

## ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: THE NEW SOUTH: A CASE ANALYSIS OF  
LATINO STUDENTS ATTENDING A  
HISTORICALLY BLACK UNIVERSITY IN  
NORTH CAROLINA

Salvador Bienvenido Mena, Doctor of Philosophy,  
2013

Directed By: Professor Susan Komives  
Department of Counseling, Higher Education, and  
Special Education

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of Latino students attending a historically Black university in North Carolina. The study was guided by the revised campus climate framework by Milem, Chang, and Antonio (2005). A case study methodological research design was used to explore the following two research questions: (a) What is the Latino student experience at an HBCU that is intentionally seeking to promote Latino student success? (b) How is the campus climate, as defined by Milem et al. (2005), experienced by Latino students at an HBCU? Individual interviews with 13 students, 3 faculty, and 2 staff members were conducted along with the examination of the case site (e.g., review of the institution's strategic plan). The study revealed five areas of focus for understanding and enhancing the Latino student HBCU experience: 1. The decision-making process by Latino students for enrolling at an HBCU; 2. Latino student acclimation to the HBCU campus environment; 3. The cultural dissonance experienced by Latino students in the HBCU setting; 4. The benefits of diversity derived from Latino student enrollment at an HBCU; and 5. Latino student

engagement within the HBCU environment. Recommendations for future research and practice based on these five identified areas were made.

THE NEW SOUTH: A CASE ANALYSIS OF LATINO STUDENTS ATTENDING A  
HISTORICALLY BLACK UNIVERSITY IN NORTH CAROLINA

by

Salvador Bienvenido Mena

Dissertation submitted to the faculty of the Graduate School of the  
University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
2013

Advisory Committee:

Professor Susan Komives, Chair  
Professor Karen K. Inkelas  
Professor Marylu K. McEwen  
Professor Sharon Fries-Britt  
Professor Noah Drezner

© Copyright by  
Salvador Bienvenido Mena  
2013

## DEDICATION

Earning this degree was a nine-year commitment and sacrifice that would not have been possible without the support and love of individuals whom I have been blessed to have in my life. I dedicate this dissertation to my sister Bernarda “Santica” Mena who passed away in 2003 and to my aunt/godmother Juana “Juanita” Custodio, who crossed over in 2012 for always being encouraging and supportive of my educational pursuits. Their advocacy for the importance of education while being wonderful role models to everyone in my extended family has left a lasting legacy for all of us to continue to carry on.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my parents Teresa Mena, Aurora Flores, and Salvador Mena who raised me under a unique familial arrangement that positively shaped the person that I am today. Furthermore, their lived experience of growing up under difficult circumstances in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, eventually leading them to come to the United States to pursue a better life, has always served as a source of inspiration and strength for me.

This dissertation is also dedicated to my life partner, Jessica “Jess” Mena, and to our kids Ilan and Julianna. No one besides Jess knows the personal side of my doctoral journey - the triumphs and difficult moments; her support, encouragement, and love sustained me throughout the whole experience – I love you! During the most difficult moments of the journey, my kids served as a source of inspiration and reason for persisting to completion. I hope this accomplishment serves to inspire their future educational pursuits and how they choose to live their lives.

Lastly, I dedicate this dissertation to all the public school teachers, baseball coaches, college administrators and professors, supervisors, colleagues, mentors, and friends who believed in me and encouraged me to carry on. Your confidence in me helped me to believe in myself – this accomplishment is a tribute you.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Completing the doctoral journey was a life-altering experience that took a personal toll both emotionally and physically. The experience required me to make personal sacrifices and to push myself to the limit in an endurance race that lasted nine years. Like any marathon where participant supporters line the route of the race, my doctoral journey was marked by individuals who gave me water when I was thirsty, shouted encouragement when running the most challenging part of the course, and held up signs with words of inspiration when I did not think I would finish the race. If not for my faith in God and the individuals supporting me along the way, I would not have started or finished the doctoral marathon.

First, I want to acknowledge my immediate and extended family for their love and support. In particular, I want to acknowledge my brother Uri “UGOD” Mena for being there with me during every mile of the race. More importantly, you were there supporting and encouraging me as far as I can remember. I cannot tell you how much I love you and value your presence in my life. To my big sister Lucy whose “renowned methods” of discipline saved me from going down the wrong path and whose educational interventions early on in life aided my difficulty with learning, I will forever be grateful to you.

