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**VALIDATING THE EXPERIENCES OF MALE MEXICAN AMERICAN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRANSFER STUDENTS STUDYING AT CATHOLIC
UNIVERSITIES**

by

ELIAZER AYALA-AUSTIN

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education
University of San Diego

May 2007

Dissertation Committee

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ABSTRACT

California's community colleges and public and private universities must collaborate to address the Tidal Wave II student enrollment surge composed mostly of Hispanic/Latinos and Asian students in order to meet the educational needs of community college transfer students (CCTSs). Avoiding the issue will result in continued neglect of CCTS within public and private institutions; possible outcomes include delayed graduation and potential attrition of at-risk students. Using Rendón's (1994) theory of student validation as the theoretical framework, this qualitative study uncovered the validating and other university experiences of male Mexican American CCTSs. This qualitative study included individual interviews of six CCT students, six CCT alumni, and nine university administrators within the divisions of student and academic affairs from two respective Catholic universities in southern California.

The results of the study show that validation of CCTS by university personnel contributed to and influenced the perceptions of CCTSs about their overall university experiences. Also, the data suggest that words of encouragement told to students by university personnel help students perceive that the university cares about their success. The findings of the study show that students who had a positive university experience also perceived the staff and administration as caring for the success of students, helpful to students, and providing for individualized and personal attention. These results study suggest that Catholic four-year universities may be a good fit for m Mexican American CCTSs, but only when university personnel proactively engages in validating this special student population. Faculty validation also emerged as a source of student validation and

contributor to their satisfaction with the university. CCTS in the study also attributed the university's religious affiliation and international student population as factors that helped to enhance their university experiences.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my husband and son, family and friends, everyone who supported me through this endeavor, current community college transfer students and alumni, and to future CCTS.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	v
DEDICATION	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	viii

CHAPTER

1. INTRODUCTION	1
The Problem.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	6
Purpose of the Study	9
Significance of the Study	11
Research Questions.....	12
Methodology	13
Limitations of the Study.....	14
Definition of Terms.....	15
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	18
Introduction.....	18
Community College Student Profiles.....	19
Student Validation Theory, Involvement and Integration Theory, and Cultural Capital	24
The Transfer Function and Its Relationship to Retention and Attrition.....	29
Institution Type and Students' Perceptions of these Institutions	37
Transfer Experience	42
Models of Student Services for CCTS.....	49
Conclusion	53
3. METHODOLOGY	55
Introduction	55
Methods Used.....	56
Sites and Respondents	56
Sampling	57
Selection Criteria	58
Data Collection	63
Data Analysis.....	65
Limitations of the Study.....	66
Conclusion	67
4. FINDINGS.....	69
Introduction.....	69

Challenges and Sacrifices	71
Campus Climate.....	71
Campus demographic issues.....	72
Religious resources.....	78
International influence.....	79
Cultural and Social Capital	81
Family as support	82
Managing resources.....	87
Non-validating Experiences.....	90
Early impressions	90
Continuing problems	97
Unmet expectations	99
Connections and Validating Experiences	101
Validation.....	101
Faculty experiences	101
Administrative validation	106
Self-validation	114
Academic and Student Affairs Professionals Perceptions.....	117
Identifying Mexican American CCTS	117
Inclusive and validating roles.....	118
University ready	127
Conclusions.....	129
5. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	131
Introduction.....	131
Purpose of Study	132
Summary of Findings.....	132
Research Question 1	134
Research Question 2	135
Research Question 3	135
Research Question 4	136
Discussion	137
Recommendations.....	140
Participants'	140
Researcher's.....	143
Conclusions	145
Implication for Policy	145
Recommendation for Future Study.....	145
Concluding Remarks.....	146
References.....	150

Appendix

A1. Pre-interview questionnaire	166
A2. Student and alumni interview guide.....	170
A3. Administrator interview guide	174
B1. Letter to student requesting participation.....	177
B2. Letter to alumni requesting participation	179
B3. Letter to administrator requesting participation.....	181
C. Informed consent form.....	183
D1. Pre-interview questionnaire results: CU CCT students and alumni	185
D2. Pre-interview questionnaire results: SU CCT students and alumni	189
D3. Profiles of CU academic and student affairs professionals	193
D4. Profiles of SU academic and student affairs professionals	195
E. List of recommendations for CCTS unmet needs	197

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The Problem

California's system of higher education is currently experiencing its second Tidal Wave of student enrollment—the effects of which may impact all of its current students and potentially compromise the Master Plan's original intent of increasing access among low income and non-traditional students of color (Carroll, 2005; CPEC, 1995; CPEC, 2005b; Kan-Rice, 2000; Shulock & Moore, 2003). The term *Tidal Wave II* was coined to describe the student surge phenomenon composed mostly of Hispanic and Asian ethnic backgrounds.¹ When the California Master Plan of Higher Education was developed in 1960, the framers intended for it to serve two purposes: (a) to put a stop to duplication of programs and degrees in order to avoid unnecessary spending, and (b) to offer access to all eligible residents who could benefit from a college education (California Master Plan, 2004; Carroll, 2005). The problem is that with 45% of California students beginning their college studies at a California community college, California's higher education crisis calls for private four-year institutions to contribute to the solution by ensuring that they remain part of the educational pipeline for community college transfer students (CCTS) (California Master Plan, 2004; Carroll, 2005).

In California, roughly 45% of all first-time college freshmen begin undergraduate education in the community college system (California Master Plan, 2004; Henry & Knight, 2000; Laurente & Pailthorp, n.d.), with the largest minority group being Hispanic/Latino (CCCCO, 2005a; CCCCCO, 2005b). In spring 2005, Hispanics/Latinos

¹ The first Tidal Wave occurred in 1960 when the baby boomers enrolled in college; it was composed mostly of White males between the ages of 18 to 22 (CPEC, 1995; CPEC, 2005b; Kan-Rice, 2000).

represented 27.9% of California's community college total student body, while White students represented 37.6%, African American represented 7.3%, Asian represented 11.9%, and Native American Indian represented 0.8% (CCCCO, 2005a; CCCCCO, 2005b). Even though Whites still outnumber Hispanic/Latino community college students in the state, the ethnic makeup of Tidal Wave II students is majority Hispanic/Latino and Asian. As such, the problem California is facing is that Hispanic/Latinos transfer rate is relatively low when compared to Whites, respectively 19.1% and 38.2% (CCCCO, 2005a; CCCCCO, 2005b). The transfer rates between White and Hispanic/Latino student groups are not proportionally representative of the statewide population; considering the state majority is now Hispanic/Latino, the transfer rates should ideally be representative of the state population (CCCCO, 2005a; CCCCCO, 2005b; NCES, 2005; Sabagh & Bozorgmehr, 1996). As a result, it is crucial for both California private and public universities to work collaboratively with the community college system to address Tidal Wave II and CCTS' transfer needs with a focus on Hispanic/Latino students and other historically underrepresented minority groups.

Although all sectors of higher education can contribute to solving the problem, many regard community colleges as the most logical solution to the problem: They have the ability to provide a pipeline for the four-year universities through the transfer process. The transfer process provides students with access to the university from the community college through articulation agreements established between institutions. It has especially served as a gateway to increasing access to the university for students from low-income, non-traditional, and historically underrepresented backgrounds (Berger & Malaney, 2003; Carroll, 2005; CPEC, 2005; Kan-Rice, 2000; Shulock & Moore, 2003). Nevertheless, the

transfer rates for Blacks and Hispanic students are significantly lower than those of White students; the problem is that most California community colleges enroll up to 40% Black and 50% Hispanic students but they transfer at a lower rate (McGrath & Spears, 1994; Rendón & Garza, 1996). As a result, scholars maintain that the community college transfer function remains less effective for historically underrepresented minority groups and nontraditional students (Knoell, 1994; Townsend, 1995). Those students who do transfer are said to be more likely to encounter problems at the university such as adjusting to the university environment, having a negative college experience, and/or experiencing a decrease in their grade point average in the first semester (Ceja & Kaylor, 1997; Davies & Casey, 1999; Glass & Harrington, 2002; Harrell & Forney, 2003; Knoell, 1994; Laanan, 1996; Townsend, 1995).

Increased enrollment of CCTS at private institutions is vital if densely populated, diverse states like California are to fulfill their social and economic obligations to all citizens. Tidal Wave II major enrollment increases began in the 1998–99 academic year and are projected to continue until 2010–13 academic year (CPEC, 1995; CPEC, 2005b; Kan-Rice, 2000). Currently, the California Postsecondary Education Commission (2005b) projects that community colleges are expected to enroll 656,447 additional students between 2003–13; however, the number of students that California can accommodate within the public university and community college system is currently 723,146 students, so the system cannot possibly meet the needs of all students without additional funding and resources—nearly double the amount of students (CPEC, 1995; CPEC, 2005b). While not every community college student wants, or needs, to transfer and earn a bachelor's degree for career training, a four-year degree facilitates access to

the middle-socioeconomic class (Cedja & Kaylor, 1997; Davies & Casey, 1999; Glass & Harrington, 2002; Harrell & Forney, 2003; Knoell, 1994; Laanan, 1996; Townsend, 1995); higher educational institutions' goal should be to meet all students' educational needs and encourage transfer to a four-year university for those who may benefit from a bachelor's degree (Berger & Malaney, 2003; Hurtado, et al., 1994; Rendón, 1994; Rendón & Garza, 1996; Shulock & Moore, 2003; Suarez, 2003; Townsend, 1995; Trujillo & Diaz, 1999).

Furthermore, while increased enrollment at private universities will contribute to addressing the student enrollment surge, Catholic universities may be a better fit for Hispanic students because a high number of Hispanics identify Catholicism as their religious faith. This seems like an ideal solution in addressing the anticipated high enrollment of Hispanic college students. However, more research must be conducted to determine whether these Catholic universities are a better fit for Hispanic students, and whether these institutions meet the educational needs of community college transfer students of Mexican descent-- the largest Hispanic/Latino group in California.

Though the California Master Plan mentions addressing Tidal Wave II by increasing state funding and building new campuses, the current fiscal crisis affects the ability to fulfill the promise of college access for all Californians (CPEC, 1995). Private universities may help alleviate the pressure California public universities are facing by increasing access to community college transfer students (CPEC, 1995). Their help will alleviate pressure from California's public universities quest to fulfill their promise of providing access to all qualified California applicants (California Master Plan, 2004; Kan-Rice, 2000; Shulock & Moore, 2003). Private four-year colleges and universities can

admit many of the Tidal Wave II students, and improve the enrollment and graduation rates of CCTS on private campuses (Shulock & Moore, 2003). Some additional steps private institutions can take immediately are to increase the number of articulation agreements they have with community colleges, and increase academic and social resources for California community college transfer students (CCTS) pursuing a bachelor's degree. Doing so will help address the major enrollment increase issue while providing resources for CCTS to remain in college and complete the degree.

Because California private universities report CCTS enrollment on a voluntary basis, these universities may enroll few community college transfer students while underfunding the academic and social resources required for them to be successful (Berger & Malaney, 2003; Eggleston & Laanan, 2001; Laanan, 1996; McGrath & Van Buskirk, 1999; Rendón & Garza, 1996; Romano & Wisniewski, 2003; Townsend, 1995). Consequently, there is limited knowledge about CCTS' experience on private university campuses as a result of low CCT student enrollment. In addition, scholars maintain that private institutions' low enrollment rates of CCTS may be attributed to their perception of CCTS as academically underprepared (Berger & Malaney). However, recent research has found that CCTS perform academically equally to native students, and in some cases, outperform native students (Carlan, 2001; Carlan & Byxbe, 2000; Cedja, 1997; Glass & Harrington, 2002). Although there is an abundance of information about success among traditional students at public and private four-year institutions, there is a dearth of information about college student success of nontraditional CCTS at Catholic universities; more knowledge must be acquired about CCTS from various racial ethnic groups studying at Catholic universities. Doing so will help identify the unique academic

and social factors that contribute to, or detract from, retention and graduation rates of CCTS—and to determine if existing university resources are suitable for the non-traditional CCTS at Catholic universities.

Statement of the Problem

Though California statewide demographics have shifted from majority White to majority Hispanic/Latino and Asian, data still show a lower level of degree attainment among Hispanics/Latinos in higher education (Cohen & Brawer, 2003a; Hope & Rendón, 1996; Sabagh & Bozorgmehr, 1996). Many scholars note that certain aspects of CCTS' college experience, such as a non-inclusive curriculum and the quality of the interaction with campus personnel, have contributed to attrition rates of CCTS—especially for community college students of color (Berger & Malaney, 2003; Hope & Rendón, 1996; Rendón, 1993a; Rendón, 1993b; Rendón, 1994; Rendón, 1995a; Rendón, 1995b; Rendón, 2000; Rendón & Garza, 1996; Rendón & Jalomo, 1995a; Rendón & Jalomo, 1995b; Rendón, Jalomo, & Nora, n.d.; Townsend, 1995). As a result, some higher education institutions have failed to meet the educational and cultural needs of ethnic minority community college students. One potential explanation for why CCTS struggle at the university, in particular private universities, can be found by applying the framework of Rendón (1994), who suggests that ethnic minority students' academic persistence and retention is affected by the lack of interaction with non-student members of higher education institutions—suggesting that faculty and administrators need to engage in practices of student validation with CCTS to increase retention and persistence.

While it is important to study the collegiate experience of Hispanic/Latino community college transfer students, it is even more imperative to examine the

experiences of male Mexican American CCTS (MMACCTS) at Catholic universities for two reasons: (a) Mexican American students are considered a historically underrepresented group on California college and university campuses (UCOP, 2005); and (b) Mexican Americans/Mexicans in California represent 77.1% of the total state Hispanic/Latino population as a result of proximity to the Mexican–U.S. border (U.S. Census, 2000). In addition, the college and university experiences of MMACCTS need to be studied in order to understand the recent phenomenon of Mexican American women outnumbering their male counterparts on college campuses. The phenomenon of women outnumbering male students on college campuses is evident across the nation, and across every type of higher education institution, and this is consistent with White, Asian, and African American student populations (Carroll, 2005; CCCCO, 2005a; CCCCO, 2005b; NCES, 2005). Moreover, special attention to religious universities is important because religion plays a significant role in the identity of Mexican Americans and these institutions may be a better fit for this population of college students. Furthermore, more information about the validating experiences of MMACCTS studying at Catholic universities is necessary because of the university commitment and mission statement which reflect elements of Christianity, equity, diversity, access, peace, and justice.

Although there are programs and organizations aimed at improving the transfer rate of community college students to four-year universities, scholars question their effectiveness (Laurente & Pailthorp, n. d.; Shulock & Moore, 2003). The question is whether these programs are effective in terms of student enrollment increases, since they do not take into account the enrollment issues that California faces as a result of Tidal Wave II (CPEC, 1995; CPEC, 2005b; Hayward, 1999; Shulock & Moore, 2003). For

example, two programs that provide resources to community college transfer students include the Association of California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) Mentor program and the Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer (ASSIST). Although the programs are available to assist students in the transfer process, there is little research that measures their effectiveness in increasing the transfer rate of community college students to a private four-year university in particular.

While private universities do enroll CCTS, information on the graduation rates of CCTS from private universities is largely unavailable because these institutions are not bound by the California Master Plan to report such information. However, reports show that in 2004, a discrepancy existed in degree attainment by ethnicity at public universities, with 16.4% of Hispanics and 39.6% of Whites obtaining a bachelors degree (CCCCO, 2005a; CCCCCO, 2005b; CPEC, 2005a; UCOP, 2005). Hispanic/Latino students also have the lowest degree attainment among other minority students at public universities (Rendón & Garza, 1996; Suarez, 2003). In addition, the problem is that Tidal Wave II is largely composed of Hispanic/Latino students and they have the lowest transfer rates when compared to White students. While programs do exist for CCTS bound for a four-year university, more programs must be developed to help CCTS on the receiving end of the transfer process. If California's higher education institutions do not address Tidal Wave II, then CCTS' educational needs may continue to be neglected, with possible outcomes including delayed graduation and the potential attrition of at-risk students on a larger scale than anything we have seen to date (CPEC, 1995a).

Purpose of the Study

Historically, private universities admit fewer CCTS as a result of various factors, including a possible bias against students who are assumed to be academically underprepared (Cohen & Brawer, 2003b; McGrath & Spear, 1994). In addition, recent literature shows certain institutional barriers contributing to academic failure among CCTS and non-traditional students (Bean & Metzger, 1985 as cited in Berger & Malaney, 2003; Knoell, 1994; McGrath & Spears, 1994; Rendón, 1993a; Rendón, 1993b; Rendón, 1994). However, one factor known to contribute positively to graduation rates of non-traditional students is Rendón's (1994) theory of student validation which states that proactive intervention by college personnel in lending a helping hand or affirming ethnic minority students as capable learners will increase retention and graduation rates and improve college experiences. While Rendón's theory is based on validation of community college personnel of community college students, the assumption is that applying the theory of student validation by university personnel may also contribute positively to the experiences and graduation rates of CCTS and non-traditional students enrolled at the university. Using Rendón's theory of student validation, relationships between MMACCTS and Catholic university staff are examined to determine factors contributing to, or detracting from, the validation of MMACCTS studying at California Catholic universities.

By means of using Rendón's (1994) theory of student validation as a critical lens, this study uncovers relationships between MMACCTS and administration, and relationships between male Mexican American CCT alumni (MMACCTA) and administration, that contribute or deter the validation of CCTS at two southern California

Catholic universities. Specifically, the purpose of this study is three-fold. First, is to understand the collegiate and validating experiences of MMACCTS studying at, and MMACCTA who graduated from, Catholic universities. Purposely, the focus is on two southern California Catholic universities because of expressed commitment in their mission statement to such factors as Christianity, equity, diversity, access, peace, and justice. The researcher identifies perceptions of male CCTS' and alumni CCTS of Mexican American descent on transitional or adjustment problems in transferring from a community college to a Catholic university, and any special needs, academic or social, unmet by the institution.

The second goal of the study was to collect data about the perceptions of non-faculty administrators of Catholic universities on their role in validating MMACCTS college experiences. The data include the perceptions of non-faculty administrators about the academic and social experiences of MMACCTS. The assumption is Catholic universities provide a better fit culturally for male Mexican Americans students because religion is significant in the identity of these individuals.

The third goal is to perform a comparative analysis on the data collected on perceptions of university experiences of MMACCTS, MMACCTA, and academic and student affairs professionals (ASAPs) to determine whether their perceptions are congruent, or not. In the end, the overall purpose of the study was to begin to fill the gap currently existing with respect to our knowledge about MMACCTS studying at Catholic universities.

The research contributes to the conversation about community college transfer students by investigating a specific ethnic group's experiences as CCTS. The study

served to identify the role Catholic universities play in CCTS degree completion of MMACCTS; it is hoped this information will serve as a guide for other Catholic universities in designing programs to meet the needs of CCTS and better integrate students to improve graduation rates. Further, information was gathered to better understand the types of resources and policies which require implementation to achieve improved retention rates and college experiences of CCTS. The resulting study documents the perceived college experiences of male CCT students' and CCT alumni of Mexican descent, as well as perceived attitudes held by administrators about these CCTS studying at Catholic universities in southern California.

Significance of the Study

While earlier literature on student retention and persistence is based on models of traditional students at four-year universities, more recent studies have emerged shedding light on retention and persistence of ethnic minority college students (Perrakis, 2003). This study is valuable to similar four-year Catholic universities enrolling male CCTS of Mexican American descent and serves as a learning opportunity for institutions who have limited knowledge about the CCTS' academic and social experiences and needs. In light of the ethnic composition of Tidal Wave II being mostly Asian and Hispanic-- with Mexican Americans representing the largest Hispanic group in California-- it is important to examine the collegiate experiences of male Mexican American CCTS in order to identify unique factors and knowledge to help college and university administrators design academic and social resources to improve transfer and graduate rates.

A second significant reason for the research about community college transfer students studying at Catholic universities is that it contributed to the dearth of

information on the level of validation that university personnel engage in when interacting with CCTS of Mexican descent. This study also shed light on the level of validation MMACCTS experience when seeking academic and social resources and services from Catholic university personnel. This study helped to identify unmet needs and suggestions for addressing the unmet needs, which will inform university administrators from similar universities.

In addition, it is imperative to examine the experiences of CCTS from lower socioeconomic backgrounds in order to uncover special needs unique to this population. The knowledge acquired in this study informs universities with information about CCTS from impoverished communities and their collegiate experiences studying at affluent Catholic universities. Knowledge from this study informs universities on designing programs to address the academic and social needs of CCTS from lower socioeconomic backgrounds in an effort to improve graduation and retention rates.

Research Questions

The following four questions guide this study:

RQ1: To what extent, if at all, do male Mexican American community college transfer students (MMACCTS) perceive themselves as personally and academically validated by administrators at two Catholic universities?

RQ2: To what extent, if at all, do male Mexican American community college transfer alumni (MMACCTA) perceive their personal and academic experiences at Catholic universities were validated by administrators?

RQ3: To what extent, if at all, do administrators at these institutions perceive themselves as validating the experiences of MMACCTS and MMACCTA?

RQ4: To what extent are the MMACCTS' and MMACCTA perceptions congruent with the perceptions of administrators regarding validation of MMACCTS' and MMACCA experiences at these Catholic universities?

Methodology

This study utilized a research approach incorporating qualitative methods of inquiry (Patton, 1990) to explore the validating experiences of MMACCTS studying at Catholic universities. Lincoln and Guba (1985) referred to the type of opportunity as *transferability*. Donmoyer (1990) defines transferability as follows:

According to [this] characterization, an experience in one situation leads to the development of working hypotheses; when a person moves to a new situation, he or she simply compares the sending situation to the receiving situation, determines the degree of fit, and applies those hypotheses [that] appear to be applicable in the new situation.

Donmoyer (1990) points out two advantages of qualitative studies: accessibility and seeing through the researcher's eyes. Through qualitative studies, one has the opportunity to experience vicariously the unique individuals and situations within our culture (Donmoyer, 1990). In this situation, the study provides educators and educational leaders with an opportunity to better understand the collegiate experiences of community college transfer students (Donmoyer, 1990). Thus, professionals from the divisions of student affairs and academic affairs will have a better understanding of how to improve programs aimed at increasing the retention and persistence rates of male Mexican American community college transfer students.

The study's participants were MMACCTS enrolled at, and MMACT alumni who graduated from, either one of two Catholic universities in Southern California. In addition, academic and student affairs professionals (ASAPs) participated in the study.

The two universities are in close proximity to one another, small in size, and are both Catholic. To maintain confidentiality, pseudonyms for both institutions are utilized: university #1 is City University (CU), and university #2 is Sunny University (SU).

The study included three sampling groups from each institution: three MMACCTS, three MMACCT alumni, and four and five ASAPs, respectively. To identify the student and alumni sample both a snowball method and a list of potential participants obtained from the universities was employed. The researcher selected the participants who met specific criteria. To identify and select academic and student affairs professionals for the study, the researcher identified potential participants who worked directly with CCTS and who had at least two years of experience working with college students. Data was collected using a pre-interview questionnaire and individual interviews. The data was analyzed first by institution, and then followed by a cross-institutional analysis by grouping and comparing each corresponding sample group with one another.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study include a small sample size from two Catholic universities in southern California and participation in the study is limited to male Mexican American community college transfer students, male Mexican American CCT alumni, and Catholic university administrators only. As a result of the small sample, it is difficult to make generalizations and to identify patterns that can then be further explored about CCTS outside the Catholic university context and CCTS who do not self-identify as a male Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano who completed at least four-years of high school in the United States. The study does not include the perceptions of faculty at

Catholic universities about CCTS. However, this study is a point of departure for research on faculty perceptions about CCTS studying at Catholic universities. Also, an inherent bias is visible in selecting participants who were referred by an administrator because these individuals may be students who are more resourceful and seek campus resources; these individuals may not be representative of other CCTS who may not have the cultural or social capital to navigate the university.

Another limitation is the researcher's concern about her role as a graduate of a community college. She transferred from a community college to a public four-year institution in California. However, the researcher is aware of her bias; having experienced the transfer process of transitioning from one institution to another, the researcher has addressed any concerns about assuming that all CCTS' experience difficulty transitioning from the community college to a four-year institution by recognizing her bias using Peshkin's (1988) method. Peshkin's method addresses bias by identifying it and managing subjectivity. Peshkin (1988) advocates an enhanced awareness that should result from a formal systematic monitoring of self. Enhancing awareness helps the researcher avoid turning the study into an autobiographical study. Furthermore, Peshkin (1988) argues that by managing her subjectivity (or as he puts it taming one's subjectivity) through the process of collecting, analyzing, and writing, the researcher will avoid the burdensome activity of subjectivity

Definition of Terms

1. Attrition. Student departure from university or college.

2. Baby Boomers. People born in a period of increased birth rates, 1946–1964, such as those during the economic prosperity that in many countries followed World War II and who mostly represented students in Tidal Wave I.
3. Chicana/o. Individuals who identify ethnically with Mexican descent and who were either born in, or grew up, in the United States.
4. Community College Transfer Student (CCTS). A student that completed their lower-division general education course work at a two-year community college and then was accepted by a four-year institution to complete the upper division course work for a bachelor's degree.
5. California Master Plan of 1960. California's document that promises all residents access to higher education.
6. Mexican American/Mexican. Individuals who identify ethnically with Mexican descent and who were either born in, or grew up, in the United States.
7. Native Student. Students who entered the four-year institution as a freshman and are continuously enrolled.
8. New Student Orientation. An event held by universities to introduce both academic and social services to newly enrolled students. Orientation takes place usually prior to the start of the CCTs' first academic semester at the university.
9. Retention. Student persistence in institutions of higher education.
10. Reverse Transfer Student. Students enrolled at community colleges who have university-level course credit earned.

11. Student Affairs. The university organization responsible for out-of-class education of students. This organization assists students with non-academic type of issues or concerns such as residential life, club membership, etc.
12. Student Validation Theory. The theory argues that validation of students by members of the college (staff, administrators, and faculty) contributes to retention, graduation, and persistence of ethnic minority college students (Rendón, 1994).
13. Tidal Wave I. The first wave of student enrollment surge in higher education institutions occurred in 1960 when the baby boomers enrolled in college— ethnically composed mostly of White males between the ages of 18 to 22 years old.
14. Tidal Wave II. California's second wave of student enrollment surge in higher education institutions ethnically composed mostly of Hispanic/Latino and Asian students.
15. Transfer Student. Any student who has left his or her original higher education institution and has selected to study a new institution.
16. Transition. The process of a community college transfer student leaving the two-year institution for a four-year institution.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

California's community colleges and public and private universities must collaborate to address the Tidal Wave II student enrollment surge composed mostly of Hispanic/Latinos and Asian students in order to meet the educational needs of community college transfer students (CCTSs). Avoiding the issue will result in continued neglect of CCTS within public and private institutions; possible outcomes include delayed graduation and potential attrition of at-risk students. In an effort to understand community college students and their needs, a literature review was conducted which explores various articles and studies related to community colleges and its student population both at the community college, and at both public and private universities around the country.

This literature examines the profiles of today's community college student and compares it to those of earlier community college students who made up Tidal Wave I. In addition, the review explores various theories applied to non-traditional students. Those theories include theory of involvement (Astin, 1993), theory of integration (Tinto, 1997), cultural and social capital, and of course the theory of student validation (Rendón, 1994). Following that analysis is one on the transfer function and its relationship to student retention and attrition at both community colleges and universities, as well as a review of the transfer experience. The last section of the literature review is dedicated to examining successful models of student services for CCTS, followed by concluding remarks.

