairs and Participant E orchestrated the interviews and meetings with the faculty, staff, and students at the various HSIs. These meetings were comprised of student groups all the way up to presidents and provosts.

During the planning phase of the site visits, each subcommittee submitted questions to be explored at the HSIs. Based on feedback from the subcommittees, the site-visit questions were broken up into categories similar to the divisions of the subcommittees. For example, when the delegates from Metro State were interviewing the Director of Admissions at one of the HSIs, they could reference the recruitment and retention section of the questions. Table 4.2 highlights some questions that were explored at the various HSI site visits.

**Table 4.2**

**Prepared Questions for Ground Research Onsite Visits**

<b>Retention and Enrollment Management</b>	<b>Academic Affairs, Assessment, and Senior Leadership</b>	<b>Campus Climate and Public Relations</b>
<p>What are your retention rates for first year students?</p> <p>Do you have a first year experience course?</p> <p>Are students of color retained at similar rates as Caucasian students?</p> <p>How do you encourage students of color to major in areas that are traditionally underrepresented?</p> <p>How do you identify students with remedial needs?</p> <p>How do you define ‘remedial’?</p> <p>How do you create a positive atmosphere for students who need remedial work?</p> <p>What strategies do you use to recruit more Latino students?</p>	<p>What percentages of part-time faculty teach classes at the full time level in relation to full time faculty?</p> <p>What kind of tutoring or academic support programs do you have at the college/university?</p> <p>How do you assess the success of your HSI initiatives at the college level, academic level, student affairs level, and external community level?</p> <p>Please describe the process you went through to become an HSI?</p> <p>What types of curriculum changes were made in response your transition to HSI status?</p> <p>What advice do you have for Metro State as we move towards HSI status?</p>	<p>Did you conduct a pre-HSI assessment of your campus?</p> <p>Did you use any particular set of benchmarks to measure improvement in the overall campus climate? What were they?</p> <p>Do faculty, staff, and students feel that it is safe to express their genuine concerns with their colleagues on campus about HSI?</p> <p>What are the major lessons that you have learned regarding HSI’s and public relations?</p> <p>What culturally competent public relations strategies do you use with Latino/a communities?</p> <p>Do you have publications in Spanish?</p>

After the site visits, each group reported back to the full taskforce on October 26.

An interesting point discovered by Metro State was that every HSI visited had informed

the delegates that they had not become an HSI by strategy. They were HSIs because of their existing demographics (i.e., already possessed a 25% Latino student population by the time HSI designation began in the early 1990s). Many staff and faculty associated with the HSI schools visited stated that they were impressed that Metro State was being proactive in its approach toward becoming an HSI.

Participants in this case study said that these HSI site visits had provided Metro State with invaluable information that then helped to shape the recommendations they included in their final Emerging HSI report. The most glaring statistic is the fact that the HSIs visited had higher retention and graduation rates, with similar student populations in terms of academic preparedness, compared to Metro State. Participant B said:

A couple of these Cal State schools have demographic statistics indicating that their students are probably poorer than ours—more Pell grants, lower SAT and ACT scores, lower GPAs coming out of the schools—and the darnedest thing, they have a much higher retention rate than we do.

Common findings included that each visited HSI (a) had a graduate school, (b) a first-year experience requirement, (c) required all developmental/remedial studies to be completed by the 30<sup>th</sup> credit, (d) enforced registration and application deadlines (whereas Metro State had a rolling admissions/registration policy), and (e) had multiple college publications in Spanish and a variety of bilingual staff who could communicate with the families. Metro State did not have any of these measures in place, with the exception of some bilingual staff. In addition, Metro State learned that some of the HSIs facilitated bilingual parent orientations (concurrently with new-student orientations) and offered culturally responsive workshops for faculty and staff. While these HSIs did not have a specific strategy regarding how they obtained and maintained their HSI status, it was

clear that they were more focused than Metro State on support, accountability, and outreach to students and families.

### **Community Proposals: October–November 2007**

In an effort to maintain the transparency and openness of the Emerging HSI Initiative, the taskforce accepted proposals from the surrounding community at-large and the Metro State community through a public website highlighting the Emerging HSI Initiative. In total, nine community at-large proposals were submitted by a Metro State faculty or staff member, although many proposals included community partnerships.

Participant E reflected on the variety of proposals that had come from the community:

Some of the proposals came from community connections, so organizations that committee members or campus or community members were involved in.... “We want to make that connection with Metro State. We want to help you achieve your goals.”

One such proposal came out of a partnership between individuals at Metro State and the community called *The Abrace y Forente, Puente al Exito* program. These community partners included Senator Ken Salazar, former Denver Mayor Federico Peña, and Senior Program Officer for the Colorado Trust, Ed Lucero. The goal of the *Abrace y Forente* program was to facilitate intensive interactive community relations and peer-support activities within the Latino community in support of Latino students at Metro State. Participants on the HSI Taskforce utilized their community connections to collaborate in authoring a proposal, to be included with the subcommittee proposals as part of the larger final report.

### **Public Meeting, Presentations, and Final Report Due: Nov–Dec 2007**

Upon returning from the HSI site visits, the delegations reported their findings to the steering committee and respective subcommittees. The subcommittees would use the findings along with other forms of research and group input to make final recommendations. The subcommittees had a November 30 deadline to make their final presentations at a public forum, designed to inform the public regarding the progress and direction of the Emerging HSI Taskforce as well as to solicit feedback for the final written reports due late December. Each subcommittee had fifteen minutes to present their respective initial research findings and recommendations. To maintain transparency, each subcommittee also provided their mission statement. Following their presentations, the public (anyone in the audience) was able to provide feedback and speak. Metro State's President Jordan attended and also provided feedback.

According to an internal Metro State publication covering the November 30 meeting, among twenty community members present, the former executive director of the Greater Auraria Neighborhood of Associated Services, Patrick Vigil, said: "It's so important what you're doing. Think about it. We're spending more than \$100,000 to keep a kid locked up in juvenile detention. It makes a whole lot of sense to spend that money on education instead"

([http://www.mscd.edu/~collcom/artman/publish/hsi\\_tvw5120507.shtml](http://www.mscd.edu/~collcom/artman/publish/hsi_tvw5120507.shtml), 2007).

Many public comments at the meeting suggested that people were happy that Metro State was attempting to intentionally address systemic issues that had been barriers to students of color. Some recommendations challenged the status quo and existing

infrastructure at Metro State (Appendix A). For instance, the Curriculum committee recommended that the college needed to (a) more strictly enforce prerequisites (i.e., by currently not doing so, the college was putting students in a position to fail), (b) take control over the remedial education of its own students (i.e., which the community college currently administered), and (c) begin graduate education at the college. The latter two recommendations would require state-wide legislation to be passed through the Colorado House and Senate.

The Assessment subcommittee included recommendations for a complete overhaul of the college's student information system as well as greater transparency in utilizing college-wide data to make evidence-based decisions. They concluded that Metro State needed to adopt a culture of assessment at all levels, and urged Metro State to culturally transform itself in a way that adopted and embraced assessment.

The Recruitment and Retention subcommittee challenged Metro State to build sustainable programs for students, such as (a) a comprehensive first-year success program, (b) to develop an undergraduate research program, and (c) to dramatically expand pre-collegiate programs in the metro region. They emphasized that areas of recruitment and retention should be interrelated; that is, the college must recruit students with the intent to retain and graduate them. This subcommittee presented twenty-eight distinct recommendations, which were the most of any subcommittee (Appendix A).

The Campus Climate subcommittee challenged Metro State to create a more interactive HSI website and encouraged the college to prominently display the effort on its web pages. They presented eight distinct recommendations encouraging the

continuation of the open and transparent nature of the Emerging HSI effort. In addition to the website recommendation, they emphasized that Metro State needed to implement a full-scale campus climate survey plan, with the results to be assessed by an outside vendor and reported back to the campus. This type of assessment had never been administered before at the college.

The Public Relations subcommittee challenged Metro State to position itself as a state leader in addressing educational issues regarding the state's changing demographics, and encouraged the college to maintain a strong internal communication presence. While this subcommittee had only two specific recommendations, they covered multiple areas regarding internal and external relations; for example, bilingual advertising, town-hall meetings, providing frequent faculty and staff updates, and ensuring that representatives at Metro State were more present at Latino community events.

Finally, the Faculty and Staff Grantsmanship subcommittee's main recommendation challenged Metro State to create a sustainable Professional Development Center on campus for the faculty, to include multicultural workshops. They also emphasized that professional development opportunities could lead the faculty to new learning paradigms. This subcommittee's theoretical framework drew on the work of Cross, Bazron, Dennis, and Isaacs (1989); which emphasizes (a) valuing diversity, (b) having the capacity for cultural self-assessment, (c) being conscious of the dynamics when cultures interact, (d) institutionalizing cultural knowledge, and (e) adapting service delivery to reflect an understanding of diversity between and within cultures.

The final recommendations of the subcommittees were derived from (a) a combination of the HSI site-visits research, (b) personal experiences of the participants, (c) published journals and articles, and (d) active research in the Denver Metro area. For instance, according to Participant E, the Excel Outreach recommendation came from some action research that her team had facilitated in the Denver Metro area.

We went out and surveyed the counselors and the other pre-collegiate programs. Most of them were just open and honest and upfront and said, “We want to fill the niches that you are not filling.” And they asked parents and families what they wanted. So they were able to design a program that filled a need, didn’t step on anyone else’s toes, and helped more students come to college.

The graduate program recommendation from the Curriculum subcommittee grew from the HSI site visits to other Hispanic serving institutions. Participant B said:

Then the question turned to the master’s programs. Well, what kind of impact could it have that these students were in an institution that had a master’s program? So one of the things that we focused on was that, somehow, the master’s program must give those students [at the other HSIs], especially if ... somebody from east LA can’t go up to San Francisco because they are more place-bound. Whether or not that’s a stereotype of Latinos, it also happens to be true.

The recommendation in the Journey Through Our Heritage proposal, submitted by Participant G, stemmed from his personal and professional experiences in the community and with Chicano Studies. He said:

For me, one of the goals I had was to make sure that there were at least recommendations that included the Chicano Studies Department, because I felt that because of our connections to the Latino community, the work we do, the nonprofits that we work with, that we were a natural mechanism to help people come into Metro State as students.

The subcommittees submitted their final reports on December 21, 2007. (See Appendix A for the final recommendations of every subcommittee.) Participant E, reflecting on the final dash to write and submit his report, said:



There were literally days when I just didn't feel like I had one single minute to breathe during that time. So, in fact, I took a week off; but I spent half that week writing up my subcommittee's final report, because I really wanted it to be well-done and well-received.

### **Online Voting for Top Recommendations**

After the final reports were handed in on December 21, 2007, the Emerging HSI Taskforce steering committee decided that each participating member on the taskforce would vote on the top recommendations for priority consideration. Fifty-five recommendations were submitted, and each was supported by a developed proposal that was two to ten pages long. The Emerging HSI steering committee was concerned that they would not be able to implement every recommendation at once. Therefore, they believed a voting process would prioritize the recommendations. Participant D said:

Then it really came down to a vote to all of the people involved in this HSI taskforce. That's what narrowed the list down. And I think that caused people to feel that they had a say in what the final report was.

During an early January 2008 taskforce meeting, the full Emerging HSI Taskforce was briefed on the online voting process. The voting then took place over four days that month. Voters were asked to answer yes, no, or in absentia to all fifty-five recommendations. There was also a "comments" section for each recommendation where voters could provide qualitative feedback. Of the sixty-five eligible Emerging HSI Taskforce members, forty voted; sixteen recommendations were voted as priority recommendations, with a 95 percent yes level or higher. (See Appendix M for highlights of the top recommendations, along with an update as of January 2012 as to their status.)

The Emerging HSI steering committee suggested that the recommendations that did not make the top sixteen would still be on the table and would be revisited at a later

date; they simply weren't going to get priority consideration for the 2008-2009 budget cycle. Based on the sixteen priority recommendations, approximately \$500,000 was earmarked to be implemented during the 2008-2009 budget cycle.

### **Phase III of HSI Implementation: February 2008–Present**

Metro State hosted an awards recognition ceremony for the Emerging HSI Taskforce members in late February 2008. The final report was formally presented to President Jordan at this meeting. This event created feelings of closure and accomplishment, and also marked the beginning of Phase III, the implementation phase of the Emerging HSI Taskforce. The president thanked all of the taskforce members for their participation and pledged that Metro State would follow through on many of the recommendations. This event marked the end of the formal roles of the Emerging HSI Taskforce. Participants in this study reflected that they had made lasting friendships and developed strong networks as a result of their work on this committee. Participant C said:

What is interesting is that I made some friendships on that committee that still endure through today. Several faculty members, when we get together even for social occasions, are as a result of this. So in that respect it was productive, which means there is that interactive aspect that continues on and I think it's been productive. That makes all the informal, indirect aspects in some cases more important than the actual goals of the committee, per se.

The president's cabinet would spend the rest of the spring 2008 semester studying the recommendations and formulating a plan for implementation. Metro State set a campus-wide meeting for July 2008 to provide updates regarding the progress of the implementation phase of the Emerging HSI Initiative. The agenda for the July 2008 meeting included:

- Following through on the taskforce report and recommendations

- Xcelente Marketing presentation, Campus Climate Survey
- Update, funding for sixteen taskforce recommendations
- Assistance for implementing funded recommendations
- Long-term budget planning
  - (a) Items from the 16 priorities for which a budget was not requested
  - (b) Plans for addressing additional non-priority recommendations
- Next steps for furthering and expediting HSI Initiative recommendations and goals.

This comprehensive agenda addressed multiple aspects of the HSI Taskforce report and detailed the Metro States' future plans regarding the Emerging HSI Initiative. President Jordan announced that the college would follow through with a comprehensive campus-climate survey, even though that recommendation was not in the top sixteen, and he would hire an outside company to conduct, analyze, and report the results. He proceeded to discuss the specific budget requests for the priority recommendations and requested assistance and cooperation from the taskforce members as well as the campus offices affected by the new programs. He closed the meeting by reiterating his support for the Emerging HSI effort and encouraged the taskforce to assist Metro State in keeping track of its efforts to implement and carry out the recommendations.

While Metro State began implementing the first sixteen priority recommendations during the fall 2008 semester, the recommendation that had fallen just below the cutoff at number seventeen began to see the most attention. During the final presentations in 2007, the Curriculum committee had presented their graduate program recommendation. At the

time, President Jordan had said it was a noble idea but likely would not be a direction that Metro State would take since its primary focus was undergraduate education. However, six months later, the administration took a different position. Participant B said:

President Jordan came in and he had the taskforce report and said he came down to look at it. “Where is the recommendation on the master’s program? We are going to go over to the faculty senate and we are going to talk about the recommendation on the master’s program. Do you want to come?” I said, “I want to come, yes.” So he [went] up to the meeting and spoke about it... I’ve been on the faculty senate for maybe eleven years. I don’t think I’d ever heard them applaud for anything. I mean they just instantly burst out in applause.