I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to Dr. Gerald Work, Professor Emeritus at the University of Maine for his belief in me and for providing me with the opportunity to enroll in the Student Development in Higher Education Master’s Program. The chance you took on me set me in motion and provided me with the opportunity to pursue a professional career in higher education administration. I will forever be indebted to you, and I hope that I have made you proud.

I was attracted to the College Student Personnel (CSP) program at the University of Maryland, College Park, because of the program's value for social justice and multiculturalism. During my time in the program, I had the pleasure of having Drs. Marylu McEwen, Susan Jones, Karen Inkelas, and Susan Komives as my program advisors (maybe a CSP record for the most number of advisors). Each of you in a caring and thoughtful manner passed me seamlessly to the other while providing a safe and supportive space for me to come into my own as a doctoral student, PhD candidate, and finally Dr. Mena! I would not have completed the PhD marathon if not for your collective commitment to the aforementioned program values. My earning the doctorate is a testament to your believe in access and inclusion and to who you are as amazing individuals – thank you!

I would like to express also my gratitude to my dissertation committee whose feedback, guidance, support, and excitement for my research inspired me to conduct the study and to see the light at the end of the tunnel. I am grateful for how Dr. McEwen after retiring and Dr. Inkelas after leaving the University of Maryland stayed with me until the end - while frequently checking on my progress. I am appreciative of the enthusiasm and expertise that Drs. Fries-Britt and Drezner brought to bear on the study. Lastly, I am forever indebted to Dr. Susan Komives whose positivity, energy, advocacy, and compassion in the past year propelled me to completion.

Many good friends and professional colleagues also supported and encouraged me throughout my professional and doctoral experience. Your kindness and presence in my life have been a blessing and a reminder of the importance of mentoring and “reaching back” to bring others along on the journey. This listing of individuals may not be



exhaustive so I apologize if I left anyone off: Dr. Peniel Joseph, Dr. Margaret “Peggy” Jablonski, Dr. Jean Joyce-Brady, Dr. Christopher Payne, Terry Mena, Dr. Lee Hawthorne Calizo, Kisa Takesue, Dr. Armando Bengochea, Dr. John Hernandez, Dr. Michelle Espino, Dr. Judy Marquez Kiyama, Dr. Juan Guardia, Dr. Darrell Peterson, Dr. Jacob Diaz, Lilly Leon, Tarome Alford, Dr. Elyse Chaplin, Sharron Evans, Esq., Dr. Tom Segar, Chris Medrano, Dr. José-Luis Riera, Andrew “Andy” Matthews, Deb and Dr. Richard Southall, Dr. Marisa Rivera, Dr. David Perez II, Dr. Jerri Lyn Dorminy, Dr. Dawn Johnson, Dr. Jeannie Brown Leonard, Dr. Craig Alimo, Dr. Marilyn Tyus De LaRoche, Maureen Blair, Dr. Kristen Renn, Dr. Robert Kelly, Dr. Jamie Washington, Amanda Williams, Dr. Tony Ross, Dr. Gail Edmonds, Dr. John Halstead, Dr. Tomás Morales, Dr. Cherly Daly, Dr. Frank Sanchez, Dr. Art Jackson, and the late Thomas Wendt.

I want to express my gratitude to two individuals who were like “book ends” in supporting me throughout the experience never letting me falter even during my most difficult moments. Drs. Patty Alvarez and Mark Lopez provided a safe space for an insecure and at times struggling doctoral student like me to ask any questions and to bear my inner soul. Your commitment to my success and guidance throughout my time at College Park propelled me to completion. You are the embodiment of the saying, “I am my brother’s keeper” and for that you two will always have a special place in my heart. The only way that I can honor what you did for me is to do it for someone else. I will forever be grateful – thank you!