Community college student profiles

Community college students (CCSs) today look different from those who were part of the 1960's Tidal Wave I (CPEC 1995; CPEC, 2005b; Kan-Rice, 2000; UCOP, 2005). While the recent literature on community college students typically describes CCSs as nontraditional, the first tidal wave of community college students' was composed mostly of traditional students—White, male, and between the ages of 18 to 21 years (Bean & Metzner, 1985). Today, the literature describes the CCSs as nontraditional student (Bean & Metzner). Nontraditional is defined by scholars as those students who are economically disadvantaged, academically underprepared, first-generation in their family to attend college, and mostly from an ethnic minority group—typically from historically underrepresented groups on college campuses. In addition, today's CCS is older than the traditional student, working at least part-time while attending school, and most likely to start college at the community college. Also, Community college students are more likely to have family responsibilities and be from a lower socioeconomic background (Andero, 2000; Berger & Malaney, 2003; Carlan, 2001; Frederickson, 1998; McGrath & Spear, 1994a; Rendón & Garza, 1996; Townsend, 1995). Nontraditional students often do not possess the skills to navigate the college system, which has resulted in high levels of attrition and lower rates of transfer.

In contrast to the nontraditional college student, the literature describes the traditional student as White, between the ages of 18 to 22, academically prepared, enrolled full-time at a four-year university as a freshman, from middle- or upper-socioeconomic class, and with knowledge and skills to navigate the university (Anglin, Davis, & Mooradian, 1993; Berger & Malaney, 2003; Christie & Hutcheson, 2003;

Cohen & Brawer, 2003a; Cohen & Brawer, 2003b; Diener, 1994; Glass & Harrington, 2002; McGrath & Spear, 1994; Rendón & Garza, 1996). Studies on CCTS usually refer to students enrolled at the university since freshman year as *native* students (Anglin, Davis, & Mooradian, 1993; Best & Gehring, 1993; Carlan, 2000; Glass & Harrington, 2002; Montondon & Eiker, 1997; Thile & Matt, 1995). Unlike the nontraditional student, the traditional student is said to possess the skills and knowledge to navigate successfully through college (McGrath & Van Buskirk, 1999; Rendón & Garza, 1996; Trujillo & Diaz, 1999).

Recently, another CCTS population has emerged—reverse transfer students. Reverse transfer students (RTS) are relative newcomers to the group of CCTS. While some scholars define today's CCTS as nontraditional, other scholars include reverse transfer students—typically traditional students—in the literature on CCTS (Hagedorn & Castro, 1999; Townsend & Dever, 1999). Hagedorn and Castro define reverse transfer students as those students enrolled at the community college with previous college credit from a four-year institution. The authors provide five identifications of reverse transfer students: undergraduate, summer sessioners, concurrently enrolled, foreign diploma, and post-baccalaureate. The undergraduate reverse transfer students are those who attend the community college, but only after starting their freshman year of college at a four-year university, and transferred to a community college to complete general education (Hagedorn & Castro). The summer sessioners are those reverse transfer students who attend the community college during summer session and transfer earned credits back to their home institution (Hagedorn & Castro). The concurrently enrolled reverse transfer students are those who are concomitantly enrolled at both the community college and the

university (Hagedorn & Castro). The foreign diploma reverse transfers students are those who possess a college degree from a non-U.S. university and are enrolled at the community college (Hagedorn & Castro). Post-baccalaureate reverse transfer students are those enrolled at the community college, despite holding a master's or doctoral degrees, and are taking courses for career change or advancement, career enrichment, or technical updates (Hagedorn & Castro). While RTS experiences are important, this literature review will focus primarily on the nontraditional community college student.

To adequately prepare nontraditional students for academic success, private and public institutions must change the campus culture so that CCTS and nontraditional students experience education successfully. McGrath and Spear (1994) maintain that education needs to require more than memorizing, reciting, expressing, and opining in order for nontraditional students to succeed in college. Berger and Malaney (2003) shed light on the concerns and cautiousness of private universities about recruiting and admitting CCTS. The researchers stress that universities view of CCTS as poor academic performers who fail at the university is the reason for the low enrollment of students on private campuses. In addition, Berger and Malaney contend that community colleges are disturbed by the lack of success of CCTS after transferring and with the limited resources committed for CCTS adjustment to university life. It appears there is a great need to analyze programs at private institutions to determine which are effective for CCTS to adjust to university life. Thus, private four-year institutions must also examine inefficiencies in their student resources that do not provide adequate support for CCTS.

Some community college transfer students are academically disadvantaged by virtue of the community colleges' open-door policy; however, most CCTS receive an

outstanding general education from faculty whose primary responsibility and interest is teaching rather than research. The open-door policy has led to a significant enrollment increase of academically underprepared students. As a consequence, the community college system redefined its mission to include “remedialization” (McGrath & Spears, 1994). The open-door policy also led to an enrollment increase of minority students at the community college. Nevertheless, the transfer rates for Blacks and Hispanics decreased; this is a problem considering most community colleges enroll up to 40% Black and 50% Hispanic students (McGrath & Spears, 1994). As a result, the community college transfer function remains less effective for historically underrepresented minority groups and nontraditional students (Knoell, 1994). Those students who do transfer are said to have problems adjusting to the university environment, and may have a negative college experience; yet, several scholars have shown that CCTS perform academically as well as native university students (Best & Gehring, 1993; Berger & Malaney, 2003).

CCTS who perform poorly at the university return to the community college are also known as reverse transfer students. This might serve as an explanation for why it takes community college transfer students an average of eight years to complete a bachelor degree compared to traditional students who typically take four years to finish a college degree (Piland, 1995). The CCTS have worked too hard to return to the community college; it is vital for universities to see that CCTS remain in, and graduate from, the university. Both private and public four-year institutions benefit from having knowledge on the time frame of CCTS degree attainment to adequately provide resources for retention and graduation of CCTS.

The data show that California community college transfer students are more likely to transfer to one of the two public four-year California university systems than to a private four-year university (CPEC, 2005a). The two public university systems are University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU). In 2002–03, UC accepted a total of 12,780 CCTS, while CSU accepted a total of 50,744 (CPEC, 2005a). In 2003–04, the number of CCTS enrolled at UC and CSU dropped to 12,580 CCTS enrolled at UC and 48,317 CCTS enrolled at CSU (CPEC, 2005a). The decrease in enrollment of CCTS at UC is approximately 1.67%, and a decrease in CCTS enrollment at CSU represents a 4.78% decline. The decrease is a result of the UC and CSU systems implementing enrollment management cuts in order to stay within their enrollment target (CPEC, 2005b). This is evidence of the state’s inability to enroll all qualified applicants. As 2013 approaches, the enrollment dilemma will worsen as a consequence of Tidal Wave II.

Even though a number of California community college students do successfully move on to the four-year private university, the majority of transfer students are White. According to California Postsecondary Education Commission (2005a), in 2002 a total of 2,178 community college students transferred to California’s private independent universities. The total number and percentage of students who transferred to private institutions in 2002 by ethnicity are as follows: 52.2% were White (1,148); 21.49% were Hispanic/Latino (468); 7.9% were Asian/Pacific Islander (171); and 6.4% were Black (140).). In comparison, the total number and percentage of students who transferred to the University of California in 2002 by ethnicity are as follows: 30.78% were White (3,935); 11.97% were Hispanic/Latino (1,531); 21.11% were Asian/Pacific Islander

(2,698); and 2.16% were Black (277) (CPEC, 2007). In contrast, the total number and percentage of CCTS who transferred to the California of State University system by ethnicity are as follows: 24.41% were White (12,391); 13.67% were Hispanic/Latino (6,937); 10.14% were Asian/Pacific Islander (5,143); and 3.16% were Black (1,605) (CPEC, 2007). As the data reveal, White students represent the majority of CCTS who transferred to a California private university; they represent more than half of the total number of CCTS. White students also represented the majority of total transfer students to both the UC System and CSU system in 2002. If private universities do not serve as part of the solution, the transfer rate gap will continue to widen between White and Hispanic/Latino students. This could mean that less Hispanic/Latino students will achieve a college education, and it is a risk the state's economy cannot afford. For the sake of the community, it is imperative for private institutions to accept more CCTS, CCTS that reflect the state's demographics to persist in college.

Student validation theory, involvement and integration theory, and cultural capital

Although scholars have examined the attrition and retention rates of both nontraditional and traditional students, some argue that earlier landmark research on student persistence erroneously applied four-year university models of attrition and retention to community college transfer students and nontraditional students (Berger & Milem, 1999; Perrakis, 2003; Rendón & Garza, 1996). More specifically, scholars argue that these earlier models were based on students in predominantly White college campuses and then applied to ethnic minority and historically underrepresented students of color (Berger & Milem). One of these models is Astin's theory of involvement, which suggests that certain student involvement factors contribute to student persistence in, and

departure from, college (Berger & Milem). Astin examined student involvement in a longitudinal study of student persistence (Astin, 1975 as cited in Berger & Milem). Student involvement entails the actions and behaviors the student takes in engaging on campus activities. Astin argues that the more involved the student is on campus, the more likely the student will persist in college—leading to graduation. On the other hand, Astin contends that the less involved the student is on campus, the more likely the student is to depart from college. Astin (1993) notes that student involvement with faculty, academics, and student peers is positively correlated with persistence. Factors that have a negative affect on student persistence include forms of involvement that isolate the student from his peers and activities off campus, such as living at home, commuting, being employed off campus, being employed full-time, and watching television (Astin, 1993). Thus, students must engage more in on-campus activities and less in off-campus activities.

Tinto's theory of integration is the other model on student persistence and attrition that researchers mistakenly apply to nontraditional students. Tinto's (1997) theory of integration posits that students will persist academically when they become socially and academically integrated into the fabric of the institution; as a result, the student will avoid alienation, which leads to college departure (Perrakis, 2003). A student experiencing alienation as a result of poor integration may fail to attend classes, study less, and question her academic potential (Perrakis). Perrakis argues that the danger in applying Tinto's model as the actual basis of retention is that researchers assume that the processes involved in nontraditional and traditional student retention are similar when in fact they are not; differences in gender, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, educational background, and institution play an important role in the retention process. Scholars

argue that the problem inherent in the theory of involvement and theory of integration is that the individual is solely responsible for integrating and getting involved in institutional life. As a result of incorrectly applying traditional models of retention to nontraditional student population the opposite effect of what was intended could occur—an increase in student departure.

Student validation plays an important role in student persistence and graduation rates. Rendón and Garza (1996) contend that minority students will persist if institutions engage in practicing forms of student validation. Student validation involves interaction between student and faculty, student and staff, and student and administration. Validation influences the quality of students' college experience such as with academics; researchers link academic performance of the first semester in college to validation (Rendón, 1993a; Rendón, 1993b; Rendón, 1994; Rendón, 1995a; Rendón, 1995b; Rendón, 2000; Rendón & Garza, 1996; Rendón & Jalomo, 1995a; Rendón & Jalomo, 1995b; Rendón, Jalomo, & Nora, n.d.). Community college students, specifically those who are first-generation college students and ethnic minority, are in the greatest need of validation (Rendón, 1993a; Rendón, 1993b; Rendón, 1994; Rendón, 1995a; Rendón, 1995b; Rendón, 2000; Rendón & Garza, 1996; Rendón & Jalomo, 1995a; Rendón & Jalomo, 1995b; Rendón, Jalomo, & Nora, n.; Perrakis, 2003). Rendón (1994) defines validation as something other than getting involved in the campus activities or becoming socially and academically integrated with the campus life; validation is “active intervention from an in- or out-of-class agent who lends a helping hand or who initiates an action that affirms students as being capable of learning” (p. 294). In-class validation activities include a nurturing faculty who calls students by name and who creates academic experiences that

motivate students to succeed while helping the student believe in their natural ability to succeed in college by earning a degree. Out-of-class validation activities involve validation by family and friends through encouragement or role modeling (Rendón & Garza, 1996).

Scholars argue that although individual, psychological, and institutional factors affect all students, they impact minority students more because minority students lack the socialization to recognize transfer opportunities to pursue (Rendón, Justiz, & Resta, 1988, as cited in Rendón & Garza, 1996). Nontraditional students are exposed less often and for less time to primary agents of socialization, such as faculty and peers, than traditional students (Bean & Metzger, 1985 as cited in Berger & Malaney, 2003). Therefore, retention is influenced by individual, psychological, and institutional factors (Rendón & Garza). Students who face economic barriers, unemployment, and poor preparation in high school need more attention from institutions. Programs need to be accessible and effective for CCTS who face challenges. Administrators also need to consider that students may need assistance on improving good study habits and setting specific student goals, for example. Helping students to identify clear educational goals is imperative for retention; students will commit to education when they recognize that these goals are achievable (Suarez, 2004).

Developing a culture where students feel comfortable seeking help academically is an important aspect of retention. Students need to know that these services are available, and that the people running these programs are approachable. Students need to connect with the course curriculum as well as with the professors to remain in college. Professors can connect with students by incorporating effective teaching methods,

holding the student accountable for class attendance, and serving as role models. For minority students, having more minority faculty will increase retention; they need to see that members of their own cultural group have succeeded, and that they too can succeed academically. In addition, administrators need to move away from over reliance on students' initiation to getting involved in social and academic activities; a direction to consider is incorporating programs where students and faculty can engage effectively in social and academic settings (Rendón & Garza, 1996). By focusing on the methods that work for increasing retention, negative psychological factors such as anxiety, self-doubt, cultural separation, and low self-esteem will subside.

Cultural capital is attributed to the difference in attrition and retention rates between economically disadvantaged students and traditional student; CCTS may not have the cultural capital to navigate through the four-year university as smoothly as traditional students (Perrakis, 2003). Cultural capital is defined by McDonough (1997, as cited in Berger 2000):

Cultural capital is a symbolic, rather than material, resource. It has no intrinsic value, other than the ways in which it can be converted, manipulated, and invested in order to secure other highly valued and scarce resources, including economic capital (McDonough, 1997). Moreover, it is a type of knowledge that members of the upper class value but is not taught in schools. (p. 98)

Thus, if cultural capital is a resource primarily associated with the upper class, then it is imperative for educational institutions to create programs for students from a lower economic status to learn how to navigate college and society as successfully as their upper class peers.

In addition to cultural capital, other scholars examine social capital and how it promotes success and transfer among a diverse student population (Trujillo & Diaz,

1999). Trujillo and Diaz define social capital as the quality of relationships established between students and faculty and staff; social capital facilitates positive educational experiences and contributes to transfer and retention. Community colleges that encourage the development of social capital are successful because they employ a transformational function in nurturing a sense of community and cohesion. Vital to student success is community colleges' role, and other educational institutions, to contribute toward helping students build the confidence and academic skills needed for further achievement (McGrath & Van Buskirk, 1999). McGrath and Van Buskirk maintain that higher education can significantly contribute to retention through social capital; they stress that merely offering opportunities for involvement is not enough. Institutional programs need to encourage development of social and emotional capital in order to transform students' images of the future from negative to positive through engagement, positive appraisals of well being, inclusiveness, and advocacy. Community colleges can provide a supportive and nurturing environment and culture where students express feelings of belonging as a result of genuine treatment by the college's staff and faculty (Trujillo & Diaz), but this type of environment must be actively and consistently cultivated by all members of the campus community.

The transfer function and its relationship to retention and attrition

The transfer rate is determined by the effectiveness of the transfer function. The transfer function consists of services provided by admissions and articulation. While admissions consist of outreach to prospective students, advising and counseling, new student orientation, and student financial aid, articulation involves the colleges' actions in aligning courses and programs offered at the community college with courses offered at

the university in order to minimize duplication, overlap, and loss of time and credit by students as they move from the community college to the four-year university (Johnson, Mekis, & Noseworthy, 2005; Knoell, 1994).

The transfer function is less effective for historically underrepresented minority groups at community colleges (Anglin, Davis, & Mooradian, 1993; Eaton, 1994; Odell & Mock, 1989 as cited in Knoell, 1994; Suarez, 2003; Shulock & Moore, 2003), and serves as an explanation for the university underrepresentation among certain ethnic groups, such as Hispanics/Latinos (Harrell & Forney, 2003). Suarez contends that the transfer function needs to be a shared responsibility between academic affairs and student services in order to contribute to the successful transfer of Hispanic/Latino students. Anglin et al. suggest the importance of early advising programs is to familiarize students with requirements for admission and transfer of courses. Thus, transfer ineffectiveness is linked to the incongruence between programs and services and nontraditional students at the community college, which requires a closer examination of program effectiveness and collaborations between the colleges' stakeholders in order to improve transfer rates for historically underrepresented and at-risk college students (Eaton, 1994; Eggleston & Lanaan, 2001; McGrath & Van Buskirk, 1999).

The decrease in the transfer function emphasis in community colleges, one of the many missions of the community college system, has been attributed to an overall decline in transfer rates. Community colleges have, in recent decades, increased their focus on vocational and remedial education and reduced the focus on the transfer education (Clark, 1994; Cohen & Brawer, 2003a; Cohen & Brawer, 2003b; Diener, 1994; Gleazer, 1994; McGrath & Spears, 1994; Ratcliff, 1994). Clark argues that in the 1970s community

colleges promoted the *cooling out function*—a method to track students out from the transfer education program to a vocational program; examples include counselors “rechanneling” low achieving students to other programs like vocational and remedial programs. The cooling out function cost students the opportunity of social mobility and higher paying jobs, attainment of bachelor degree, attending good schools and benefiting from networking connections for job attainment—a benefit of attending good schools (Adelman, 1994; Trujillo & Diaz, 1999). In San Antonio, Texas, Palo Alto College’s emphasis was on vocational education, which placed Mexican Americans and other students from blue-collar families on the vocational track rather than transfer track, costing many the opportunities to advance professionally and economically. As a result, the cooling out function—tracking into vocational programs—costs many minorities social and economic opportunities.

The quality of transfer services and information a community college student receives play an important role in degree attainment and transfer rates. Many scholars have examined potential obstacles hindering transfer and retention of community college students (Berger & Malaney, 2003; Davis & Kratky, 2000; Hurtado, et al., 1994; Rendón & Garza, 1996; Shulock & Moore, 2003; Suarez, 2003; Townsend, 1995; Trujillo & Diaz, 1999; Welsh & Kjørlien, 2001). Other scholars stress that to help community college students transfer, institutions need to be more aware of and better able to serve students in successfully transferring from the community college to the university (Berger & Malaney). Trujillo & Diaz maintain that the relationships developed by students, faculty, and staff are an important form of civic engagement in the educational process; the quality of these relationships contributes to helping students overcome

educational obstacles and barriers, thus succeeding academically and eventually transferring to a four-year institution. Suarez argues that in addition to individual factors, institutional and environmental factors contribute to the successful transfer of Latino students to the university. Some of the institutional factors include validation, community college flexibility, and role models. Welsh and Kjorlien maintain that states have the tools and information to positively impact transfer students to pursue and achieve their educational goals but note that there is a disconnection between the collection and the use of data on transfer students in shaping public policy.

Critical to the transfer function are the articulation agreements between community colleges and four-year universities. Articulation involves efforts between the community colleges and four-year universities to align courses and programs in order to minimize duplication, overlap, and loss of time and credit by students as they transfer from the community college to the four-year university. The alignment of courses and the agreement between community colleges and universities is the articulation agreement, which communicates the understanding that students who take these courses will receive course credit at the university upon transfer; in other words CCTS will not lose time in graduating as a result of courses not being accepted (Cohen & Brawer, 2003b; Eggleston & Laanan, 2001; McGrath & Spear, 1994; Shulock & Moore, 2003). Establishing effective articulation agreements is imperative in increasing transfer rates.

The transfer curriculum is a vital part of the transfer function's effectiveness. Cohen and Brawer (2003b) maintain the long-lived issue of the transfer curriculum is the acceptance of articulation agreements, interinstitutional standing committee, and policy statements. McGrath and Spears (1994) argue that the function of articulation was a key

factor of the university parallel program and made the transfer process efficient for CCTS. Eaton (1994) states that the commitment of community colleges to the transfer function was evident in the availability of academic course work, the mission statement, and college catalogs, in transfer enrollment, and in the actions of community college and university leaders'. In the 1940s, transfer function problems resulted as a result in lack of management of articulation agreements between institutions—both informal and formal, which attributed to a decrease in transfer rates. Institutions must consistently evaluate institutional effectiveness of transfer schools as well as their commitment to community college transfer students. Most importantly, institutions must consistently track students to the point of baccalaureate degree attainment to determine student success.

The quality of the relationship between junior and senior universities affects the articulation function, thus impacting student transfer, attrition, and retention. Prager (1994) examined the articulation function of community college system, and how its relationships to other institutions, including senior institutions, are affected. Prager found that the essential relationships between community colleges and senior institutions have weakened, and noted four patterns of statewide articulation patterns: (a) voluntary interinstitutional or intersegmental agreements, (b) constitutionally or legislatively mandated, (c) policies that localize responsibility for transfer within a system governance unit focusing upon student services, and (d) vocational–technical education in states with two-year public technical institutes or with other postsecondary vocational–technical education institutes. An example of the decline of an essential relationship between the community colleges and four-year universities is believed to be a result of the increase in demand for vocational training. The community colleges have instead increased the

number of relationships they have with business and industry leaders to meet this demand, but at the cost of decreasing the number of relationships with four-year universities (Eaton, 1994). Rendón and Garza (1996) attribute poor relationships with feeder schools as a contributing factor to low transfer rates. Establishing relationships with receiving institutions and using other means of strengthening institutional relationships is vital to ensure transfer students' success at the four-year university after transfer.

In order to place more CCTS at four-year institutions, community colleges must provide services to retain students and to identify students' transfer goals early in their academic career. Nora (1990, as cited in Rendón & Garza, 1996) contends that student retention of Hispanic community college students is linked to the students' commitment to educational goals and to attendance at preferred institution. Maukauakane-Drechsel and Hagedorn (2000) maintain that student persistence, transfer, and graduation will increase once community colleges and other higher education institutions create programs and services for ethnic minorities—in their case aboriginal-descent, Native Hawaiian students at the community college.

Programming should be tailored to address the multiple responsibilities of the nontraditional student. For example, Suarez (2003) noted that community colleges recognized the low transfer rates of minority students who had family responsibilities and work, and thus, organized activities to facilitate an increase in transfer; unfortunately, the student participation was low, probably as a result of the additional responsibilities nontraditional students have that traditional students do not. Perrakis (2003) argues that if colleges and universities want to see increased learning interest and retention of

nontraditional, specifically racial minority students, institutions must involve them both academically and socially in the fabric of institutional life—without forcing integration and assimilation—by validating racial minority students' presence on campus. In addition, rendering adequate services for minorities requires an understanding of the different learning styles of nontraditional students (McPhail, 2003). Hence, institutions must be creative in the development of programs and services for ethnic minority students and must also understand factors that influence, or deter, minority student persistence.

Nontraditional students also need role models—such as faculty members of color—for retention and successful transfer to the four-year university (Hope & Rendón, 1996; Opp & Smith, 1994; Suarez, 2003; Trujillo & Diaz, 1999). Harrell and Forney (2003) argue that in order for first-generation college students to remain enrolled in college, they need mentors and role models to help navigate their way through higher education systems. Institutions need to diversify college campuses; diversifying campus benefits everyone economically and socially, locally and globally, and it contributes to retention (Harrell & Forney). Moreover, scholars contend that it is particularly important for community colleges to increase the representation of ethnic minorities among full-time faculty in order to mirror the increasing number of minority students and to serve as role models (Opp & Smith). Opp and Smith conducted a quantitative study using survey of 1,293 vice presidents of academic affairs at community colleges. They found that the African Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians are significantly underrepresented in higher education as full-time faculty members compared to their proportional representation of these groups in the U.S. population. The study provides confirmation

that having minorities in visible positions of leadership assists the recruitment of minority faculty.

Opp and Smith (1994) contend that as the number of minority college students increases, finding methods of recruiting and retaining minority college students is becoming an ever-growing issue for higher education. Opp and Smith argue that one solution is to significantly increase the presence of minority full-time faculty. Piland, Hess, and Piland (2000) argue that it is crucial for community college leaders and professors to reflect multiculturalism for students to connect with the institution and their students; students feel a connection when professors incorporate in the curriculum examples and role models of people with whom the students identify (Harbour, Middleton, Lewis, & Anderson, 2003). Rendón and Garza (1996) found institutional factors that influence attrition of nontraditional students include having few minority faculty members on college campuses, a curriculum that ignores multicultural perspectives, and inadequate academic or student services, among other factors. Thus, community college and university administrators need to increase visibility of minority faculty and encourage faculty to employ a multicultural curriculum, which can promote retention of minority community college students.

The absence of receiving institutional commitment to community college transfer students is not only questioned by scholars; but it is related to the low rate of degree completion among CCTS (Anglin, Davis, & Mooradian, 1993; Townsend, 1995). Townsend contends that to increase and retain CCTS, university administrators need to pay closer attention to their academic program and create a teaching–learning environment conducive to community college transfer students. Anglin, et. al (1993)

suggest that high levels of attrition of CCTS at the four-year university is an indicator of student support services are organized for traditional student at senior institutions; nontraditional CCTS do not conform to traditional student support service practices.

Private universities must consider increasing enrollment of CCTS based on recent studies on CCTS academic success at four-year institutions as well as on the CCTS' contribution—academically and socially—to the overall college experiences of students. Several studies show that CCTS are academically prepared to cope with university academic work (Anglin, et al, 1993; Best & Gehring, 1993; Christie & Hutcheson, 2003; Snell & Makies, 1993). Townsend (1995) found that the CCTS who succeed at the university are self-reliant and able to survive with little institution assistance as demonstrated via the transfer process and upon initial entry to the university. CCTS turn to friends and family members who succeeded with the transfer process and at the university. Catholic universities can provide enrolled CCTS with tools and skills to help incoming CCTS adjust to university life. Catholic universities could also utilize the help of family members by developing on-campus activities that involve the family of CCTS. Catholic universities must take strategic steps in developing programs based on knowledge that former and existing CCTS and family members positively influence the college experience of CCTS. Hence, increasing enrollment of CCTS is vital; a contribution of CCTS is serving as mentors to future incoming CCTS.

Institution type and students' perceptions of these institutions

There are several notable differences between California public and private four-year universities that affect CCTS' decision to attend a public university over the private universities. Bowen (1994) argues that the cost of attending college varies by university

(as cited in Brenemen & Nelson, 1994). Private university tuition is significantly higher, which draws students from affluent families who can afford the tuition, and discourages students from lower socioeconomic status. Cleary and Logue (2004) discuss California's current budget dilemma and its effects on the enrollment of financially disadvantaged students at private institutions. The authors argue that increasing the cost of attending college deters academically qualified students from low- and middle-income families. As the 2003–04 CCTS transfer rates reflect (CPEC, 2005a), almost 50,000 CCTS enrolled at California's CSU public university system to complete upper division course work; the CSU system is more affordable than private universities and the UC system. However, the UC is also relatively more affordable than private universities as a result of the state subsidizing a significant amount of the real cost to attend college. Private universities do not rely on the state financially to stay in business, and thus must pass the expense burden on to students and parents.

California public universities are legally bound by the Master Plan of education, while private institutions are not; however, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) exists between the California Community College system and the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) to increase CCTS enrollment at private institutions. As of June 2005, the California Community College Chancellor's Office is working with AICCU on adding four more private universities to the association (CPEC, 2005b). They propose that CCTS enrollment will increase from the current enrollment of 5,000 CCTS to an additional 20,000 CCTS at in-state and out-of state private universities (CPEC, 2005b). While the effort is noteworthy in their attempt to address the Tidal Wave II student enrollment surge, the total number of CCTS who

complete four-year degrees will prove the MOU's effectiveness. Increasing CCTS enrollment is not enough to solve California's higher education problem; it is imperative for private universities to also provide adequate student services in order for CCTS to graduate.

While private universities exercise autonomy, the Master Plan of Education outlines California's three-tier public higher education systems. While the UC and CSU systems have authority over establishing the enrollment criteria, the Master Plan does establish enrollment limitations for both systems. The UC system is to enroll the top 1/8 of qualified applicants, and the CSU system is to enroll the top 1/3 of qualified applicants. The Master Plan grants the community colleges an open-door policy. In 2003–04, both CSU and UC implemented enrollment cuts. Qualified students were denied admission, and as a result, began their freshman year at the community college. An implication of denying admission to qualified students is that they may feel resentment toward, and distrust, the higher education system for not rewarding them with admission to a four-year university; students may perceive their hard work they made in high school as not worth the time and effort. The implications may be worse for nontraditional students who trusted a process they were unfamiliar with, but pursued the process as a result of advice from counselors and teachers on obtaining admissions to a university. Denying admissions will lead traditional and nontraditional students to question their academic ability as well as the worthiness of university-bound track system; and a result is that they may not enroll at the community college either.