The research conducted by the Emerging HSI Taskforce had demonstrated gaps in accessible graduate education in key areas in the Denver community. For instance, the University of Denver, which costs upwards of \$35,000 per year for full-time tuition, was the only graduate school in the Denver area that offered a master’s degree in social work. Since there is a high need in the Denver community for social workers, the taskforce felt there was an opportunity to fill a niche. So, Metro State decided to propose offering master’s degrees in teacher education and accounting, which were also graduate fields identified as emerging for Latino students.

President Jordan took the proposal to the board of trustees, who voted in favor of drafting legislation in support of graduate education. The proposal was sent to the Colorado legislature and signed into law by then Governor Bill Ritter in the spring of 2009. The college would begin implementing graduate education the fall semester of 2010. Metro State consistently pointed to the HSI recommendation for graduate education as the main rationale for this idea.

Metro State has continued to provide updates and to engage the college regarding the Emerging HSI effort (Appendix H). They have created a comprehensive website on the president's page and provided approximately six to eight article updates per year. They have held approximately two Emerging HSI open-meeting updates per year since 2008. In 2010, the Emerging HSI effort was highlighted in a national publication (Andrade & Santiago, 2010) as an example of an Emerging HSI being intentional in its direction to becoming a full HSI.

The implementation phase of the Emerging HSI Initiative has not been without its difficulties. The severe economic downturn of 2008 impacted the initial funding for some recommendations. Participant B said:

The first six months after the report seemed very promising. There were funds set aside and some of the initiatives starting getting funded. But then came the bad downturn [of the economy] and the hiring freeze.... For example, we couldn't hire the Excel pre-collegiate people for about a year-and-a-half after the report.

Fortunately, the stimulus money allocated from the federal government from the fall of 2008 to 2010 provided temporary funding for some programs. For instance, the Journey Through Our Heritage program was funded with stimulus money for two years, then was base-funded starting in 2010.

While the formal Emerging HSI Taskforce ended after the final report was handed in, Participants A and B kept the message alive with their commitment to the mission. Despite the economic difficulties and potential for momentum being halted, participants in this study said that they took leadership and kept it in view for the college. Their persistence helped to gain the temporary funding sources through the federal stimulus and

helped to remind the college to earmark baseline-funding for the Emerging HSI Initiative for when the economy would come back.

During an open forum conducted in the fall semester of 2011, Participant A said that Metro State had increased their Latino enrollment by 35 percent since the Emerging HSI Taskforce had started and was projected to receive full HSI status by 2018 (Table 4.3 below).

The 2011 open forum was attended by about 40 participants of the original Emerging HSI Taskforce. The forum updated and highlighted many recommendations that had been implemented as a result of the Emerging HSI Initiative; such as the first-year success program, graduate education, outreach programs, and the public-relations initiatives. The Journey Through Our Heritage program was also highlighted, which had been implemented on a full-scale basis and was successfully connecting Latino high-school students to Metro State through the medium of Chicano Studies. More importantly, according to Participant B, the updates provided at the open forum meeting made people feel that the Emerging HSI Initiative had helped to positively change the infrastructure of the college.

**Table 4.3**


**Path to Achieving HSI Status**

**Full Time Equivalent, Actual and Predicted Enrollment to achieve HSI status**

PREDICT	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
TOTAL	7,459	7,571	7,684	7,800	<b>7,917</b>	8,035	8,156	8,278	8,403	8,529	8,656	8,786
HISPANIC	937	1,014	1,098	1,188	<b>1,286</b>	1,393	1,507	1,632	1,766	1,912	2,070	2,241
% HISPANIC	12.5%	13.4%	14.3%	15.2%	<b>16.2%</b>	17.3%	18.5%	19.7%	21.0%	22.4%	23.9%	25.5%

ACTUAL	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
TOTAL	7,459	7,556	8,113	8,447	<b>8,313</b>							
HISPANIC	937	955	1,041	1,297	<b>1,466</b>							
%	12.6											
HISPANIC	%	12.6%	12.8%	15.4%	<b>17.6%</b>							



In November 2011, Participant B wrote a memo on behalf of the Emerging HSI Taskforce, proposing new potential tuition structures for undocumented students. While the in-state tuition clarification issue from 2007-2008 had dealt with Colorado residents with undocumented parents, this memo dealt specifically with undocumented students who had moved to Colorado at an early age. The memo was a direct response to and support of recommendation number fourteen from the Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee, which advocated in-state tuition for undocumented students and had received unanimous support from the HSI Taskforce. While undocumented students are charged out-of-state tuition in most states (including Colorado), some states, such as

California, have passed legislation (e.g., California state bill AB 540, and California Education Code § 68130.5) to allow for in-state tuition for undocumented students who meet specific requirements; including (a) attending a state high school for at least three years, (b) graduating with a GED or diploma, and (c) requiring an affidavit that the student will apply for legal residency.

Participant B's memo advocated for two tuition structure options: (a) to support either undocumented students with in-state tuition (plus additional stipend fees), or (b) allow them to pay 150 percent of in-state tuition. This proposal will be under consideration at the spring 2012 board session. Metro State would be the first college in Colorado to propose this legislation.

### **Salient Themes**

Six salient themes have emerged as a result of this study of the Emerging HSI Taskforce at Metro State: sustainability, cynicism/fear, transparency/vulnerability, commitment to social justice, participatory action research, and a collaborative/interdisciplinary spirit.

#### **Theme 1: Sustainability**

One of the stated goals of the Emerging HSI effort was to ensure that an infrastructure was created or enhanced to sustain success for all students at Metro State (i.e., specifically for students of color). According to the final report:

The mission of the larger HSI Initiative is to equitably educate the residents within the geographical area that Metro State is legislatively intended to serve, including Hispanics. Our vision of success is to create the means by which Hispanic students can reach their full potential through increased recruitment, matriculation, and graduation, while at the same time ensuring that all students are likewise assisted by the Emerging HSI efforts. (Participants A and B, 2008, p. 3)



Sustainability was a central theme that came up in the interviews for this study and in many of the internal documents that highlighted the Emerging HSI Taskforce at Metro State. Most participants strongly asserted that the Emerging HSI Initiative was sustainable due to two primary factors:

1. First, the initiative had buy-in from the board of trustees and the president of the college. Participant D, the faculty senate president, said that most faculty committees he had been on in the past were not effective if they did not have direct communication and engagement with upper administration.
2. Second, the Emerging HSI Initiative had campus-wide buy-in due to its intentionality of inclusiveness and transparency.

The participants in this study mentioned that this effort was sustainable in nature due to the early interactions with the Latino community leaders over the contentious in-state tuition issue. While the issue had taken substantial time to work through, Metro State had developed allies in the Latino community by establishing open communication lines; this helped them to make amends and to build a more meaningful relationship with the community.

This Emerging HSI Initiative would not have been sustainable without Metro State's willingness to implement many of the recommendations developed by the Emerging HSI Taskforce. Ultimately, this effort has been sustainable because of the efforts and leadership of the two co-chairs, Participants A and B, who have (a) remained with the institution; (b) championed the Emerging HSI efforts through media, conferences, and intentional internal communication efforts; and (c) ensured that the

Emerging HSI Taskforce recommendations are being implemented effectively. Table 4.4 highlights many of the participants' views regarding the sustainability of the taskforce.

**Table 4.4**

**Participant Views on Sustainability of the Effort**

<b>Participant D</b>	<b>Participant E</b>	<b>Participant F</b>
I think it's sustainable even in times of budgetary crisis and I've seen funding go behind the proposals. I think the student success building (\$59 million dollar building to open in Summer 2012) to some degree owes its existence to some of the work of HSI	I definitely think this is sustainable. You can see the results. Just for example, the late registration fee policy. The goal in doing that was to never have to collect a fee from students; it was to make sure they are registered early and to ensure their success. We raised the expectations and the students met them. It made a huge difference. It didn't just make a difference for students; it made a difference for staff too.	I think this is certainly sustainable. It's become an effort that is now recognized in the community.... It certainly comes out indirectly, for example, at the Latino information desk at open houses. I explain to incoming parents in Spanish saying the fact is that we have an emphasis now on recruiting the Latino community. I think that there seems to be more of a welcome effort. I have a lot of contact in the community, and there is more of a positive understanding that Metro welcomes these students.
<b>Participant A</b>	<b>Participant G</b>	<b>Participant B</b>
I do believe it is sustainable... I think now that we are being explicit and intentional about our goals, the community is responding.	It's a combination of the mission statement and I think the president's philosophy on shared governance.... the open systems approach that is opening these doors that made it a lot easier. If this had been a closed system, we would not have had shared governance, it would have been a lot more difficult.	When you are overt, when the college is really active, things happen. When you are not, they don't. If we hadn't been engaged in this, we would not have the numbers that we have, we would not have the retention rate... but this is not automatically sustainable.
<b>Participant F</b>	<b>Participant A</b>	
Yes, this is sustainable.	HSI is now in both mine and	

<p>We're still so young (as a college) and we have significant turnover. And with the long process like becoming an HSI, we're still talking about something that started over four years ago.</p>	<p>participant B's job expectations. So that's something that is explicit and that's kind of our new leadership role. Our provost is making sure the HSI effort is embedded within our job expectations, so that we are staying on top of an advancing initiative</p>	
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While many participants in this study believe that the HSI Initiative is sustainable, some feel that the sustainability effort of the initiative would be stronger with more buy-in from Metro State's vice presidents. Participant E said, "I think the process would have been even better if we had more buy-in from senior leadership. I don't think any of the vice presidents at the time were on the taskforce." Participant A echoed that sentiment, saying of the lack of vice president involvement on the Emerging HSI Initiative:

I think I would have made it more of my hope that the VPs would participate; because, ultimately, we were an advisory committee to the president. So I think maybe having some front-end conversations about "who is going to take charge of those deliverables to ensure the continuity," I would liked to have seen more front- end ownership and expectation.

However, now that the Provost has written the Emerging HSI expectation into Participants A and B's job descriptions, they believe they now have more authority to ensure that the taskforce's recommendations are being implemented effectively.

The budget crisis of 2008-2010 also threatened the sustainability of the Emerging HSI Initiative. Fortunately, many initiatives initially earmarked with institutional money eventually were funded by the federal stimulus money or during succeeding budget cycles. For instance, the data warehouse initiative recommended by the Assessment Subcommittee was funded and implemented by almost \$500,000 of stimulus money.

## **Theme 2: Cynicism and Fear**

While many participants in this study expressed hope and excitement over the Emerging HSI effort, some initially had expressed cynicism or fear that this effort would not be sustained. Many of these fears stemmed from the participants' personal and professional historical struggles when advocating for social justice and civil rights. Many past diversity efforts in which the participants had been involved had seemed half-hearted to them or ineffective, with the institution exhibiting a lack of authenticity and willingness to champion diversity efforts.

Fear and cynicism were also evident in the surrounding Latino community, especially in light of the in-state tuition controversy. The Latino community believed that the institution, which they felt should have been supporting their students better, had come up short. This feeling is what most likely triggered the contentious comments at the first open forum with the Latino community leaders. How could one argue with the fact that Federal Boulevard, which is heavily populated by Latinos, had far more billboards promoting liquor and cigarettes than promoting education? What does that say about how society views this population? This was eye-opening for Metro State, and the Emerging HSI effort became an avenue to start directly addressing such systemic issues.

Some participants in this study willingly acknowledged that their own colleagues at Metro State initially had been skeptical and critical about the Emerging HSI Initiative. They said that this skepticism might have been due to some colleagues' lack of knowledge regarding institutional racism. As a result, many of the study's participants viewed the Emerging HSI effort as an opportunity to educate and inform.

Some of the criticism also may have been triggered by past historical struggles and stereotypes that many taskforce participants had spent their lives confronting. However, this seems to have strengthened their resolve to see the HSI Initiative through. Table 4.5 highlights many of the participants’ fears when the Emerging HSI effort first came about.

**Table 4.5**

**Participant Views on Cynicism and Fear**

<b>Participant B</b>	<b>Participant G</b>	<b>Participant A</b>
I didn’t think I would live to see these kinds of changes, and I’ve been involved in educating Latinos and other minorities since 1969. All those years I’ve had to keep myself from becoming cynical-....So, it almost seemed too good to be true. I keep telling myself, ‘eventually, I’ll see what’s wrong with this picture’.	Without closing the achievement gap, if the achievement gap is not closed at the lower levels in schools then it’s not going to be sustainable. But not because of Metro’s lack of work or outreach. It’s going to be, in my opinion, that the education system continues to fail Latino kids.	I was nervous about having something so inclusive, because I was the co-chair, I was concerned about being able to manage it. But, we ultimately decided to keep this open.
<b>Participant B</b>	<b>Participant E</b>	<b>Participant D</b>
I remember when I first started thinking, ‘God, I hope this keeps up. I hope this diversity continues, that it’s not just at the beginning of the effort and then it dies out and then becomes primarily faculty or primarily classified staff.	I said, ‘if this is just about getting them here to achieve the goal of HSI, but they are leaving in a semester with student loan debt and no degree, we are just contributing to the cycle of poverty and I won’t be a part of that!	Some faculty members were concerned about the direction.
<b>Participant C</b>	<b>Participant G</b>	
I know that there was a lot of misunderstanding on campus from HSI the idea was this is	There was this inherent fear in my field that you can’t show the institution	

only going to benefit Hispanics only.	anything wrong or they are going to criticize you and take away your money	
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**Theme 3: Action and Participation-Oriented**

The Emerging HSI Initiative utilized a community-based research (CBR) method in its structural makeup. The intent was not overtly based on the specific theoretical model of CBR, but rather intended to provide each faculty and staff member an opportunity to participate and to have a voice. There was an intentionality to utilize multiple methods of research, which included (a) site visits, (b) learning from the lived experience of each participant, and (c) traditional academic research.

The Emerging HSI Initiative used an open-systems approach to create a dialogue with the community, which they did through the open forums and by utilizing community connections. While the Emerging HSI Initiative started with the board of trustees and the president, the taskforce was not given a prescribed or required methodology for how to go about their research. They were, however, encouraged to focus on deliverables. The recommendations were solution-focused in nature, rather than to be focused only on the problems at hand. Table 4.6 highlights some of the participants’ views regarding the participatory nature of the Emerging HSI Initiative.