I also want to give special thanks to Dr. Kevin Rome, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Tia Dixon, Director of Student Affairs Assessment at North Carolina Central

University for their support throughout this study. Their belief in the importance of this study and assistance with providing me with access to information and study participants was invaluable to carrying out the study.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge all the students that I had the honor to serve over the years. You continue to inspire me and make me feel hopeful for a better tomorrow. This degree is also a tribute to you and God willing will inform my service to students and society over many years to come.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables .....	xiv
List of Figures .....	xv
Chapter 1: Introduction .....	1
Background of the Study .....	1
Latinos in North Carolina .....	3
Impact of Latino population growth on K-12 .....	6
Latinos and higher education .....	8
Historically Black Colleges and Universities .....	10
HBCUs and Latinos .....	13
Campus climate .....	15
Purpose of the study .....	16
Significance of the study .....	16
Overview of the methodology .....	18
Definition of terms .....	18
Summary .....	19
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature .....	21
Theoretical Framework .....	21
Latino College Students .....	25
College pathways and access for Latinos .....	26
Impact of citizenship status .....	28
Significance of language .....	28
College transition programs .....	29
Institutional mission .....	30
The effects of rapidly rising college costs .....	31
Social, cultural, and human capital .....	31
Role of gender .....	33
Latino college student success .....	34
Academic involvement .....	35
Identity development and validation .....	36
Campus climate .....	39

Minority Serving Institutions .....	40
Tribal Colleges and Universities .....	43
Asian American and Pacific Islander Serving Institutions .....	45
Hispanic Serving Institutions .....	46
Historically Black Colleges and Universities .....	48
Historical overview .....	48
Booker T .Washington versus W.E.B. DuBois .....	50
Compositional diversity .....	51
Student experiences .....	53
College choice.....	54
Uniqueness of the experience .....	58
White student experience .....	61
Latino student experience .....	62
Summary .....	63
Chapter 3: Methodology .....	64
Purpose of the study .....	64
Case study research .....	64
Case study site .....	68
Human subjects approval .....	70
Sampling strategy .....	71
Data collection.....	72
Individual interviews .....	73
Documents and other data sources .....	74
Data analysis .....	74
Establishing trustworthiness.....	77
Credibility.....	78
Transferability .....	78
Dependability .....	79
Confirmability .....	79
Researcher reflexivity .....	80
Summary .....	84

Chapter 4: Results .....	85
Study Participants.....	85
Student interest in the study .....	86
Student participants .....	87
Faculty and staff participants.....	92
Campus Climate for Latino Students at an HBCU .....	92
Historical Legacy of Inclusion and Exclusion .....	93
Students’ understanding of the legacy of HBCUs.....	94
Enrolling without regard to historical mission.....	95
Post-matriculation education and awareness .....	96
Decision to attend an HBCU .....	97
Financial support provided .....	97
Welcoming campus.....	98
Close to home .....	99
Prior exposure to the university .....	99
Academically accessible .....	100
Positive feelings about attending an HBCU .....	100
Supportive academic and social environment.....	100
HBCU status does not matter.....	102
Benefits of being a Latino student at an HBCU .....	103
Minority status advantages .....	103
Financial benefits .....	105
No advantages as a Latino .....	106
Understanding the HBCU legacy: Faculty-staff perspective .....	106
Decision to work at an HBCU .....	110
Faculty-staff perspectives on Latino enrollment at NCCU.....	112
Compositional Diversity .....	114
Participants’ awareness of Latino compositional diversity.....	115
Connecting with Latino students .....	115
Presence of Latino faculty and staff.....	117
Living up to its legacy of inclusion.....	119

Psychological Climate.....	122
Welcoming community at NCCU .....	123
Central cares.....	125
Positive academic environment .....	127
A perceived hospitable campus environment .....	130
Latino student perspectives on campus diversity at NCCU .....	133
Making meaning of being Latino.....	138
Feeling different.....	139
Behavioral Climate.....	144
Quality of student engagement.....	145
Making connections across differences .....	146
Black-Brown student relationships .....	151
Interactions between Latino students.....	154
Interacting with faculty and staff .....	159
Campus engagement through participation .....	164
Latino student involvement.....	164
Inclusive campus activities .....	167
Organizational/Structural Dimension.....	174
Challenging and supportive campus environment .....	175
Just like everyone else .....	175
Cultural isolation.....	177
Structural factors contributing to student success .....	179
Central faculty, staff, and students making a difference.....	179
The need to develop institutional cultural competencies .....	182
Strengthening the organizational structure for Latino students .....	184
Developing Latino student life and services.....	184
Recruiting Latinos.....	188
Partnering with Latino students to recruit Latinos.....	189
The role of financial support in the recruitment of Latino students .....	191
Cultivating outreach to Latino families .....	192
Summary .....	194