While most traditional higher education campuses are predominantly White, California's public universities tend to enroll more people of color; private independent

religious institutions' diversity is minimal (CPEC, 2005a; CPEC, 2007). While public universities do not have any affiliation with religion, in comparison, some private universities have a religious affiliation in which they promote peace, justice, spirituality, and students and staff may openly speak about Jesus Christ and pray, for example. Promoting peace, justice, and spirituality entails creating opportunities for non-violent interactions between people of different races, cultures, religions, gender, and sexual orientation; this involves diverse people understanding and getting along with one another. Catholic universities must increase the diversity of their campus to reflect a truly diverse student population and faculty. In contrast, other private institutions are for-profit and do not promote peace, justice, and spirituality. For-profit private universities may be more driven by the bottom line rather than the academic development of its students. For nontraditional and students of color who lack the skills to navigate college and to raise critical questions, they may be at a disadvantage when attending for-profit private institutions. Thus it is imperative for Catholic universities to diversify their college campuses to reflect the community.

The CCTS' perceptions about four-year universities vary by the type of institution—public or private. Townsend (1995) conducted a study that focused on the perceptions of a group of community college transfer students about the transfer process and the academic environment at a private university. She found that most students perceived the academic standards as more difficult at the university than at the community college, with some stating the standards were the same. Students commented that university faculty required more writing for assignments and tests than did the community college faculty. Most of the students felt the university faculty was more

available for questions and outside class consultation, while two of the students perceived the community college faculty as more available. CCTS held mixed perceptions about the university faculty's willingness to help students; some students experienced negative class incidents with professors. They found that the university atmosphere was competitive and students were reluctant to help one another. Several students indicated that the university teaching process was more effective for them due to the faculty's greater enthusiasm, fast pace of the classes, and emphasis on critical thinking.

Researchers found that CCTS almost unanimously perceived the university's student body as "so white" (Berger & Milem, 1999). Berger and Milem found in a longitudinal study on student role of involvement at private universities that African American students, who entered the university with strong levels of institutional commitment, were less likely to perceive the institution as being supportive and less likely to persist. Hurtado, et al. (1994) maintains that studies have shown that Latino students are more likely to have a negative perception of the campus climate than white students; and Hispanic/Latino students are more likely to perceive ethnic or racial tension in environments where they do not feel valued by the institutions' administration and faculty. The researchers also found that Hispanic/Latino students adjusted well in their second year at university campuses where they perceived the faculty and administration to be student-centered.

College campuses that deliver student-centered transfer services validate the presence of CCTS on campus. Clayton (2001) found various perceptions students held about three types of higher education institutions. Using a pre-project survey of 67 CCTS, students felt that the four-year private universities were the least affordable, give

the most student attention, enroll the greatest number of students who are academically prepared for college, enroll students with the least tolerance toward differences and openness to new ideas, have the fewest student behavior problems, and enroll students with the most positive attitude toward learning.

It is important for administrators to create a college campus environment that is inclusive of ethnic minorities. Mack, Tucker, and Cha (2000) found that African American and Latinos perceived the four-year university campus environment as less supportive and welcoming for ethnic groups. The authors stress for administration to provide students who perceive racism and discrimination on campus with tools to address these issue and to reduce the impact of these negative factor on their academic, social, and emotional adjustment. Thus, administrators need to pay closer attention to student perceptions and beliefs about racism on college campuses; these perceptions play a significant role on student retention and persistence.

Transfer Experience

The transfer experience of community college students encompasses the CCTS' experience with the transfer process at the community college as well as at the university. Positive experiences of CCTS at all three stages are vital for degree attainment. In a study on pre-transfer student services, Davis and Kratky (2000) examined the effectiveness of community college transfer programs in Colorado and Wyoming, and found that the students who participated in the program felt satisfied with the services provided by the center. These students ultimately transferred to a four-year university. The students attributed their overall positive experience with the transfer process to the program; the program assistance alleviated the stress of the transfer process. The services the center

delivered lead to the successful transfer of community colleges; services included completing the application for transfer, advising, orientation, and peer mentoring.

While CCTS may have similarities based on their nontraditional student status, college experiences vary. Davies and Casey (1999) conducted a study of eleven focus groups consisting of six CCTS to examine the experiences of CCTS at the community college and university. Davies and Casey found, when comparing the experiences of CCTS at the community college and university, that their experiences were more different than similar. They also found that students based their satisfaction and dissatisfaction with their experiences with individual attention and level of interaction with faculty and staff, the quality of the teaching–learning experience, and the level of difficulty in the course work. In addition, students had different views of their social experiences at both institutions. Davies and Casey conclude that the students' need for more of strong support systems and financial resources, social and institutional resources all contributed to, or detracted from, a good college experience.

Scholars note specific factors that contribute to an overall positive experience of CCTS at the university. Using a telephone survey, Berger and Malaney (2003) examined 372 CCTS' adjustment to life at a four-year university in Massachusetts and how pre-transfer experience and preparation, and post-transfer experiences influenced this adjustment. The study yielded several findings revealing differences in the levels of student involvement while at the community college and at the university. Berger and Malaney's findings include factors that contribute to a positive satisfaction with university experiences of CCTS. Some of the factors that correlated positively to satisfactory college experiences include White students, having knowledge of graduation

requirements prior to transferring, receipt of transfer advice from faculty or staff members, living in on-campus housing, and employing high levels of social engagement with peers. As Trujillo and Diaz (1999) and Rendón and Garza (1996) reported, Berger and Malaney found that CCTS' experience positive college and university experience by engaging with peers, faculty and staff; a sense of validation is accomplished. In addition to the validation the students received, Berger and Malaney also found three predictors of satisfaction with sense of community on campus: knowing graduating requirements prior to transferring, socializing with peers at the university, and working on-campus at the university. Perrakis (2000) found, using reflective essays, that students experience the community college positively when they perceive the staff and administration as caring for the academic success of its students, helping students, and providing individualized and personal attention.

Researchers also suggest that CCTS with family and work responsibilities encounter a difficult time adjusting to university life, at the cost of experiencing an overall positive college experience. Cameron (2004) found that CCTS in a nursing program who had family dependents experienced difficulty adjusting to university life. Berger and Malaney (2003) contend that having family commitments and spending more time with family contributed to lower satisfaction with university social life. Other factors that predicted negative levels of overall satisfaction with the university experience include CCTS who prior to transferring, spent more time doing homework or studying, and after transferring, worked off-campus hours while students at the university (Berger & Malaney). Research shows that satisfaction with university social life is correlated to the extent to which students felt prepared to transfer and higher levels of socializing with

peers at the university (Berger & Malaney). Thus, to enjoy a positive university experience, students need to have a balance between social and academic activities; doing too much of one activity will jeopardize academics.

Several factors influence satisfaction with academic support. Data support that the amount of time students spend doing homework and studying while at the community college contributes to a student satisfied with academic support (Berger & Malaney, 2003). Also, the authors found that students are satisfied with academic support if they self-perceive that they have adequate level of preparation for transfer. Students are also likely to be satisfied with academic support with the more knowledge they have about university graduation requirements. Educators, from both the community colleges and universities, can make an impact on community college transfer students' successful transition and university experience (Berger & Malaney). Thus, transfer programs and receiving institutions can positively contribute to students' academic experience with knowledge about factors that contribute to student satisfaction with academic support.

Researchers have found that community college students who successfully transfer to a four-year university experience a drop in grade point average (GPA) as a result of the transition and adjustment to a new campus. This phenomenon is referred to by scholars as *transfer shock* and is attributed to the shock of transferring to a new institution (Carlan & Byxbe, 2000; Cedja, 1997; Cedja & Kaylor, 1997; Glass & Harrington, 2002). Some attribute the transfer shock as a result of studying at the community college where instructors are more nurturing and protective of students than at a larger institution where faculty may not have the time to provide students with individualized attention; however, without experiences nurturing and protective

treatment, CCTS may not have transferred (Carlan & Byxbe). Although university faculty's time for students is limited due to conducting research, one way of exercising nurturing and protective treatment to CCTS is to recruit CCTS to be teachers' assistants (TAs). Both the student and faculty will benefit from establishing a TA-professor relationship.

Although CCTS experience a decrease in GPA, research exists that suggests that CCTS have the potential to succeed—in spite of the transfer shock. Cedja and Kaylor (1997) examined the transfer shock phenomenon experienced by 216 CCTS at private liberal arts colleges, and found that CCTS experienced a GPA mean drop of 0.09%. However, they stress that while the CCTS experienced a GPA drop, there is still evidence to suggest that CCTS have the capability to succeed at private liberal colleges. While a drop in GPA is an indicator of impaired acclimation to the university campus, administrators need to consider other factors that contribute to transfer shock.

CCTS' drop in GPA may be linked to specific academic majors CCTS choose. Cedja (1997) investigated whether the transfer shock experienced by a total sample of 100 participants accurately represents the academic performances of discipline based groups within the same sample. Cedja found that CCTS transferring into particular majors such as education, fine arts and humanities, and the social sciences majors experienced an increase in GPA after transfer; a phenomenon known as *transfer ecstasy*. Moreover, the research found that CCTS who experienced transfer shock did not accurately reflect the academic performances by the total sample in the study in the respective discipline-based groups (Cedja). However, CCTS who transferred into business, mathematics, and sciences majors experienced higher levels of transfer shock

when comparing the GPA decline to the total sample. Thus, administrators must pay closer attention to CCTS in these majors; taking no action may result in college departure.

CCTS who experienced transfer shock may still perform as well as, or better, than native students. Carlan and Byxbe (2000) conducted a study on whether the grades of CCTS in upper division course work were lower than those of native students using a sample size of 487 transfer students and 230 native students. The authors were investigating whether grades would serve to determine whether it is due to initial environmental shock or ineffective preparation. Carlan and Byxbe found that there is rarely a difference between the overall grades of native and transfer students in upper level course work following a bumpy first semester. Further studies are required in order to determine other factors such as age that contribute to academic performance.

Older CCTS perform better than younger native students. Carlan (2001) found that adult students in similar academic settings outperform younger students across all majors. The researcher also found the community college GPA and credit hours are good predictors of academic success of adult learners. However, some studies found data to support the possibility of grade inflation by community college faculty when examining grades of freshman and sophomore courses at both the community college and four-year universities (Carlan & Byxbe, 2000). Carlan and Byxbe found data that show no significant GPA differences between the cumulative upper division GPA of CCTS and native students. Carlan and Byxbe contend that CCTS who earn fine grades at the community college appear to be well-prepared academically for upper division coursework, except for those students entering business and science disciplines. These

data suggest the possibility of incongruence between community colleges' business programs and the university's business programs. Glass & Harrington (2002) also note that CCTS lower division work at the community college was not significantly different from the mean semester GPA of native students; transfer students do just as well and on occasion, better than native students. However, CCTS who experience a drop in GPA recovered from the transfer shock in the next semester. While some CCTS experience transfer shock, they recover after the first semester. But for those students who may not recover in their second semester, it becomes crucial for receiving institutions to help CCTS adjust to university life before the start of the fall semester at the university.

Additionally, the incongruence between institution and student contributes to attrition. Berger and Malaney (2003) argue that although most studies focus on the academic achievement as an indicator of how well CCTS have acclimated to the university life, adjustment to college life involves more than academic performance. Acclimating to the campus environment involves a wide range of academic and social interactions. Berger and Malaney contend that outcomes must be considered in a comprehensive view of the college adjustment process. In order to fully understand how well transfer students adjust to the four-year university, it is essential to consider how well students adjust to and fit in with the social and academic environments of the campus (Berger & Malaney).

A correlation exists between academic and social integration. Borglum and Kumala (2000) conducted a study on student withdrawal rates in an effort to assist community colleges in retaining students and to help them realize their educational goals. Borglum and Kumala found that there was a correlation between academic and social

integration in a study of 462 community college students in Orlando, Florida. The students' background skills at point of entry into the community college had a strong correlation with the number of withdrawals. Rendón and Garza (1996) argue that for ethnic minority students, integrating socially and academically to the college as means of surviving college is difficult when having to juggle two separate set of identities, and as a result they face issues of identity that make it difficult to transition from community college to the university. It is imperative for administrators and educators consider the cultural backgrounds of students and how it helps or inhibits ethnic minorities' adjustment to campus life at the university.

Model of Student Services for CCTS

While private universities typically have limited student support services for CCTS, public universities have implemented programs and services that contribute to the CCTS overall college experience and graduation; programs that Catholic universities need to develop similarly. University of California Los Angeles' Transfer Summer Program (TSP) is a model that facilitates CCTS transition to university life (Ackerman, 1989). Another program is the UCLA's Transfer Center. Both programs can serve as effective models that provide adequate services and resources for CCTS academic success and a positive college experience.

UCLA's TSP has proven to be effective in helping CCTS encounter the transfer experience positively (Ackerman, 1989). The program is designed to raise the academic achievement, retention, and graduation rates of underrepresented and low-income students. The goal of the program is to ease transfer students' transition from community

college to UCLA. TSP is based out of UCLA's Education Opportunity Program (EOP), known as the Academic Advancement Program (AAP).

The Transfer Summer Program assists students to become socially and academically acclimated to the university. A group of about 50–75 CCTS, who transfer from a California community college, begin their studies at UCLA during summer rather than the fall semester. The idea is to help the student to adapt and adjust to a larger campus environment. The summer is strategically used to prepare CCTS before the start of the fall semester—the semester in which it has been shown that CCTS experience transfer shock (Carlan, 2001). In addition, TSP provides CCTS with scholarships and grants to cover the cost of attending TSP.

The TSP program helps community college transfer students to overcome, or avoid, the first-semester transfer shock. For example, CCTS live in a dormitory for six weeks with other CCTS on campus. CCTS share an assigned room with another TSP for six weeks. Socially, students develop friendships with other CCTS. Because of the nontraditional status of the students, connecting with one another is easier and convenient considering the living arrangements; CCTS may have more in common with one another as transfer students and first-generation college students. To meet academic needs, TSP provides students with academic counselors to help with the planning of academic year, and to help the CCTS deal with the transition from community college to UCLA.

Enrollment in summer courses provides students with opportunities to navigate the campus' academic resources. TSP students take two on-campus summer classes, five days a week for six weeks; the courses include a film class and an English class. CCTS are grouped into two cohorts as learning communities and they take the English class

separately. By noon, students return to the dormitory to have lunch, and return back to campus around 1:30 p.m. All CCTS in the TSP program return to an auditorium to watch an independent international film on social issues. After the movie, the students engage in dialogue with the professor about the film. The students depart back to the dormitory for dinner and to complete homework. The CCTS find the TSP experience enriching.

By the start of the fall semester, students have the social and cultural capital to steer through the campus, socially and academically; as a result CCTS navigate the campus as easy as native students. An example of social capital is the friendships CCTS establish with other CCTS, friendships that will potentially last throughout their entire university experience. An example of TSP facilitating cultural capital is that CCTS are given the experience to experience the university academic workload, and learn how to access academic resources. In addition, students have established a network of UCLA students to help get through the transfer transition process. Thus, CCTS transition smoothly into academics and the campus culture as a result of forming relationships with other CCTS, experiencing university courses, earning university credit, and knowing the academic resources.

While the program's longevity proves TSP effectiveness, the success of the program for CCTS is evident in their transition into university life. Ackerman (1989) conducted a longitudinal study on the effectiveness of the TSP program and found that 94% of TSP students from the 1989 cohort who participated in the study continued at UCLA through spring 1989. The demographics of the 75 CCTS who participated in the 1989 TSP cohort was composed of traditionally underrepresented minority students. A majority of these students attended UCLA while maintaining work and family

responsibilities (Ackerman). The 1989 TSP cohort of students were 52% female and 48% male, with an ethnic breakdown of 36% Chicano, 36% Black, 20% Latino, and 8% Filipino. In fall 1988, 56% of the students worked part-time on campus, while 41% worked off campus. In addition, 74% of the TSP students had family responsibilities to fulfill, in addition to completing the Transfer Summer Program.

The services for CCTS at UCLA continue beyond the TSP program. UCLA has established a Transfer Student Center within the AAP Center. The main goal of the Transfer Student Center is to increase retention and graduation rates of historically underrepresented transfer students at UCLA. In addition, a goal of the Transfer Student Center is to help AAP transfer students to explore academic talents and abilities, improve their perception about their own ability to succeed academically, and set the highest academic standards. The Transfer Student Center also facilitates opportunities for CCTS to create a network of community college transfer students on campus. Other services offered are resources on the Center's website, mentoring, tutoring, workshops, and counseling services for new and existing transfer students.

The Transfer Student Center provides CCTS with peer counselors and AAP counselors to help gain knowledge of other campus programs and departments. Counselors and peer counselors help CCTS persist through college and toward degree attainment and cultivate a culture where CCTS begin planning for graduate studies. In addition, internships, undergraduate research, and scholarship opportunities are available to AAP Transfer Students, opportunities that will enrich their overall university experience.

The resources provided by UCLA's Transfer Summer Program and the Transfer Student Center are both comprehensive and specifically for CCTS. The program's services help to improve retention and address any attrition factors that may be facing CCTS. Any university, specifically Catholic universities, that enroll CCTS must develop and implement similar programs on their campus. To make an impact on CCTS degree attainment, Catholic university's programs must directly address CCTS issues and increase retention and graduation rates of CCTS on private campuses.

Conclusion

California private universities' participation in addressing California's higher education crisis is vital in fulfilling the Master Plan promise to all Tidal Wave II students (CPEC, 1995; CPEC, 2005b). While the California Community College Chancellor's Office is taking steps to increase CCTS enrollment at private universities, the availability of student services for CCTS is questionable. Examining the experiences of CCTS enrolled at private-religious universities in California will contribute to the body of knowledge about CCTS academic and social experiences—specifically about experiences at private-religious institutions. This knowledge is important for university administrators to consider about CCTS in order to adequately provide student services to CCTS—services that will contribute to graduation and a positive college experience.

By increasing enrollment of CCTS, religious universities are fulfilling their mission of peace, justice, and diversity; however, implementing CCTS student services is a vital part of enrollment management. Without sufficient student services, CCTS will not graduate; a risk California's economy cannot afford. CCTS student services must be made available. Because the ethnic composition of Tidal Wave II students is mostly

Hispanic/Latino and Asian and a majority will begin their freshman year at a community college, private-religious universities will change the demographics of their student body while enriching students' university experience.

In the next chapter, the methodology employed in the study is discussed. The discussion includes sections on the description of sites and respondents, sampling, selection criteria, data collection methods, and data analysis.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the university and validating experiences of male Mexican American community college transfer students (CCTS) studying at religious universities. Using Rendón's (1994) theory of student validation as a critical lens, this study sought to understand the interaction between students and administrators using perspectives of three sample groups. The particular focus of this study was uncovering the relationships between male Mexican American CCTS (MMACCTS) and administration, and relationships between students male Mexican American CCT alumni (MMACCTA) and administration at one of two southern California Catholic universities. These relationships are thought to either contribute or deter the validation of CCTS enrolled at religious universities. The following four questions guided this study:

RQ1: To what extent, if at all, do male Mexican American community college transfer students (MMACCTS) perceive themselves as personally and academically validated by administrators at two Catholic universities?

RQ2: To what extent, if at all, do male Mexican American community college transfer alumni (MMACCTA) perceive their personal and academic experiences at Catholic universities were validated by administrators?

RQ3: To what extent, if at all, do administrators at these institutions perceive themselves as validating the experiences of MMACCTS and MMACCTA?

RQ4: To what extent are the MMACCTS' and MMACCTA perceptions congruent with the perceptions of administrators regarding validation of MMACCTS' and MMACCA experiences at these Catholic universities?

The study incorporated qualitative methods of inquiry (Patton, 1990). The following section describes the two sites where the study was conducted, the three categories of participants in the study, data collection methods, the selection criteria, the data analysis, and procedures.

Methods Used

Sites and Respondents

The study's respondents are MMACCTS enrolled at and MMACCT alumni who graduated from either one of two Catholic universities in southern California. These two institutions are close in proximity to one another, small in size, and both are Catholic. To maintain confidentiality of both institutions, pseudonyms are utilized: City University (CU) and Sunny University (SU).

With permission from the institutions, the researcher recruited MMACCTS participants by telephone, e-mail, and/or U.S. mail seeking to identify participants for participation in the study. The letter and e-mail message explained the purpose of the study, the time frame in which the data were to be collected, and the researcher's contact information (see Appendix B1). For more demographic information about the MMACCTS in the study, see appendices D1 and D2.

To help identify MMACCT alumni (MMACCTA) participants, the researcher requested and acquired access to the campus' alumni center and admissions office to release contact information on potential participants. The alumni participants were

contacted by telephone, e-mail, and/or letter inviting them to participate in the study (see Appendix B2). For more demographic information about MMACCTA, see appendices D1 and D2.

In order to identify potential administrators who work directly with CCTS, the researcher identified employees who work directly with CCTS within academic and student affairs in identifying departments providing services to CCTS, and then contacting the offices. In addition, the snowball method was utilized to identify and recruit MMACCTS, MMACCTA, and administrators by telephone, email, or U.S. mail (see Appendices B1, B2, and B3). In the following sections, methods of data collection, selection criteria, data analysis, and reasons for using qualitative study are discussed. Please see appendices D3 and D4 for demographic information about the ASAP included in the study.

Sampling

To address the four research questions of the study, a qualitative study approach was used to gather data from male CCTS and CCT alumni of Mexican American descent, and academic and student affairs professions (ASAPs) at two select Catholic universities. Three MMACCTS from each institution were selected to participate in the study. Semi-structured individual interviews were used to collect data from the participants. The students were selected based on continued enrollment at the university for at least one semester after transferring from a community college; attended at least four years of high school in the U.S.; and self-identified as Mexican American, Mexican, or Chicano. Student participants who were invited to be in the study were not required to have earned an Associates of Arts degree from the community college they transferred from. In

addition, a total of three MMACCTA from each institution were selected to participate. Administrators who work within the division of student affairs and academic affairs, work directly with CCTS, and have at least two years of experience working with this population of college students were also interviewed. The total number of administrators who were interviewed varied by institution, and included five ASAPs from CU and four from SU.

Selection Criteria

Locating currently enrolled MMACCTS was much more difficult than identifying administrators for several reasons. One reason is because of the Family Education Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA is a U.S. law protecting the educational records of students until college graduation and which prohibits university personnel from releasing contact information about the student without the students' or institutional permission. The researcher originally selected one Christian university and one Catholic university for the study. However, it became an obstacle to identify MMACCTS at the Christian universities because of their inability to track CCTS and the lack of process to identify male Mexican American students. As a result, the researcher instead selected to include in the study a second Catholic university that had both a process in identifying MMACCTS and that tracked CCTS at their university.

Several methods were utilized to identify and recruit CCTS at each Catholic institution. One method the researcher used was acquiring a list of CCTS names and contact information from each university. Informally, the researcher investigated the protocol for obtaining a list of potential participants. The university released contact information of those students who met the criteria and who granted the university

permission to divulge their personal contact information. In turn, the researcher contacted the potential participants to invite them to participate in the study and to verify if the individual met the selection criteria.

To identify other prospective participants, the preceding method was augmented through the use of a snowballing procedure. With the snowball method participating CCTS, alumni CCTS, and administrators may refer the researcher to other potential participants at each institution. Glense (1999) affirms the snowball (or chain or network) method helps researchers acquire information regarding prospective participants for the study by contacting people who know other individuals who meet the selection criteria for participating in the study. In instances when the snowball method was used, staff members and administrators within the department of student affairs and academic affairs were asked to refer the researcher to any CCTS who met the criteria and who was open to participate in the study; these campus personnel are more likely to interact with or know about CCTS on campus.

Upon receiving institutional approval, the researcher obtained contact information for male Mexican American alumni CCT from the institutions' alumni center and admissions office at each institution. The researcher contacted the individuals first by e-mail, second by telephone, and lastly by mail. In situations when the researcher was not able to contact the prospect by e-mail or telephone first, the researcher sent the CCT alumni a letter with a copy of the abstract of the study explaining the purpose of the study, selection criteria, and inviting the individual to participate (see Appendix B2). Once the researcher made contact with MMACCTA from each institution and an

agreement to participate in the study was reached, then the initial interview was arranged at a location suitable to the individual.

The researcher provided the alumni with a copy of the pre-interview questions; they were asked to complete and submit these to the researcher before the interview took place (see Appendix A1). On a couple occasions, the participant was not able to complete and return the questionnaire prior to the day of the interview, but completed the questionnaire on the day of the interview prior to the start of the interview session. The questions asked during the interview were grand tour in nature, which allowed the researcher the opportunity to probe further based on the information shared through the grand tour question (Spradley, 1979).

An invitation for an interview was extended only to those MMACCTS who satisfied all of the following selection criteria:

1. The student is male and began his college education at a community college, or transferred from a four-year to the community college to complete general requirements with the goal of university transfer.
2. The student transferred from a community college to the Catholic university.
3. The student has attended at least one semester at the Catholic university and is currently enrolled.
4. The student self-identified as Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano and attended at least four years of high school in the United States.

The researcher verified participation eligibility by asking the individual verbally or via e-mail during the initial contact, and by including these questions in the preliminary questionnaire. By asking questions to determine that the CCTS started his college career

at a community college and then transferred to a four year private institution, the researcher was able to distinguish those students from others who started college at a four-year institution (known as reverse-transfer students), and for whatever reason, transferred to a community college (Hagedorn & Castro, 1999); the researcher included one reverse-transfer student in the study. Each participant was asked to sign an informed consent form prior to the interviews (see Appendix C).

Only those male students who identified as Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano and who attended at least four-years of high school in the United States were included in the study. If a potential participant identified as Hispanic but not as Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano, then he was not invited to participate in the study. The study focused on males of Mexican heritage because they are the largest Hispanic/Latino group of the California's second Tidal Wave, and are also the Hispanic/Latino group with the lowest degree attainment. In addition Mexican American students are considered a historically underrepresented group on California college and university campuses (UCOP, 2005), and (b) Mexican Americans/Mexicans in California represent 77.1% of the total state Hispanic/Latino population as a result of proximity to the Mexican-U.S. border (U.S. Census, 2000).

One participant completed four-years of high school in two years and was invited to participate in the study. The individual completed up to seventh grade in the U.S. prior to moving to Mexico, and returned to the U.S. his junior year of high school to finish his diploma. He was required by the school district to make up four years of high school in two years in order to graduate with his class.

Similar to CCTS participants, CCT alumni who met the following criteria were invited to participate in the study include:

1. The alumnus transferred from a community college to one of the two participating universities.
2. The alumnus is male and graduated within the last five years from one of the two Catholic universities.
3. The alumnus self-identified as Mexican, Mexican-America, or Chicano, and attended at least four-years of high school in the United States.

By requiring male Mexican American CCT alumni (MMACCTA) to have completed their bachelor degree within the last five years, the memory of their community college and university experiences was more likely to be remembered in greater detail. In order to compare the experiences of MMACCTS and MMACCTA, it was imperative for both to self-identify with the same ethnic group.

In selecting academic and student affairs administrators (ASAPs) to participate in the study, administrators who met the following two criteria were invited to participate:

1. The administrator worked directly or interacts with the general population of community college transfer students at the Catholic University.
2. The administrator had at least two years of experience working with students, especially CCTS.

In requiring administrators to have at least two years of working with students and having direct contact with CCTS, the researcher was ensuring that the administrators selected have information about CCTS college experiences.

Data Collection

The researcher collected data from students and alumni using pre-interview questionnaires and individual interviews. Both Mexican American CCTS and CCT alumni received a demographic questionnaire prior to the interview and were asked to complete and submit to the researcher before the initial interview. The pre-interview questionnaire was both structured and open-ended. The researcher asked follow-up questions about the questionnaire prior to the initial interview before asking grand tour questions. The administrators did not receive a pre-interview questionnaire; however, demographic questions about their ethnicity and their history attending a community college were asked prior to the start of the interview to determine a correlation between the information and whether it had any impact on student experiences.