**Table 4.6**

**Participant Views on the Participatory Nature of the Emerging HSI Initiative**

<b>Participant A</b>	<b>Participant E</b>	<b>Participant G</b>
We learned best practices and ways to implement them in a context that	What happens a lot in educational institutions, both k-12 and higher education, is	It was conceived to get multiple representations, so that internally we

<p>mattered for our students and for their benefit here at Metro State.</p>	<p>they implement something. If it doesn't work right away they say, 'never mind, we are going to do something different. But, they (the Emerging HSI Taskforce) kept working on the plan. And to see the Latino enrollment jump to 16% of the student body in the fall of 2010, I was like, 'yes, it works! I knew it could work!</p>	<p>would be able to discuss any issues that might come up, and they did come up. It allowed for multiple voices. It was managed in a way that people felt safe to speak their truth.</p>
<p><b>Participant C</b></p>	<p><b>Participant J</b></p>	<p><b>Participant B</b></p>
<p>It amazed me at what some of the committees accomplished. The fact that so many of the faculty took their participation very seriously, they put in a lot of time and effort...I think that was also indicative of the cooperative nature of the group and the fact that people were willing to collaborate and participate. It was very positive that people were so participatory</p>	<p>If you didn't have a voice within the HSI committee, then that's your fault.</p>	<p>We insisted on research...both book-type research and on the ground research and we had to therefore suspend what we thought was the best approach until it was either confirmed or not by that research.</p>

**Theme 4: Transparency and Intentionality**

From President Jordan's opening speech at the fall 2006 welcome breakfast to the recent open forums, the Emerging HSI Initiative has been consistent and intentional in its mission and message. Every participant interviewed for the study provided consistent answers regarding what they believed the mission of the Emerging HSI Taskforce to be: a testament to the open-communication structure embedded in the HSI Initiative. The participants in this study gave credence to the Emerging HSI Initiative as an example of

how an institution can transform itself through an open-systems approach, which requires the institution’s commitment to shared-governance and to being open to criticism and dissent.

The Emerging HSI effort has been persistent in its mission, as demonstrated in the case when Participants B and C openly addressed a dissenting department during the open community forums with Latino leaders. Many participants in this study felt that the deliberate approach to be transparent helped to culturally transform Metro State from a closed system to an open system. Participants A and E said that Metro State struggles at times with consistency in messaging due to high turnover in some vice presidential areas, which had been a major reason why the Provost ended up writing the Emerging HSI Initiative into the job description of the co-chairs (for consistency purposes). Table 4.7 highlights some participants’ views regarding the theme of transparency and intentionality.

**Table 4.7**

**Participant Views on the Transparency and Intentionality of the Emerging HSI Mission**

<b>Participant D</b>	<b>Participant F</b>	<b>Participant C</b>
The president said from the beginning that he was taking the group seriously	It is to increase and improve access for our students and their educational experience	I think realistically the goal of the HSI committee was to turn this into a campus-wide support system for this effort. In other words, to bring faculty and staff more aligned in order to try to accomplish the goals of his.... I could see that what we were trying to accomplish was indeed to increase the enrollment, to reflect the demographics of Denver.



<b>Participant G</b>	<b>Participant A</b>	<b>Participant J</b>
We needed to have policies that were consistent with HSI goals, objectives and policies and maybe play the advocacy role for the larger issues in the legislature---I think it was consistent with the president's vision of shared governance	The goal was to double the number of Latino students over a 10-year period while focusing on recruitment and graduation for all students. So that the rising tide raises all boats.	The goal was to move our students forward, to increase and improve access for our students and their educational experience...It was conceived to gain the most communication touches as possible.

### **Theme 5: Collective and Individual Commitment to Social Justice**

The participants interviewed for this study exhibited a stern commitment to social justice and said that this may have been true for others on the taskforce as well. A hallmark of community-based research (CBR) is that it typically centers on a social-justice mission (Strand et al., 2003). Even though Metro State is a lower-funded four-year college compared to other colleges in Colorado, most would not consider Metro State an underprivileged organization due to its highly educated workforce and identity as a state college.

At the core of its mission, Metro State is legislatively intended to serve the seven-county Denver metropolitan district. The college serves more Pell-eligible students than any other four-year college in Colorado and serves more students of color than any other four-year college in Colorado. Denver County and Adams County are home to some of the most underprivileged people in the state in terms of educational attainment and socioeconomic status. Colorado also continues to possess one of the largest educational achievement gaps in the nation in relation to college readiness (ACT, 2011). Table 4.8

highlights the differences in 2011 Colorado graduates in ACT scores in relation to college readiness compared to national averages when disaggregating for ethnicity.

**Table 4.8**

**ACT Scores in High School Graduating Class of 2011 in Colorado Compared to National Scores; White and Latino Comparisons (ACT. org, 2011)**

<i><b>ACT BENCHMARK OF 18 ON ENGLISH</b></i>			
ETHNICITY	WHITE	LATINO	ALL STUDENTS
% OF COLORADO STUDENTS WHO ARE COLLEGE READY FOR ENGLISH	76%	36%	63%
TOTAL N	30493	10520	52930
% OF US STUDENTS WHO ARE COLLEGE READY FOR ENGLISH	77%	47%	66%
TOTAL N	981585	200661	1623112

<i><b>ACT BENCHMARK OF 22 IN MATH</b></i>			
ETHNICITY	WHITE	LATINO	ALL STUDENTS
% OF COLORADO STUDENTS WHO ARE COLLEGE READY FOR MATH	50%	18%	40%
TOTAL N	30493	10520	52930
% OF US STUDENTS WHO ARE COLLEGE READY FOR MATH	54%	30%	45%
TOTAL N	981585	200661	1623112

ACT score for high school graduating class of 2011 for Colorado compared to national

The co-chairs of the Emerging HSI Initiative and the president of Metro State consistently have pointed out that, due to Colorado’s large achievement, it is imperative for Metro State to become a leader in addressing the achievement gap. Many participants in this study, along with several leaders at Metro State, said that the college had not done enough in the past.

The Latino population is the fastest-growing population in Denver and comprises more than 50 percent of Denver Public School and Adams Public School children.

Therefore, it makes sense that Metro State can be a viable option for the post-secondary aspirations of students of color in the Denver community. Metro State could have said it was going to increase the recruitment of Latinos in an effort to simply meet the 25 percent threshold to reach federal HSI status (thus, being subject to more federal money). Instead, it looked within itself and found an inter-organizational structure that was not as effective as it could be for the students. Therefore, in order for Metro State to become a leader in educating the underserved, the message was delivered that Metro State needed to dramatically improve itself in order to meet that challenge.

Due to the social justice undertone in the first phases of promoting the Emerging HSI effort, individuals who shared similar sentiments were spurred into action. Many participants were able to meet like-minded individuals who were also committed to improving the educational landscape for students. These relationships likely formed into a collective commitment around the social justice issue of creating a more equitable landscape for students. Table 4.9 highlights some of the participants’ views regarding the social-justice focus of the Emerging HSI Initiative.

**Table 4.9**

**Participant Views on the Social Justice Focus of the Emerging HSI Initiative**

<b>Participant A</b>	<b>Participant D</b>	<b>Participant C</b>	<b>Participant B</b>
Within just a few months of working here, it was very evident to me that we had done a disservice to our students over the years by churning	I think on this committee, there was a spark of desire to make a difference –I think it gathered right into a membership of people who care	It’s about providing opportunities and opening doors for students, where so many have been told by high school counselors and faculty that they	Latinos are very cognizant. . . .In my community, one is really judged more in what one does for the underprivileged than our titles.

them...I didn't want this initiative to fail. It was too important for the Denver metro area, for the community where I live and work.	about what was going on, and we had ideas.	weren't suited for this.	
<b>Participant B</b>	<b>Participant G</b>	<b>Participant J</b>	
It felt remarkable that the committee wasn't just Latinos. It was multiethnic, multiracial, and the entire city of representation.	It made me realize what we can do when a college makes a commitment to work in the community and be open and to create the conditions for an effective dialog	It gave me an opportunity to think more closely about the change in demographics of our students...It had a good effect to help me always think about what we need to give our students.	

**Theme 6: Interdisciplinary Spirit**

Participants in this study reflected that the success of the HSI initiative was due to a committed, interdisciplinary spirit by the committee, who engaged the board of trustees and all levels of the college. The collective commitment of the Emerging HSI Taskforce centered on social justice and cultural transformation, which facilitated cross-department and position collaboration. The co-chair model of a faculty and non-faculty member set a tone for collaboration.

The Emerging HSI Taskforce was effective because of the large-scale buy-in and interdisciplinary nature of the work. Most of the issues discussed in the taskforce were large in scope and, therefore, facilitated conversations that needed to involve various stakeholders across campus.

As Participant D said, the overt tone of the interdisciplinary nature of the Emerging HSI Initiative may have naturally pared down people who were not apt to work outside their comfort zones. For instance, a faculty member who might have been offended if a non-faculty member was chairing a Curriculum committee most likely would not want to be involved in that effort. Yet, every participant in this study said that this taskforce was different from any other committee work they had done before. Many non-faculty had never worked with faculty members on committees before, and vice-versa. Participant B, a tenured faculty member, said he felt like the staff knew more about the faculty side of the house than the faculty knew about the staff side.

Other participants in the study said that the interdisciplinary framework of the Emerging HSI Taskforce had created informal and formal networks between the faculty and staff who worked together on this initiative. One network created was a General Studies Completion Committee, derived from the recommendation that urged the college to enforce its policies more strictly. This committee consisted of department chairs, registrar staff, enrollment staff, and assessment staff. They found that, due to the lack of policy enforcement, the college was hindering the ability of students to graduate; and that over 2,000 seniors (students over 90 credits) had not taken a general studies math class even though they were required to take one by their 30<sup>th</sup> credit. Every HSI visited during the site visits was strictly enforcing these policies; while, it was evident that Metro State was not. Faculty and staff alike were shocked to discover that this was occurring; and this discovery exposed many loop holes that had enabled students to persist in college without taking the appropriate courses.

In just under a year, Metro State had reduced the number of students who had not taken a math by their 30<sup>th</sup> credit by 50 percent. The math department faculty, registrar's office, and assessment center now work more closely together in an effort to fix this loophole and to support the academic success of the students. Table 4.10 highlights comments from the participants in this study regarding the interdisciplinary nature of the Emerging HSI Initiative.

**Table 4.10**

**Participant Views on the Interdisciplinary Nature of the Emerging HSI Initiative**

<b>Participant D</b>	<b>Participant G</b>	<b>Participant E</b>
In this case, I think since we had the administration engaged, that was successful....I think President Jordan was trying to set a tone within Metro State as to how he would see things run and how he would try to engage faculty and staff, students, and administrators to work together	By having cross disciplines you heard alternative voices and theories that you probably wouldn't have heard....I think you get buy-in when you can understand that, when you can see the whole puzzle. When you look at the puzzle and not all of the pieces are in it, you wonder about what that is?	People were suspicious. They had reservations and suspicions and fears. And so, we had to do this in a democratic, collaborative, cross-campus way in order for people to get buy-in. Well, everybody knows that one strategy or one program or one technique can't achieve a goal like this. It has to be across the board: curriculum, assessment, recruitment, and retention.
<b>Participant E</b>	<b>Participant F</b>	<b>Participant D</b>
Other people who either weren't on a subcommittee or were on another one would say, 'I have an idea.' And we would say, 'Great, come on down. Bring it on.'	I think it is a good example of how committees can be executed. I have participated on other committees that were very dictatorship-based...very top-down and difficult to have your voice within.	So what we need to do is get out of these silos, and that's a real problem.
<b>Participant J</b>		

I think it's an interesting committee to where you have a tenured faculty member and a pure administrator lead this effort.		

**Reflection on Themes**

The six themes that emerged from this case study captured the motivations, hopes, fears, and overall spirit of those involved in the Emerging HSI Taskforce. The members put aside their differences and rallied around the goal of creating a more equitable infrastructure for students of color. Most importantly, because there was a collective acknowledgement that Metro State historically had fallen short in terms of student success, the HSI Taskforce's mission was to ensure that their recommendations would be sustainable and would create long-term momentum for the college.

Although the participants in the HSI Taskforce represented different departments and position titles, there was a consensus of opinion among the study's participants that the taskforce had created a platform that enabled positive individual and collective contributions to Metro State's core operations. This spirit of participatory action also resonated with the surrounding community, as evidenced by the meetings with Latino community leaders and the subsequent proposals co-authored by members of the taskforce and the community.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Summary, Implications, and Recommendations**

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the research study. The key findings are then summarized in relation to the research questions. The chapter next turns to the implications for Metro State's internal and external stakeholder groups such as the board of trustees, faculty, staff, students, community leaders/activists, and other colleges and universities seeking to make organizational change. Next, recommendations for future research are considered. The chapter ends with my concluding thoughts.

#### **Summary**

The purpose of this case study (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003) was to investigate the organic community-based research approach of Metro State College of Denver's Emerging HSI Initiative and its impact on the college and individuals on the taskforce as the college moved toward becoming an HSI. The community-based research (CBR) model is an atypical higher-education change model due to its intentional, interdisciplinary, participatory, and collaborative structure that values multiple sources of knowledge and focuses on social justice. As such, this model is in direct contrast to the traditional, discipline-specific, silo-based structure that is common in higher education (Ruben, 2004).

This study determined the extent to which the CBR model might be useful to other traditionally underserved higher education institutions that serve a high rate of



urban college students when they consider engaging employees, students, and community members in a systemic change process. In addition to making recommendations for systemic institutional change and improvement, this study analyzed the impact of the CBR approach of the Emerging HSI Taskforce to help bring to the forefront issues of inequality involving post-secondary opportunities (Fowler, 2009).

### **Methods**

The case study of the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Task Force Initiative is an instrumental case study because it focuses on the unique situation the case itself provides, focuses on a single issue or concern, and involves one bounded case (Creswell, 2007). Stake (1995) suggests that the instrumental case study focuses on a particular case in an effort to gain an understanding of a phenomenon or theoretical concept. In this case, the framework of CBR was analyzed in the context of an institutional systemic change process in an urban, post-secondary public institution. The sources included (a) qualitative interviews with 7 participants in the Emerging HSI Task Force, (b) public documents from the Emerging HSI Task Force such as presentation materials, meeting notes, and official letters of communication, (c) retrospective observations from my personal experience on the Task Force, and (d) the final 384-page Emerging HSI Task Force report.

## **Findings from Research Questions 1-4**

### **1. How was the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce Conceived? What Were Its Aims and Goals? How Was the Taskforce Implemented and Operationalized?**

Kezar & Eckel (2002) wrote that higher-education institutions need a culture that encourages change in order for any proposed change strategy to be successful; however, that this change framework is insufficient if it exists only at top leadership levels. They said that a spirit of collaborative leadership is necessary at all levels of an organization if successful change is to take place.