Chapter 5: Summary and Discussion .....	195
Overview of Findings in Relationship to the Campus Climate Framework .....	195
External environment .....	196
Internal environment .....	197
Discussion of the Findings in Relationship to the Literature .....	205
Decision to attend an HBCU .....	206
Financial value .....	207
Welcoming campus environment .....	209
Academic accessibility.....	209
Proximity to home.....	210
Transition to college .....	211
Learning communities .....	213
First-year seminars.....	215
Welcoming faculty, staff, and students.....	215
Cultural fit .....	216
Benefits of diversity for Black and Latino students .....	219
Student engagement.....	221
Implications for practice.....	225
Recruitment, outreach, and awareness .....	226
Recruitment practices and other HBCUs .....	229
Transitions and connections .....	230
Campus education about Latinos.....	232
Latino student life.....	234
Latino alumni relations .....	236
Recommendations for future research .....	237
Limitations .....	239
Conclusions.....	243
Appendix A.....	244
Appendix B .....	245
Appendix C .....	246
Appendix D.....	248

Appendix E .....	254
Appendix F.....	255
Appendix G.....	256
Appendix H.....	258
Appendix I .....	259
Appendix J .....	260
Appendix K.....	261
Appendix L .....	262
References.....	263



## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	Key Categories.....	77
Table 2.	Student Participant Profiles.....	90
Table 3.	Historical Legacy of Inclusion/Exclusion.....	198
Table 4.	Compositional Diversity.....	200
Table 5.	Psychological Climate.....	201
Table 6.	Behavioral Dimension.....	203
Table 7.	Organizational/Structural Dimension.....	204
Table 8.	Mapping of Key Categories to Campus Climate Framework.....	207

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Percent change in Hispanic or Latino population by county 2000-2010.....	2
Figure 2. Concentration of Hispanic population by leading growth counties, 2004.....	4
Figure 3. Concentration of Hispanic births in four leading Hispanic growth counties, 2004.....	5
Figure 4. Campus climate framework.....	23
Figure 5. HBCU Latino Engagement Model.....	226

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This dissertation is a case study that explores the experiences of Latino students attending North Carolina Central University (NCCU) a historically Black university (HBCU) in North Carolina. Latino undergraduates as well as faculty and staff that have been identified for their commitment to issues of inclusiveness were interviewed individually. Documents relevant to the case site were also reviewed. This chapter presents the background, purpose, and significance of the study. Definitions of key terms are provided as well as an overview of the methodology.

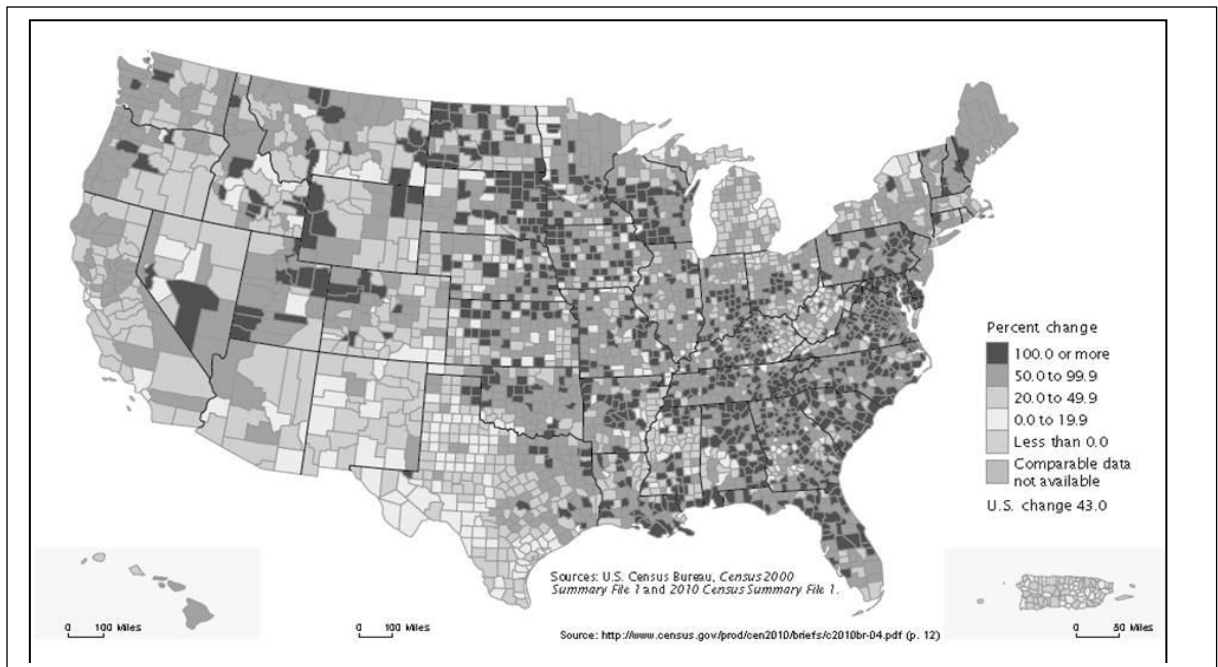
Specifically, to set the context for the case study, this chapter will describe the growth of the Latino population nationally with a particular focus on the Southeastern United States and the state of North Carolina in particular. North Carolina is of interest because it has had one of the fastest growing Latino populations in the country from 2000 to 2010. Additionally, having resided and worked in the area where NCCU is located allowed me to make connections that facilitated access to the institution. Furthermore, some attention will be paid to the impact of the Latino population growth on the education system nationally and in North Carolina. Lastly, the emerging trend of HBCUs recruiting and enrolling Latino students will be described as a rationale for learning about the experiences of Latino students attending HBCUs.