The individual interviews provided an opportunity to uncover validating experiences, collegiate experiences, and any special needs of MMACCTS. During the interview using an interview guide (see Appendices A2 and A3), the researcher elicited information using grand tour questions about the students' validating experiences by university personnel, and on their experiences in using campus resources and services at both the community college and university. While all of the student and alumni participants were bilingual in Spanish and English, the interviews were conducted only in English. The researcher probed in order to access details that were not divulged with the grand tour question. The researcher began the interview by asking the participants to recount their experiences as CCTS at both the community college and the receiving institution. The interview was kept conversational and interactive between the interviewer and interviewee. The researcher piloted both the pre-interview questionnaire

and interview questions with peers, administrators, and students not participating in this study.

In collecting data from administrators, the researcher interviewed administrators from each of the university's division of academic and student affairs. Administrators were included in this study in order to triangulate the data with that collected on MMACCTS and MMACCTA. It is important to examine the perspectives of administrators about their role in validating the experiences of MMACCTS to ascertain if it is consistent with the experiences of the students. Administrators were also asked questions about their perceptions of CCTS' experience in general in addition to the university experiences of MMACCTS at the Catholic universities. Administrators were identified by title and work related duties which involve direct contact with CCTS. These individuals were contacted by e-mail first and then a follow up telephone call. The e-mail included an attachment of the abstract of the study in order to familiarize the participant about the study and to help them to determine if they wanted to participate. When the administrator agreed to participate, the researcher obtained approval to include the data in the study by having the individual complete and sign the informed consent form. Once the initial interview was completed, a follow-up phone call occurred on a couple of occasions to either gather additional information or to clarify information collected in the initial interview. This was one method of member-checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The questions in the initial interview were grand tour in nature and they attempted to uncover administrators' perceptions about CCTS experiences in general, and specifically about the male Mexican American student population.

The grand tour interview questions were designed using the following categories based on a pilot qualitative case-study on the university experiences of CCTS that was conducted in spring 2004 in a doctoral course on Advanced Qualitative Research. The pilot study included only three CCTS participants who were recruited using snowball method; the individuals included two White male undergraduate students and one Mexican American female undergraduate student at one private Catholic university in southern California. The categories that emerged from the analysis of the pilot study included experiences, motivators, special needs, recommendations, interaction with campus personnel, and satisfaction level with host institution. In addition, some subcategories that emerged included experiences at community college, transitioning at the university, and special needs which includes academic and social subcategories.

All conversations with the participants were audio taped. The entire audio tape was transcribed to uncover and identify themes and to code the data related to MMACCTS' and MMACCTA validating experiences as well as the perceptions of administrators at these institutions who perceive themselves as validating the experiences of MMACCTS. In addition, notes taken during each interview were kept in journal form in order to prompt any special questions that were not initially asked (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transcripts were shared with the respondents before the final draft was written to ensure accuracy through member checking once again (Lincoln & Guba).

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed by institution and then followed by a university cross-institutional analysis by groups comparing CCTS students to CCTS students, administrators to administrators, and CCT alumni to CCT alumni. The analysis was

conducted by using both Rendón's Theory of Student Validation (1994) and the categories that emerged from the analysis of the pilot study. The initial analysis included transcribing the audio tapes and identifying themes in the interviews. Each taped interview was transcribed by the researcher in order for the researcher to become immersed in the data (Patton, 2002). Decoding the transcripts helped to generate general categories, subcategories, and themes from data collected from CCTS, CCT alumni, and administrators. A case record was used on the CCTS data "in order to pull together the voluminous case data into a comprehensive primary reserved package" (Patton, p. 449). To construct a case record, a narrative of each participant's study was written followed by a written final study narrative. A goal of the analysis was to identify patterns (or what Patton describes as "pattern recognition"), recurring themes, categories, and anomalies gathered from the interview data (Patton).

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study include a small sample size from two Catholic universities in southern California and participation in the study is limited to male Mexican American community college transfer students, male Mexican American CCT alumni, and Catholic university administrators only. As a result of the small sample, it is difficult to make generalizations and to identify patterns that can then be further explored about CCTS outside the Catholic university context and CCTS who do not self-identify as a male Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano who completed at least four-years of high school in the United States. The study does not include the perceptions of faculty at Catholic universities about CCTS. However, this study is a point of departure for research on faculty perceptions about CCTS studying at Catholic universities. Also, an

inherent bias is visible in selecting participants who were referred by an administrator because these individuals may be students who are more resourceful and seek campus resources; these individuals may not be representative of other CCTS who may not have the cultural capital to navigate the university.

Another limitation is the researcher's concern about her role as a graduate of a community college. She transferred from a community college to a public four-year institution in California. However, the researcher is aware of her bias; having experienced the transfer process of transitioning from one institution to another, the researcher has addressed any concerns about assuming that all CCTS' experience difficulty transitioning from the community college to a four-year institution by recognizing her bias using Peshkin's (1988) method. Peshkin's method addresses bias by identifying it and managing subjectivity. Peshkin (1988) advocates an enhanced awareness that should result from a formal systematic monitoring of self. Enhancing awareness helps the researcher avoid turning the study into an autobiographical study. Furthermore, Peshkin (1988) argues that by managing her subjectivity (or as he puts it taming one's subjectivity) through the process of collecting, analyzing, and writing, the researcher will avoid the burdensome activity of subjectivity

Conclusion

This chapter described the research methods utilized in this study. A qualitative study research design was believed appropriate for this study because the research questions guiding this study sought to uncover the validating and university experiences of MMACCTS using the perspectives of CCTS, CCT alumni, and university

administrators who worked within the divisions of student affairs and academic affairs at one of two southern Catholic universities.

Participants for the study were identified using the snowball method and a list of potential participants obtained from the universities. A pre-interview questionnaire and individual interviews was used to collect data. The data were analyzed and followed by a cross-institutional analysis by grouping and comparing each corresponding sample group with each other. In the next chapter, the findings of the study are presented.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the study. The chapter introduces the various university and validating experiences of male Mexican-American community college transfer students (MMACCTS) studying at Catholic universities. Using the perceptions of administrators, students, and alumni, this study examined the forms of student validation that administrators render when interacting with CCTS. In this study, administrators were defined as non-teaching university personnel within the departments of academic and student affairs. Data were drawn from interviews of six male CCTS students and six alumni CCTS of Mexican American descent, and nine academic and student affairs professionals (ASAPs), from one of the two respective catholic universities.

Male Mexican American community college transfer students reported shouldering several challenges and sacrificing many important things in their lives during their endeavor to complete a bachelor's degree at a Catholic university. One challenge was adjusting to a campus culture ethnically composed of majority White students, and working with a university that lacked university personnel of color. Some student and alumni participants found the universities religious affiliation and international student population resourceful. Others relied on their family support to get through the rough times of their college education, or where adamantly determined to complete it to help their parents economically in the long run. MMACCTS and MMACCTA shared experiences being validated by administrators and faculty who they interacted with

throughout their college experience at the university. However, they also shared instances in which they did not feel validated by the institution as a result of unmet expectations, early impressions, and continuing problems. While students relied on self-validation and managing resources in these instances to get through the tough moments of their educational experience, they also relied on those connections they made with certain faculty and administrators.

The findings are organized into two major headings: challenges and sacrifices; and connections and validating experiences. The section on challenges and sacrifices discusses the various reports made by MMACCT students and alumni regarding their experiences of the campus climate they encountered, the cultural and social capital they possessed or lacked throughout their collegiate experience, and any other non-validation experiences the MMACCTS participants faced. The section on connections and validation includes the various reports by students about validation they received from campus personnel. This section also sheds light on the perceptions of ASAPs. Included within this chapter is a discussion on three unexpected findings that emerged from the study: self-validation, non-validation, and faculty validation. Lastly, the results of the pre-interview questionnaire of the students and alumni are presented in the appendices section of the study (see Appendices D1 and D2). Also, an appendix is included on the profiles of administrators' demographic information (see appendices D3 and D4). The following findings share insight on personal recounts about MMACCT students and alumni on their experiences studying at a Catholic university.

Challenges and Sacrifices

The male Mexican-American community college transfer (MMACCT) students and alumni participants in the study endured many challenges and made various sacrifices in their plight to complete a college degree. Some of the challenges involved adjusting to a majority white and young campus climate that included a majority Caucasian staff and faculty and a different demographic population than what they grew up in. The religious affiliation of the university served as assistance to some of the participants in adjusting and connecting to the university, while others gravitated toward the campus' international student population in acclimating to the new campus environment.

Campus Climate

The student and alumni participants of the study described their university campus climate as one that was dominated by a majority White and young student population. The participants also described the campus climate as demographically different from what they encountered at the community college and the neighborhoods in which they socialized and lived. Others found the university's religious affiliation and international student population as resources utilized to acclimate to a new university campus climate. The following sections shed light on the experiences of MMACCTS facing challenges and making sacrifices in their quest to complete an undergraduate degree at a Catholic university campus. The last section of *Campus Climate* describes the MMACCTS use of religious resources and international influences that they gravitated toward in order to overcome, and balance out, some of the challenge faced by the students at the university.

Campus Demographic Issues

Some of the students and alumni participants felt invalidated by the lack of diversity among the students, faculty, and administration of their university. A MMACCT alumnus retells of an incident that occurred when his roommate was bothered by his Afghani friend who was visiting. A confrontation occurred between the two men and the CCTS alumnus found himself in the middle of a verbal altercation. After the incident, his roommate problems began. His roommate would initiate arguments with him about minor things such as cleaning the kitchen or bathroom. Unfortunately, the other two roommates took the other roommate's side rather than helping to resolve the issue. The CCTS alumnus considers the students' lack of sensitivity to other cultures to be a flaw that could reflect the university negatively.

Other students also felt the university has a strong need for more faculty and administrators of color. One individual recalls not seeing a lot of Hispanic or African-American faculty. Alejandro, who is a MMACCTA, acknowledges the university's effort to promote and encourage diversity, but feels it is difficult to maintain credibility about this position when the administration and faculty is made up of very few people of color. Alejandro also finds the lack of diversity of experiences disturbing:

If we had a diverse faculty, but a truly diverse—not just of color—but of experiences and [a] faculty who really does genuinely care about the Latino community, then we would see a more genuine student body... People are really caring but again, we are missing something.

That something he says the university is missing is "true diversity" which in his mind includes people from different socioeconomic backgrounds and those who are first-generation college students. He believes students whose parents went to college have better resources and improved opportunities to succeed. Several students felt the

university and student population would benefit from learning about people with different perspectives and experiences.

Several other students felt they did not fit in with the university student population. One MMACCTS, Joel, turned the experience into a challenge and chose to see it in a positive light. Joel saw the challenge as a learning experience which will improve his ability to work with those different from him who will be in his life:

I want to challenge myself as [much as] possible. It was a different experience which was good, but also bad at the same time. Good for the fact that I'm able to experience different things. I'm able to affiliate with different ethnicities, different mannerisms, and different teachers. The only thing bad was that I felt that I didn't fit in. But that also turned into a positive because when I get into the real world, I'll be able to socialize a little bit better and also [be] more comfortable.

While Joel found the make-up of the university campus troublesome, he was able to see it as a challenge rather than a hindrance. Joel sees the challenge as a way to prepare for life in the real world, and knows that his comfort level will change as a result of increased exposure to a different ambience and people than he is accustomed to.

Some of the CCT student and alumni participants acknowledged anticipating unpleasant moments as a part of transition to the university. It was understood that they were entering a new environment with a different culture and attitude about learning. They knew that transferring to a university would mean having to meet new people, and they expected to initially feel uncomfortable in a new setting with new people. They also expected to feel some discomfort when meeting new people in class and out of class. They realized that the new situation would change how much time was spent interacting with their pre-university social group, and that they would need to develop a new group

of friends. The participants even expected a learning curve in trying to acclimate to the university campus culture. The students also acknowledge that transferring would mean having to learn about their professors' styles of grading and lecturing, and about their academic expectations.

Other students expected to make friends in class and hoped that those relationships would continue outside of class. However, one City University student, Antonio remembers making connections in class with peers, but upon greeting these acquaintances outside of class he was ignored—many of these students were native university students. When asked if he could identify why this was the case, Antonio responded with:

It is just what happens every time. I mean it happens in high school, it happens in grade school...I am sure it happens to a lot of people. I mean I talk to a lot of people and it's the same experience.

While the student expected some of this to happen, he was not anticipating that it would reoccur with more than one fellow student. This student, unfortunately, was not able to attend the new student orientation where he could have developed genuine connections with other community college transfer students. But for others, who had attended their university's new student orientation, they at least hoped to make one connection with a peer who could be relied upon for information or for conversation; unfortunately, this was not the case for all the students who attended orientation.

While some of the students and alumni anticipated a mostly White campus, they were not prepared for the culture shock they endured. One participant acknowledges knowing that he would be attending an affluent campus and expected to see young students driving expensive cars and wearing expensive clothes; however, he did not

expect such a large number of students fulfilling this expectation. It bothered him because it made it difficult to identify and connect with people who had similar working-class backgrounds. Others tried not to make prejudgments about the students' academic abilities but could not help to think that maybe they were at the university because of their family's ties or resources. One participant stated that it was disturbing to hear young students talk about partying and having fun at the cost of sacrificing their academic studies for entertainment; they were taking their education for granted while he was working hard juggling multiple responsibilities including family, school, and work.

Some of the students made references to having a desire to connect with other Latinos on campus, and others stated they had made the connections but still felt as though something was lacking. One alumnus stated that the "something" that was missing was the genuine connection between the Latino students and the Latino community. He admits that many were fulfilling required community service at Latino community organizations because is part of Sunny University's Jesuit practice, and so he felt they were not there with genuine interests. He also attributed the "something" to be that these Latinos were at least second-generation college students or came from affluent Latino families. He was not able to relate to these Latino students as much because of their different socioeconomic backgrounds and upbringing. He was able to relate to students who came from working class families and international students. Those who hoped to connect with Latino university personnel and students, fortunately, did so although the Latino population on campus was scarce.

Other participants felt that the campus was significantly different demographically speaking from where they originally came from—cities with more

Hispanics/Latinos. One student named Antonio stated, “[This area], in general, is not very Hispanic”. Antonio was comparing the region to his hometown of East Los Angeles. Antonio stated that he felt a bit uncomfortable at the beginning of his first semester. “The school setting was very different than what I was used to. I felt a little bit out of place”. Fortunately, Antonio was able to “pull through” the discomfort with the help of his history professor whom he interacted with outside of class. Antonio considered this interaction as validating and helpful because the relationship he established with the professor helped him to endure the difficult time in adjusting to a very different campus climate. He had several things in common with the professor; he identified as Mexican American and grew up in East Los Angeles. Antonio knew that if he ever felt homesick, that visiting the professor would diminish some of that homesickness.

The older aged participants reported feeling uncomfortable with the young student population. Jesús and Jaime were both older students with family and lots of life experience. Jaime remembers being the “old guy” in most of his classes, and was known as the guy with “nearly twenty-years of experience”. He remembers walking into his classes and his fellow classmates would straighten up and were ready to begin classes—they mistakenly thought he was the class professor. In comparison, he felt his age did not stand out as much at the community college because the student population was diverse in ages. He managed to turn the negative feeling into positive attitude when he took on the leadership role in classes by sharing his professional experience with his classmates. Jaime shared information about his personal life as well. He found it validating when students took an interest in his background. While students validated him as a university

student, however, Jaime did not get any validation from university professors regarding his age.

Jesús felt the same about the lack of age diversity among the student population, but also about the lack of ethnic diversity. He felt that the lack of diversity limited the number of perspectives students were exposed to and share about. He also felt that having a lack of diversity on campus would affect those people who were interested in a more diverse campus, and consequently, would result in students of color and different ages being less likely to apply to that university.

If you show that you want people of color, of different ages, then people will be more willing to apply. And you have a more diverse campus. And the campus is more challenging, and focuses on educating and creating this student body that is aware of what is going on. Like the campus itself is constructed in a way to keep people out. You [have] security guards in each corner and they block [others out]. You feel that you are not supposed to be here. The [immediate outside community] is different than what is here on campus. So that tells me a lot about the campus. And it just kind of blocks itself out. It doesn't want ...it pushes people away.

Jesús clearly sees the disconnection between the campus community and the community immediately outside of the university. He feels that the university does not appear inviting and pushes people out of the campus life because of the security guards stationed at each entrance of the university—sending the message that the university community is a separate and exclusive society from the rest of the community outside the campus. He feels the university lacks the motivation to seek, and deliver resources for helping, low income students. Unfortunately, he has not met anyone at the university who has experienced a similar upbringing or background. He confidently states that he is more likely to find people he can connect with at the community college and public universities.

Some CCT student and alumni participants found it disappointing to learn that a small number of students at Sunny University were from a diverse socioeconomic background and who had different experiences from the majority of the student population. Alejandro recalls feeling a bit dissatisfied not being able to make connections with other students who shared the same experience of growing up impoverished with limited resources. In comparison, he loved that at the community college students came from different backgrounds (e.g., in socioeconomics, ethnicities, and experiences). As a result, Alejandro felt he had more in common with community college students than with university students:

We all had to work. We all had to commute with other people and share gas. So overall, I thought it was great. You know, we had professors from India, from Pakistan, Chicano professors—Chicano professors who studied in Mexico during high school. So, it was great.

The university setting was clearly different than the community college Alejandro had transferred from. Alejandro found it difficult incorporating into the campus community, and he attributes it to his background having lived in Mexico and having Spanish-speaking parents. He felt life at Sunny University was stagnant because of the lack of diversity. Students dressed, thought, and lived life with the same perspective. As a result, he connected less with the general population at Sunny University, but connected more with the community outside of the university.

Religious Resources

While all six students and six alumni participants identified their religion as Catholic, only about half of them felt connected to the university as a result of the Catholic affiliation. But several noted how important the Catholic identity of the university was to them. Jonathan, for example, says he enjoys going back to the Sunny

University as an alumnus to attend Church; he feels strongly connected to the university's Catholicism and drives a distance to attend Church on Sundays in order to visit the campus. Another alumnus enjoyed having access to the university priest around the clock during a time of need. Others reported appreciating Sunny University's Jesuit tradition of doing good for society. For one student, the university's Catholic affiliation helped him decide to attend that specific university when he learned it was a Catholic institution, and just wishes he had time to attend mass more frequently. These students' religious background is part of their identity, and the university's religious affiliation served as a reason they selected to attend a religious university over a public or non-religious private university. The students perceived that campus' religious influence helped them to adjust to a campus climate more easily than had they attended a non-religious university.

International Influence

About half of the CCT students and alumni participants experienced an international opportunity either in the U.S. or abroad. Two of the students participated in a study abroad program, and they credit the international experience in helping them to identify their career goals. In one case, Manuel enrolled in courses in France after spending two semesters at the community college and feeling he had no career goal or direction. He was unsure what it was he wanted to study. A family friend extended an invitation to Manuel to stay with him and his family in France. Manuel accepted the offer and enrolled in a business class and a French language course. This family friend served as a role model while in France. After experiencing a life in a different culture, Manuel decided he wanted to pursue a career in international business. The experience abroad

helped him to focus on a career path. Consequently, he came back to the United States refreshed, inspired, and motivated to succeed. He became determined to transfer to a four-year university.

Another student had a very similar experience except he went through his community college for a study abroad experience. He chose to visit his mother country, Mexico, through a university summer study abroad program. The experience proved and confirmed his potential and ability to succeed in higher education. He returned confident and focused on accomplishing his career goals. Therefore, a study abroad experience was helpful in reassuring these community college transfer students that they belong at the university; both students had only positive comments to say about their international experience.

One-fourth of the students and alumni participants admitted gravitating, socially and academically, toward international students on campus. Several noted their ability to socially relate more with international students than with native U.S. students. One student found it more intellectually stimulating when interacting with international students. His impression of international students was they possessed intelligence and took education seriously while managing to have fun learning. He made many friends with the international students, and in the process learned to enjoy learning as well. As a result, he spent time at the International Center for the camaraderie of his friends originally from other countries.

Other participants gravitated toward international students on campus because they could relate to having to acclimate to a foreign place. Because a majority of the university's native students come from traditional White American backgrounds, others

would not understand what it meant to be White, middle-class, and with certain privileges. Like the non-traditional CCTS, international students had to learn about this traditional American culture. Many of the CCTS students knew about being Mexican American, but could not understand what it meant to live in the world of the traditional White American life or mainstream America. Essentially, the community college transfer students felt like outsiders, although they had lived in the U.S. their entire lives. Consequently, it seemed almost natural for CCTS to have a better bond with students from foreign countries studying at an American university; they were able to relate to being “others.”

Five of the students and alumni participants majored in international business at the university. These students aspired to engage in business endeavors with people around the world. They did not want to limit their business experiences to the U.S., but they wanted to go beyond borders and tap into the international market. Some of the students enjoyed making connections in the U.S. through the international student body at their respective universities. The friendships they established were genuine, and the CCTS realized the business and network benefits of knowing people from different parts of the world.

Cultural and Social Capital

The students and alumni ability to navigate the university successfully was a result of the cultural and social capital they possessed. However, the cultural and social capital of these students is based on different life experiences from those experiences of students from mainstream or upper class backgrounds. The following sections demonstrate examples of students motivated to succeed based on their personal

experiences with managing resources, experiencing crossing the U.S.-Mexico border, and using various academic and social resources. The section on *Family as Support* sheds light on the role of family commitment played in their quest to succeed at the university. As a result of these experiences, MMACCTS used the unique cultural and social capital they possessed to navigate the university.

Family as Support

Most of the student and alumni participants' family played a major role in completing a bachelor's degree. For some participants, family served as the motivator to complete a degree, and others were expected to earn at least a bachelor's degree. While some were driven to complete a college education in order to avoid dropping out of college as some of their family member had done, others were completing a college degree for the sake of their children. So, for MMACCTS and MMACTTA, family support significantly contributed to their academic success.

A third of the participants had completed part of their K-12 education in Mexico, and as a result to being exposed to poverty became compelled to help their families escape poverty by pursuing university education. Two of the study's participants immigrated to the U.S. as children, while two other American born participants completed some elementary education in both the U.S. and Mexico. The students who immigrated as children to the U.S. remember vividly their childhood experience living in poverty in Mexico. They remember the lack of opportunities that their native homeland offered to rise economically out of poverty. One student wanted so badly to come to the U.S. to help his parents economically that he left Oaxaca, Mexico, with the help of his two sisters, but without telling his parents. His parents feared losing him in his quest to

making a better living economically. He was only a teenager when he arrived. He knew absolutely no one but was able to enroll in school. He graduated from high school but knew that a high school education was not enough for him to survive in the U.S. and support his family in Mexico. He worked multiple odd jobs doing almost anything to make a living. He remembers sleeping in the streets on many nights when he was out of money and could not find a job. All he could think of was that he had to suffer in order to send money home so that his two older sisters could go on to college and complete a respectable career.

He grew up quickly and without family on the city streets of the U.S. He enrolled at the community college in an effort to improve his English. He remembers many nights worrying about the difficulty in trying to learn two languages: English and Spanish. Although he grew up in Mexico, he lived in a region of Mexico where an indigenous language was more commonly spoken, and many of the children had not learned to speak Spanish by the time they reached adulthood. In order to land menial work in the U.S., he had to learn Spanish. Many of the people who employed him in the U.S. spoke only Spanish, while others spoke only English. While at the community college, he remembers being made fun of, by people who looked as he did, for mispronouncing English and Spanish. But he was willing to put up with unpleasant moments for the sake of surviving; for the sake of helping his family survive hundreds of miles away in the neighboring country. It has taken him over 10 years of community college education and he had attended three community colleges before he actually began his studies at the university. He now sees the light at the end of the tunnel. He now believes he will complete his degree in international business. It will take him longer than most because he is paying

out of pocket and working multiple jobs in order to ensure he finishes his degree. But he is determined and will continue to make sacrifices when necessary to realize his career goals.

On the other hand, an American-born participant's international experience was different in the sense that he immigrated to Mexico with his native Mexican parents. When Alejandro was in seventh grade, his parents decided to move the entire family to Mexico. His father wanted him to experience the Mexican education and to learn about Mexican politics. The participant shared that his family is very involved politically, and so his father expected him to pursue an education in politics. In addition, his father wanted him to learn the Spanish language and to make his life in Mexico rather than the U.S. While he learned Spanish well, unfortunately, he became less competent in the English language. So when his family decided to immigrate back to the U.S., he had a difficult time trying to catch up with his school studies to graduate in time with his class. He had to relearn English, although he was American born. His international experience in Mexico and the difficulty in mastering the English language helped him to connect with international students, and it gave him a different perspective about life that other Mexican Americans do not ever get to experience for themselves. Having friends from Mexico who attended American universities served as a catalyst for Alejandro to go on to a university after completing his community college coursework. His friends and family in Mexico expected him to succeed academically in the U.S. because he was American born.

All of the students and alumni participants were family orientated, and they attributed family as one of the reasons for pursuing a college education. For example,

René was the first in his family to go to college, and his family was expecting him to succeed. His little sister was one reason he was driven to thrive academically; she looked up to him. When making a decision about his college education, René always considered his family's opinion. He even excelled in his classes because he did not want to disappoint his parents with average grades. He attributes his family as the reason for transferring to the university.

Some of the participant's decisions about college were influenced by their strong family ties. For example, René's family influenced his decision on which university to attend. When René's application for admissions to an out-of-area university was accepted, René admits he could not move away. He was not sure he would be able to deal emotionally with living so far away from his family. He explains they are a "close-knit" family, and his dad's siblings all live within a two mile radius. It was not just his immediate family he would be moving from, but many cousins, aunts, uncles, and grandparents. He elected to attend Sunny University because of its proximity to his parents' home. Receiving the acceptance letter from Sunny University meant he would live with his family for two more years. He truly needed to remain close to his family in order to succeed educationally and emotionally at the university.

One student selected to attend City University because two family members completed their undergraduate studies there. While he admits that knowing his aunt transferred from the same community college did not influence his decision to go to college, he does acknowledge that he selected City University to finish his baccalaureate studies because his aunt and uncle spoke very highly of the institution. He had heard great stories about their college experience and hoped he would encounter a similar

experience. Economic reasons served as a catalyst to pursue higher education. These students recognized their parents' forthcoming need for retirement benefits, and knew that their parents would not make it financially on their own in their retirement years without the financial assistance of their adult children. Part of the reason is that because they worked low-paying jobs that do not provide retirement pensions, these students and alumni were preparing for their parents retirement by obtaining a college education. For many of the participants, the family system and value for family serves as a resource. In addition, the students' selflessness is permeated among the participants of the study which is opposite of what mainstream Americans experience where the parents financing their own retirement with savings. In the cases of the students, students were preparing to help finance their parents' retirement years.

A third of the students feared "getting stuck at the community college" as some their family members or friends had experienced, so they were adamantly determined to transfer to the university to finish a bachelor's degree. Manuel, for instance, tried different strategies to prevail such as meeting with the same community college counselor. Manuel's fear was not completing the requirements to transfer to a four-year university:

I always tried to get the same advisor all the time. They helped dearly. They wanted to help because a lot of people get stuck at the community college like my older brother who got stuck. And it is nice to see these people who really want to help you achieve. And even at the community college, all the advisors were female and were very caring and nice which helped.

Manuel vicariously learned from his brother's personal experience in "getting stuck" at the community college. He did not want to repeat the same mistake his brother made. So he turned to the campus resources made available to succeed. He followed their advice

and had taken all the necessary steps to succeed. Similarly to all the participants in the study, Manuel's ultimate goal at the community college was to complete the requirements to successfully transfer to a four-year university.

Managing Resources

Several of the students and graduate participants admit that because of their multiple responsibilities and managing their time effectively between work and academics, they were unable to participate in campus activities; a missed opportunity to interact with administrators and receive validation. José, for example, works long hours to pay for his tuition because he does not qualify for federal financial aid and is unable to take out loans to help finance his education. He sends money to his family living in Mexico because without his financial contribution, his family would starve.