While the aims and goals of the Emerging HSI Taskforce began with the board of trustees, the Taskforce eventually developed into a collaborative college-wide initiative that aimed to evolve Metro State into an institution conducive to the success of all students. The vision of the Emerging HSI Taskforce began with the Metro State board of trustees in 2005 when they hired President Jordan and directed him to lead the college to achieving HSI status into the decade of 2010-2019; because colleges that achieve HSI status are open to Title V funds, which provides millions of additional federal dollars. Therefore, it could be concluded that one of the original aims and goals of the HSI Taskforce was simply to increase the Hispanic/Latino student-body demographic of the college to 25 percent of the overall student body in order to open up more federal funding to the college.

The board of trustees did not provide President Jordan with any specific directions on how he was to achieve this. So, when Jordan hired Participant A as the new Associate

Vice President of Enrollment in January 2006, he was interested in her taking a leadership role to create the vision of achieving HSI status. The preliminary conversations between President Jordan, Participant A, and other leaders at the college about achieving HSI status were limited to increasing outreach and rebranding the college's marketing strategies. However, during Participant A's first six months at Metro State, she became concerned about the college's historically low retention and graduation rates and she did not believe that Metro State had a sustainable infrastructure to promote the success of its students. She believed that the Emerging HSI Initiative needed to permeate the entire college.

Fowler (2009) argued that society can become blind to the issue of inequality when there is an equality of opportunity (access) even though there are gross inequalities in the results (success). Metro State has provided an accessible, four-year higher-education option for the Denver community since its inception in 1966. The college serves more students of color than any four-year public college in Colorado. However, in terms of educational success, Metro State possesses the lowest retention and graduation statistics compared to other public four-year colleges in Colorado. Thus, it can be argued that Metro State largely has been largely ineffective in providing an equitable educational infrastructure for students of color.

Participant A identified several barriers to student success, including an institutional lack of enforcing pre-requisites, an absence of structure regarding a student's first-year experience, and a lack of collaboration between the faculty and staff departments. She believed that if the college continued to operate in that fashion, they

ultimately would fail at their mission to provide a good, post-secondary education for the seven-county region that Metro State is intended to serve.

Participant A and President Jordan both believed that the Emerging HSI Initiative could address some of the core issues plaguing Metro State's operational effectiveness. Therefore, Participant A began forming an exploratory committee in the summer of 2006, with faculty and staff who wanted to make systemic change at the college. Throughout 2006-2007 (Phase I of the Emerging HSI Taskforce), the aims and goals of the Emerging HSI Initiative shifted from the limited scope of increasing the Hispanic student representation to 25 percent of the student body to also re-visioning an educational infrastructure that would be conducive to the success of all students. Table 5.1 demonstrates an historical timeline from how the Emerging HSI Taskforce was envisioned to its current state today (January 2012).

**Table 5.1: Timeline of Emerging HSI Taskforce**

Date	Event
July 2005	President Jordan is hired by the Metro State board of trustees. They give him the directive to lead Metro State to achieving HSI status into the next decade (2010-2019)
January 2006	Participant A is hired by President Jordan as the new Associate Vice President for Enrollment.
Summer 2006 – Winter 2007	Participant A begins to form an exploratory committee to help envision a strategy for the Emerging HSI initiative. It becomes clear to the exploratory committee that the Emerging HSI initiative needed to be campus wide involving faculty, staff, and students.
April 2007	A campus wide forum is held that describes the vision for the Emerging HSI initiative. The forum invited all campus community members who were interested in participating to sign up.
July 2007	The formal Emerging HSI Taskforce begins its role. 65 college volunteers ranging from faculty, staff, and students agree to participate. Each person self-selected into one of six subcommittees.
August 2007 – October 2007	Due to controversy over not offering in-state tuition for students with undocumented parents, Metro State receives negative coverage in the media, which results in strained relationships with Latino community leaders. This leads the Emerging HSI Taskforce to engage community members through the medium of public forums.
August – December 2007	The six subcommittee, most of which operated with a faculty and non-faculty co-chair model, begins meeting and formulating recommendations that will address Metro State’s future operational goals. The subcommittees also conduct site research at various HSI’s in California and Illinois.
January 2008 – February 2008	Final recommendations are drafted and voted upon by the 65 members of the Emerging HSI Taskforce. The co-chairs craft the recommendations into a 384 page document that is delivered to President Jordan at the final taskforce meeting in February of 2008.
February 2008 –	The top sixteen recommendations (those that required financial resources) are provided with budget line-items in the next fiscal year budget to assist with implementation. The Emerging HSI initiative is

July 2008	highlighted on the Metro State web-site, where the public can view the final report, updates, and historical documents from the taskforce.
July 2008 – Present	Participants A and B have the Emerging HSI initiative written into their job-descriptions and represent HSI at the president’s cabinet. They help oversee the implementation of the various recommendations and provide public forum updates to the campus community twice per year.

Metro State made itself accountable to both the campus community and outside community for implementing the various recommendations of the Emerging HSI Initiative by making the documents available to the public, creating campus-wide buy-in through the open nature of the taskforce, and embedding the leadership of the initiative into the position descriptions of the original co-chairs. Connections to several prominent Latino leaders in the community were also created through the open system that the Emerging HSI Taskforce decided to create in response to the in-state tuition controversy.

**2. How Effective Was the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce in Creating a More Collaborative, Social Action-Oriented Organization?**

Participants in this study believed that the Emerging HSI Taskforce was effective in creating a more collaborative, social, and action-oriented organization. This initiative marked the first time that some staff and faculty had worked alongside one another on a campus-wide initiative. Oliver and Huyn (2010) wrote that barriers to collaboration in higher-education reform include power struggles related to academic disciplines, resources, time, and shared governance. The Emerging HSI Initiative avoided these common power struggles by allowing volunteers to work alongside one another on the theme of improving the post-secondary infrastructure for students of color. The co-chairs

of the Emerging HSI Taskforce and President Jordan were vocal and consistent about highlighting the Colorado Paradox and relating Metro State's role in improving the post-secondary climate for students of color in Colorado. They felt it was important for the Emerging HSI Taskforce to have prominent leaders across various disciplines (e.g., the President of Faculty Senate, Deputy Provost, and Associate Vice President of Enrollment) to jointly agree that Metro State had not done enough in the past to create a climate of student success.

Birnbaum (1988) wrote that the most collegial departments and organizations place less emphasis on job status and hierarchy and focus more on common commitments and collective responsibilities. The spirit of the Emerging HSI Taskforce helped spawn several collaborative committees at Metro State, which focused on issues the recommendations had brought to light. For example, issues stemming from a lack of enforcement of pre-requisites were worked on by a group of faculty and staff members who created a committee titled "General Studies Completion." With the collaborative efforts of the academic faculty and enrollment staff (admissions and registrar), the college was able to implement graduate education in only one year.

Many regional, urban land-grant colleges, such as Metro State, have far fewer resources to serve less-prepared students (Saxton & Boylan, 1999) than public, state-flagship and land-grant research universities. As Metro State's resources continued to get leaner during the recession of 2008-2011, a collaborative work spirit became even more important to the overall operation of the college.

Based on the participant interviews in this study, it was not evident that the Emerging HSI Taskforce would readily engage the outside community until Metro State began to receive negative press because of the in-state tuition controversy. However, connections to several prominent Latino leaders in the community were created through the open system that the Emerging HSI Taskforce created in response to that controversy. These forums actually brought many difficult issues to light and revealed a strong disconnect between Metro State and the Latino community.

Participant C believed that the open forums brought healing and a new beginning between the college and the Latino community. Some Latino community leaders who had participated in the open forums with the Emerging HSI Taskforce were instrumental in helping pass legislation through the Colorado house and senate to approve graduate education at Metro State. In addition, the college has offered its public support to a bill called the ASSET bill that was introduced in the spring of 2012 and would provide tuition relief for undocumented students. The mutual desire to provide successful post-secondary opportunities to the Latino community outweighed the historical animosity between the college and the Latino community and helped to bring them together.

### **3. To What Extent and By What Ways Were the Three Principles of Community-Based Research Utilized in the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce from Its Conception to Implementing the Recommendations?**

The Emerging HSI Taskforce was an avenue for the campus community to come to the table, voice their opinions, and share their expertise about what it meant for Metro State to successfully serve the broader community. Based on the interviews conducted for



this study, the intent of the co-chairs, Participants A and B, was to achieve maximum buy-in in an effort to culturally transform the college into one that takes the success of its students more seriously. For this to occur, the co-chairs believed it was imperative to foster interdisciplinary participation around the social justice goal of providing more equitable educational opportunities for students of color. Therefore, while the co-chairs did not overtly implement the three principles of community-based research (CBR) into the Emerging HSI Taskforce, the principles of CBR were closely adhered to throughout the initiative.

Strand et al.'s (2003) three principles of community-based research are that it: (a) is a collaborative enterprise between academic researchers and community members; (b) validates multiple sources of knowledge, and promotes the use of multiple methods of discovery and dissemination of the knowledge produced; and (c) has, as its goal, social action and social change for the purpose of achieving social justice (p. 8).

**1<sup>st</sup> Principle of CBR: CBR is a collaborative enterprise between academic researchers and community members.**

In respect to the first principle of CBR, the Emerging HSI Taskforce was a collaborative enterprise among faculty, staff, students, and, to a certain extent, community members outside of Metro State. The co-chair model of the overarching Emerging HSI Taskforce was led by a respected faculty member (Participant B) and a senior Student Affairs administrator (Participant A). Invitations to join the taskforce were equally distributed to faculty and staff members. Volunteers were able to self-select into a subcommittee that most interested them, irrespective of their position, title, or area of

expertise. Each Emerging HSI Taskforce subcommittee was co-chaired by an Academic Affairs faculty or staff member and a Student Affairs staff member. The Curriculum Subcommittee was the only one that did not have a co-chair model, but it was chaired by a non-faculty member. The Emerging HSI Taskforce acted as a partnership of members of the Metro State community who had various research experience and position titles and wished to contribute to the cause of forming recommendations to help improve the educational infrastructure of the college.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Principle: CBR validates multiple sources of knowledge, and promotes the use of multiple methods of discovery and dissemination of the knowledge produced.**

The spirit of knowledge-sharing and engagement in the Emerging HSI Task Force parallels the second principle of community-based research. The co-chairs of the Emerging HSI Taskforce encouraged the subcommittees to use multiple modes of dissemination and research when forming their recommendations. The participants interviewed for this study believed that the voices of each Emerging HSI Taskforce volunteer had been respected and valued. Journal articles and research studies involving HSIs were shared and discussed among the subcommittees. The site visits to the HSIs in California and Illinois promoted the use of action research. Subcommittee members also shared ideas emanating from their experiences in their positions at Metro State, while working for other institutions, and in the community.

Higher education institutions are often comprised of employees who have spent the majority of their professional careers focused on a single discipline; this is true for

faculty and can be true for staff members. However, such a single discipline or specialty-focused industry creates structural isolation and silo-based operations (Ruben, 2005). Participants in this study said that Metro State had found itself in this situation before the Emerging HSI Taskforce.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Principle: CBR has its goal social action and social change for the purpose of achieving social justice**

According to Gorski (2006), multicultural education and social justice are “an institutional matter, and as such, can be secured only through comprehensive school reform” (p. 3). The main premise of the Emerging HSI Taskforce was to promote social justice through the formation and eventual implementation of recommendations to improve the educational infrastructure at Metro State. The HSI Taskforce brought people together from a variety of disciplines to create a sustainable educational infrastructure for its students. The co-chairs of the Emerging HSI Taskforce often articulated Metro State’s role of working to reduce the achievement gap that was evidenced by the Colorado Paradox. Thus, it was necessary to bring together people with a variety of experiences and knowledge to collaborate and work together to develop a new shared vision. With its commitment to social justice, the Emerging HSI Taskforce parallels the third principle of community-based research.

**4. As State Appropriations for Public Higher Education Continue to Fall, What Are the Implications of the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Taskforce Effort at Metro State College of Denver for (a) Systemic Change in Higher Education and (b) the Field of Community-Based Research?**

Nationwide calls from the president of the United States and legislators to parents and concerned students are challenging higher education on issues such as transparency in educational outcomes (Pike, Kuh, McCormick, Ethington, & Smart, 2011), affordability (Lewin, 2012), and increasing civic engagement with local communities (Strand et al., 2003). Metro State's Emerging HSI effort was an example of how an institution of higher education can rally its stakeholders around transforming an institution so that it can offer more equitable educational opportunities and outcomes for students of color. The Emerging HSI Initiative forced the college to reexamine what it meant to serve its students and local community who rely on Metro State for post-secondary access and opportunity.

Student success cannot be enhanced by the efforts of single office units acting in isolation from one another. Kuh et al.'s (2005) project, known as the Documenting Effective Educational Practice (DEEP) study, identified best practices at colleges that had performed well in the areas of student engagement and graduation rates. These best practices include: (a) encouraging and rewarding cross-functional activities focused on student success, (b) tightening the philosophical and operational linkages between academic and student affairs, (c) harnessing the expertise of other resources, (d) making governance a shared responsibility, and (e) forming partnerships with the local

community. The effectiveness of the Emerging HSI Initiative at Metro State mirrored the elements found at DEEP campuses. The interdisciplinary nature of the Emerging HSI Taskforce had placed the social imperative of the initiative above position titles, prior experiences, and internal politics.

The Emerging HSI Initiative employed the principles of community-based research (CBR) because it was centered on a social justice issue and fostered interdisciplinary collaboration, and because its participants utilized action research and multiple methods of dissemination. When employed, the principles of CBR allow academic researchers and their community partners to work in collaboration on a mutually agreed-upon social justice issue that serves as the catalyst of the research problem to be investigated. While CBR is typically employed between academic researchers and external community partners, it also can be effective when utilized internally within an institution of higher education; specifically, those that are under-resourced and serve underrepresented populations of students.

### **Implications**

This section will provide recommendations for both internal and external stakeholders to Metro State. This includes; (a) other colleges and universities, (b) Metro State's Board of Trustees and president's office, (c) college staff and faculty, and (d) community members/leaders/activists.

#### **Colleges and universities**

“When you are overt, when the college is really active,” said Participant B, “good things happen.” Institutions of higher education that seek to produce systemic change

must do so by engaging the greater campus community (internal and external) around the underlying issues that the proposed changes seek to address. In the conclusion of Morrison et al.'s (1997) published community-based research project, the authors wrote: "Moreover, universities need to consider being partners in promoting community involvement and interdisciplinary work" (p. 533). Colleges and universities may have a difficult time forging external community partnerships if they lack an interdisciplinary and community oriented work spirit within the organization.