### **Background of the Study**

Nationally, the Latino population comprises 48 million (or 15% of the U.S. population) with continued growth projected to reach 103 million (or 24% of the population) by 2050 (United States Census Bureau, 2010b). Moreover, from 2000 to 2006, Latinos accounted for one-half of the total population growth in the country

(United States Census Bureau, 2010b). During the same period, the growth rate of the Latino population was 24.3% as compared to the 6.1% growth rate of the total population (United States Census Bureau, 2010b). The tremendous growth in the population since 2000 has been fueled more by the Latino birthrate than international migration to the United States (Fry, 2008; Pew Hispanic Center, 2005). By 2020, second-generation Latinos are predicted to make up 36% of the overall Latino population as compared to 34% for Latino immigrants (Fry, 2008).

The growth in the Latino population has occurred in areas traditionally populated by Latinos as well as in places where Latinos previously did not have a significant presence (Fry, 2008; Pew Hispanic Center, 2006; Suro & Singer, 2002). Since 1990, the South has experienced a greater share of the Latino population growth than any other region in the country (Figure 1; Fry, 2008; Kochhar, Suro, & Tafoya, 2005; Pew Hispanic



*Figure 1.* Percent change in Hispanic or Latino population by county 2000-2010.

Adapted from the United States Census Bureau Summary File (2000, 2010).

Center, 2005; United States Census Bureau, 2010). From 2000 to 2006, five Southern states led the way nationally with the fastest growth in the Latino population: Arkansas (60.9%), Georgia (59.4%), South Carolina (57.4%), Tennessee (55.4%), and North Carolina (54.9%; United States Census Bureau, 2010). Additionally, from 2000 to 2006 the same five Southern states experienced a percentage change in the Latino population of 50% or higher as compared to the national growth rate of 24% (United States Census Bureau, 2010). More than any other states, Georgia and North Carolina have the most number of counties experiencing an exponential amount of Latino population growth (Fry, 2008).

**Latinos in North Carolina.** The Latino population growth in North Carolina has been fueled in part by immigration to the state from Mexico, other Central and South American countries, and the Caribbean islands (Kasarda & Johnson, 2006). Additionally, the migration of Latinos from other parts of the United States to North Carolina and an increased number of births in the state have also contributed to the Latino population growth in North Carolina (Lee, 2007). Between 1995 and 2004, 38% of Latinos in North Carolina emigrated from another country; 40% were from other jurisdictions in the United States, and 22% were born in the state (Kasarda & Johnson, 2006). In the 10-year span from 1990 to 2000, the Latino population in North Carolina grew by 394% from 76,726 to 378,963 (Kasarda & Johnson, 2006). This growth rate continued into the new millennium with Latinos making up 7.7% of the total population in North Carolina in 2009 as compared to 4.7% in 2000 (Kasarda & Johnson, 2006; United States Census Bureau, 2010). Latinos in North Carolina are mainly of Mexican origin (65.1%),

followed by Puerto Rican (8.2%), Cuban (1.9%), and from other countries (24.8%; Kasarda & Johnson, 2006).