The participants who were married with children while attending the university had a harder time trying to balance work, school, and family. They worked and attended the university full-time. Any extra time they have was devoted to their family. They understand that part of balancing family life and academics means prioritizing, which involves not partaking in campus activities. While they both wished they had remained in college their first time around, they understand that leaving college meant sacrificing the opportunity to experience a traditional college life if they were ever to returned to college at an older age.

While attending the university, two of the participants worked and attended school full-time. Although they were both single while attending the university, they were committed to helping their parents financially; their parents both worked low-paying jobs and were unable to make ends meet with just their incomes alone. As a result,

both participants opted to maintain employment while they completed their bachelor's degree. They did not feel there was a different option but to contribute financially to the family household. Although they did not participate in a lot of the campus activities, they participated in enough campus activities to be satisfied with the out-of-class socializing they experienced.

All of the students and alumni in this study describe their college experience as one in which they juggled multiple responsibilities and roles that involved making sacrifices for success. Some of the responsibilities students managed while attending the university included family, employment, a second job, community service, sports, personal issues, a pre-university social life, and leadership roles. To balance their lives, at times the students found themselves sacrificing family events, reducing their work hours, skipping class, or lessening some of their other responsibilities.

While most of the students and alumni juggled school, work, and family, a third of the participants also dealt with crisis, tragedy, and adversity. For Jaime, finding out that he had cancer gave him the drive to change his life. He was diagnosed in his early twenties and he remembers fighting cancer for ten months and going through chemotherapy and radiation treatment. Jaime states that having cancer gave him two options:

For someone who really had no direction in life, really wasn't focused on where I was gonna go, that will wake you up. Either it is going to straighten you out and give you some direction, or you're just gonna kind of give up and not really care about yourself anymore.

Although Jaime had the option of giving up and letting cancer control his life, he chose to focus on fighting cancer. He chose to succeed in college and eventually complete his bachelor's degree. Jaime is now working in real estate as an analyst. Jaime did not let

cancer take the best of him. He committed to living, and to achieving all of his personal and educational goals.

Although some of the participants faced hardships and difficulties while enrolled at the university, they believed it was imperative to succeed by “sticking it out” or “learning to deal with it.” Jonathan dealt with adversity on balancing college life with a job promotion. Since high school, Jonathan worked as a police cadet with the local police department. His dream job was to eventually become a police officer. Jonathan was extended a job promotion to become a police officer during his first semester at the university. He felt perplexed because he knew that he wanted to continue attending the university fulltime, but he was also offered the job of his dreams—a job he had worked hard to earn. He knew that working fulltime would mean spending less time on campus with friends and in college activities; that was the opposite of what he planned to do. But he needed the job promotion in order to contribute more financially to his parents’ household. However, Jonathan wanted to experience the whole college life, and the new position required him to work fulltime:

I wanted to experience the whole college life, you know, not working. But it was impossible. I needed to help my family. I needed to pay for books, and it was a good position that they rarely offer. And I got it. So, I took it and it was hard juggling the two: keeping my grades up and working. So, then I had to work 10 hour-days, four days a week. I had to work weekends. And my days off were Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday’s. And so I tried to put all my classes within that timeframe. That was difficult. There was no remedy for that. I just had to suck it up and get used to it; which I did.

Jonathan was able to figure out a strategy to “do” both college and his new job. He felt he had no choice. He wanted both—the job promotion and attending college fulltime—and

so he made both work. He was determined to succeed at both, and that required making personal sacrifices.

Non-validating Experiences

Many of the students reported confronting situations in which they felt invalidated by the university. While some of those situations occurred early in their university experiences, others continued to confront the problems way into their university enrollment. Several students felt invalidated as a result of certain unmet expectations, while others felt invalidated as a result of impersonal interaction with staff and administration when acquiring services. The next section describes student and alumni participants' moments in which they felt invalidated by the institution.

Early Impressions

Although a number of community college transfer students and alumni reported being validated by both faculty and administration, some also experienced feeling invalidated by university personnel or processes. Some of the reasons students reported feeling invalidated was during the early interaction with college personnel. The reasons include: weak orientation, poor academic advising, not receiving letter of acceptance; losing course credit; late course registration. Other reasons appeared to be an on-going problem such as unposted coursework and struggling with financial aid.

Two students and one alumnus felt invalidated and discouraged as a result of receiving poor advising from their appointed faculty advisor. Similarly to Joel's experience, Jesús describes feeling lost when he first arrived at the university campus. Jesús felt as though nobody would take the time to explain what he needed to do to start the semester. He shares:

I don't live on campus. I don't have the luxury, like, when was I going to school. I came to school at night, so everything was closed. I had to take time off of work and try to figure things [out]. And it was just frustrating [because] it [seemed] like they were looking for any which way to keep me from graduation or to keep me from succeeding in this school.

He became so frustrated and discouraged with the situation that he found another advisor who eventually answered his questions and helped him. However, the preceding experience disappointed him and he was left wondering whether the university really wanted him to succeed and graduate at their institution.

Students also experienced poor advising sessions with administrators. René had an appointment with a business school advisor to register for classes. He describes the session as follows:

I had an appointment with one of the administrators to get registered for the fall. And so I met her, and so she basically...she asked me to bring all my transfer information from [the community college]. And I brought it. And she got a piece of paper, and she wrote down all my classes and all my electives on a piece of paper-and had one paper. And she said, "You have two years to take twenty classes, that's five classes per semester." And that was the extent of my advising. And so I absolutely hated it. And actually, I just thought, "you know, maybe I just caught her on a bad day."

This student needed a more personalized advising session rather than one which made him feel as if advising was routine and mundane. This administrator's attitude did not resonate with the student. She was not approachable and the session was short. Her attitude and manners gave him the message that he was just number. As a result, the student felt unwelcome and disconnected to his university. This particular staff member had a great opportunity in her hands to contribute positively to a new student's university experience. In the perspective of the student, the advisor dropped the ball.

While only a third of the student and alumni participated in the new student orientation for CCTS, two of the four students felt the orientation they attended was weak. René felt that the orientation at Sunny University was not the best in comparison to the new student orientation at his community college. While the community college's format emphasized group activities, Sunny University's was designed as a mixer where new students would interact with faculty, administration, and other students. According to René, a problem with the mixer was that people interacted with others from their community college or with people who they already knew, instead of mingling with people from other community colleges who they did not know. Some of the new transfer students were more likely to engage with students they knew from their community college than with other new transfer students from different community colleges.

Some of the students felt left out of the university registration process. They were given just a few days prior to the start of the semester to register for classes. By the time they met with their academic advisor, unfortunately, many of the classes were closed and the students' choices for classes were limited. Joel discusses feeling frustrated and hassled as a result of being given a late start to find classes. He stated that the university's new orientation for community college transfers students was held a day before the start of the fall semester. Also, students were not able to register for classes until they met with their academic advisor, and this meeting could not take place until the day of orientation. He became worried because classes were to begin the next day and he still had not seen a schedule of courses.

When Joel spoke to a counselor at orientation, the counselor advised him to come to campus the next morning to register for classes. He arrived the next morning and

waited for about an hour, but he still was unclear on what to do. He went home, figured out what to do, and registered for his classes on his own. What made it more difficult was that the courses he intended to register for conflicted with his work schedule. It took two days for Joel to figure out which courses to take, and an entire week to get his school and work schedule organized. As a result, he did not actually begin classes until the second week of the semester, and he found that experience awkward. In addition, he fell behind an entire week with his course work, and the experience added more stress. Joel remembers his first semester as being difficult, and thinking that he never intended or wanted to start his first university semester late.

As a result of not ever receiving his letter of acceptance, one student felt unwelcome and invalidated by the university from the start of his university experience. Students look forward to the tradition of receiving the letter that officially tells them that they are university material. Unfortunately, Jesús did not get to experience opening the letter of acceptance from City University. For Jesús, it was important to receive the letter because he had already put off attending a university for a year. He had decided to delay attending a university for a year in order to apply to City University after deciding not to attend the out-of-state art school he was accepted to. In the following excerpt, Jesús describes the moment he felt invalidated by the university:

They make it very hard, I think, for us students [because] when I transferred I didn't know I had been accepted, for one. I actually had to call [because] it was two weeks before school was about to start and I didn't get anything in the mail; they didn't tell me when I was supposed to register. So, I finally called and I found out that I was accepted...It was difficult because I didn't think they place much value on transfer students.

The message Jesús received from this incident is that the university did not value transfer students. He was relying on the university to inform him about the status of his

application for admission. He also was expecting the university to notify him about his acceptance into the university, and about what steps he needed to take to register. Consequently, Jesús felt the university was making it difficult for him to start a smooth transition into his university studies.

A fourth of the participants reported feeling discouraged upon learning that a number of units completed at the community college were not accepted by the university. Jaime recalls having to retake a math course at the university. Although he felt retaking the course benefited him because it had been over ten years since he had taken his last math course, other students were not as pleased having to repeat a course they had completed successfully at their community college.

Though some students reported not losing course credit, they did experience having community college core courses accepted by the university only as electives—forcing the student to retake core courses at the university. In one instance, a junior CCTS felt invalidated by having to retake courses he had finished at the community college. René states:

When I transferred all 60 units, [a lot] of the requirements at [Sunny University] became electives. So, I was missing a lot of first year, second year classes. So, I had to make up, like, two history classes, a psychology 100, which were sort of odd taking them as a third year student and needing those first year classes.

In addition to having to repeat coursework, René felt disappointed and invalidated as a university student by having to sit in class, in his junior year, with freshman and sophomore students. He felt that having to redo coursework delayed his graduation date, and it cost him more financially than he anticipated spending for his college education.

One student felt invalidated when a professor embarrassed him in front of the entire class for responding to his question with the wrong answer. It was Ricardo's first semester at City University during his logic course when this occurred. He remembers feeling certain he had the correct answer, so he responded. But he quickly learned that the professor's style of responding to a student's incorrect answer was to belittle the student in front of his classmates. Ricardo was left feeling not only humiliated in front of his peers but also questioning whether he was university material. Ricardo reveals, "It made me feel like I wasn't really good enough for the university at all. And the funny thing is that was my first semester, and that wasn't my best semester at all, by far". Ricardo was dealing with more than just adjusting to a new environment; he was mourning the death of a family member, and feeling belittled by a professor in front of his peers made him feel worse. Ricardo is not surprised that the professor is no longer employed by the university. He is thankful because he would not want other students to feel how he did in his first semester at the university. The professor's behavior was opposite of what the theory of student validation encourages.

A common theme among the students who did not experience validation by administrators is their reliance on the campus website for easy access to information. As a result, help was not sought from administrators because they were able to find answers to their questions by researching the university's website—resulting in interfacing less with campus staff. For example, Antonio stated that "the school has a pretty good website", pretty much knew where to go for services because of the school's small size. He admits that he really could not think of a time in which he was validated by a staff member within student or academic affairs because he relied on his own research when

needing something. He also stated that if he could not find an answer to his question on the web, he would simply call the university to get his question answered over the phone. The interaction that did occur was not at a personal level; thus, the student was not able to refer to the interaction as validating.

While one student found the information on City University's website reliable, a different student wished he had interfaced with the university's business school in person to verify information he found on the website. Manuel had selected City University based on referral but also because the university's website stated it offered a degree in international business. Unfortunately, he found out that he first had to complete the business degree requirements before he was able to declare an international business emphasis; this information was not available on the website. Upon arriving at the campus as an enrolled student, he found out about the requirement for an international business emphasis. However, he still feels that the information on the website about an international business major is true, and admits he might have misread the information. Manuel is hopeful that he will find the right person, in his next semester at the university, who will confirm whether the information about an international business major is correct or not.

A third student also relied on information published on the university's website, and had accepted the university's invitation for admissions--without ever visiting the campus. Ricardo admitted that accepting admissions without visiting the campus was "blind" on his part. He felt City University was the right place for him to transfer to. Ricardo confesses:

Actually, I never visited the campus; all I did was look online. So, I guess it was a blind acceptance on my part. Just knowing that it had all of these

facilities—and other friend attending or applying—it just felt like the right place to go at the time. And I did, I accepted.

Ricardo, like many of the students and alumni in this study, accepted admission to his university of choice without actually setting foot on campus. The students relied on recommendations from family and friends, reputation, and information available on the university website. Thus, it is imperative for university to ensure information published on their website is updated and accurate; many students select which university to attend based on information found on the website.

Continuing Problems

A number of students and alumni felt nervous about not having community college coursework posted on their university transcript. For instance, this happened to both José and Manuel. Upon learning this information was missing from his transcript, José immediately contacted the schools of business at his respective universities to research the reason his transcript did not reflect his community college coursework. Because this student is paying his tuition entirely from personal loans and from his own earnings, he felt uneasy about not seeing courses posted on his transcripts; he worried that it would mean having to spend more on his education and delaying his graduation. Manuel also spoke to the school of business at his university and learned that he needed to take some steps to have his general education posted on his transcript. He was unsure who he needed to speak with and was waiting for the semester to end to begin the process; he anticipated that it would be a long and tedious process and opted instead to focus on his current school work. He would resolve the problem at the end of his semester. He chose to focus on his academics for the current semester rather than

resolving the issue; doing so would allow him to complete the semester successfully without the additional stress of resolving the unposted coursework issue.

A third of the students and alumni participants reported feeling frustrated with the university's financial aid services. One student was questioning whether his frustration with the university's financial aid services was an isolated incident or whether it was a universally shared frustration among the student population. Initially, the student was awarded a very good financial aid package to work less in order to establish an identity on campus as a university student and to focus more of his time on school. However, after he had accepted the award and reduced his hours at work, he received a modified award letter showing he no longer had the university grant he was originally offered. He was very disappointed and felt discouraged. He was forced to take out more loans, and as a result his out of pocket educational expenses increased.

A different student, Ricardo, was initially very happy with his financial aid packet as well. Prior to receiving his financial aid award letter, Ricardo worried about how he was going to finance his education at the university of his dreams. He knew from the start that the tuition at the private university would be significantly more than attending a public university. But he saw it as an investment and accepted that it would cost more. He even skipped applying for financial aid at the community college because he mistakenly thought that any financial aid accepted at the community college would reduce his award at the university. So his prayers were answered when he received the award letter. However, his G.P.A. dropped as a result of having a rough first semester at the university while trying to adjust and dealing with family problems. He was put on academic probation and he lost a merit scholarship. He felt ashamed and doubted his capability to

succeed at the university. To make matters worse, the financial aid office did not seem empathetic of his situation. Without sharing much detail about his personal problems, Ricardo tried to explain that he was going through rough times and pleaded for an exception. Unfortunately, federal financial aid policy did not allow exceptions for special circumstances.

Unmet Expectations

Many of the Mexican American CCT students and alumni in this study expected the university to have the best resources because they were attending a private, wealthy, and prestigious university; however, that wasn't always the case. One student was happy to be attending the private university, and his family praised him for this accomplishment. However, once he began his university studies, he quickly learned that the university's creative writing lab consisted of a small room with limited resources. He was disappointed at both himself and the university. He felt he should have done more research on the university's academic resources and should have not assumed that because it was a private university that he would have access to the best resources. He was disappointed with the university because it gave him the message that the university did not really care for the art of writing or that it was not a priority. He adds that a priority of the university was clearly to maintain its beautiful aesthetics rather than funding an important program.

Other students were surprised to learn that the means of communication was better at the community college than at the private university. For a student who had attended the new student orientation, he especially expected the university to communicate information on what students could expect in the first weeks of the initial

semester. He anticipated that the university would do this because his community college covered all the details on what a new student should know about attending a new school.

The student said this about his expectations not being met:

I'd say it was difficult at first, just because I really am not used to the campus. I had no one to tell me this was what it was going to be like, where at [the community college] it was sort of for student's coming in "This is what you should expect, we're here." During the new student orientation they don't really go over what to expect so much, the daily incidentals. And so just simple things like parking, where should I park at the campus?

While the student admits that there are no real differences on what to expect when attending class, he found it difficult to get around the campus and to access resources such as where to go to join clubs or develop a social network. When not in class the student found himself doing homework at the library rather than developing a social life because he did not know what else to do and he did not know anyone to help him get through the situation. The student claimed, "It was awkward. Initially the transfer wasn't very good at all. First semester, I think, was tough". This scenario proved to be true for a majority of the CCT student and alumni in this study.

When describing their university experience, many of the male Mexican American participants referred to their community college experience in identifying expectations of the university. For instance, because of the diversity of community colleges, some students expected a more diverse campus than what was actually present. Others expected to have the latest technology at the private university because their community college had great technological resources and it was a public school. Others expected to have an even more rigorous academic workload, but one found that his community college's academic rigor was actually tougher; he attributes it to the college's

goal in preparing transfer students for university work. So, when he arrived at the university, the student actually found the assignments manageable and he felt academically well-prepared.

Connections and Validating Experiences

The CCT alumni and student participants shared many examples of connecting to the university and experiencing validation from university personnel. While the study did not seek information about the validating experiences of students by faculty, student and alumni participants unexpectedly included faculty as university personnel who validated them, and whom the students connected with at the university. The findings in this section are organized into two sub-sections: (a) validation; and, (b) academic and student affairs professionals (ASAP) perceptions.

Validation

The six students and six alumni describe various validation experiences they encountered when engaging with university administrators including faculty. Surprisingly, the validation by faculty emerged as a result of students sharing about their experiences in both the in- and out-of-class interaction. The participants also shared experiences of self-validation as part of their university experiences, and they attribute the self-validation instances to their academic success.

Faculty Experiences

Many of the students responded with an example of being validated by faculty when asked to describe a moment in which a university administrator validated them outside of class. Five of the students and six of the alumni told of being validated as male Mexican American community college transfer students by a professor. The researcher

had to repeat the question and emphasize the word *administrators* in order to ensure the student understood that the question asked to describe validation experienced from university administrators, and not faculty. However, because the majority of the study's participants reported experiencing faculty validation, a section is included on faculty validation. Although, many examples of faculty validation emerged, faculty was not included nor interviewed for the study. Thus, faculty validation is included as an emerging theme. Sub-themes that surfaced from the data include: encouraging, belonging, in-class acknowledgement, making connections, and developing relationships.

Student experiences described as validating were words of encouragement they received from specific faculty members. The participants perceived the words of encouragement as motivating and supportive. One student who experienced frustration with his transition to the university says that he received words of encouragement from a professor who knew his situation; these words motivated him to overcome the hardship. The professor's words were simply, "Just keep at it; you know, you're almost there". This comment confirmed to Jesús that someone at the university cared and believed that he would persevere in spite of the difficulty he encountered during the start of his university experience.

A different CCTS alumnus felt validated by his professor when he gave him the option of skipping the final for the course. Mike explains that receiving the invitation from the professor made him feel like someone had noticed how hard he had worked in this class. Mike avows:

He pulled me aside and asked to speak to me. [He said] I had the option of not taking the final because I had already locked an A in the course. It made me feel like someone had noticed and acknowledged my hard work.

This in-class acknowledgement confirmed to Mike that he belonged at Sunny University—that he was university material. These simple words the professor shared with Mike served to diminish some of the doubt Mike held about his academic potential as a result of being a community college transfer student and a first-generation college student.

An additional student participant from City University who was in his second semester at the university, described feeling validated by his business professor the very first time he sat in class. Manuel notes: “I guess that is just when I felt I belonged [at the university]. She advised me. She knew I was a transfer [student]”. Upon asking Manuel to describe a validating experience by an administrator, he did not have an example. Not having a validating experience specifically from an administrator might explain why Manuel gave an example of a professor instead. This professor made him feel he belonged at the university. Nevertheless, the student received positive interaction from a member of the university.

Some students and alumni expressed feeling a connection with faculty who shared personal information about themselves, or about people in their life. Antonio, for example, made a connection with his Chicano history professor who shared that he was also originally from the same region as Antonio. He remembers meeting him prior to enrolling in his class. Antonio visited the professor during his office hours to simply have a discussion. The purpose for meeting him, Antonio explains, was to “just talk—not about school—we just talked about our area, East L.A., family. He asked me about my family. He was interested in my history research project”. During this visit, Antonio identified himself as a community college transfer student. The professor replied by

saying that he had many friends who had attended a community college who now hold Ph.D.'s. This information reaffirmed to Antonio that it is not impossible to achieve his academic and career goals; that it is very possible for CCTS to succeed beyond a bachelor's degree education.

The professor made such a profound impact on Antonio that he immediately enrolled in his course. At the time of this interview, Antonio had enrolled in a second course with the same professor. He knows he is always welcome to visit his professor's office to discuss improving his grades, or to simply say hello. When the professor voluntarily shared personal information about his life or people in his life, Antonio understood this as evidence that he, too, would succeed in a college setting. As a result of the connection, Antonio considers the professor approachable and knows he may visit him anytime to discuss just about any topic.

In this study, students and alumni participants developed relationships mostly with approachable faculty members who validated them as capable learners. Similarly to Antonio, who made a connection with a professor who he found approachable, Tom also was helped by a professor who he considers accessible. Tom remembers sitting in Dr. Miller's office after receiving an invitation to discuss Tom's midterm—he had earned a low grade. Tom was extremely concerned because he had gone from earning straight A's at the community college to earning an F on his political science midterm at the university. Tom shares the interaction with his professor in the following words:

He actually asked me to go in his office [to sit] down with him and asked like, "How did you study for this?" and "What did you think?" So, I he gave me some pointers on how to study for the final [because] his class was just a midterm and a final—and that was it. I ended up getting A on the final and pulled a B in the class. After that, like that was pretty much the deciding point where I knew, "OK, I can handle this".

Dr. Miller reached out to Tom and expressed concern for his low grade. He was interested in learning what went wrong and how he could help Tom study for his next exam. He even went as far as giving him tips on preparing for the final examination. Dr. Miller left Tom with a positive impression about the university—that the university cares about seeing its students succeed. Tom was grateful to Dr. Miller for wanting to sit with him to find out what went wrong. Dr. Miller assisted Tom in identifying how he learned best and ways of improving his studying habits.

A different student also developed a relationship with his professors. When Jesús' wife was in the hospital delivering their second baby, his English professor, Dr. W, was very supportive when he missed class. The professor understood that he had to attend to his wife and their newborn baby girl, and as a result had missed a few days of class. She allowed him to turn in his missed assignments upon returning from Spring break. The surprise came when he learned that he enrolled in her class without realizing she had the reputation as one of the toughest English professors. So, Jesús was elated when he received an A grade in her course after working very hard in her class. He says the following about the feedback he received from Dr. W:

I remember staying up late at night just trying to figure out what she wanted. One day she told me, "You're doing good. You're doing great. You love what you're doing." She explained it to me. She actually went into detail, explains why you are doing a good job, and what needs to be worked on. But if it's a critical objective that really motivated me because that means that the teacher is actually reading what I'm writing—not just having somebody else read it for them or just putting a grade [they] feel like giving you. She actually took the time to break it down. Now that [is motivating] because it shows that what I'm doing is not just being tossed [out]. She was a really hard teacher and I ended getting an A in the class. I'm pretty proud of it just because it was so difficult. It helped me a lot because it changed and improved my writing skills a lot. And it had a lot to do with her—she was just very supportive....She was interested in what

I had to say and it mattered, I guess, it is all like a pat on the back. It's all that you really need to keep going.

Dr. W really made an impact on Jesús. She was supportive during a time of need. She also gave him detailed feedback about his writing and provided advice on how to improve his writing piece. He felt great finishing the class because he knew that he completed a very difficult class and earned the highest grade possible. In addition, he developed a sense of respect for Dr. W because she empathized with the responsibilities he had as a family man. Although she was a difficult professor, she was approachable in times of need. She allowed him some flexibility in order to care for his family, and gave him the support he needed in order to keep going—to succeed.

Administrative Validation

Three of the six community college transfer students and all six CCTS alumni perceived having at least one moment in which they were validated by a university administrator. Unfortunately, all three CCT students from City University claimed they did not encounter validation from administrators. The three students from Sunny University who did encounter validation from administrators also experienced a non-validating experience. However, in the following are recounts of several examples of validation of CCTS by administrators. Categories that emerged from the data on administrative validation include early impression, academic counseling, and extracurricular validation.

A number of students encountered a validating experience prior to transferring to the university. In one example, the positive experience may be attributed to identifying himself to all university personnel as a community college transfer student. Joel took a step further by admitting to the staff that he needed their help. He found student services

accommodating in answering his questions. He stressed, “They would help me as much as possible”. He felt validated by the student services department because of the helpful nature of a few university personnel. Specifically, Joel identifies the admissions counselor as helpful, and describes the staff’s actions that made him feel validated in the following excerpt:

[Sunny University] validated me a lot. They helped with the many times that I wanted them to answer [my] questions. Whenever I had a question, I can call them and they would answer my question—they would call me right back. I would e-mail them. Within days they would e-mail me back. I never felt as if I was bugging them [because] they were always helpful to me.

In the preceding quote, Joel clearly identifies specific actions by the admissions counselor, such as timely replies and providing answers to his questions, as validating. Joel felt comfortable approaching the admissions counselor. The message he received from engaging with the admissions office was the counselors were approachable and accountable. Once enrolled at the university, Joel had a second positive interaction with campus personnel.

Another student experienced two validating experiences at Sunny University. José had helpful incidences when interacting with counselors in both admissions and financial aid offices. With the admissions office, José felt supported and reaffirmed about his capability of achieving a college degree. Because of his immigrant status, he was unable to afford the out-of-state tuition fees from the first four-year university he transferred to—a public university. The fees became a hindrance, and he decided instead to return to community college to improve his English. When it was time for José to transfer, his employer encouraged him to seek admission at a private university that was geographically closer to his place of employment. The validation occurred when he met

with an admissions counselor who immediately made him feel welcome when she encouraged him to transfer to Sunny University after completing the last required transferable courses at the community college. She explained the university was not concerned with his immigration status but instead about his academic ability; she added that, clearly, his transcripts reflected his potential of succeeding at Sunny University. In the following, the student describes how he felt after this experience:

I feel more motivated. And I feel like I can do it and I can do better. And I am pretty sure that I will finish within a year or two [because] I am still working on [transferring courses] from the [public four-year university]. That will be, like, five more classes I could transfer in.

It is evident from the quote that the conversation between the admissions counselor and the student left the student knowing he would complete his degree very soon. The admissions counselor made a positive impression on the student, and as a result he remembered his interview with her clearly.

A different time José remembers feeling cared about as a transfer student is when he immediately received a return telephone call from the Financial Aid Office regarding his school loans. The student felt the financial aid office treated him “as a person and they try to help” (José, 2006, p. 3) because they returned his message. This service made a positive impact on him especially while he was worried and unsure of how he would finance his university education. For José, the positive assistance he received from the administration cancelled out some of the uncertainty and negative feelings he faced as a result of the transition from institution to another. The great customer service he received from the financial aid staff and administration affected how he felt about the university.

Similarly to José, Joel appreciated the services rendered by the university’s financial aid office. When asked if he sought any student services while at the university,

Joel shares about his attempt in trying to obtain scholarships and loans from the university:

The experience was real helpful but the person they [told] me to talk to tried to help me out as much as possible. And she was able to provide me with \$3000 more. I tried to press my luck to see if I could get more money and she said that [amount] would be it. And that the rest I would have to pay out of my own pocket which was not a problem.

Joel considered the assistance he received from the financial aid office as helpful and validating. He attempted to improve his financial award by asking for more. He felt he had nothing to lose by asking for more. The relationship he developed with the university professional gave him the confidence to seek more financial assistance. Because the financial aid advisor went out of her way to obtain the most financial for him, he perceived her as the most helpful of all the staff.

A CCTS alumnus from Sunny University describes feeling validated upon participating in the new student orientation for transfer students. Jonathan recounts his experience with his university's new student orientation program:

Once I started [Sunny University], everyone was very welcoming. They had a new student orientation. Everyone was welcoming, for the most part. I didn't know anybody [at the orientation]. I knew one person at [SU]. So, all the teachers that I [met] were very friendly. All my classes were small; so that was cool. I was able to meet my teachers. Their biggest goal there is to make new students feel at home, feel welcomed, feel validated, and stuff.