The leaders of an institution, beginning with the board of trustees and the president, must create a culture of transparency and accountability. Colleges and universities can accomplish an internal community-oriented working environment by welcoming diverse representation (staff, faculty, and students) on the president's cabinet and by making the minutes of the cabinet available to the campus community. College leadership, including leadership from the faculty, should facilitate at least one public forum per term that is open to the campus community and one public forum that is open to the external community. College-wide committees that could potentially affect systemic change at an institution should have diverse representation from faculty, staff, and students, and should report their activities through an accessible website that is open to public feedback.

#### **Metro State's Board of Trustees and president's office**

As participant D stated, "The president said from the beginning that he was taking the group seriously." The Metro State Board of Trustees and president took bold steps in leading the effort to facilitate a more transparent and community-oriented educational

environment. Based on the effectiveness of the Emerging HSI Initiative, they should continue to seek input and leadership from within the Metro State community and from the external community.

The Board of Trustees and president have set a precedent for shared governance at Metro State. Participant G stated, “It [the Emerging HSI Task Force] was conceived to get multiple representations, so that internally we would be able to discuss any issues that might come up, and they did come up. It allowed for multiple voices. It was managed in a way that people felt safe to speak their truth.” This environment would not have been possible without a value system that supported shared governance that began with the Board of Trustees and the president. The institution will continue to be resource thin and overstretched for years to come due to declining state appropriations. In order to promote environment that values continuous improvement, the Board of Trustees and the president must promote a collaborative and interdisciplinary educational environment.

### **Faculty and Staff**

“I think on this committee, there was a spark of desire to make a difference –I think it gathered right into a membership of people who care about what was going on, and we had ideas” (Participant D). Functional administrative areas such as admissions, registration, financial aid, learning support, student activities, and information technology should be organized in such a way that helps students to fluidly navigate through their educational journey at the college. The same could be said for academic departments as well. However, according to Manning et al. (2006), departments or services developed around a specialty area can see themselves as separate, rather than as related to other

departments on the campus. This can create a culture of disconnect among departments, faculty, staff, and students.

According to Ruben (2004), many faculty members in higher education have little to no operational involvement in areas such as enrollment services, student life, and personnel training. Likewise, many nonacademic administrators or classified staff members rarely get involved in curriculum issues (Ruben, 2004). By contrast, Metro State's CBR approach to the Emerging HSI Taskforce allowed them to begin tackling the Colorado Paradox in a collaborative and interdisciplinary manner.

Colleges and universities should have standing committees that are open to all members of the campus community that specifically discuss current broad based challenges, issues, and opportunities in field of higher education, especially at their particular institution. Faculty, staff, and students can work in collaboration, much like the Emerging HSI Task Force at Metro State, to develop recommendations and potential departmental synergies to help address these issues. This recommendation is also consistent with the recommendations from the DEEP study (Kuh et al., 2005) which concluded that colleges that performed well in the areas of student engagement and graduation rates worked in a more cross-functional manner in the context of their organizational culture.

### **External Community leaders/activists**

The concept of community-based research is aligned with the historical mission of land-grant universities, which were intended to be “regional institutions shaped by and responsive to local conditions, local problems, and local needs” (Strand et al., 2003, p. 2).



Community members and activists should hold their local institutions of higher education accountable in relation to their connections, or lack thereof, with the surrounding community. The public forum between Metro State and community leaders from the Denver community serves as an example of how critical it is for institutions of higher education and the community to work together. Metro State was not intentional over its forty year history in relation to building relationships with the surrounding Latino community. Latino community leaders in Denver felt historically silenced and marginalized by the institution.

The relationships formed between Metro State and the Latino community leaders/activists during the Emerging HSI Initiative broke down perceived historical barriers between the two parties. Even though the first public forum was contentious, it helped create an open line of communication that continues to exist today. Ultimately, if the goal of the Emerging HSI Initiative was to produce recommendations that would create a more equitable, sustainable educational infrastructure for students of color (particularly Latinos), then it was critical to take into account the voices of the children and adults in the surrounding community. As Participant B stated, “Latinos are very cognizant....In my community, one is really judged more in what one does for the underprivileged than by our titles.” Thus, it was imperative for Metro State to stop operating like an ivory tower and instead begin operating like a collaborative, community based organization.

## **Recommendations for Future Research**

Most organizational change research in higher education tends to be theoretical in nature (Kezar & Eckel, 2002), and there have been few published tangible case studies that analyzed organizational change within specific institutions of higher education. The case study of the Emerging HSI Initiative at Metro State detailed the motivation, strategy, and key factors involved in a college-wide effort to produce systemic, interdisciplinary organizational change. Many of the recommendations that were drafted are still in the beginning phases of implementation at the college. Thus, the longer-term effects of the recommendations may be better measured in five years when Metro State will become a full HSI. This will provide more insight into the actual effectiveness of the recommendations put forth by the Emerging HSI Taskforce.

The president of the American Association of Universities, Dr. Hunter Rawlings (2012), writes that it is imperative for American universities to undertake radical change. He suggests that American research universities have fallen short in terms of creating climates for effective undergraduate education teaching and learning. According to Rawlings, American universities can no longer afford to exclusively live off of their international reputations for excellence in research. The time is now for colleges and universities to undertake large scale change processes that seek to improve the make-up of the undergraduate education experience. The principles of CBR and the organizational change process that occurred at Metro State can provide colleges and universities with a framework to begin mapping out the change process. An effective change process will seek to achieve maximum buy-in and input from faculty, students, staff, and the

community. Due to a lack of research on specific change processes at colleges and universities, there must be a concerted effort to document and collect all data from the process as possible.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

In 2007, when I was a 27 year old student affairs practitioner at Metro State, I found myself as the chairperson of a college-wide curriculum committee. Even though I was just beginning my career in higher education, I knew this was rare position for someone with my background. Needless to say, my experience as a participant with the Emerging HSI Task Force has dramatically affected my professional outlook in higher education. I have learned that there can indeed be a spirit of collaboration and knowledge sharing amongst students, faculty, staff, and the community if an institution fosters an authentic pursuit of social justice. The data from this case study informed me that the other participants felt the same way as well. The mission of the Emerging HSI Task Force superseded historical power differentials based on individual credentials and institutional/departmental politics.

Zakaria (2012) writes that in the past twenty years, state spending on prisons has risen six times the rate of spending on higher education. Every stakeholder in higher education including parents, students, faculty, staff, community members, alumni, and legislators should be deeply concerned about this trend. This in itself has become a social justice issue. Each stakeholder group must work together in an effort to improve the climate for teaching and learning, improving community connections, and increasing operational efficiencies due to declining resources. Higher education must become an

industry that is worth investing in again. The Emerging HSI case study from Metro State should give colleges and universities a blueprint of how an organization can seek to improve by engaging and empowering faculty, staff, students, and the community in the change process.

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## Appendix A

HISPANIC SERVING INSTITUTION TASKFORCE FINAL REPORT JANUARY 25, 2008

### Final Recommendations

**Total:** Fifty-five (55) Recommendations of the HSI Taskforce.

#### **Public Relations Subcommittee – 2 recommendations**

1. External Communications – To position Metro State as a leader at the state level for addressing the state’s changing demographics.
2. Internal Communications - To keep faculty, staff and alumni apprised of significant HSI newsworthy events.

#### **Recruitment / Retention & Student Development Subcommittee – 27 recommendations**

1. Development and Implementation of a Metro State Pre-Collegiate Summer Program
2. Expansion of the Excel Outreach Program to create a pipeline of diverse high school students to Metro State by building long term relationships and offering admissions services on site in diverse feeder high schools.
3. Develop a M.O.U. with Community College of Denver (CCD) to facilitate the transfer of students to Metro State, the transfer of students denied admission due to HEAR deficiencies, and the retention of students who must take developmental coursework at CCD
4. Adult Student Services – to assist adult students with the difficulties they have balancing school/life.
5. Embrace, Promote and Build Bridges to access/Abrace y fomente, Puente al exito. This will raise community connectedness with Metro State and increase Latino/a and African American students’ awareness of career paths.
6. Metro’s Café Cultura. This is an effort to recruit and retain Latino/a and African American students.
7. Journey Through Our Heritage/Jornada de Nuestra Herencia. By hosting this historical and cultural knowledge base competition, high school students and parents will increase their awareness of Metro State as an college to attend after high school.
8. All Female Bilingual Police Academy: A Metro State Summer Program for 2010. This will increase female bilingual representation in local, state and federal arenas of law enforcement.
9. Require freshman students to complete developmental coursework within the first 45- credit hours of coursework.

10. Declaration for Major by completion of first 45 credit hours
11. Develop a campus-wide Early Alert Warning system
12. Continue Advising holds to encourage students to seek academic advising and degree planning assistance.
13. Revise Last Grade Stands Policy and Forgiveness Policy
14. In-state Tuition for Undocumented students who have graduated from Colorado high schools.
15. Provide Supplemental Instruction for Gatekeeper Courses and courses with a 35% or higher failure rate.
16. Create an Academic Learning Support Center
17. First Year Bridge Program to support students who participate in the Summer Bridge Program.
18. First Year Success Program for all first time to college students and transfer students.
19. Student Engagement Courses
20. Student Multicultural Leadership Summit
21. Develop an Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program
22. Create a Parent Connections Program to give parents the knowledge needed to support their child in college.
23. Prepare students to a successful transition to career/graduate school
24. Add Academic Advising staff to support HSI
25. Academic and Student Affairs Liaison – Add one Assistant Dean to each of the three schools to coordinate the student retention efforts of HSI.
26. Design faculty and staff development workshops on working with diverse student populations, classroom management, student development, curriculum development, and teaching theory.
27. Provide scholarships for first-generation college students to help support their success in college.

### **Campus Climate Subcommittee – 9 recommendations**

1. Create a different name for the HSI campaign. (while retaining the name of HSI for the initiative). “Hispanic Serving Institution” creates many images for the campus community; that of ONLY serving the Hispanic community to the detriment of other ethnic and social groups. The name may potentially alienate all other groups.
2. Create an interactive HSI Website that will include a place for FAQs as well as a BLOG so visitors may ask more questions and gain additional feedback.
3. Schedule town hall meetings, open forums, and educational opportunities for 1<sup>st</sup> amendment education for students to discuss HSI and related topics.
4. Develop a campaign brochure. It will resemble an elevator speech and include talking points for faculty and staff.
5. Bring cultural events to campus for **all** backgrounds.
6. Increase support for the Student Academic Success area, including Reece Learning Community and the First Year Success Program.
7. Create an institutional Master Calendar that highlights diversity events at Metro State.
8. Create a showcase multicultural environment on campus that will showcase and integrate the history, art, and influence of historically underrepresented minorities on the Auraria campus, specifically on Metro State properties.
9. Assess the current campus climate by conducting a campus climate survey in conjunction with the Latino/a Faculty and Staff Associate.

### **Faculty & Staff Development / Grantsmanship Subcommittee – 2 recommendations**

1. Equip the Metro State community with the requisite skills to acquire multicultural competency by (1) developing a mandatory online Multicultural Awareness Training, (2) developing cultural competency assessments, and (3) Creating workshops for in-service training and multicultural certification program.
2. Provide on-going professional development opportunities that both faculty and staff can use in their tenure/ tenure-track and employee evaluation processes.

### **Curriculum Development Subcommittee – 11 recommendations**

1. Review and evaluate current policies, state statutes, and institutional controls regarding remedial coursework.
2. Review and evaluate the design, curriculum, and implementation of Metro State's First Year Success Seminar.
3. Review and evaluate institutional practices in relation to the implementation and enforcement of prerequisites.
4. Review and evaluate current general studies requirements, rigor, and overall effectiveness in preparing students for their major/minors, professional pursuits, and global citizenship.
5. Review and evaluate Academic Advising requirements and processes in the general studies and major/minors.
6. Review and evaluate the impact, design, and success rates of Metro State's online classes.
7. Identify departments that currently adhere to best HSI practices in relation to student expectations, inclusion, and student success. Sub-classifications of HSI departments, and offer incentives for non-HSI departments to achieve HSI status.
8. Identify new programs that will attract and retain Latino/a students based on national research and current/future trends.
9. Review and evaluate part-time faculty issues in relation to consistency of content delivery, training, support, retention, and position levels.
10. Review and evaluate full-time tenure / tenure-track faculty issues in relation to teaching 1000 level courses, advising, and management of adjunct or graduate assistant teaching.
11. Review and evaluate faculty diversity and culturally responsive teaching in relation to achieving institutional multi-culturalism in the content and delivery of the curriculum.

### **Assessment Subcommittee – 4 recommendations**

1. Data collection and interpretation for all HSI activities
2. Constituent Relationship Management System (CRM) – Implementation & Adoption
3. Create a data clearinghouse and hire a Data Management Specialist
4. Study retention of current students and hire a Retention Specialist



## Appendix B

# HSI Taskforce Policy, Program or Strategy Proposal (PPSP) Guide

### Proposal Guidelines:

HSI proposals provide the Metro State community with an opportunity to affect, inform and interact with the HSI Taskforce and its activities. Individuals or groups may suggest one of these types of proposals through one of the HSI Areas listed below:

**Policy** - Proposals related to changes related to institutional (Metro State) policies which may be altered to positively affect students.

**Programs** – Proposals related to one-time or ongoing programs/projects to positively affect students.

**Strategies** – Proposals related to strategies that will lend to improved performance of students on campus.

The proposals will be forwarded to the correlating HSI Taskforce Areas:

**Recruitment/Retention** – This committee will address and identify the needs for students (specifically Hispanic) regarding recruitment and retention.

**Campus Climate** – This committee addresses the issues within the workplace and learning environment, ranging from subtle to cumulative to dramatic, that can influence whether all individuals feel personally safe, listened to, valued and treated fairly and with respect.

**Public Relations**- The business of generating goodwill toward Metropolitan State College of Denver through diverse media outlets.

**Professional Development**- This committee will address the necessary ability to increase knowledge or skill through study, travel, research, workshops or courses, sabbaticals, internships, apprenticeships, residences or work with a mentor or master.

**Assessment**- This committee will address how assessment is a central element in the overall quality of teaching and learning at Metro State.

**Curriculum**-This committee will address initiatives to expand academic excellence across the college and integrate throughout.