Geographically, Latinos are located throughout the state. Specifically, more than half of the state's Latino population is concentrated in 20 counties (Kasarda & Johnson, 2006). As Figure 2 shows, four of these counties (Mecklenburg, with 12.8% of the state's Latino population; Wake, 9.8%; Forsyth, 5.6%; and Durham, 4.8%) are home to 33% of the state's Latino population and accounted for one third of the state's Latino population growth between 1990 and 2004 (Kasarda & Johnson, 2006). Moreover, Figure 3 indicates that the same four counties had the highest concentration of Latino births in 2004 (Kasarda & Johnson, 2006). The case site for this study is located

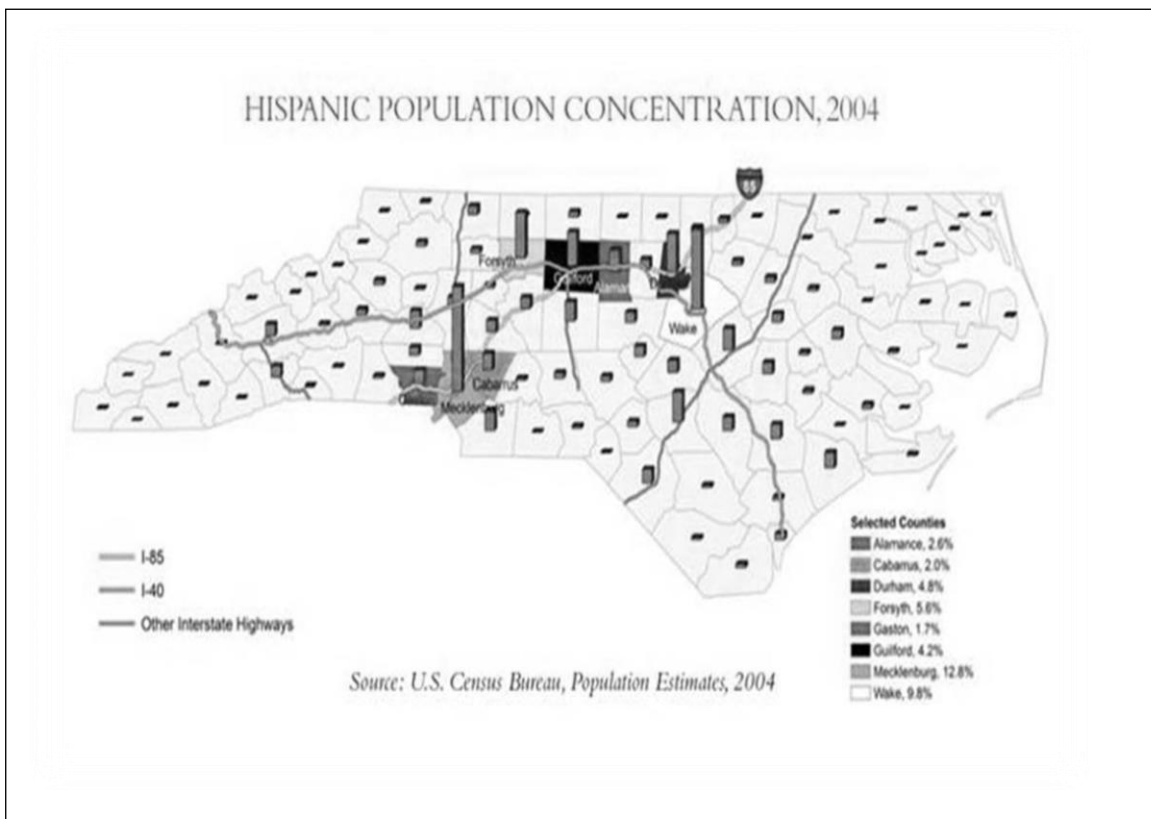
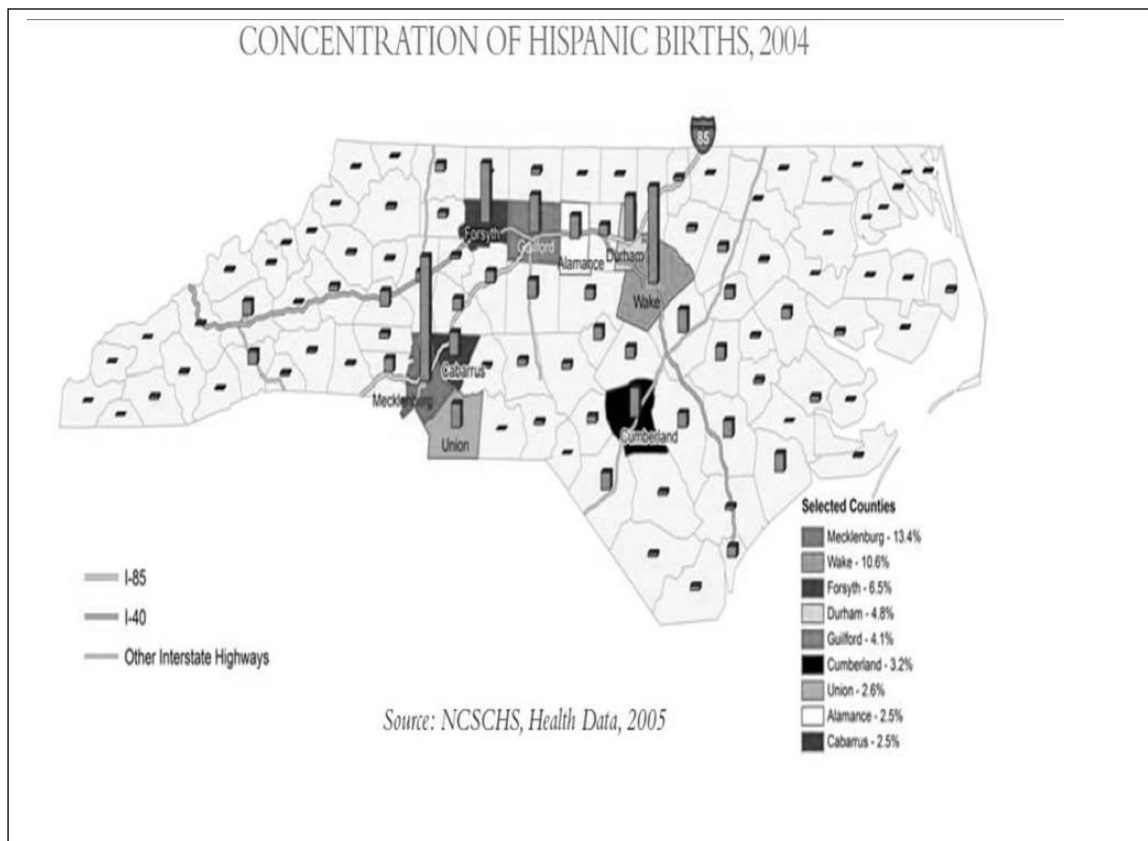