Jonathan's positive experience with Sunny University's new student orientation allowed him to meet professors. He felt as though everyone was welcoming and friendly. It was clear to this student that the goal of the orientation was to help the transfer student to feel at home and validated at Sunny University.

Some CCT student and alumni felt validated and welcomed by the university during their initial contact with the university's admissions office. For example, Miguel, who goes by Mike, told of his experience with the admissions office at Sunny University. The admissions counselor was encouraging, courteous, and helpful. The level of treatment he received confirmed his desire to attend Sunny University: "My initial interview with the admissions counselor was very encouraging and cemented my decision to want to attend [Sunny University]. She was extremely courteous and helpful". Mike's initial experience with the university was a positive one. He felt encouraged and welcomed by the university prior to applying for admission because of the warm service he received from the admissions counselor. He became determined and committed to attend this particular university because of this positive interaction with the admissions counselor.

Several of the CCT student and alumni participants report feeling validated by an academic counselor within their program of study. For example, a community college transfer student named René recounts being validated by an administrator within the School of Business at Sunny University when he faced problems enrolling in courses required to graduate in his senior year as planned:

I [was starting] my fourth year, and I couldn't get the classes [I needed] because they filled up [as] I was trying to get everything sorted out. So I told the professor "I'm having trouble. Next semester, I need to take finance. I'm a finance major. I need finance and three electives, and I've never taken any of them." And so he goes, "That's a problem. Go see this woman in the college of business." I went to [see] her and she was absolutely great. She helped me in every possible [way]. She even told me, "This is what you gotta do." I took a while doing it. She sent me an e-mail saying, "You have to make sure [you do it]. You have to do it. I can't do it for you." And I thought that was great.

René felt important and cared about when the administrator sent him a follow-up e-mail, reminding him to fulfill the steps she suggested he take to resolve his issue.

Unfortunately, this positive experience occurred after having an impersonal and unsatisfactory advising session with another administrator.

A number of students reported being validated at the university by an academic counselor. An alumnus from City University had a validating experience during a counseling session with an academic counselor. An older student, who returned to the community college in his 30's after a long break from college, remembers his first interaction with the female academic counselor. He describes the interaction as encouraging—he received personalized direction with his academic planning. She specifically outlined the upper division courses he needed to take at the university. She suggested an order in which to complete the courses. He admits following her instructions and completing his courses as suggested. He affirms that taking the courses in that order allowed him to know where he stood academically without any confusion or surprises. Because of the accurate counseling session with an academic counselor at City University, he advises his nephew—who is currently attending a university—to consistently seek the advice of an academic counselor at his respective institution. Further, he suggested to his nephew to enroll in courses that fulfill a requirement for his major, and to not waste his time taking courses that do not fulfill a transfer requirement—as he did when he first enrolled in college. He found the knowledge he gained from this validating experience so vital to accomplishing a degree that he passed on the information to someone whose education he cared about.

Another CCTS alumnus, Alejandro, from Sunny University was validated by an academic advisor within the Psychology Department. Alejandro felt validating when his academic advisor encouraged him to pursue graduate school. Alejandro had recently completed a master's degree in educational psychology from SU, and he gives credit to his academic advisor for supporting his desire to accomplish his graduate school goals. He recounts meeting with his advisor five times during his two year tenure at SU. He enjoyed the interaction with this advisor so much that he also enrolled in courses he taught. Alejandro interprets his advisor's support for pursuing graduate school as taking a personal interest in his career goals. Although Alejandro enrolled in courses with his advisor, it was the interest in Alejandro's scholastic endeavors that his advisor expressed during the advising appointment that made him feel capable of accomplishing any educational goal he set for himself.

In a new scenario, an athletic coach from City University made a difference in the university life of a CCTS alumnus. When asked to recount any administrative validating experience from engaging in campus sports, Tom initially could not recall a moment. But when asked about his experience playing sports on campus, Tom first remembers about a discouraging meeting he had with the university football coach before meeting the supportive coach from the university's crew team. The validation all occurred when a coach accepted a CCTS into the campus' crew team, "on the spot."

I actually met with the football coach there and was like, "I played at [the community college]; started there two years, transferred to [City University], and I'd like to play football here." And he kind of blew me off and was like, "We've got a pretty good recruiting class." And so I literally walked out of his office, went up the hall, walked into the crew office, met with the head coach and was like, "I'm coming here in the fall. I've played sports my whole life. I don't have a sport to play here yet. I'd like to try out for the crew team." And then he asked me: "Well, you

know, we have a few requirements in athletic abilities. What kind of background do you come from?" and I told him that I was in football, wrestling, track, and volleyball in high school; and football and volleyball in college. And then he asked me some [questions about] lifting weights, how much I could squat, bench, or press. [After] I told him he was like, "Alright, I'm gonna put you in my first group." And, like, a week later I had my acceptance letter from the University".

Tom felt his athletic abilities were confirmed by the invitation to join the crew team.

Unfortunately, Tom met the unsupportive football coach before meeting the compassionate crew team coach. But because of his perseverance to play sports for the university, he did not let that experience with the football coach impede his desire to play ball. Instead, he continued pursuing his goal of playing sports at the university, and eventually landed a position on the university's crew team upon meeting a welcoming and supportive coach.

When asked to share about an out-of-class validating experience received from an administrator or staff, a City University CCTS alumnus describes two experiences he encountered but he emphasized about his experience with pastoral counseling. The first validating experience occurred when an academic dean cleared the letter grade F he received for a class he did not withdraw from by the deadline; however, it was the second validating experience he encountered that helped improve his university experience.

Ricardo had sought the help of the university's pastors when confronted with the difficulties associated with transferring and adjusting to university life. In his first semester at the university, Ricardo was at a stressful point in his life. He had considered two options: whether to drop out of college or to stay and finish. He was mourning the death of close family members and facing other family problems. In addition, Ricardo was feeling overwhelmed by the changes. When Rene decided to turn to spiritual

counseling, he clearly identified the interaction with one Father as an out-of-class validation:

It was actually the pastors. Whenever I needed to consult with them, or just talk to them, simply, I would just give them a call and they would be there—I mean, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Whenever I needed someone to hear me out, if I had problems, they would be there. They were very helpful the times I needed them. Just another thing that [City University] provided.

This student benefited from a service found only at religious universities—pastoral counseling. Public universities and colleges would not have offered this service. Instead he would have decided to drop out of school as a way to cope with the change and trials he faced. He felt validated by City University's pastors during a rough time in his life, and decided to remain in college. Unfortunately, a number of students reiterated that most of the community college students are not encouraged to attend private religious universities; they are encouraged to attend public four-year universities and private universities are not mentioned as an option.

Self-validation

The participating male Mexican American community college transfer students and alumni had one of many things in common: they were determined to succeed at the Catholic university. Self-reliance, resourcefulness, and risk-taking were some of the common characteristics the CCT students and alumni participants had in common. For instance, Jesús admitted getting upset about the lack of information he had early in his university academic experience. He managed to get through the difficult part of his university experience, and even began working on campus for a short time. Campus employment helped him to learn how things worked at the university such as who to contact for specific services and where to go for help.

While most of the students faced a rough transition from the community college to the university, it was their resourceful nature that helped them to address the bumpy moments. Jonathan set out to make at least a couple of friends in each class in order to compare notes, form a study group, and to develop a social identity on campus. He also inquired into student clubs and organizations to join as a way to develop an identity on campus. He eventually joined a multicultural fraternity and MECHA. Membership in these organizations proved his commitment to acclimate to the university and to form an identity as a university student.

Some of the students proved to be risk-takers in their quest to succeed in higher education. Never visiting the university campus prior to the first day of school was a risk several students made. However, they were confident they wanted to complete their degree at a private, religious university, and so visiting the campus could wait until the first day of school. Others risked by juggled multiple responsibilities such as family and employment and not balancing the two. For example, a student risked not attending the university of choice when he failed to inform his wife that he had applied for admission to an out-of-state school. When he had the letter of acceptance in his hand he shocked his wife with the news and, unfortunately, he had to decline the acceptance for admission. The news was a surprise to his wife; he did not prepare her for the possibility of leaving California as a family to complete his degree. A lesson many of the participants in this study learned was the importance of involving their wives, parents, siblings, and children throughout their endeavor to succeed at the university; succeeding in academia was part of the family just as it was part of the students' life.

Some of the students and graduates used the attitude of “If he can do it, so can I” to persevere in college. This attitude helped students get through the toughest moments of their college education. They would measure their ability at succeeding by comparing their skills with the skills of someone they knew, or who they could relate to. In the case of Alejandro, the interaction he had with his community college counselor who was an alumnus of Sunny University reassured him that he, too, would finish a degree. Even more reassuring is that this counselor was encouraging him to apply there, and she even helped him design an educational plan to transfer to her alma mater. He remembers losing the only copy of the educational plan and she was willing to take her time to redo the plan. He was so confident he would be accepted that he only applied to one university—another risk several participants ran.

For Antonio, he adopted the “if he can do it, so can I attitude” when he visited a university in Mexico. He remembers feeling reassured about the likelihood of completing a college degree, when he saw people who looked like him and who spoke Spanish as he did, succeeding at the university. It was reassuring especially since he did not personally know anyone with similar backgrounds who had completed a college degree. His brother had gone straight to the university immediately after completing high school. Unfortunately, he did not complete his degree. So, for Antonio knowing this about his brother who he identified with made him feel there was a possibility that he too would not finish his degree. However, meeting people who he related to, and who possessed the confidence and a positive attitude about college success, gave him a sense of comfort and encouragement to prevail.

Academic and Student Affairs Professionals Perceptions

All of the academic and student affairs professionals (ASAPs) in this study stated that it was difficult to identify male CCTS of Mexican American backgrounds—unless the student volunteered the information; as a result many could not give a specific example on validating MMACCTS. One professional explained that a students' ethnic background is not divulged on students' transcripts, and so it is difficult to determine their ethnic identity on just looks alone. Others also had a difficult time identifying whether a student had transferred into the university from a community college, and relied on information students shared to determine if the student was a community college transfer student.

Identifying Mexican American CCTS

Because many ASAPs were unable to share about a time in which they assisted CCTS of Mexican American descent, they shared instead about other students who identified as Mexican American. For example, an academic affairs professional tells about an interaction she had with a freshman male student who self-identified as Mexican American. He was seeking her assistance in transferring coursework to another university because he was leaving the university to play soccer elsewhere; he confided in her that he did not feel comfortable studying at City University because of the lack of ethnic diversity. While this story does not include a CCTS, the information about lack of ethnic diversity may help explain why it is difficult to identify male CCTS of Mexican American backgrounds—they may be transferring to other four-year university with more ethnic diversity.

Inclusive and Validating Roles

Whereas a number of the academic and student affairs professionals (ASAPs) admit that they had not directly worked with male CCTS who identify as Mexican American, they all consider their roles and responsibilities to be inclusive and validating of all students. For example, a City University ASAP from the academic dean's office asserts that she validates community college transfer students by meeting with students, usually at the beginning of the semester when the student is feeling lost and they are not sure what classes to take. She meets with those CCTS who have not yet declared a major. Another time she meets with CCTS is during the semester when students need to register for classes for the following semester. In this meeting, she provides students with the registration access code to enroll in classes. The only way to obtain the access code is through the academic advisors. This would benefit all CCTS but especially those who transfer into the university without a declared major. While the ASAP admits that all of this information is provided at the new student orientation, she acknowledges that the orientation is not mandatory; and so many students with multiple obligations do not attend. She acknowledges that a high number of CCTS are working and attending school, and so they opt not to attend the orientation. In addition, she also validates CCTS by designating two days of the week prior to the start of the semester to advise students on a drop-in basis. Fortunately for the students, the dean's office has set up mechanisms to compel community college transfer students to interact with this ASAP, creating several opportunities for this academic administrator to validate CCTS throughout the semester.

A second academic administrator at City University working in the dean's office, feels she supports CCTS through her job responsibilities as well—which leads to

validating incoming community college transfer students at every point of their interaction. Adriana has committed over 30 years working directly with community college transfer students in the same capacity at two distinct universities because she cares about the CCTS's success. She evaluates transfer students' transcripts to ensure the core curricula and academic competencies are fulfilled by each transferring student. She enters the information into the academic computer system which automatically inputs information into the students' academic transcript. She plays an important role in the lives of CCT students; she determines whether courses completed at the community college are transferable and whether they fulfill major requirements.

While this ASAP admits that she rarely works with Mexican Americans, she did have an example of a time in which she validated a CCTS of Mexican American descent. In the next excerpt, Adriana describes how she validated a CCTS by helping him prepare graduation paperwork he needed in order to participate in the graduation commencement ceremony:

Well, I just recently was helping one of my students who is up for graduation. I know he's Mexican because I know his mother works here, OK. And I was helping him, you know, get some paperwork passed through for his file so he wouldn't be rejected for graduation. And I met with him a couple of times and made sure that he got the proper signatures, and held his file and made sure everything was complete before I returned it back to the registrar's office so there wouldn't be any problem. But I do that with all students, I mean, I guess I just don't look into the race part of that. I just do what I do when I walk through that door. You know? And I clearly have my little signs up there.

This academic administrator admits that the duties she performs, she performs for every student who seeks her assistance regardless of their race. She adds that because the campus lacks ethnic diversity, it is difficult for her to come across Mexican males, and

those she does come across are in the U.S. as international students from Mexico—not Mexican Americans. And the students' college records do not identify the students' ethnic identity or race. And although students' last names may give a hint at a students' ethnic background, that information is not always reliable. The same is true for an academic advisor within the school of business at Sunny University; she could not identify a moment in which she validated a MMACCTS; however, she was able to tell about times in which she validated male CCTS within the business school at the university.

Two of the participants who are admissions officers also consider their role to inherently validate CCTS—they validate CCTS beginning at the pre-application stage for admissions. The admissions officer at Sunny University feels he confirms to community college students that they belong at the Catholic university when he meets with them to advise them on transferring to SU. He describes specifically what he does in each session with CCTS: “I advise them on what courses they could take that will easily transfer to [SU]. I also advise them on the application process to [SU]. And I just get out general information about the university”. Andrew admits that he has not worked with too many male Mexican American community college transfer students and, like Adriana, instead offers to share about a time that he validated a male Mexican American community college student who wanted to transfer to SU. He was doing a favor for a female co-worker who asked him to advise her brother on transferring to SU. He explained to the prospective student the steps he needed to take to strengthen his application for admission. While he admits that he was advising a co-worker's sibling, he acknowledges

that he gives all prospective students the same helpful and genuine customer service. He does his admissions advising role well whether he is helping a stranger or a friend.

He stresses that his role is important to how prospective students view the university since he is the first point of contact with the university. And so he feels he validates CCTS by doing a good job of guiding them through the application process and advising them on courses to take to transfer to the university while encouraging them through the process. In addition, he feels he validates CCTS by making sure they complete the process by giving them accurate data so that they can realize their goal of transferring to SU. Also, he feels he validates CCTS by participating in campus cultural events and inviting CCTS to become part of the campus community by engaging in activities in order to network and make friends. He does this because he knows that CCTS do not have the advantage that freshman have of having two years to develop a social network by their junior year. Many of the CCTS transfer in their junior year and enter having no social life and do not feel part of the university community as a result of being new to the campus. This ASAP feels that as an admissions officer he is validating CCTS by giving them advice to help them adjust to a new environment in addition to counseling CCTS on academics to transfer to the university

On the other hand, the admissions officer at City University believes his role as transfer admissions officer was designed to validate prospective CCTS and encourage them to apply to attend CU; however, he is unable to serve prospective CCTS because his office is short-staffed and he has spent more of his time recruiting and assisting prospective freshman students on their admission application. So, unfortunately, he was unable to recount a time in which he validated a MMACCTS at CU. Nathan instead

focused on sharing about his professional experience recruiting CCTS for the university where he was previously employed for over eight years. He begins by stating that his professional relationship with CCTS “ends once a student is admitted into the college campus,” and the “interaction with students [is] limited beyond the recruitment and evaluation process”. One way he validated prospective CCTS was by visiting community college campuses and was “proactive about at least trying to be an example of what a successful graduate could do”. He spoke with students in, and participated in events held by, organizations such as MECHA, AVID, and bridge programs in order to specifically target populations that were non-traditional college students. Nathan shares his intentions in visiting these groups:

And what I would try to do is go to some of their events, interact with the students, at least acknowledge the pursuing the four-year degree was not only an option but really in their reach and expectation. You know, it wasn't something that they thought 'I should be working towards'; it was something that they were going to do.

The college recruiter admits that while he did this for the last university he worked for, he has not been able to do the same for CU during his eight months of employment due to staff shortages. He currently is wearing a number of hats which include webmaster, transfer advisor, and freshman evaluator. In spite of the current circumstances, he is confident that the university is committed to serving CCTS; it is evident through the existence of his position. In addition, he maintains the university is dedicated to CCTS by accepting 350 new CCTS each academic year. Nathan adds, “Most [private] colleges don't really pay attention to community college students, to be honest”. He believes he will resume to his regular role as transfer advisor as soon as the two vacant positions within the admissions office are filled. He also explains that the field of admissions is

“atrocious for staff retention”—it is difficult to retain qualified admissions officers because people who take these jobs right out of college leave when they realize, a year or two later, that this career is not right for them. This ASAP has committed to a career in admissions and recruitment of CCTS by remaining in the field for over eight years—it is his way of validating potential CCTS that they belong at the Catholic university.

Both of the dormitory resident directors in the study found they served as role models for heterosexual males. While his fulltime role is resident director, and he also works in the summers assisting with the orientation program for community college transfer students. His role as resident director is to implement social events for the students living in the dorms and also to trouble-shoot. He says his role is unique in the sense that he serves as a role model for other heterosexual males living in the dorms.

Francisco states:

As a straight, white male, more of the masculine side, working in student affairs I don't think there are a whole lot of us. And I think there are so many males running around who need someone to stand up and say “this is how you live a good life and this is what being a good person is all about. And this is what Jesuit education and myself is all about.” This is my philosophy.

He intentionally targets males when it comes to recruiting students to participate in his off-campus outdoor adventures and recreation. Francisco feels males need that kind of leadership and role modeling on campus, and he bases his intentions of literature, his observations, and the directives from the university administration. These programs allow his male residents to get out of the city and enjoy camping trips to the desert and mountains. His budget pays for the cost of these trips; otherwise, students would not be able to participate. Francisco states, “It is a really healthy way to build community and giving students things to do on the weekends other than clubbing and drinking”. This

ASAPs validates students by concerning about the quality of the out-of-class learning experiences and created ones that are valuable lessons for the students.

One of the resident directors, in particular, feels that his role validates male CCTS of Mexican American descent through the university's culture of high student contact. He validates students by being readily available to assist them when in need. The dormitory he oversees houses a diverse group of transfer students, including those that have transferred from other four-year universities and community colleges around the country. While he admits having a hard time giving a concrete example in which he validated a CCTS, he does have a routine practice in which he circulates the dorm halls in order to make contact with the students residing in his dorm hall.

After spending some time reflecting, he is able to identify a CCTS of Mexican-descent from the northern region of California who he remembers assisting during a time of need. The student had just transferred and had difficulty balancing his high school and community college social networks while creating a new social network on campus. Part of the reason for not making new friends at SU was that he spent a lot of time on his cellular phone talking to his friends from home rather than developing new relationships with students at the university. He believes that CCTS integrate into the campus culture differently, and they must be looked at on a case-by-case basis; some CCTS have a difficult time while others may have it easier. In reference to Mexican American male CCTS, he feels that it is even more difficult because there is a smaller number of other Mexican Americans on campus and an even lesser number of CCTS in general. And so making those connections with other CCTS of Mexican American descent becomes a

unique and difficult situation. His role is to help students to develop the social skills to successfully make personal connections with other students in the dorms and on campus.

The multicultural center administrators in this study felt they validated community college transfer students of color by helping them to adjust to a majority White campus. One advisor has served working with CCTS for over 11 years supporting the university's transfer programming. She feels she validates MMACCTS by meeting with them individually in a one-on-one session and advises them to get connected to the campus immediately, and reassures them that she is available anytime to assist them with their adjustment to an majority White campus. When asked to describe how her role as director of the multicultural center validates CCTS, she acknowledges to the student that they may be feeling a bit isolated from attending a majority White campus and that it is OK to not try to figure out why they feel invalidated by the institution, environment, classrooms, and teachers. Juana explains to students:

I empathize, validate, and acknowledge what they are going through. And then my second rule is to provide them guidance, advice, and support on how to challenge themselves to overcome any feelings of adversity in terms of how they would go back into a classroom and address a faculty member, either [during] their office hours or in response to feeling selected out within a class [because] you're Latino. [I] support their transition, provide personal experiences, and also suggest skills to develop coping mechanisms to be effective advocates for themselves.

Her rationale for using this approach with CCTS of color is that a lot of students, especially transfer students, have not experienced a different type of campus and as a result feel isolated. She serves students on a day-to-day basis as a mentor on how to cope with the challenges of being a minority in a majority White campus. To help support Latino male students, she formed a male group called *Circulo de Hombres*. This group served to provide male students with resources to help transition into the campus culture.

The group served as a forum for the men in which they could share the challenges they dealt with as Latino men on a majority White university campus. Many of these students were the first ones in their families to attend college, and so the peer group positively served students by allowing them to share their experiences with one another. This administrator shares that she has finds she serves as a mother figure to many of her male students which gives the male students a sense of comfort that they do not always find elsewhere on the campus.

In comparison, the male administrator of the same multicultural center at City University finds himself using an approach that teaches students of color to avoid self-victimizing when attending a majority White campus. The self-identified, Chicano and Mexican American administrator maintains that he “does not ascribe to the theory of student validation because an individual in their developmental stages in life will seek from the outside some sense of affirmation, some sense of validation”. Rather, Isaac’s work involves getting students to work from within to self-actualize, build self-esteem, create a sense of critical consciousness, and liberate themselves from victimization. He feels social scientists, in the past, have really “forced down their throat” the victimization perception. He believes it is a mutual responsibility between students of color attending a predominantly White campus and university professionals to help them adjust to a new campus climate. His approach involves acknowledging students’ experiences and mobilizing student resources to help improve their university experiences rather than saying “seek for validation and look for it in people”. Instead of letting students be victimized by a social construct that historically does not include students of color, he provides skill and tools for students to “build themselves up individually”. When

advising students, he prefers to teach students to view life using different perspectives in an effort for students to take charge of their life and education, and to be independent. He does not want to enable students by giving them a false notion that they need him; he is not looking to serve in the role of a parent or to fulfill the role of friend. His goal is to provide mentorship so that these students will seek out other students to mentor. He states, “It is not about me; it is about the student when I do my work”. While this ASAP may not believe he is validating students—but rather acknowledging them, his professional work clearly validates students as capable learners. He cares enough about student experiences that he acknowledges their needs and lends a helping hand.

University Ready

All nine of the professionals in the study perceived community college transfer students as academically prepared and driven to succeed. They believe CCTS have the drive, motivation, and skills to accomplish whatever they set their minds to do. They do acknowledge that some CCTS may struggle academically, but it is not due to being academically unprepared; it is a result of the number of responsibilities they cope with in addition to their academic responsibilities. The advisor from the academic dean’s office states that when she meets with CCTS, it usually is not an academic probation issue. She sees CCTS as “very focused in that they know they want to get in, come in, and they know when they want to leave [the university]”. Because they are attending an expensive private university, CCTS do not want to spend more time at the university than required. Based on Alicia’s personal experience as a CCTS who studied at a private university, CCTS are determined to complete their undergraduate studies and take the necessary steps to ensure they finish in a timely manner.

An academic advisor assumes that if a CCTS is accepted by SU, then the CCTS possesses the grades and test scores, and the ability to succeed academically. Elizabeth does not question his or her academic capability. She serves the CCTS with the attitude and assumption that he or she is a capable learner. She trusts that the admissions office has done their job of evaluating the CCTS application thoroughly to determine college aptitude. In the following excerpt, the academic advisor describes her perspective about CCTS academic preparedness:

So, based on that we assume that they will be able to complete the work for their major that they need. Basically, if they are doing well at the junior college, we assume they will do well here at [SU]. So, the admissions office, these people are admitted through the undergraduate admissions office. And if they were admitted by admissions, we have no doubt they succeed here as well.

Thus, by the time this advisor meets with the student, she is ready to advise the CCTS on which courses to enroll in his or her first semester. She is the person that ensures the CCTS have had a smooth transition, and that his or her community college coursework is transferred in successfully. She believes the university confirms a student's ability to succeed academically by accepting the CCTS to complete their degree at her institution. She adds that when she meets with students, she encourages CCTS to continue doing well, and if they happen to not being doing well academically, she provides students with resources to improve their studies to avoid getting on the "probation roller coaster". This ASAP extends her assistance to CCTS when in need and all the time. She truly believes the CCTS are at the university because the students belong there and they have proven themselves academically.

Conclusion

Chapter four revealed the findings of the study. The data from this study clearly suggest that the theory of student validation which involves community college personnel engaging in confirming to students that they belong at the college, may also be applied to university personnel. University personnel validated students by acknowledging that they are university material and care about the student's success. To summarize, none of the CCT students and all three of the CCT alumni from City University felt validated by the university's administration and staff. And of those six City University participants, only five felt satisfied with their overall university experience. In comparison, Sunny University's six participants felt validated by administrators, and all six were also satisfied with their overall university experience. In addition, all nine ASAPs felt they validated MMACCTS as a result of fulfilling their daily job requirements.

In this study, the results also suggest that validation of CCTS by university personnel contributed to and influenced the perceptions of CCTS about their overall university experiences. Eleven of the student and alumni CCTS participants were satisfied overall with their university experiences, while one student was not satisfied with it at all. Most of the students and alumni participants attributed validating and non-validating experiences to this satisfaction—even with three students could not identify experiencing validation from administrators. The one student who clearly expressed that he was not satisfied with his experience felt the university did not believe he belonged at the university, and it made it difficult for him to transition smoothly into the campus. The results also imply that faculty validation contributed to the overall satisfaction of eleven of the twelve student and alumni participants. And while most of CCTS participants were

satisfied with their overall university experiences, all 12 participants had wished they had done some things differently to avoid some of the non-validating experiences they endured.

Academic and student affairs professionals had mixed perceptions about the CCTS' overall satisfaction with their university experience. Some felt that because of the important role social aspect plays in adjusting to university life, some CCTS may not be as satisfied with their university experience as those who were able to adjust socially to the campus climate. And others felt that for the MMACCTS, it is probably even more difficult because they are a minority on the campus. As one student stated, "Although, there is an established Latino population, they may not be able to come in contact". And for CCTS who attend a university with a less diverse demographic of students and university personnel than what they were exposed to at the community college, it could become difficult relating to a new student population and campus climate. Academically, the ASAPs in the study felt that CCTS were satisfied overall with the university's academic rigor. The ASAPs do acknowledge that while some of the CCTS may be struggling in trying to balance academics with other non-academic responsibilities, they eventually graduate from the university and leave with an overall satisfaction with their experience.

The participants in the study provided many examples on how administrators and faculty validate the community college transfer students. While most of the students felt satisfied with their university experience, all the participants of the study agreed that the university needs to do more for the CCTS to integrate CCTS into the university campus community smoothly.

CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study, male Mexican American community college transfer students' university experience could be described as one in which they juggled many responsibilities and tasks to complete their undergraduate studies at the Catholic university--just as in the art of multiplexing where an individual tosses multiple balls and catches them strategically. The responsibilities MMACCTS juggled, such as family and work, were carefully and strategically thrown and caught one at a time using their own set of hands while completing their coursework. Most of the students had three or more personal and academic responsibilities to get done by a certain deadline, and so the individual did strategically what was necessary to reach their academic goals within a timeframe. In most cases, the students reached out to campus resources, university personnel, faculty, and family for assistance in juggle their multiple responsibilities.

This chapter draws on and discusses the findings within the framework of four research questions. This section also reports the recommendations from the study's participants and the researcher. The chapter is concluded with a discussion on the implications for policy, recommendations for future study, and concluding remarks.