When submitting a proposal to Metro State's HSI committee the proposal is required to be submitted in both hard and electronic copies to Campus Box 16 and to [snorton6@mscd.edu](mailto:snorton6@mscd.edu). The proposal must include the information requested below, follow the indicated format and be submitted by October 8, 2007. Proposal evaluation will follow the timeline below:

- October 8: Proposals due, posted to website

- October 15: Public input on proposals due to subcommittee chairs
- October 15-November 29: Subcommittees develop individual reports
- November 30: Full Taskforce Meeting Presentation, Open to Public for comment on Reports
- December 3-January 31: Co-Chairs and Steering Committee develop comprehensive report
- February: Present final report to Dr. Jordan

## The PPSP Format

**Required Text Format Guidelines:** Maximum five (5) pages, single space, 12 point font, and narrative in outline format.

**The Cover Letter (One page in a business letter format)-** Consists of the following:

1. Identify if this proposal is a Policy, a Program, or a Strategy
2. Title and proposed dates of implementation
3. Contact Name, Email Address, Campus Box Number, and Phone Number
4. Area of Consideration: Campus Climate, Retention and Recruitment, Public Relations, Professional Development, Assessment, Curriculum

**The Remaining 4 Pages**

1. Goal(s) of recommended HSI initiative
2. Policy, Program, or Strategy to support Goal
3. Measurable outcomes of Policy, Program, or Strategy
4. Timeline for implementation
5. Area/person/division responsible for implementation
6. Resources necessary for implementation (per year with budget breakdown)
7. Existing or proposed funding source for implementation

## Appendix C

### METRO STATE NEWS

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### College launches HSI initiative

Apr 25, 2007

Calling the goal bold and audacious, Metro State President Stephen Jordan officially launched the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) initiative Thursday morning, April 19.

An estimated 120 faculty and staff attended the “Why HSI?” town hall meeting in the Tivoli Turnhalle to hear Jordan and members of the steering committee of a soon-to-be-formed HSI taskforce explain the reasoning behind the Board of Trustees-mandated HSI goal (for Hispanics to compose 25 percent of student enrollment) for Metro State.

Faculty Senate President Hal Nees opened the meeting by stating that living up to the responsibility of educating all students is at the heart of what Metro State is about.

Jordan explained the changing demographics in Denver and Colorado that point toward an ever-increasing Latino population. For instance, he pointed out that in the last 10 years, U.S. Census Bureau data show a population increase in Colorado of not quite 6 percent; while at the same time the state’s Latino population grew 17 percent.

Meanwhile, there is what Jordan calls a “shrinking pipeline” to education for students of color. Even while the Latino population grows, Colorado remains ranked 44th in sending students of color to college. “A longitudinal look at the demographics of education in the Denver metro area shows why,” Jordan said.

- Denver’s school district has the largest ethnic minority population in the metropolitan area, with 80 percent of its students being of color.
- The Community College of Denver, which offers the most diverse community college experience, has a population that is 48 percent students of color.
- Metro State has the largest minority student population of any four-year institution in the Front Range at 24 percent. The state average at four-year colleges is 17 percent.

Jordan also spoke of how it makes economic sense for Colorado to graduate more students of color. “If Colorado could graduate and employ students of color at the same rates as other students, it would generate an additional \$967 million in tax revenue each year,” he said, citing figures from the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education.

### **Benefits to Metro State**

Jordan concluded that economic and social realities dictate that Metro State should and must increase its Latino student enrollment; he emphasized that an HSI designation provides significant benefits to all students, faculty and staff, not just Latinos.

“Once we achieve a 25 percent Latino population,” Jordan said, “this designation opens up a world of possibilities for receiving grant monies for activities that range from faculty development to renovation of instructional facilities to student support services.”

Jordan cited U.S. Department of Education figures that show \$96 million was awarded by the DOE to HSI institutions across the country in 2005. Of this, Colorado’s five HSIs received approximately \$1.4 million (Community College of Denver is the only one in the metro area.) He added that many other governmental and private entities target HSIs for their grants, including the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the American Association for Cancer Research.



An estimated 120 faculty and staff heard Jordan and the HSI steering committee discuss the strategies behind the HSI initiative.

### **HSI taskforce**

The president announced that an HSI steering committee, led by Associate Vice President of Enrollment Management Judi Diaz Bonacquisti, has been working for several months on a template for an HSI taskforce. He asked the audience to nominate themselves or others to serve on five working groups: Assessment, Retention and Recruitment, Public Relations, Campus Climate and Professional Development. One faculty member and one staff person will co-chair the 30- to 40-member taskforce

Along with Diaz Bonacquisti, the other steering committee members are: Professor and Co-Director of the College Assistance Minority Program (CAMP) Arthur Campa, Assistant Professor of Finance Juan Dempere, School of Professional Studies Dean Sandra Haynes, Assistant Vice President of Communications Cathy Lucas and Associate to the President for Diversity Sallye McKee.

All but Lucas spoke at the meeting. Campa discussed learning communities and the importance of support services, citing the high retention and graduation rates of CAMP students and what has been learned through this community of the most underserved population in the state. “This is a team effort that involves our staff, College services and the community people who support us,” he said.

Dempere discussed in further detail the funding that could be available. As an example, he cited the University of Texas-Pan American, which recently received 25 grants totaling \$8 million because it is an HSI. He also reiterated that the legislation which created HSIs states that any funding must benefit the institution as a whole.

Diaz Bonacquisti discussed the importance of retaining and graduating all students and how the committee has been researching institutions designated as HSIs that have high retention and graduation rates, such as the California State University-San Bernardino. “We have a lot to learn from those institutions that we aspire to be like,” she said, adding that the enrollment management area already has been working toward improving recruitment and retention by revamping the Excel and Summer Bridge Programs and “changing the way we do recruitment of DPS students.”

Haynes announced that for the past two months, the College has been working on a Faculty Development Center that will provide faculty with grant-writing assistance for public and private funds. Once the College reaches HSI designation, professors will be able to attain funding for professional development, research projects and other projects that “benefit themselves, our students and the college as a whole,” she said.

McKee wrapped up the presentation portion of the meeting with a call for the College community to address head-on the issue of race, citing concerns she had heard about HSI status. “We must work hard with each other across cultural lines,” she said. “If we don’t stay at the table and fight the good fight, someone else will walk off with our piece of the pie.”

**Audience questions**

Those concerns were brought to light during the question-and-answer period when Alton Clark, associate director of Veterans Upward Bound and a member of the African American Affairs Council, asked how HSI status is going to serve other campus groups.

"I'm here to say that all of us will do better as an HSI," said Jordan in response. He also cited the fact that East High School, one of Metro State's biggest feeder schools, has a large African American population, as does Aurora Community College, which is set to become the second community college with which Metro State will have a 2 + 2 program.

Diaz Bonacquisti added, "The rising tide raises all boats. HSI will not be at the expense of any other group."

Luis Torres, interim assistant dean of the School of Letters, Arts and Sciences, praised the HSI goal, saying "I can't think of any other project in the state that is as ambitious and visionary."

*Editor's Note:* If you would like to nominate yourself or someone else to be on the HSI taskforce, email McKee at [smckee4@mscd.edu](mailto:smckee4@mscd.edu). For a copy of Jordan's speech click on [HSI Launch](#). The powerpoint presentation can be [downloaded here](#). And a video of the meeting will be available Wednesday, April 25, [here](#).



Several audience members asked questions, including Alton Clark.

## Appendix D

### HSI Taskforce gears up

Jul 25, 2007

The HSI Taskforce has been named, steering committee co-chairs chosen and the members all charged by President Stephen Jordan with developing recommendations by February 2008 that outline how Metro State will attain the designation "Hispanic Serving Institution."

Interim Associate Dean of Letters, Arts and Sciences Luis Torres has joined Judi Diaz Bonacquisti, associate vice president for enrollment services, as co-chair of the 67-member taskforce. An associate professor of Chicana/o studies, Torres has been with Metro State for 12 years, 10 as department chair.

"Dr. Torres' credibility and the respect he has garnered from the Metro State community and the Denver community at large are unmatched," said Diaz Bonacquisti, who over the last several months has led the steering committee's work on a template for the taskforce. "He will be invaluable in helping us gain support and momentum for the HSI initiative," she added.

Torres has worked extensively on the Denver Public Schools' Alma de la Raza curriculum and teacher training project and for many years was chair of the Hispanic Education Advisory Council.

"I think it has become common knowledge that HSI status is good for the entire College community," Torres said. "Research shows that having the HSI designation improves the retention rate of not only Hispanic students, but all other students, including those who are African American, Native American and Asian American."

In addition to Torres and Diaz Bonacquisti, the members of the steering committee are Professor and Co-Director of the College Assistance Minority Program (CAMP) Arthur Campa, School of Professional Studies Dean Sandra Haynes, Assistant Vice President of Communications Cathy Lucas and Associate to the President for Diversity Sallye McKee.

Torres says he was impressed with the large number of nominations and volunteers, whose names were gathered at the "Why HSI?" launch of the initiative in April. (To read about the launch go to [http://www.mscd.edu/~collcom/artman/publish/hsi\\_tw4042507.shtml](http://www.mscd.edu/~collcom/artman/publish/hsi_tw4042507.shtml).)

"To have 65 members of the College community volunteer for such an important and time-intensive initiative really speaks to the importance we're placing on this endeavor," he said.

The members have chosen which of the six subcommittees they would like to serve on. The six committees are:

- Assessment: Building a Culture of Evidence
- Recruitment, Retention and Student Development
- Creating a Culture of Academic Success
- Public Relations: Promoting a Tradition of the "Urban-Land Grant Institution"
- Campus Climate: Enhancing a Culture that Respects Diversity
- Faculty & Staff Development, Grantsmanship: Enriching our Faculty and Staff
- Curriculum Development: Expanding Academic Excellence

The full Taskforce will hold its first retreat this Friday, July 27.

Following is the list of members and their subcommittee assignments:

#### Assessment

Rick Beck, Information Technology  
Ellen Boswell, Institutional Research  
Denny Boyd, New Student Orientation  
Paul Cesare, Admissions  
Steve Culpepper, Human Services  
Joan M.C. Foster, Academic Affairs  
Derrick Haynes, PaceSetter Scholars Program  
Gretta Mincer, Student Activities  
Percy Morehouse, Equal Opportunity Office  
David Rein, Development Office  
Larry Worster, Student Services

**Recruitment/Retention and Student Development**

Rick Cisneros, Information Technology  
Kimberly Clark, Registrar's Office  
Skip Crownhart, Academic Advising  
Sylvia Dawson, Journalism  
Richard Jividen, Creative Services  
Joan McDermott, Athletics  
Michelle Pacheco, Admissions  
Richard Paiz, CAMP  
Michelle Ramirez, student  
Elena Sandoval-Lucero, New Student Programs  
Pat Trotman, Trio Program  
Betty Vette, Student Intervention Services

**Public Relations**

Leroy Chavez, Veteran's Upward Bound  
Clayton Daughtrey, Marketing  
Ramon Del Castillo, Chicana/o Studies  
Brooke Dilling, Student Activities  
Donna Fowler, College Communications  
Theresa Godinez, Financial Aid Office  
Robert Hazan, Political Science  
Cathy Lucas, College Communications  
Mercedes Salazar, Chicana/o and African American Studies

**Campus Climate**

Josh Anderson, Alumni Relations Office  
Kate Ashley, New Student Orientation  
Charles Batey, Equal Opportunity Office  
Gail Bruce-Sanford, Counseling Center  
Dave Cisneros, Transfer Services  
Alton Clark, Veterans Upward Bound  
Allison Cotton, Criminal Justice and Criminology  
Yvonne Flood, Information Technology  
Joan L. Foster, School of Letters, Arts and Sciences and Biology  
Michelle LeBoo, Scholarship Center  
Augie Maestas, Creative Services  
Emilia Paul, Student Life  
Greg Root, Access Center

**Faculty and Staff Development and Grantsmanship**

Debra Clark, Student Services  
Vincent C. deBaca, Chicano Studies  
Donelyn James, Bridge Program  
David Kottenstette, Communication Arts and Sciences  
Patti Lohman, ESL/Immigrant Services  
Denise Schuette, Information Technology

**Curriculum Development**

Antonette Aragon, Secondary Education  
Heather Boylan, Early Childhood Education  
Eric Dunker, Tutoring Center  
Hal Nees, Faculty Senate and Criminal Justice and Criminology  
Esrom Pitrie, Teacher Education  
Esther Rodriguez, TQE  
Tat Sang So, English  
Luis Torres, School of Letters, Arts and Sciences and Chicana/o Studies

## Appendix E

July 20, 2007

Dear Hispanic Serving Initiative (HSI) Taskforce member:

Thank you for agreeing to serve on this very important committee. As you know, I have been charged by the Board of Trustees of Metropolitan State College of Denver to lead the College to the next echelon as the preeminent public urban baccalaureate college in the nation.

To build on this vision, Metro State has set an ambitious goal: to become a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), with Latinos comprising at least 25 percent of our enrollment. Currently, Metro State has 13 percent Latino enrollment, a quarter of the state's baccalaureate-seeking Latinos. Since 2003, Latino students have had a higher retention rate than any other underrepresented ethnic group at the College. With a strategic focus on our enrollment—of Latinos and other ethnic groups—we will reach HSI status within the next decade. Our economic and social realities in Colorado dictate that Metro State should and must increase its Latino student enrollment. Your recommendations and service on this committee will make this goal a reality allowing Metro State to take a leadership role in the state.

HSI designation will bring benefits to the College, to Denver, and to Colorado. Metro State would be eligible for funding that would provide significant benefits to all students, faculty and staff, not just Latinos. We would be able to receive grant monies for activities that range from faculty development to renovation of instructional facilities to student support services. In 2005, the U.S. Department of Education awarded nearly \$96 million to HSIs. In addition, federal agencies—from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to the Department of Defense—routinely set aside HSI funding. For example, in 2005 the University of Texas-Pan American received \$2 million from the DOE and \$6 million from other federal entities.

To assure that we tell all aspects of the Metro State story, we will work around the following themes:

- Assessment: Building a Culture of Evidence
- Recruitment, Retention and Student Development: Creating a Culture of Academic Success
- Public Relations: Promoting a Tradition Of the “Urban-Land Grant Institution”
- Campus Climate: Enhancing a Culture that Respects Diversity
- Faculty & Staff Development, Grantsmanship: Enriching our Faculty and Staff
- Curriculum Development: Expanding Academic Excellence.

The membership of this taskforce includes a wide array of faculty, staff, administrators and students. Its membership is based on the nominations that were received at the HSI initiative launched this past spring.

I have asked Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services Judi Diaz Bonacquisti and Dr. Luis Torres, Interim Assistant Dean of Letters, Arts and Sciences, to co-chair this important



initiative. Over the past few months, the HSI Steering Committee, led by AVP Diaz Bonacquisti, has been working on a template for the HSI Taskforce.