Introduction

This study examined the validation and university experiences of male Mexican American community college transfer students and alumni from when they were enrolled students. The framework guiding this study was based on Rendón's (1994) theory of student validation which affirms that ethnic minority college students' college experience will improve and graduation rates will increase when college personnel proactively

engages in validating these students. While Rendón's theory is based on community college institutions, the findings in this study suggest that the theory of student validation also applies to the validation for ethnic minority and non-traditional CCT students studying at private religious universities. The results of this qualitative study reaffirmed the importance for Catholic universities to pay closer attention to community college transfer students (CCTS) as means to ensure that CCTS ultimately graduate from four-year universities. In addition, the data proposes that students who were validated by academic and student affairs professionals and others were more likely to feel satisfied with their overall university experience.

Purpose of the Study

One purpose of the study was to determine the level that male Mexican American community college transfer students perceived themselves academically and personally validated by non-teaching administrators at private religious universities. A second purpose of the study was to determine the extent that male CCT alumni of Mexican descent felt validated by administrators during their university experience. The third purpose of the study was to determine the degree of which administrators felt they validated MMACCTS. Finally, the last purpose of the study was to determine the level of congruency of CCTS' and alumni CCTs' perceptions with the perceptions of administrators regarding validation of MMACCTS' and CCT alumni' experiences at these religious institutions

Summary of Findings

While three fourths of the male Mexican American CCT student and alumni participants experienced validation from academic and student affairs professionals,

eleven of the twelve felt satisfied with their overall university experience at their respective Catholic university. All of the student and alumni participants of Mexican-descent identified specific moments of validation, and non-validation, by administrators within the departments of academic affairs and student affairs. In addition, while the study did not include a research question on the validation of MMACCTS by faculty, almost all of the participants had a story to share about their interaction with faculty and how it contributed to their satisfaction with the university experience.

The findings showed that none of the CCTS and all three of the CCT alumni from City University (CU) felt validated by the university's administration, with five of the six CU participants reporting feeling satisfied with their overall university experience. In comparison, all six Sunny University (SU) participants felt validated by administrators, and all six were also satisfied with their overall university experience. In addition, all nine ASAPs felt they validated MMACCTS as a result of performing their daily job responsibilities. In reference to the CU CCTS who were unable to report a moment in which they felt validated by ASAPs, the data suggest that self-reliance was a contributing factor for CCTS; students missed an opportunity to receive validation from ASAPs because they had the tools and strategies to navigate the university without assistance from ASAPs. It is difficult to determine congruency between the perceptions of students and alumni about validation by university personnel with the perceptions of ASAPs in engaging in validating MMACCTS; however, more quantitative research must be conducted to determine the correlation between factors such as self-reliance and validation.

The results of the study also affirm that validation of CCTS by university personnel contributed to and influenced the perceptions of CCTS about their overall university experiences. Faculty validation unexpectedly emerged as a source of student validation and contributor to their satisfaction of the university because the research question specifically asked students about validation from administrators in academic and student affairs. CCTS in the study also attributed the religious affiliation and international student population as factors that helped to improve their university experiences. Perhaps a contributing factor to the validation of CCTS was ASAPs believing that CCTS are academically prepared for the university and satisfied with the university's academic rigor.

The data suggest that Catholic universities are a good fit socially and academically for MMACCTS and MMACCTA, and also personally a good fit for their family members. The family of MMACCTS felt a connection to the university because it was a Catholic university, and according to the participants, the family identified Catholicism as their personal religion. According to the student participants, their family members found the Catholic university welcoming and non-intimidating. The findings suggest a need for more research to be conducted on the perceptions of MMACCTS' (attending a Catholic university) family members feeling connected to Catholic universities and comparing those findings with the families of those MMACCTS who attend a public non-religious university.

Research Question One

To what extent, if at all, do male Mexican American community college transfer students (CCTS) perceive themselves as personally and academically

validated by one academic and student affairs administrators at one of two Catholic universities?

City University's three MMACCT students did not perceive being validated academically and personally by the Catholic university's student and academic affairs administrators. In addition, all three of the MMACCTS at Sunny University perceived being validated personally and academically by the Catholic university's academic and student affairs administrators.

Research Question Two

To what extent, if at all, do MMACCT alumni perceive they were personally and academically validated by academic and student affairs administrators at one of two Catholic universities?

All three of City University's MMACCT alumni, while students at the Catholic university, perceived being validated academically and personally by the university's academic and student affairs administrators. In comparison, all three of the Sunny University's MMACCT alumni perceived being academically and personally validated while students by the Catholic university's administrators.

Research Question Three

To what extent, if at all, do administrators at these institutions perceive themselves as validating the experiences of MMACCTS'?

At both City University and Sunny University, all nine of the administrators perceived they validated all students they interacted with as a result of carrying out their daily job responsibilities; however, none of the administrators were able to identify if

students they served were CCTS and/or Mexican American descent unless the student self-identified as such.

Research Question Four

To what extent are the CCTS' and CCT alumni' perceptions congruent with the perceptions of administrators regarding validation of MMACCTS' and CCT alumni' EXPERIENCES at these institutions?

It is difficult to determine the extent of congruency about the perceptions on validation between the sample groups because many of the ASAP were unsure if students they served were of Mexican descent and community college transfer students. While all MMACTTA reported feeling validated by ASAPs, not all MMACCTS felt validated by ASAPs. All three of CU CCTS reported not feeling validated but acknowledged that perhaps it was a result of not interacting with or seeking the help of ASAPs. These students did not interact with administrators as a result of self-reliance; thus, it is difficult to measure congruency between perceptions of validation of students and administrators. These students knew how to seek help without actually interacting with academic and student affairs professionals, and thus the data suggest that the self help-seeking behaviors of the students contributed to resiliency; however the students did not receive direct validation from ASAPs. The data suggest that congruency cannot be measured when more complicated factors exist such as students' self-reliance. More research must be conducted using a larger diverse sample and a variety of quantitative research methods to determine the correlation between validation and self-reliance.

Discussion

American community colleges provide its community members with a second chance at earning a college education with the option of transferring to a four-year university to complete a bachelor's degree. However, providing access to a college education is not enough; educational institutions must provide academic and student affairs resources and services to help students succeed academically and socially at every point of their educational endeavor. In designing services, university professionals must take specific factors into consideration when helping non-traditional groups of students succeed without having to confront unnecessary barriers. Many of the participants in this study were first in their families to attend college, and, fortunately, these students beat the odds of remaining "stuck at the community college" and transferred to a university. For most of the participants, they achieved transferring in spite of their unique situations as non-traditional students such as simultaneously managing family, work, and academic obligations. So, for those CCTS who are accepted by a four-year institution to complete a college degree, it becomes even more crucial for educators to take efforts to minimize or eliminate some of the barriers that affect non-traditional students in their quest to completing a higher education.

As noted in the findings, all of the MMCCTS and MMCCTA reported self-seeking, self-reliance, and resiliency behaviors in their quest to completing a university education. While these students knew how to seek assistance, many relied on their own resourcefulness to successfully navigate the campus' resources. The students and alumni reported relying on past personal experiences to help stay focused on achieving their ultimate career and educational goals. While all encountered hurdles and rough moments,

they all persevered in spite of those obstacles. As research on resiliency shows, the students learned a lesson from encountering moments of frustration and it was the resiliency they possessed that helped the students get one step further to completing their degree and acquiring one more strategy for resolving issues as a result of the continuing problems they faced at the Catholic universities (Ford, 1994; Freiberg, 1994; Garmenzy, 1994; Gordon & Song, 1994) Masten, 1994; McMillan, & Reed, 1994; Parejes, 1996; Sagor, 1996; Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1994; Wolin & Wolin, 1993).

It must be noted that results of this study support the findings of various research conducted on community college transfer students. For one, the study shows that providing more and stronger financial resources to MMACCTS will contribute to students' satisfaction with their overall college experience (Davis & Casey, 1999). Also, student and alumni participants based their satisfaction with university experience on the individualized attention and levels of interaction they had with university personnel (Davis & Casey). In addition, students and alumni participants were able to overcome obstacles as a result of the relationships they developed with administrators and faculty (Rendón, 1994; Rendón & Garza, 1996; Trujillo & Diaz, 1999). The data also suggests that students who felt academically prepared for university level work were also satisfied with their university experiences (Berger & Malaney, 2003). Similarly to Perrakis' (2003) claim, the results of the study suggests that students who experience a positive university experience also perceived the staff and administration as caring for the success of its students, helpful to the student, and provided individualized and personal attention.

MMACCTS are just one group of students who need special and personalized attention by university personnel. Similarly to the student and alumni participants of this

study, all students benefit from receiving encouragement and confirmation from university personnel. While traditional students may not need as much of the encouragement, it is non-traditional students who will gain by hearing words of encouragement and advice on strategies to succeed in college. The findings of this study show that words of encouragement from university personnel help students perceive that the university cares about their success. Some example of words of encouragement is to remind CCTS to stay focused and visualize themselves achieving their academic goals by enduring the rough times of their university experience which will eventually result in graduation.

Spirituality is a unique characteristic that is somewhat different from the public four-year universities. Students may speak openly about spirituality with university personnel and give glory to God without feeling uncomfortable sharing their faith, or seeking the Church clergy. While one MMACCTS sought out the spiritual assistance of a university priest during a rough time in his life, other student and alumni participants sought the help of Catholic university personnel. In this study, all twelve participants looked to the religious university staff and faculty for support and encouragement during their transfer adjustment period at the university. The results of this study suggest that Catholic four-year universities may be a good fit for MMACCTS, but only when university personnel proactively engages in validating this special student population. The university could take additional steps to identify MMACCTS, and in general CCTS, in order to facilitate administrators in helping these students adjust to the university campus and eventually improving their overall academic experience.

Recommendations

Participants' Recommendations

In order to acquire the perspective of the participants on how to improve the transfer and university experiences of future and current community college transfer students, all the participants were asked to identify some unmet needs of CCTS that the university, community colleges, and students could do to address any special needs. Even though some programs and resources for CCTS exist on both campuses, all nine of the university professionals felt the services are limited and the university could do more for CCTS. For example, several professionals identified a need for the university to designate one academic advisor who would specifically work only with CCTS. ASAPs at both institutions acknowledge that a person designated to work solely with CCTS does not exist at their campus but students are in great need of this type of resource. In their mind, this person would help CCTS academically and socially could help CCTS meet other CCTS enrolled at the campus.

Better recruitment of CCTS is another service the ASAPs identified as needing improvement. One administrator noted that because many of the community colleges *feed* student enrollment to the public four-year universities, it is imperative for private universities to include community colleges in their recruitment efforts. He adds that because four-year public universities are mandated to accept community college students for admission, their marketing, recruitment, and retention efforts are more effective. While Nathan admits that some public schools will have a harder time retaining students because of their locations and student demographics, he adds that in his opinion community college students are more likely to chose a four-year university close to home

and “that is much more true of a Latino—male or female--to stay close to home”. As a result, private universities will have to really want to increase their enrollment of community college transfer students and they will need to be creative in recruiting students of color.

Three of the ASAPs in the study suggest that their university develop learning community cohorts for CCTS. One ASAP believes that CCTS need an academic program such as the freshman preceptorial program at her respective university. The program helps guide incoming freshman through the university’s resources and services in order to help them find their way. Cohorts of incoming freshman enroll in the same courses as a group during their first and continue to take classes with the same group of freshman in their second semesters. A faculty member is assigned 17 freshmen and forms an academic group to experience their first year together. The faculty member also is as an advisor to the students for the entire academic year, and students may continue with the same advisor until the second semester of their sophomore year—or until they declare a major. While the immediate goal is to help the students adjust academically to the university setting, being in the group allows the students to develop relationships with each other outside of class. Community college transfer students would benefit from a similar program, but because of their unique situations and needs it is imperative for ASAPs to creatively design specifically for their unique needs and situations in mind.

Many of the academic and student affairs professionals agree their particular university could improve the new student orientation for CCTS. One academic professional explains that when incoming CCTS asks how important it is for new

students to attend orientation, she informs the student that the information they will learn at the orientation will help academically and socially; she explains that this information is crucial to surviving socially and academically at the university. Although the orientation is not mandated for CCTS, she believes the university could do a better job of ensuring students get some form of orientation whether online at their own time or in person. Another administrator states that because many students do not read the literature on campus resources and services the university sends because of their multiple responsibilities, she argues that orientation should be mandatory for all CCTS to attend. She adds that offering CCTS either one-on-one or small group orientations should be made available for those individuals who absolutely cannot make the orientation.

A different administrator states that an assessment must be conducted to determine if the orientation is meeting the needs of the student, and to establish whether the program design must be adjusted. An example on where the university could use assessment, provided by an administrator who was a CCTS at one time, is determining how the university could do a better job at introducing CCTS to one another. Using a peer mentoring program which matches incoming CCTS with current CCTS would help new incoming CCTS to identify someone who went through the same process and who is succeeding at the university. Improving the new CCTS orientation program and measuring its effectiveness will benefit future incoming CCTS in the long run.

Many of the ASAPs agree that another way for the university to improve the services for CCTS is to create a Transfer Center. A Transfer Center for CCTS would allow transfer students to get involved in a group or club that identifies them as CCTS. One professional at City University perceives her university as doing well in recruiting

CCTS; however, the university is doing poorly on supporting the students in their journey to becoming acclimated to the campus. She suggests having a faculty advisor who would meet with the students several times throughout the semester to check on the students' transition into the university. The role of this advisor would be to identify any academic and social needs the students need to improve their experiences and transitions. With the help of this advisor, CCTS would be better served and mechanisms could be institutionalized to identify problems early in their transfer rather than when it is too late.

The participants of the study were asked to provide suggestions or advise to future CCTS on things to do to improve their transfer experience. A list of recommendations as well as other unmet needs were compiled and presented in Appendix E. Some of the recommendations are specific for Mexican American male CCTS while others are for the general CCTS population.

Researcher's Recommendations

The findings of this study support the literature on the need to hire staff, faculty, and administrators from diverse backgrounds including individuals who having transferred from community college and from low-economic backgrounds (Opp & Smith, 1994). It is not enough to hire people of color to work for the university; the university must engage in proactively educating its existing university personnel about the change in demographics and to prepare them to serve new student populations better. In addition, university personnel across the country need training on working with individuals from economically diverse backgrounds (Rendón & Garza, 1996; Opp & Smith, 1994). ASAPs need to be equipped with the knowledge and resources on helping students from impoverished backgrounds. One example is to provide ASAPs with tools to teach CCTS

on how to address issues of racism. Because students who seek resources will benefit from having such tools, it is imperative to publish these tools on the campus website so that all students who do not seek the resources from administrators may access the tools as needed. In addition, ASAPs and faculty need to understand what the culture of poverty entails and how to better serve students from impoverished backgrounds. One way is to help low-income students and nontraditional students navigate the hidden rules of the middle class (Payne, 1996). It is not enough to admit more students with diverse backgrounds; it is imperative for the university to be equipped with the tools and knowledge on how to help non-traditional students. Universities must create a campus climate after a model that is inclusive of CCTS in all aspects of the university life.

Currently, baby boomers are retiring which means that new leaders will emerge among universities to lead a diverse campus (Bagnato, 2004). This will result in the opportunity for universities to create a new campus culture that celebrates and appreciates ethnically and economically diverse students especially those who have transferred from community colleges. Perhaps a provost could be in charge of overseeing the programming of resources for CCTS. This leader would oversee that the special needs of CCTS which would be revisited and addressed continuously. This leader would oversee the degree attainment of CCTS; celebrate CCTS accomplishment of transfer; increase academic and social resources; and train all counselors and faculty to exercise student validation with all students. It is imperative for these new leaders to understand the critical role of CCTS play at private institutions and within California's society and economy in order to implement institutional policies that support the increase of enrollments of CCTS.

Conclusion

Implications for Policy

Retention and graduation rates of CCTS are important in sustaining California's government system, cultivating a prosperous economy, and for providing a basis of a harmonious society (California Master Plan, 2002). To achieve this, private institutions need to serve as part of the solution by ensuring that they remain part of CCTS educational endeavor, and to relieve pressure from the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) system. In addition, the knowledge attained from this study may guide institutional leaders in including CCTS in their institutional strategic planning. Intervention of independent colleges and universities is essential in educating California's residents; by admitting more CCTS they can help close the educational gap for all students in California. In the case that the student enrollment surge does not occur, it is imperative for public and private campus to proactively pursue the enrollment of more Mexican Americans to their campuses. An implication of the study is for Catholic universities to accept more Mexican American CCTS into their campuses and to proactively assist them to graduate from their institution. In addition, as the data shows the CCTS in this study worked while attending college; private and public universities must work together to assist working CCTS to remain in college.

Recommendation for Future Study

This research demonstrates the need for scholars to examine the university experiences of all CCTS. The findings of the study highlight a need to examine the correlation between validation and self-reliance of community college transfer students.

In addition, scholars should also examine the university and validating experiences of female CCTS of Mexican descent.

Because MMACCTS and their families identified with university's Catholicism, there is a need for more research to be conducted on the retention of MMACCTS at Catholic universities in relation to the perceptions of the family feeling connected to the Catholic university and compare those results with family members of MMACCTS' who attend a public non-religious university. The students' family played a significant role in the quest to successfully complete their educational endeavor; it is imperative to understand the different ways universities could incorporate more family collaboration in the collegiate experiences of the MMACCTS at Catholic universities in a way to assist the student to balance their family and university life.

In addition, more on student validation must be conducted to include the perception of faculty about the validating experiences of community college transfer students at religious universities. Additionally, examining those results with results of the university and validating experiences of other underrepresented ethnic groups may shed light on unique factors and needs that speak to specific ethnic and minority groups. Another recommendation for future study is to examine the CCTS university experiences at different types of religious institutions and compare the results with those of Catholic universities to determine if other private religious universities are a good fit for CCTS in general.

Concluding Remarks

The change in California's demographics calls for educational leaders to pay closer attention to the new majority—Latinos and specifically Mexican Americans. It is

important to examine the experiences of all students but especially those who have higher risks of educational failure due to having a lack of cultural and social capital which have been shown to contribute positively to student success. While Mexican Americans may not have the same cultural and social capital as mainstream White American students, they do possess their individual cultural capital based on their unique experiences; tapping into this knowledge may facilitate succeeding in anything they set their minds to do. In this study, the students' strengths and skills were drawn from their personal experiences, family values, and economic need to succeed at the university. Adversity for these students leads to identifying other ways to address issues. The study also suggests that male Mexican American students do possess the social capital needed to survive at the university. It is the universities that need to better understand the relationship dynamics of students of color and find better ways to communicate using these tools and resources.

A change of administration as a result of the baby boomers' retirement is a great opportunity for new leaders to emerge—leaders who understand the critical role of CCTS at private institutions—in order to implement institutional policies that support increased enrollment of CCTS (Bagnato, 2004). In addition, new leadership could influence a change in private university culture; it needs to occur. Part of changing the campus culture requires leadership in senior management, such as creating a position that would oversee the degree accomplishments of CCTS. For example, a university provost that cares about the academic success of CCTS and their college experience is ideal; a provost has the authority and leadership to implement policies that will change the campus culture to one that is inclusive of CCTS. New campus leaders could improve the

resources for CCTS and implement activities that welcome CCTS to the receiving institutions. One activity to consider is celebrating CCTS' accomplishment of transfer, persistence, and graduation. Faculty and staff participation would be instrumental in changing the culture of the campus to include CCTS. Another activity is for college administrators to implement campus-wide training sessions on CCTS as well as the importance of student validation for college success; all students would benefit from student validation, especially ethnic minority and nontraditional college students.

The state could also increase CCTS enrollment at private institutions by creating a special grant for CCTS studying at private institutions. The grant would serve as an incentive for private institutions to increase enrollment of CCTS and to create student services to address the special needs of CCTS. In addition, the grant might increase CCTS interest in transferring to private institutions and help CCTS alleviate some of the cost of attending a private university. Nontraditional, at-risk students, and historically underrepresented CCTS will benefit the most from these actions. Because no new community colleges have been built in California in 50 years and only one new UC campus has been built in 30 years, providing a special grant to CCTS would help alleviate pressure from California's community colleges and UC and CSU system by providing additional access to alternative campuses for students. Instead of California investing millions of dollars in building new campuses, providing a special grant to CCTS is a better investment with better returns; it would contribute to California's infrastructure and economy in preparation for Tidal Wave II. The additional 723,146 Tidal Wave II students in California seeking a college education between 2003–13

desperately need access to private-religious universities, financial support in the form of grants, and adequate student services to succeed.

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Appendix A1
Pre-interview Questionnaire

Male CCTS & Alumni CCTS of Mexican-American Descent

Name of Participant _____
 Date _____ Campus: _____ Location of
 Interview: _____

A. Eligibility Criteria & Demographic/Background Information

Eligibility Criteria:

1. The student/alumnus is male and began his college education at a community college.
 YES or NO
2. The student/alumnus transferred from a community college to a private religious university. YES or NO
3. The student is currently enrolled at a private religious university and has attended at least one semester. **Or** the alumnus graduated from a private religious university within the last three years.
 YES or NO
4. The student self-identifies as Mexican, Mexican-American, or Chicano and attended at least four-years of high school in the United States. YES or NO

Demographic and Background Information

A1. Home Address: _____ City _____ Zip
 Code _____
 Email
 address(es): _____

Telephone Numbers: Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

A1a. What are your current living arrangements? _____

A1b. How far is your commute to campus, in miles? _____

A1c. What were your living arrangements while attending the community college?

A1d. How far, in miles, was your commute from your home to the community college?

A1e. Are you originally from CA? YES or NO

1f. If no, where are you originally from?

A2. DOB: _____ A3. Place of Birth: _____ A4. Ethnicity: _____

A5. Marital Status: _____

A6. Name of Community College(s) attended and dates of enrollment:

A7. What is the name of Community College you transferred to the university from?

A8. When did you transfer from CC to the university? _____

A9. What was your major at the CC? _____

A10. What is/was your major at the university?

A10a. If you are still a student, what is your ultimate career goal?

A10b. If you are alumni, what are you currently working in?

A10c. Do you have plans or desire to go on to graduate school? YES or NO

If so, in what field? _____

A11. Did you earn an A.A. degree? _____ YES NO

A11a. If yes, in what? _____

A11b. If not, why not? _____

A11c. How many units were transferable to the university?

A11d. How many units were NOT accepted by the university?

A12. When do you anticipate to/did you graduate from the university? _____

A13. What is your parents highest level of education:

A.13a. The highest level of education my father completed is: _____

A.13b. The highest level of education my mother completed is:

A14. Where did you attend high school? _____

A14a. If you attended multiple high schools, where did you earn your high school diploma? _____

A 14b. When did you graduate from High School (or when did you receive your GED)? _____

A 14c. If you have already graduated from college, when did you graduate? _____

A15. Are you the first in your immediate family to go to college? YES NO

A15a. If no, please indicate family member(s) who has (have)? _____

A15b. Did this (these) individuals graduate from college? Yes NO Please explain.

A16. Where you employed while attending community college? YES NO

A16a. If so, how many hours on average per week did you work? _____.

A16b. Were did you work? _____

A16c. Was this employment on campus?

A17. Are you currently working while attending the university? YES NO

A17a. If so, where?

A17b. Is this employment on campus?

A17c. How many hours do you work per week? _____

A18. Did you participate in any university new student orientation program? YES NO

A19. Do you own a house? Yes or NO

A19a. Do your parents own a house? YES or NO.

A19a1. If so, who owns the home and when was it purchased? _____

A19b. Do your parents own their own business? YES or NO.

A19b1. If so, who and as of when? _____

A20. Who or what motivated you to attend college? _____

A21. What sports, clubs, and organizations were you involved in at:

A21a. Community college: _____

A21b. University: _____

A21c. Now (if alumni): _____

A21. Any additional comments (use back of page for more space):

Appendix A2
Student and Alumni Interview Guide

Male CCTS and Alumni CCTS of Mexican American Descent

Name of Participant _____
 Date _____ Campus: _____ Location of
 Interview: _____

B. Experiences:

B1. *Community College*: Tell me about your college experience at the community college.

B1a. Tell me about your academic experiences at the community college.

B1b. Describe any interaction you have had with the community college's staff and administration within the following departments:

- Counseling Department/Academic advising:
- Tutoring
- Transfer Center
- Financial Aid
- Other student services
- None of the above

B1c. Please describe any extra-curricular activities you were involved in while at the community college (member of campus organization, performed volunteer work, worked on project w/faculty member, sports, etc.).

B1d. Did you ever experience stress and felt overwhelmed? YES or NO

B1d1. If yes, please describe:

B1d2. How did you cope with it?

B1e. Is there anyone at the community college (faculty, student, volunteer, staff member, etc.) who contributed to your college experience (positively or negatively) while a student at the community college?

B1e1. If so, who and how?

B1f. Tell me about your experience(s) with fellow classmates or with other students on campus?

B2. *Transitioning*: Tell me about your experience in transitioning from the community college to the university.

B2a. What factors do you feel contributed to completing the transfer process from the community college to a four-year university?

B3. *At the university*: Tell me about your experience at the university in your first semester as a student.

B3a. Describe your overall experience at the university.

B3b. What immediate differences did you see between the community college and the university?

B3c. Tell me about any challenges and issues you have faced at the university?

B3d. What have you done to address these issues and challenges?

B3e. If your university offered a new student new student orientation program for community college transfer students and you participated, what did the program consist of and tell me about this experience.

B3f. Describe your experience with other student services for CCTS you have sought while at the university.

B3g. Describe any clubs, organizations, or extra-curricular activities you were involved in at the university?

B3h. Tell me about your experience(s) with fellow classmates or with other students on campus?

C. Motivators

C1. What factors motivated you to complete your upper division course work at this particular university?

C2. What motivated you to earn a bachelor's degree?

D. Interaction with campus personnel at the University

Please describe any interaction you have had with staff and administration within each of the following campus departments:

- D1. campus housing
- D2. academic counselor(s)
- D3. transfer counselor(s)
- D4. office of admissions
- D5. student services
- D6. clubs
- D7. financial aid
- D8. None of the above

E. Special needs:

E1. Tell me about any unmet special needs that the university could address, if any?

E2. Academic needs?

E3. Social needs?

F. Satisfaction with the university.

F1. Please describe your satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the university.

G. Recommendations

G1. As a community college transfer student, what recommendations do you have for improving the overall experience of community college transfer students studying at private universities?

G2. What recommendations do you have for improving students' experiences at the community college?

G3. What suggestions do you have for improving the transfer process?

Appendix A3
Administrator Interview Guide

University Administrator/Staff

Name of Participant _____

Date _____ Campus/Department: _____

Location of Interview: _____

A. Eligibility Criteria & Background Information

Eligibility Criteria:

1. The administrator works directly or interacts with community college transfer students at the CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY.

YES or NO

2. The administrator has at least two years of experience working with college students, especially with community college transfer students. YES or NO

Background Information

A1. How many years have you worked with college students? _____

A2. How many years have you worked directly with community college transfer students? _____

A3. What is your role in working with community college transfer students?

B. CCT Student and Male Mexican-American CCTS Experiences

B1. Tell me about any issues and challenges that community college transfer students face?

B1a. What are some issues that male Mexican-American CCTS experiences at the university?

B2. Tell me your perspective of the academic experiences of community college transfer students?

B21. What about the academic experiences of male Mexican-American CCTS studying at the university.

B3. Tell me your perspective of the social experiences of community college transfer students and Mexican-American CCTS at the university?

B4. How well do CCTS and male Mexican-American CCTS integrate into the campus culture? Please describe.

C. CCTS Motivators

C1. In your perspective, what are some motivators CCTS have for completing their bachelor's degree at a private university?

D. Campus personnel interaction with CCTS at the University

D.1 Describe your experience working with CCTS.

E. CCTS and Mexican-American CCTS Special needs:

E1. Can you tell me of any unmet special needs of CCTS and Mexican-American CCTS that the university could address, if any?

E2. Academically?

E3. Socially?

E4. Financially?

E5. What actions have you, your department, or university have taken to help CCTS with the process of adjustment?

F. CCTS and Mexican-American CCTS' Satisfaction with the private university.

F1. Please describe your perception of community college transfer students' overall satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the university.

G. Recommendations

G1. As an administrator working with community college transfer students, what recommendations do you have for improving the overall experience of community college transfer students studying at private universities?

G1a. What recommendations would you make for improving the experiences of male Mexican-American CCTS at CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES?

G2. What recommendations do you have for improving students' experiences at the community college and those experiences of male Mexican-American CCTS?

G3. What suggestions do you have for improving the transfer process for all students?

Appendix B1
Letter to Student Requesting Participation

Date

Re: Request for your participation in this study

Dear University CCTS,

My name is Eliazer Ayala-Austin and I am doctoral student at the University of San Diego. I write this letter to invite you to participate in my study. The title of my dissertation is Validating the experiences of male Mexican-American community college transfer students studying at private religious universities. I will be examining the validating experiences of male Mexican-American community college transfer students (CCTS) at two select religious universities in southern California. In addition, the validating experiences of male Mexican-American alumni CCTS who graduated within the last three years, and the perspectives of administrators in academic and student affairs department about their role in validating the experiences of these CCTS, will also be examined.

This study will result in a qualitative case-study in which male Mexican-American community college transfer students studying at a private religious university and male Mexican-American alumni CCTS will be interviewed individually to document their experiences as a transfer student and to uncover any educational or social needs to complete their degree. In addition, several student affairs and academic affairs professionals who work directly with CCTS will be interviewed.

I plan to conduct these interviews after approval from Institutional Review Board (IRB) and proposal defense; tentative window for data collection is February 15, 2006 to April 15, 2006. In addition to using a campus-wide email message to identify potential participants, the snowball method will be utilized to learn of other individuals that meet the criteria through referral by early participants. All information and the identity of the participants will be confidential. A copy of the proposal and IRB approval is enclosed for your reference.

Thank you very much for considering this request to participate in the study. I will follow up with you by telephone in a few days to confirm your ability to participate.

Sincerely,

Eliazer Ayala-Austin, M.P.A.
Doctoral Student in Leadership Studies
University of San Diego
760-599-7386, 619-260-7443
eliazer0531@yahoo.com

Appendix B2
Letter to Alumni Requesting Participation

Date

Re: Request for your participation in this study

Dear University Alumnus,

My name is Eliazer Ayala-Austin and I am doctoral student at the University of San Diego. I write this letter to invite you to participate in my study. The title of my dissertation is Validating the experiences of male Mexican-American community college transfer students studying at private religious universities. I will be examining the validating experiences of male Mexican-American community college transfer students (CCTS) at two select religious universities in southern California. In addition, the validating experiences of male Mexican-American alumni CCTS who graduated within the last three years, and the perspectives of administrators in academic and student affairs department about their role in validating the experiences of these CCTS, will also be examined.

This study will result in a qualitative case-study in which male Mexican-American community college transfer students studying at a private religious university and male Mexican-American alumni CCTS will be interviewed individually to document their experiences as a transfer student and to uncover any educational or social needs to complete their degree. In addition, several student affairs and academic affairs professionals who work directly with CCTS will be interviewed.

I plan to conduct these interviews after approval from Institutional Review Board (IRB) and proposal defense; tentative window for data collection is February 15, 2006 to April 15, 2006. In addition to using a campus-wide email message to identify potential participants, the snowball method will be utilized to learn of other individuals that meet the criteria through referral by early participants. All information and the identity of the participants will be confidential. A copy of the proposal and IRB approval is enclosed for your reference.

Thank you very much for considering this request to participate in the study. I will follow up with you by telephone in a few days to confirm your ability to participate.

Sincerely,

Eliazer Ayala-Austin, M.P.A.,
Doctoral Student in Leadership Studies
University of San Diego
760-599-7386, 619-260-7443
eliazer0531@yahoo.com

Appendix B3
Letter to Administrator Requesting Participation

Date

Re: Request for your participation in this study

Dear University Administrator,

My name is Eliazer Ayala-Austin and I am doctoral student at the University of San Diego. I write this letter to invite you to participate in my study. The title of my dissertation is Validating the experiences of male Mexican-American community college transfer students studying at private religious universities. I will be examining the validating experiences of male Mexican-American community college transfer students (CCTS) at two select religious universities in southern California. In addition, the validating experiences of male Mexican-American alumni CCTS who graduated within the last three years, and the perspectives of administrators in academic and student affairs department about their role in validating the experiences of these CCTS, will also be examined.

This study will result in a qualitative case-study in which male Mexican-American community college transfer students studying at a private religious university and male Mexican-American alumni CCTS will be interviewed individually to document their experiences as a transfer student and to uncover any educational or social needs to complete their degree. In addition, several student affairs and academic affairs professionals who work directly with CCTS will be interviewed.

I plan to conduct these interviews after approval from Institutional Review Board (IRB) and proposal defense; tentative window for data collection is February 15, 2006 to April 15, 2006. In addition to using a campus-wide email message to identify potential participants, the snowball method will be utilized to learn of other individuals that meet the criteria through referral by early participants. All information and the identity of the participants will be confidential. A copy of the proposal and IRB approval is enclosed for your reference.

Thank you very much for considering this request to participate in the study. I will follow up with you by telephone in a few days to confirm your ability to participate.

Sincerely,

Eliazer Ayala-Austin, M.P.A.
Doctoral Student in Leadership Studies
University of San Diego
760-599-7386, 619-260-7443
eliazer0531@yahoo.com

Appendix C
Informed Consent Form

Eliazer Ayala-Austin, a doctoral student in the Leadership Studies program in the School of Leadership and Education Sciences at the University of San Diego (USD), is conducting research on the validating experiences of male Mexican-American Community College Transfer Students (CCTS) studying at Catholic universities.

1. The participant will be interviewed between 45 minutes to two hours. If a follow-up interview with the participant is needed to clarify or expand upon ideas discussed in the initial interview, that meeting will last no longer than one hour.
2. The participant will be given a brief background and overview of the study. The researcher will explain the interview process and ensure the participant has an understanding of his/her rights as participant in the study.
3. The interview will be conducted at a location that is acceptable to the participant, in order that the participant will not be distracted from current work responsibilities.
4. Interviews will be recorded and transcribed.
5. Risks for participants in this study are minimal.
6. While efforts will be undertaken to ensure confidentiality by keeping data in a locked cabinet or password protected file on the computer until it is destroyed five years after the completion of the study, by using pseudonyms, and by giving the participant an opportunity to review and edit his or her interview transcript, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
7. Information from this study will contribute to knowledge in the field of community college transfer students' experiences.
8. Participation in this study is voluntary. Participant may withdraw from the study at anytime. Data collected prior to withdrawal by the participant will not be used, unless the participant agrees in writing to let the data be used.
9. If the participant has any questions about this study, or activities that occur during the course of this study, the participant may contact Eliazer Ayala Austin at 760-599-7386, eliazer0531@yahoo.com, or Dr. Athena Perrakis at 619-260-8896.
10. The information collected may be used in a dissertation and presentations and any other additional publications emerging from this study.
11. There is no agreement, written or verbal, beyond that which is expressed on this consent form.

I, the undersigned, understand the above conditions and give my consent to my voluntary participation in the research that has been described.

Signature of the Interviewee _____ Date _____
 Printed Name: _____ Address _____ City _____ Zip Code _____
 Contact Information: Phone: _____ Email _____
 Signature of Researcher _____ Date _____

Appendix D1
Pre-interview Questionnaire Results: City University CCT Students and Alumni

Pre-interview Questions	Student	Student	Student	Alumnus	Alumnus	Alumnus	Analysis Campus 1
Pseudonym	Jesús	Manuel "Manny"	Antonio "Tony"	Ricardo "Ricky"	Tomas "Tom"	Jaime	N/A
A1a. Current Living Arrangements	Wife and children	Mother and on campus	Campus	Parents	Self	Wife and children	2 of 6 lived with parents at time of interview
A1b. Commute to university campus	25 miles	15 miles	Walking distance	30 miles	10 min	No response	Commute to university ranged from 15 to 30 miles with 2 students living on campus
A1c. Living arrangements while at the Community College (CC)	Wife and children	Parents	Parents	Parents	Parents	1st time at CC lived with parents; second time at CC lived with wife and child	5 of 6 lived with parents, 2 of 6 lived w/wife and children
A1d. Commute to CC	3 miles	1 mile	13 miles	7 miles	10 minutes	5 miles	Commute ranged from 1 to 13 miles
A1e. Originally from CA	Yes	Yes	No	Yes, but born in Mexico	Yes	Yes	6 of 6 all from CA with 2 stating they are also from Mexico
A2. Year of Birth	1976	1984	1985	1980	1982	1964	Range of birth year from 1964 to 1985
A3. Place of Birth	El Centro, CA	San Diego, CA	Mexico City, Mexico	Jalisco, Mexico	Escondido, CA	Los Angeles, CA	4 of 6 born in U.S. and 4/6 identify as Mexican
A4. Ethnicity	Mexican	Mexican	Mexican	Mexican	Mexican American/Hispanic	Mexican American/Hispanic	6 of 6 identified as Mexican/Mexican American
A5. Marital status	Married	Single	Single	Single	Single	Married	2 of 6 are married with children, while 4 of 6 are single
A8. When transferred	Spring 2005	Fall 2005	Fall 2005	Spring 2002	Spring 2002	Spring 2002	4 of the 6 transferred to university in spring
A9. CC Major	English	Business	History	Business	Liberal studies	General studies	3 of 6 majored in business at CC
A10. University major	English	Business	History	Business	Political science	Business Economics	3 of 6 majored in business at university
A10a. If student, Ultimate goal	No response	Succeed	Teaching/ Education	MBA	Lawyer	No response	1 of 3 students did not state ultimate goal
A10b. Alumni profession	N/A	N/A	N/A	Job searching	Legal department of major corporation	Real estate consultant	2 of 3 alumni working in field of career choice
A10c. Plans/desire to go on to graduate school, if yes, in what field	Yes, in visual arts	Yes, international business	Yes, history	Yes, finance and marketing.	Yes, law school	Yes, masters in real estate	6 of 6 plan to pursue a graduate degree
A11. Earned an A.A.	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	4 of the 6 earned an Associates of Arts degree

Pre-Interview Questions	Student	Student	Student	Alumni	Alumni	Alumni	Analysis Campus 1
Pseudonym	Jesús	Manuel "Manny"	Antonio "Tony"	Ricardo "Ricky"	Tomas "Tom"	Jaime	N/A
A11a. Earned A.A. in what subject	English	N/A	Liberal studies	N/A	Liberal studies	General studies	3 of 6 earned an A.A. in Liberal studies/general education
A11b. If not why Not?	N/A	Did not feel he needed an AA to transfer	N/A	Goal was to transfer to a four-year institute	N/A	N/A	2 of 6 goal not to earn an A.A. degree
A11c. Units transferred from CC	60 units	47 units	63 units	88 units	At least 60 units	At least 60 units	Range of number of units transferred: 47 to 88
A11d. Units not transferred	No response	15 units	5 units	All units transferred	10 unit	45 units	2 of 6 experiences losing 5-15 units
A12. Anticipated graduation date/Graduation date	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Spring 2007	Graduated in Spring 2005	Graduated in 2004	Graduated in 2004	2 of 3 students anticipate a fall graduation
A13a. Father's highest education level	Master's	A.A. degree	Grade school	Completed a bachelors degree in Mexico	MBA	BA	5 of 6 participants' father earned a college degree
A13b. Mother's highest education level	High school	B.A. at National Univ.	Grade school	Vocational school	Community college	High school	2 of 6 participants' mother attended college/earned a BA
A14b. Year of H.S. graduation	1994	2002	2003	1998	2000	1983	Year of graduation from H.S. range from 1983 to 2003
A14c. When graduated from college	N/A	N/A	N/A	2005	2004	2004	2 of 3 alumni graduated in same year
A15. First in family to go to college	No	No	No	No	Yes, first to go directly to a 4-year university	No	6 of 6 participants were not first in family to attend college
A15a. If No, indicate family who has attended college	Father	Brothers and parents	Brother	Dad and older brother (at Harvard medical school)	Father	Father	5 of 6 participants' father attended college/earned a degree; 3 of 6 participants' brother attended college
A15b. Family members graduate college	Yes	No--check if brothers finished?	No, he dropped out but just returned	Yes, brother at medical school	Father	Father	2 of 6 participants with first family member who attended college dropped out
A16. Employed while attending CC	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6 of 6 worked while studying at the CC
A16a. # of hours worked	40 hours	20 hours	60 hours	25 hours	30 hours	50 hours	Average of 18 hours worked, ranging between 20 to 60 hours
A16c. On-campus employment	No	No	No	No	No	No	6 of 6 did not work on campus while at CC
A17. Working(ed) while at university	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	3 of 3 students work; 3 of 3 alumni worked while at university

Pre-Interview Questions	Student	Student	Student	Alumni	Alumni	Alumni	Analysis Campus 1
Pseudonym	Jesús	Manuel "Manny"	Antonio "Tony"	Ricardo "Ricky"	Tomas "Tom"	Jafme	N/A
A17b.A1 Campus employment?	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	1 of 6 worked on campus
A17c. Number of hours worked	40 hours	20 hours	30 hours	12 hours	30 hours	50 hours	Range of hours worked per week from 12 to 50
A18. Participated in university new student orientation program	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	None of the students attended orientation; 2 of 3 alumni attended orientation
A19. Own a house?	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	1 of 3 current students own home, and 2 of 3 alumni own homes
A19a. Parents own a house?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6 of 6 participants' parents own home
A19i. who and when	Parents	Both parents (divorced)	Parents and brother	Parents in 1990	Bought home with father in 2005	Parents	6 of 6 participants' parents own home
A19b. Parents own business?	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	2 of 6 participants' parents own business
A19b1. Who owns business & as of when?	Parents for over 20 years	N/A	N/A	Food service/farming and distribution	N/A	N/A	2 of 6 participants' parents own business
A20. Who/what motivated you to attend college	Self	Friend of the family	Pursue better career	Older brother	Self	Self	3 of 6 identified self as motivator for going to college and other 3 of 6 identified brother/friend as motivator
A21. Involved in sports, clubs, & organizations	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5 of 6 participants played sports, in clubs, and/or organizations
A21a. Involved in sports, clubs, & organizations at CC	None	Debate team	Phi Theta Kappa honor society	Student government	Volleyball and football	None	4 of 6 participated in extra-curricular at CC
A21b. Involved in sports, clubs, & organizations at university	None	hockey	None	MECHA and fraternity	Crew team and fraternity	Real estate institute	4 of 6 participated in extra-curricular at university
A21c. Involved in sports, clubs, & organizations as alumni, if applicable	N/A	N/A	N/A	Sigma Chi	Fraternity	Real estate alumni association, and real estate honor society	3 of 3 alumni still involved in associations after graduation
A22. Religion	Catholic	Catholic	Catholic	Catholic	Catholic	Catholic	6 of 6 identify Catholicism as personal religion faith

Appendix D2
Pre-interview Questionnaire Results: Sunny University CCT Students and Alumni

Pre-interview Questions	Student	Student	Student	Alumnus	Alumnus	Alumnus	Analysis Campus 2
Pseudonym	Jose	René	Joel	Jonathan	Alejandro "Alex"	Miguel "Mike"	N/A
A1a. Current Living Arrangements	No response	Parents	Parents	Parents	Self	Parents now; on campus 1st year at SU	4 of 6 lived with parents during time of interview
A1b. Commute to campus	18 miles	15 miles	30 miles	5 miles	8 miles	30 miles	Commute to university ranged between 8 to 30 miles
A1c. Living arrangements while at the CC	No response	Parents	Parents	Parents	Parents	Parents	5 of 6 lived with parents while attending CC
A1d. Commute to CC	10 miles	10 miles	3.5 miles	15 miles	8 miles	30 miles	Commute to CC ranged from 3.5 miles to 30 miles
A1e. Originally from California	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5 of 6 are originally from CA; 1 of 6 immigrated to U.S.
A2. Year of Birth	1975	1985	1986	1981	1980	1977	Range of birth year from 1975 to 1986
A3. Place of Birth	Mexico	Harbor City, CA	Los Angeles, CA	Inglewood, CA	Los Angeles	Glendale, CA	5 of 6 born in U.S.
A4. Ethnicity	Oaxacan/Mexican	Mexican American	Mexican	Latino/Mexican American	Mexican American	Mexican American	4 of 6 identify as Mexican American, and 2 of 6 identify as Mexican
A5. Marital status	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	6 of 6 single
A8. When transferred	Spring 2006	Fall 2005	Spring 2005	Spring 2002	Spring 2000	Spring 2003	5 of 6 transferred to university in spring
A9. CC Major	Business Administration	Business	N/A	Liberal Studies	Liberal Studies	Economics	1 of 6 did not declare major at CC
A10. University major	Business Administration	Business	Chicano studies & political science	Sociology	Psychology	Business Administration	3 of 6 declared business administration major, 3 of 6 declared social science major
A10a. If student, Ultimate goal	International Business in Latin America and live in US; seeking residency here	Law degree	Civil rights activist, law school	N/A	No response	N/A	3 of 3 students have plans to pursue graduate school
A10b. Alumni working in	N/A	N/A	N/A	Law Enforcement/Police	Recently completed MA in Educational Psychology on May 2005	Client Service Manager/Non-profit	1 of 3 alumni recently completed MA, 1 of 3 working in law enforcement, 1 of 3 working in Non-profit sector
A10c. Plans/desire to go on to graduate school, if Yes, what field	Yes, master's in international business	Yes, to law school	Yes	No	Yes, Ph.D.	Yes, business	5 of 6 plan to go on to graduate school with 1 of 6 will pursue a Ph.D. program
A11. Earned an A.A.	Yes	Yes, an A.S.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6 of 6 earned an AA/AS degree
A11a. Earned A.A. in what	Liberal Studies	Business	Liberal Studies	Liberal Studies	Liberal Studies	Economics	4 of 6 earned AA/AS in Liberal Studies
A11b. If not why not?	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Pre-interview Questions	Student	Student	Student	Alumnus	Alumnus	Alumnus	Analysis Campus 2
Pseudonym	Jose	René	Joel	Jonathan	Alejandro "Alex"	Miguel "Mike"	N/A
A11c. Units transferred from CC	60 units	60 units	30 units	65 units	60 units	62 units	Range of number of units transferred: 30 to 65
A11d. Units Not transferred	No response	N/A	8 units	10 units	10 units	45 units	An average of 12.16 units did not transfer
A12. Anticipated graduation date/graduation date	Spring 2007	Spring 2007	Spring 2008	Spring 2004	Spring 2002	Spring 2005	3 of 3 students anticipate a specific graduation date
A13a. Father's highest education level	6th grade	High school	6th grade	Elementary (2nd)	elementary	Elementary	5 of 6 participants' father earned at least an elementary education 1/6 earned high school diploma
A13b. Mother's highest education level	2nd grade	High school	Associates of Arts degree	Elementary (4th)	High school	Elementary	2 of 6 participants' mother earned a high school diploma, 3/6 earned elementary education, 1/6 earned an AA
A14b. Year of H.S. graduation	No response	2003	2004	1999	1998	1995	Year of H.S. graduation range from 1995 to 2004
A14c. When graduated from college, if applicable	N/A	N/A	N/A	Spring 2004	Spring 2002	Spring 2005	Alumni all graduated in spring semester
A15. First in family to go to college	Yes & no; first, in the U.S. but both sisters first in Mexico	Yes	Not to attend, but first to transfer to a four year university; and to transfer from a CC to a four-year	Yes and to graduate too	Yes and to graduate too	Yes	5 of 6 are first in family to attend college in U.S. with 1 of 6 first in family to get accepted to a four-year directly from high school
A15a. If No, indicate family who has attended college	Both sisters in Mexico	N/A	mother, aunts, cousins	N/A	N/A	N/A	2 of 6 indicated that a female in their family was first to attend college in U.S. or in Mexico
A15b. Family members graduate college	Both sisters in Mexico	N/A	Not to attend, but first to transfer to a four year university; and to transfer from a CC to a four-year	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 of 2 participants' whose family went to college did not graduate
A16. Employed while attending CC	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes and to graduate too	Yes	Yes	6 of 6 employed while attending CC
A16a. Number of hours worked	45 to 50 hours per week	12 hours	15 hours	20 hours	20 hours	30 hours	Range of hours worked per week between 12 to 50
A16c. On-campus employment	No	No	No	No	No	No	6 of 6 worked off campus while at CC
A17. Working(ed) while at university	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes and to graduate too	Yes	Yes	6 of 6 worked while attending college, with 1 of 6 not working in second year at university
A17b Campus employment?	No	No	No	No	No	N/A	6 of 6 worked off campus while at university

Pre-interview Questions	Student	Student	Student	Alumnus	Alumnus	Alumnus	Analysis Campus 2
Pseudonym	Jose	René	Joel	Jonathan	Alejandro "Alex"	Miguel "Mike"	N/A
A17c. Number of hours worked per week	45-50 hours	10 hours	15 hours	40 hours	20 hours	Didn't work	Range of hours worked per week between 10 to 50
A18. Participated in university new student orientation program	Yes	No, but did attend transfer student orientation/seminar	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	5 of 6 participated in new student orientation or transfer orientation seminar
A19. Own a house?	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	1 of 6 participants own a home
A19a. Parents own a house?	Yes, in Mexico	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	3 of 6 participants' parents own a home
A19l. who and when	N/A	Parents in December of 2000	N/A	Alumnus owns home; bought in October of 2005	Parents purchased in 1997	N/A	3 of 6 parents who bought home bought it No later than 9 years ago.
A19b. Parents own business?	No	No	No	No	No	No	0 of 6 parents are business owners
A19b1. Who owns business & as of when?	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
A20. Who/what motivated you to attend college	Difficult life experience; he realized he could be whatever he wanted to be	Academy of business leadership program in high school for at risk kids	Unequal rights	Family and friends	Parents and self-interest	Self	2 of 6 attribute family/friend as motivating factor to attend college while 2 others attribute it to difficult life experiences
A21. Involved in sports, clubs, & organizations	No, had no time	Yes, only at CC	None	Yes	Yes	Yes	2 of 6 indicated they did not get involved in extracurricular activities. 4 of 6 did get involved in extracurricular activities
A21a. Involved in sports, clubs, & organizations while at CC	No	Latinos Unidos	Intramurals and fraternity at 1st university transferred to	None	MECHA	Honor society, MECHA, guitar ensemble	4 of 6 were involved at CC
A21b. Involved in sports, clubs, & organizations while at university	No	Not yet	Intramural sports	Sigma Lambda Beta Fraternity	Sigma Lambda Beta, Mecha, El Espejo tutoring program	None	3 of 6 involved in extracurricular at University
A21c. Involved in sports, clubs, & organizations as alumni, if applicable	N/A	N/A	N/A	None	El Espejo Tutoring, Fraternity	None	1 of 3 alumni still involved in community work/fraternity
A22. Religion	Catholic	Catholic	Catholic	Catholic	Catholic	Catholic	6 of 6 identify Catholicism as personal religious faith

Appendix D3
Profiles of City University (CU)
Academic and Student Affairs Professionals (ASAP)

	CU ASAP	CU ASAP	CU ASAP	CU ASAP	CU ASAP	Analysis
Pseudonym	Alicia	Nathan	Adriana	Juana	Isaac	
Ethnicity/ Race	African American	Salvadorian American	Jewish/ White	Mexican American/ Chicana	Mexican American/ Chicano	1 of 5 identified as White, 2 of the 5 identified as Mexican American/Chicano, and 1 identified with other Hispanic ethnic group, 1 identified as African American
Number of years in Academic or Student Affairs	17 years	8 years	30 years	11 years	8 years	Average of 14.80 years working in academic or student affairs
Number of years working with CCTS	17 years	8 years	30 years	11 years	8 years	Average of 14.80 years working with CCTS
Position	Administrator, Dean's Office	Admissions Counselor	Transfer Analyst	Multicultural Administrator	Multicultural Administrator	Two multicultural directors
Division	Academic Affairs	Academic Affairs	Academic Affairs	Student Affairs	Student Affairs	3 of the 5 ASAPs were in Academic affairs while 2 of the 5 were in Student Affairs
A former CCTS	Yes	No	No	No	No	1 of the 5 ASAPs was a CCTS while a student

Appendix D4
Profiles of Sunny University (SU)
Academic and Student Affairs Professionals (ASAP)

	SU ASAP	SU ASAP	SU ASAP	SU ASAP	Analysis
Pseudonym	Andrew	Elizabeth	Francisco	Adrian	
Ethnicity/ Race	White	White	White	Cuban American	3 of 4 identified as White, 1 of 4 identified as Cuban American
Number of years in Academic or Student Affairs	2 years	15 years	2 years	5 years	Average of 6 years working in academic or student affairs
Number of years working with CCTS	2 years	15 years	2 years	5 years	Average of 6 years working with CCTS
Position	Resident Director	Nonfaculty Academic Counselor	Resident Director	Admissions Counselor	Two multicultural directors, 2 resident directors, 2 admissions counselors
Division	Student Affairs	Academic Affairs	Student Affairs	Academic Affairs	5 of the 9 ASAPs were in Academic affairs while 4 of the 9 were in Student Affairs
A former CCTS	No	No	No	No	1 of the 9 ASAPs was a CCTS while a student

Appendix E
List of Recommendations for CCTS Unmet Needs

Unmet needs

- Financial assistance such as grants and scholarships
- Campus housing
- Flexible and alternate class schedules
- Reserve parking for commuter students
- Diversity among university student population, faculty, and administration

Recommendations for Future CCTS

- Set goals with a timeline
- Visit the campus/tour campus and become acquainted with its resources before the transfer
- Be proactive about finding the answer to your questions
- Focus while at the community college and transfer as soon as eligible; don't get stuck
- Get involved as soon as you transfer
- Study abroad while at the community college
- Don't be afraid to ask questions
- Stay focused on your achieving your academic goals
- Meet with admissions counselors from 4-yr institution in advance
- Find CCTS enrolled at the university and seek mentorship relationship
- Attend the campus' new student orientation
- Interact with institution while still enrolled at community college
- Be proactive about your educational goals

- Mexican American CCTS should find another Latino or someone who could help during the process
- Be role models for other CCTS
- Conduct orientation in resident halls for CCTS who chose to live in dorms/campus
- Develop social networks outside comfort zone and across ethnic groups
- Own your experience; don't be a victim
- Learn the culture of the campus before you transfer
- Involve your family in discussions on transferring; help them early on to transition to change
- Socialize with academically driven students
- Attend campus events before transfer to get sense of campus culture
- Visit campus' multicultural center
- Read everything the campus sends you
- See if the university will meet your needs as a Latino

Recommendations for Institutions

- Develop effective articulation agreements with community colleges and inform students of transfer requirements
- Validate CCTS early in their university experiences
- Develop a transfer center at the university
- Build the diversity of the student population and university personnel
- Recruit more low-income students
- Be proactive about ensuring CCTS get a thorough new student orientation

- Reserve space in classes for incoming CCTS
- Embrace the arts and develop a creative writing program
- Be intentional in recruiting efforts to increase minority student enrollment; target cities
- Recognize that Catholicism is a big part of Latinos identity
- Equip CCTS for success and focus on first two semesters
- Reserve more housing space for incoming CCTS
- Create learning communities at the university for CCTS
- Be respectful, follow a time line, give transfers a priority
- Involve more people from outside of admissions office in orientation
- Accommodate hours for working students
- Look at how to improve the services for commuting students
- Develop programs to help CCTS integrate socially and academically
- Create club for CCTS/commuting Students
- University should reserve more financial funding for CCTS
- Don't combine CCTS orientation with the new student orientation for freshman
- Set up mentorship program
- Create transfer lounge
- Educate faculty on helping CCTS adjust to campus in first couple of semesters
- Be role models of color—hire more faculty, administrators and staff of color.
- Demographics of university community to reflect community's demographics
- Create a culture that is welcoming
- Develop a Latino men's group

- Hire CCTS on campus