I would like the HSI Taskforce to examine a number of critical issues and develop models/options and recommendations to outline how we will achieve this goal. **As an HSI Taskforce member, we request your participation at a morning meeting on Friday, July 27, at St. Cajetans from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. to launch this initiative.** Lunch will be provided. At the meeting, we will lay the framework and delve further into this initiative.

Let me close by reiterating that Metro State is poised to meet the social and economic imperatives to educate more students of color. The College already has a solid foundation of community programs focused on improving K-16 education for these students. I, along with the members of the Board of Trustees, look forward to receiving your analysis and the options and recommendations you provide us. We look forward to your recommendations by February, 2008.

If you are unable to participate on the taskforce or cannot attend the retreat, please let Ms. Diaz Bonacquisti or Dr. Torres know as soon as possible. This is an important assignment as the College journeys to preeminence, and I appreciate very much the expertise and effort you will bring to this task.

Sincerely,



Stephen M. Jordan, Ph.D.  
President

Encl: list of taskforce members

Cc: Board of Trustees  
Cc: President's Cabinet

## Appendix F

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM

RESEARCH, Eric Dunker, University of Denver

An Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Looks Toward the Future: A Case Study on a Collaborative, Community-based Systemic Change Effort at an Urban Land Grant College

You are invited to participate in a study that will conduct a case study in relation to the conception, operation, and implementation of the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution taskforce from Metro State College of Denver. In addition, this study is being conducted to fulfill the requirements of a dissertation for the University of Denver. The study is conducted by Eric Dunker. Results will be used to formulate the case study dissertation analysis. Eric Dunker can be reached at 541-602-7978 or [eric.dunker@du.edu](mailto:eric.dunker@du.edu). This project is supervised by Dr. Nick Cutforth, Curriculum and Instruction Department, University of Denver, Denver, CO 80208, [ncutfort@du.edu](mailto:ncutfort@du.edu) and 303-871-2477.

Participation in this study should take about 90-120 minutes of your time. Participation will involve responding to approximately 10 questions about your participation on the Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution taskforce. Participation in this project is strictly voluntary. The risks associated with this project are minimal. If, however, you experience discomfort you may discontinue the interview at any time. We respect your right to choose not to answer any questions that may make you feel uncomfortable. Refusal to participate or withdrawal from participation will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Your responses will be identified by code number only and will be kept separate from information that could identify you. This is done to protect the confidentiality of your responses. Only the researcher will have access to your individual data and any reports generated as a result of this study will use only group averages and paraphrased wording. However, should any information contained in this study be the subject of a court order or lawful subpoena, the University of Denver might not be able to avoid compliance with the order or subpoena. Although no questions in this interview address it, we are required by law to tell you that if information is revealed concerning suicide, homicide, or child abuse and neglect, it is required by law that this be reported to the proper authorities.

If you have any concerns or complaints about how you were treated during the interview, please contact Susan Sadler, Chair, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, at 303-871-3454, or Sylk Sotto-Santiago, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at 303-871-4052 or write to either at the University of Denver, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, 2199 S. University Blvd., Denver, CO 80208-2121.

Participants with questions or concerns regarding their rights as subjects may also contact Dr. Benjamin C. Thompson, Chair of the MSCD Human Subjects Committee, at 303-352-4426, [bthomp50@mscd.edu](mailto:bthomp50@mscd.edu); Guidelines for protecting the rights of human subjects that are in operation in this study may be found on the College web site: <http://www.mscd.edu> (go to: "for Faculty and Staff", under Faculty Resources); In addition, it is understood that the participant is of age 18 or older.

You may keep this page for your records. Please sign the next page if you understand and agree to the above. If you do not understand any part of the above statement, please ask the researcher any questions

you have.

I have read and understood the foregoing descriptions of the study called (name). I have asked for and received a satisfactory explanation of any language that I did not fully understand. I agree to participate in this study, and I understand that I may withdraw my consent at any time. I have received a copy of this consent form.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to be audiotaped.

I do not agree to be audiotaped.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like a summary of the results of this study to be mailed to me at the following postal or email address:

## Appendix G



### Hispanic Service Institution (HSI) Steering Committee & Full Task Force

#### **Meeting Dates**

Friday, July 27, 2007	8:30 – 1:00 pm	Retreat	St. Cajetan's
Friday, Aug. 10, 2007	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, Aug. 17, 2007	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, Aug. 24, 2007	8:30 – 1:00 p.m.	Full Task Force	St. Cajetan's
Friday, Aug. 31, 2007	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, Sept. 7, 2007	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, Sept. 14, 2007	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, Sept. 21, 2007	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, Sept. 28, 2007	8:30 – 1:00 p.m.	Full Task Force	St. Cajetan's
Friday, Oct. 5, 2007	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, Oct. 12, 2007	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, Oct. 19, 2007	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, Oct. 26, 2007	8:30 – 1:00 p.m.	Full Task Force	St. Cajetan's
Friday, Nov. 2, 2007	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, Nov. 9, 2007	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, Nov. 16, 2007	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, Nov. 23, 2007	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, Nov. 30, 2007	8:30 – 1:00 p.m.	Full Task Force	St. Cajetan's
Friday, Dec. 7, 2007	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, Dec. 14, 2007	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, Dec. 21, 2007	9:30 – 11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, January 11, 2008	9:30-11:00 a.m.		1020 9 <sup>th</sup> Street
Friday, January 25, 2008	8:30 – 11:00 a.m.	Full Task Force	St. Cajetan's
Friday, February 29, 2008	3:00 -5:00 pm	Full Task Force awards	TBA
		Presentation of Final Report	

## Appendix H

### HSI News archive

2011

#### [Running the Numbers: Latino enrollment soaring](#)

June 13, 2011

The latest numbers for fall 2011 applications show the College's efforts toward attaining Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) status, which have shown significant results since the HSI initiative was established in 2007, are continuing to pay off.

#### [High school students readying to attend Metro State](#)

May 9, 2011

Nearly 100 students who have yet to receive their high school diplomas have already registered to attend the College through the Excel Pre-Collegiate Program.

#### [Greetings, farewells and celebrations dominate Board of Trustees meeting](#)

April 11, 2011

The April 6 Board of Trustees meeting saw the coming and going of key board members.

#### [eMerge re-emerges with kick-off event for new module](#)

Mar 21, 2011

The 'eMerge' project, a collaborative information technology initiative begun in 2007 but suspended in 2009 due to lack of funds, has been restarted.

#### [Strategic Name Initiative: Community outreach projects underway](#)

Feb 21, 2011

Recent forums held to involve the Denver community in the selection process of a possible new name for Metro State have increased communications between the College and various community groups.

#### [Five years in, the vision is the same for Jordan](#)

Feb 7, 2011

Stephen Jordan took the helm at Metro State in September 2005 with a 10-year vision for Metro State to become "the preeminent public urban baccalaureate college in the nation."

#### [Board kicks off first meeting of semester](#)

Feb 7, 2011

In addition to receiving a budget update at its Feb. 2 meeting, the Board of Trustees reaffirmed its support for the latest version of the tuition equity bill, approved a change in student health insurance policy and approved a memorandum of understanding related to the Hotel and Hospitality Learning Center (HLC).

#### [College making progress toward HSI goal](#)

Feb 7, 2011

For a few years now, there's been a buzz on campus about achieving Hispanic Serving Institution status, the federal designation accorded to institutions that have at least 25 percent Latino student enrollment.

#### [Results of faculty survey show myriad perspectives](#)

Jan 24, 2011

The recently released results of a survey focusing on campus climate and job satisfaction among Metro State faculty indicate general agreement on a number of broad issues.

2010

[HSI leads to newly reinvigorated Journey Through Our Heritage Program](#)

Oct 19, 2010

A multicultural program at Metro State designed to develop leaders and engage students with their community is experiencing a renaissance, thanks to the HSI initiative.

[Master's programs help tip enrollment over 24,000 mark](#)

Sep 21, 2010

Fall 2010 saw record enrollment at Metro State. A significant part of this growth was in the category of Hispanic or Latino, whose numbers increased 23.8 percent from fall 2009.

[Marketing conference taps into Latino community](#)

Sep 7, 2010

Metro State hosted the third annual Innovations in Hispanic Marketing Conference.

[New survey to better track ethnicity and race](#)

Aug 11, 2010

A new survey to collect ethnic and racial data from students and employees, part of a federal mandate to acquire this information across the country, can provide individuals of diverse heritage, including Latinos, the opportunity to better define themselves.

[HSI update: Excelencia says 'intentionality' important in seeking HSI status](#)

Mar 10, 2010

The organization Excelencia in Education visits campus to discuss its findings on the importance of "intentionality" for higher education institutions seeking to serve the Latino community.

[Torres speaks in DC briefing on College's work to serve Latinos](#)

Feb 10, 2010

Shortly after Metro State is named one of four "emerging HSIs" by Excelencia in Education, Deputy Provost for Academic Affairs Luis Torres participates in a briefing on the role of HSIs in President Barack Obama's national college completion goals for the next decade.

2009

[HSI Update: Excel Program expands; HACU on campus Friday](#)

Sep 23, 2009

Metro State implements a recommendation by the HSI Taskforce to expand the Excel Program, which was established in 1986 to improve the College's enrollment and retention process.

[HSI Update: Teacher prep program to partner with national Latino advocacy group](#)

Jun 17, 2009

Metro State's Urban Teacher Partnership (UTP) program to collaborate with a national nonprofit to address the emerging imperative to increase higher education access for Colorado's Latino students.

[Improving the nutrition of Latinos is goal of \\$260,000 grant](#)

Jun 3, 2009

Metro State's Human Nutrition and Dietetics Program takes a major step toward keeping up with the needs of Latinos in Colorado.

[Campaign showcases Metro State's impact on Denver's growing Latino community](#)

May 20, 2009

Metro State promotes itself as the top choice for Colorado's Latino students.

[Upcoming diversity events support HSI initiative](#)

Mar 18, 2009

A series of events on campus related to Latino heritage underscore the College's initiative to become an HSI.

[HSI collaboration brings photo exhibition to King Center](#)

Jan 21, 2009

Spurred by the College's HSI initiative, the School of Letters, Arts and Sciences collaborates with the Consulate General of Mexico and the Mexican Cultural Center to offer programs.

2008

[HSI Taskforce hosts Excelencia in Education](#)

Nov 26, 2008

Metro State's HSI Taskforce hosts a special talk that attracts representatives from 10 different Colorado higher education institutions.

[HSI Update: Taskforce makes graduate programs proposal key priority](#)

Nov 12, 2008

The HSI Taskforce joins other key campus groups supporting President Stephen Jordan's idea to offer graduate programs at the College.

[HSI Update: Market research firm finds positive attitudes about Metro State and diversity](#)

Jul 23, 2008

In general, students, faculty and staff at Metro State have a positive impression of the College and its diversity outreach efforts, according to a recent study.

[College community invited to HSI meeting](#)

Jul 9, 2008

The HSI Taskforce plans how the next phase of the Hispanic Serving Institution Initiative should proceed.

[HSI Update: Taskforce develops 55 recommendations](#)

Feb 6, 2008

The six subcommittees of the HSI Taskforce have developed and voted on 55 recommendations of ways to achieve the federal HSI designation.

2007

[HSI Initiative: Taskforce presents 60 recommendations](#)

Dec 5, 2007

[HSI Taskforce invites College community to presentations](#)

November 7, 2007

The public is invited and comments are encouraged at the Nov. 30 meeting of the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Taskforce.

[>Read more in This Week @Metro.](#)

[HSI Update: Taskforce members visit other HSIs, attend HACU Conference](#)

November 7 , 2007

In October, small teams from Metro State's HSI Taskforce visited four HSI universities--three in California and one in Illinois--to glean ideas of best practices to attaining the HSI designation and truly serving the student population.

[>Read more in This Week @Metro.](#)

[HSI Taskforce Slideshow](#)

October 26, 2007

View pictures from the October 2007 HSI Full Taskforce meeting.

[HSI Update: Which majors attract Latino students?](#)

October 17 , 2007

HSI Taskforce members Tat Sang So and Ellen Boswell recently completed a study of Latino students' choices in majors, including the number of undeclared majors, over the last six years.

[>Read more in This Week @Metro.](#)

[HSI Taskforce accepting proposals through Oct. 8](#)

October 3 , 2007

As part of its charge to provide recommendations to President Stephen Jordan by February 2008 on how to double Latino enrollment at Metro State, the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Taskforce is soliciting proposals from the Metro State community for policies, programs or strategies toward achieving HSI status.

[>Read more in This Week @Metro.](#)

[First Year Success formally established under co-directors Crownhart and Diaz Bonacquisti](#)

September 26 , 2007

While more students transfer into Metro State than any other college in the state, more students leave the college each year as well.

[>Read more in This Week @Metro.](#)

[Teacher Ed and Student Services receive \\$1.3 million grant to train paraprofessionals](#)

August 1, 2007

Paraprofessionals in Denver Public Schools will train at Metro State to become teachers for English language learners, under a newly awarded \$1.4 million five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition.

[>Read more in This Week @Metro.](#)

[HSI Taskforce gears up](#)

July 25, 2007

The HSI Taskforce has been named, steering committee co-chairs chosen and the members all charged by President Stephen Jordan with developing recommendations by February 2008 that outline how Metro State will attain the designation "Hispanic Serving Institution."

[>Read more in This Week @Metro.](#)

[College launches HSI initiative](#)

April 25, 2007

Calling the goal bold and audacious, Metro State President Stephen Jordan officially launched the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) initiative Thursday morning, April 19.

[>Read more in This Week @Metro.](#)



[College launches HSI initiative](#)

April 19, 2007

**VIDEO**

Dr. Jordan's remarks [\[Word - 64k\]](#) | [\[PDF - 164k\]](#)

The Importance of Increasing Opportunities in Higher Education for Colorado's Growing Latino Population

## Appendix I

### HSI Taskforce accepting proposals through Oct. 8

Oct 3, 2007

As part of its charge to provide recommendations to President Stephen Jordan by February 2008 on how to double Latino enrollment at Metro State, the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Taskforce is soliciting proposals from the Metro State community for policies, programs or strategies toward achieving HSI status. Approved proposals will be incorporated into the recommendations presented to Jordan in February.

"HSI proposals provide the Metro State community with an opportunity to affect, inform and interact with the HSI Taskforce and its activities," said Judi Diaz Bonacquisti, associate vice president for enrollment services, who co-chairs the taskforce.

Proposals will be accepted through Monday, Oct. 8 and are sought in three areas:

- Policy: Proposals on potential changes in institutional (Metro State) policies that may be altered to positively affect students.
- Programs: Proposals for one-time or ongoing programs or projects to positively affect students.
- Strategies: Proposals on strategies that will enhance improved performance of students on campus.

Any member of the Metro State community with an idea on how to increase Latino enrollment at the College is encouraged to submit a proposal. Attaining HSI status entails increasing Latino enrollment from its current 13 percent to 25 percent.

After proposals are received on Oct. 8, they will be posted to the HSI Web site, so that anyone from the Metro State community can provide public input on them. That input is due by Oct. 15.

Proposals should be a maximum of five pages of single-spaced narrative text, consisting of a cover letter and four pages of description, in outline format. The cover letter should provide the following:

- Whether the proposal is a policy, a program, or a strategy
- Title and proposed dates of implementation
- Contact name, email address, campus box number and phone number of the submitter
- Specify the area of consideration for which the proposal is intended (campus climate, retention and recruitment, public relations, professional development, assessment or curriculum)

The remaining four pages should include:

- Goal(s) of recommended HSI initiative
- Policy, program, or strategy to support goal
- Measurable outcomes of policy, program or strategy
- Timeline for implementation
- Area/person/division responsible for implementation
- Resources necessary for implementation (per year with budget breakdown)
- Existing or proposed funding source for implementation

A copy of the RFP selection criteria is available at <http://www.mscd.edu/president/hsi/documents.shtml>.

Proposals must be submitted in both hard copy, to Campus Box 16, and electronically, to [snorton6@mscd.edu](mailto:snorton6@mscd.edu).

## Appendix J

### HSI Update: Taskforce develops 55 recommendations

Feb 6, 2008

The six subcommittees of the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Taskforce have developed and voted on 55 recommendations of ways to achieve the federal HSI designation (25 percent of the student population being Latino).

Those recommendations and voting results are with President Stephen Jordan for his review. In addition, Taskforce Co-chairs Luis Torres, interim associate dean of School of Letters, Arts and Sciences, and Judi Diaz Bonacquisti, associate vice president for enrollment services, presented the recommendations to the President's Cabinet Feb. 4. The recommendations are posted on the HSI Web site at <http://www.mscd.edu/president/hsi/documents.shtml>. The results of the voting will be posted after further analysis is complete that will better allow the recommendations to be prioritized.

"I'm proud of the work the committee did," said Diaz Bonaquisti. "Now the College has its work cut out. We need to weave this initiative into serving all of our students the best we can."

According to Torres, most of the recommendations are for changes in the basic structure at the College "Making these fundamental, major changes would benefit all students, Latinos in particular," he said.

Torres related the example of one recommendation from the Recruitment, Retention and Student Development Subcommittee to expand the Excel Outreach Program by building long-term relationships and developing admission services onsite at the College's feeder high schools.

"We learned on our site visits that HSI universities have admissions counselors at the high schools," Torres said. (To read more about those visits to HSIs go to [http://www.mscd.edu/~collcom/artman/publish/hsi\\_tvw5110707.shtml](http://www.mscd.edu/~collcom/artman/publish/hsi_tvw5110707.shtml).)

In his role as co-chair, Torres obtained from Institutional Research a listing of the top feeder high schools from 2001 to 2006. Only one, South High School, was a Denver Public School, in spite of the fact that North and West high schools are within walking distance of the campus. "There were only a total of 33 students in 2005 from DPS's predominantly Latino high schools: North, West, Manual and Lincoln. If we can't recruit more from these schools, we're simply not going to reach HSI status," he said.

With the demographics showing an ever-increasing Latino population, Torres said, "What we're really aiming at is: what do we need to do to better serve the College's mandated geographical area?"

The second question is, *Where do we go from here?* or as Diaz Bonacquisti said, "How do we own it?"

First, though, Jordan will complete his assessment of the final report and determine when and how it should be presented to the Board of Trustees. The higher priority recommendations will need budget requests submitted to Natalie Lutes, vice president of administration and finance, for the next budget cycle. Watch @Metro for information about the initiative's next step.

## Appendix K

### HSI Taskforce hosts Excelencia in Education

Nov 26, 2008

Metro State's Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Taskforce hosted a special talk on Nov. 21 at the Tivoli Student Union that attracted representatives from 10 different Colorado higher education institutions.

The talk featured the leaders of Excelencia in Education, an organization that identifies, analyzes and disseminates information on effective higher education practices for Latinos. The talk addressed a few questions, including: "Once you've recruited them, then what? How are you going to nurture them?"

Excelencia in Education President Sarita E. Brown and Deborah A. Santiago, vice president for policy and research, answered the questions by addressing common myths about HSI's and by explaining where HSI's fall on a national scale.

One myth is that HSI's are defined by the college's mission, often leading to other populations feeling left out. "HSI's are defined by their Hispanic student enrollment, not their institutional mission," said Santiago, who points to the 265 institutions across the United States that meet this requirement. Over 75 percent of these HSI's are located in California, Puerto Rico, Texas and New Mexico.

With the growing Latino population in the U.S., many more institutions will be added to this list. Accordingly, the staff and faculty of countless colleges are trying to find the right formula to recruit this population. The traditional education path is defined by students who attend college immediately after graduating high school, and graduate within four to five years.

This is not the case for your average Latino student, says Brown, who has spent more than two decades at prominent national educational institutions and at the highest levels of government working to develop more effective strategies to raise academic achievement and opportunity for low-income students and students of color.

According to Excelencia's research, more Latinos are first generation, commute to college, work off-campus while enrolled in college and attend community colleges.

So the question becomes how do you meet them where they are?

"We have to respond to how Latino students are navigating college," says Brown.

Brown offered a note of encouragement to institutions seeking HSI status, calling them trendsetters. "HSI's often have a negative connotation and there are a lot of growing pains," says Santiago. "The reality is these institutions are leading the charge."

Their presentation also reviewed "promising practices," which could include providing pronunciation classes for faculty development. According to Santiago, "it provides a warm and welcoming environment" for a student to hear their name pronounced correctly.

In addition, the presenters noted the importance of documenting the success of existing programs. "It's key to create a written record and evidence of effectiveness," said Brown.

Brown and Santiago were invited to the campus by Urban Teacher Partnership Director Esther Rodriguez.

## Appendix L

### HSI Update: Excel Program expands; HACU on campus Friday

Sep 23, 2009

Metro State has implemented a recommendation by the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Taskforce to expand the Excel Program, which was established in 1986 to improve the College's enrollment and retention process.

The expansion will help create a pipeline of diverse high school students to Metro State by building long-term relationships and transforming from an admissions and outreach program to a pre-collegiate development program.

"The taskforce recommended two high schools, but we added more outreach counselors to expand to more high schools," says Elena Sandoval-Lucero, director of admissions and outreach.

Excel counselors will offer pre-college preparation, activities and counseling to students in grades 9-12 and their parents to help them develop a college-going expectation, and to prepare to enter and be successful in college. Most services and programs will be delivered on site. The program will also bring groups of students to campus for visit days, tours and events so that they have access to a college campus, and can begin to envision attending college.

Two bilingual counselors have been hired for the program, and will be assigned at least four high schools each starting January 2010. Metro State alumni Arturo Rodriguez, Jr. and Cynthia Garcia are eager to work with their alma mater and high school students.

"I'm excited to work with students again at Metro and the Auraria Campus," says Rodriguez, who graduated in 1995 with a degree in political science and a minor in Chicana/o studies. His career has included work with community organizations and youth groups.

"I had a unique and successful experience here," adds Rodriguez, who served as president of the MEChA (*Mexicano Estudiantl Chicano de Aztlan*) student organization during his junior year and also played on the College's tennis team. "I hope to pass on to



Metro State alumni Arturo Rodriguez, Jr. has been hired as an Excel outreach counselor.

students that they can develop a dream and goal that includes higher education and accomplish it. We're here to help them with the steps.”

Cynthia Garcia, a 2008 graduate with a degree in health care management and a minor in Chicana/o studies honed her skills in the Admissions Office for three years as a work-study student. She also spent four years as an Excel Student Ambassador. Her experience will prove to be invaluable in this role says Sandoval-Lucero. “She knows the admissions process well.”



Metro State alumna Cynthia Garcia has been hired as an Excel outreach counselor.

Through Garcia’s experiences, she says she has witnessed the obstacles some students and parents face. “There are barriers, including language, but you can find a way around it to continue education. I let them know if there’s a will, there’s a way.”

Rodriguez and Garcia will assist high school students and parents with the financial aid process, Metro State application, admissions counseling, next steps after being accepted and College support services. In addition, the two will assist high school counselors by giving presentations to students and parents regarding higher education information and options available to students.

This fall, they are setting up presentation meetings with various high schools to inform them of the new program. The program will be co-coordinated by Associate Director of Admissions Cynthia Nunez and Senior Admissions Counselor Michelle Pacheco.

### **HACU National Internship Opportunities**

In other HSI-related news, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities National Internship Program (HNIP) will visit campus on Friday, Sept. 25, from noon to 1 p.m. in TIV 542 to talk to students about paid internship opportunities in Washington, D.C. and around the country. The internships offer airfare, housing arrangements and a weekly stipend of \$450 to \$550. All majors are welcome to apply at <http://www.hacu.net/>.

Following the student presentation, HACU staff will talk to staff and faculty interested in learning more about the internship program.

## Appendix M

### HSI Update: Which majors attract Latino students?

Oct 17, 2007

HSI Taskforce members Tat Sang So and Ellen Boswell recently completed a study of Latino students' choices in majors, including the number of undeclared majors, over the last six years.

"The goal of our analysis was to determine which majors are under-represented and which are over-represented as far as Latino students," said Institutional Research Director Boswell, who is on the HSI assessment subcommittee. So, an assistant professor of English, serves on the HSI curriculum development subcommittee.

"These numbers can help us devise strategies that support the HSI initiative," So said.



HSI Taskforce members Tat Sang So and Ellen Boswell produced the study of Latino majors.

To determine whether a major is under- or over-represented, So and Boswell compared the percentage of Latino students in each major to the overall percentage (13%) of Latino students enrolled at Metro State. For instance, the total number of students majoring in criminal justice and criminology (CJC) from 2002-07 is 6,313. Of these, 1,319 students—or 20.9 percent—are Latino. This means CJC is over-represented at 162 percent.

On the flip side, one example would be aviation technology: Out of 2,825 students, 191 or 6.8 percent are Latino for 52% representation.

For a general overview, the report gave the representation by school and division for 2002-07:

School of Business: 100%  
School of Letters, Arts and Sciences 95%  
- *Humanities* 95%  
- *Science and Mathematics* 83%  
- *Social Sciences* 103%  
School of Professional Studies 109%  
- *Education (special)* 57%  
- *Public Service* 127%  
- *Technology* 77%

#### Opportunities

So believes that large majors (those with many students) that are underrepresented for Latinos represent a big opportunity. "Small percentage gains in marginally underrepresented large majors would translate into many students," he said, citing chemistry, computer science, mathematics and history as examples.

Likewise, large majors that are over-represented, like CJC, offer the opportunity to study what they are doing that helps them attract and retain Hispanic students. "Lessons learned there could be spread through other departments," So said.

Boswell added that the study showed that service programs have a high concentration of Latino students. "CJC falls into this category as do social work and others," she said. "Based on literature, the main drive for many Latino students, who are very family-oriented, is that if they were given help to attend college, then they want to give back to their community. This would explain this high concentration."

However, according to So, the most important major that is over-represented is “undeclared.” “The first order of business should be academic advising that helps Latino students find majors they are excited to pursue and that promises them a path to success and graduation,” he said. “Our retention and graduation rates for students with declared majors are much higher than for undeclared.”

So emphasizes that this analysis will not be used to stereotype Latino students. “In fact, the most important conclusion we have drawn is that there are many great majors at Metro State that our Latino students are not sufficiently exposed to, and we have to make a greater effort to make sure all of our students are aware of how many exciting choices our system of majors offers.”



## Appendix N: Top recommendations and updates

Recommendation	Update (as of January 2012)
Recruitment/Retention Recommendation #2: Expansion of the Excel Outreach Program: To create a pipeline of diverse high school students to Metro State by building long term relationships an offering admissions services on site in diverse feeder high schools.	There were three outreach counselors hired in 2010. They weren't hired earlier because of deep budget reductions in 2008-2009 due economic issues. They have fully expanded the Excel program and now serve hundred of Latino students per year.
Recruitment/Retention Recommendation #14: In-state tuition for undocumented students. To remove barriers to education access and allow students who have graduated from a Colorado high school to pursue an affordable college education at in-state tuition rates	The college helped sponsor senate bill in 2008 called 08-079 that helped articulate the new universal interpretation of residency laws as it applied to Colorado residents who had undocumented parents.
Recruitment/Retention Recommendation #3: Develop an M.O.U. with the Community College of Denver to facilitate (1) the transfer of students to Metro State, (2) the transfer of students denied admission due to HEAR deficiencies, and (3) the retention of students who must take developmental coursework at CCD.	Metro State College of Denver has partnered with the Community College of Denver to begin offering Metro State only accelerated remedial sections. In lieu of funding the enrollment coordinator position, funding was reallocated to the first year experience program in an effort to boost the retention rates of first year students.
Public Relations Recommendation #2: Internal Communications to keep faculty, staff, and alumni apprised of significant HSI newsworthy events	Comprehensive Emerging HSI initiative web-site was created which archived all documents from the taskforce including meeting minutes, internal communication memos, and presentations. <a href="http://www.mscd.edu/president/hsi">www.mscd.edu/president/hsi</a>
Assessment Recommendation #1: Implementation and universal adoption of the Constituent Relationship Management system (CRM).	The college purchased and implemented a constituent relationship management (CRM) system through federal stimulus money that enhanced the current student Banner system through advanced data collection and reporting features.
Recruitment/Retention recommendation #24: Add academic advising staff to support HSI. Provide individualized advising and support programs to sustain	Professional advisors were added to each specific college (in addition to the central advising office) to support advising at the major/minor level.

retention and graduation of all students at Metro State College of Denver.	
Curriculum Recommendation #1: Review and evaluate current policies, state statutes, and institutional controls regarding remedial coursework.	<p>Metro State has continued to reexamine its remedial policies and have begun the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Offering accelerated sections (based on best practices research) in an effort to support early developmental completion</li> <li>-Differing placement cut-scores based on historical pass/failure rates (as opposed to a one-size fits all policy) and offering secondary assessments to assist with placement accuracy</li> <li>-Combining English 090 (last developmental sequence) with English 1010 to improve learning outcomes.</li> </ul>
Curriculum recommendation #8: Identify new programs that will attract and retain Latino/a students based on national research and current/future trends.	<p>Metro State used this recommendation as its rationale to begin graduate programs. Metro State welcomed its first graduate program class in the fall of 2010.</p>