Figure 2. Concentration of Hispanic population in North Carolina counties in 2004.

Adapted from J. D. Kasarda & J. H. Johnson, 2006.



*Figure 3.* Concentration of Hispanic births in Four North Carolina counties with largest Hispanic growth in 2004. Adapted from J. D. Kasarda & J. H. Johnson, 2006.

in the City of Durham, which is located in Durham County, one of the four aforementioned counties experiencing significant Latino growth in its community.

Although Latino communities in states like California, Texas, and New York have been transformed by continuous immigration and transnational movement between Latin America and the United States, the tremendous growth of the Latino population in the Southeastern United States is a more recent phenomenon. Consequently, two thirds or 64% of the North Carolina Latino population is foreign born (North Carolina Institute of Medicine, 2003). Of the foreign-born Latinos in North Carolina, a majority (58%) are not citizens, as compared to Latinos nationwide, who are less likely to be foreign born

(North Carolina Institute of Medicine, 2003). As a result, Latinos in North Carolina are more likely to encounter language barriers as compared to Latinos nationally (United States Census Bureau, 2003). Furthermore, Latinos in North Carolina have a higher birth rate as compared to the general population in the state (Kasarda & Johnson, 2006; North Carolina Institute of Medicine, 2003). This trend nationally and in North Carolina has led to an overall younger Latino population than the population at large (Kasarda & Johnson, 2006; North Carolina Institute of Medicine, 2003). Whereas the median age of all people living in North Carolina is 35 years, for Latinos, the median age is 24 (Kasarda & Johnson, 2006; North Carolina Institute of Medicine, 2003). Moreover, twice as many Latinos are under the ages of 5 and 10 as compared to the rest of the population (Kasarda & Johnson, 2006; North Carolina Institute of Medicine, 2003). The tremendous growth within the Latino population in North Carolina is well recognized; however, estimates indicate the numbers are larger than what is reported because of undocumented Latinos in the state (Kasarda & Johnson, 2006). Given the migration and birth trends discussed, the Latino population in North Carolina will continue to grow and, in the process, have a pronounced impact on the state's education system.

**Impact of Latino population growth on K-12.** The rapid growth in the Latino population nationally has led to an increase in the number of Latino youth participating in kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade (K-12) education (Pew Hispanic Center, 2005). The Latino 5- to 19-year-old population is expected to grow from 11 million in 2005 to 16 million in 2020, in the process impacting educational enrollment in the United States (Pew Hispanic Center, 2005). On the contrary, during the same period, the African American youth population is not expected to grow at a similar rate in the 5- to 19-year-



old age group (Pew Hispanic Center, 2005). Moreover, the increase in participation by Latinos in the K-12 educational pipeline has led to a continuing increase in the postsecondary education enrollment of Latino students despite continuing disparities in degree attainment (Ryu, 2010).

From 1998 to 2008, the high school completion rate for Latinos increased from 60% to 70%, the largest gain for any racial or ethnic group during that period of time (Ryu, 2010). However, despite the significant educational gains, Latinos still lagged behind all racial and ethnic groups in high school completion (Ryu, 2010). The increase in the high school completion rate for Latinos has led to similar gains in the Latino college enrollment rate from 1998 to 2008 (Ryu, 2010). Similar to high school completion rates, college enrollment among Latinos continues to lag behind that of Whites, African Americans, and Asian Americans (Ryu, 2010). In spite of the educational attainment disparities at the high school and college levels, Latino college enrollment grew by 67% between 1997 and 2007, the largest of any racial and ethnic groups (Ryu, 2010).

In North Carolina, tremendous growth in the Latino population over the past 20 years has had a significant impact on the state's educational system (1990-2010). Due in great part to immigration, interstate migration, and an increase in births, the Latino population in North Carolina grew exceedingly fast from 1990 to 2000 (Kasarda & Johnson, 2006; Pew Hispanic Center, 2005). Between 2000 to 2001 and 2004 to 2005, Latino students accounted for 57% of the total growth in attendance at North Carolina public schools (Kasarda & Johnson, 2006). The rapid infusion of Latino students into the North Carolina public school system dramatically altered the racial and ethnic

composition of schools that historically reflected a segregated society and post integration Black-White dichotomy.

**Latinos and higher education.** The path to higher education begins for many with the successful completion of a high school degree. According to the Current Population Survey administered by the U.S. Census Bureau (2000), 27% of Latinos have less than a ninth-grade education and 16% did not receive a high school diploma. Whites accounted for 93% of high school graduates in 1960 and 72% in 2001, and are expected to consist of 60% of graduates by 2012 (Mortenson, 2003). On the contrary, Latinos accounted for 5% of high school graduates in 1976, 9% in 2001, and are expected to reach 19% of all public high school graduates by 2012 (Mortenson, 2003).

The percentage of Latinos graduating from high school has increased, but Latinos continue to lag behind the high school completion rates of White and African American students (Harvey, 2003). In 2000, White students between the ages of 18 and 24 had an 87% high school completion rate, compared to a 76% completion rate for African Americans, and 59% for Latinos (Harvey, 2003). For Latinos between the ages of 25 and 29, the high school graduation rate increased slightly to 62% (Harvey, 2003). In addition, Harvey found a significant gender gap among Latino graduates, with Latino men completing high school at a rate of 54% compared to Latina women at 65%. The disparity between Latino males and Latina females at the high school level is also reflected in postsecondary education enrollment rates (Swail, Cabrera, Lee, & Williams, 2005); 57% of the 1.3 million Latino college students are female (Fry, 2002). Despite the educational gap that exists in high school completion rates, Latino students are enrolling in postsecondary education at an increasing rate (Swail & Perna, 2002).

The Pew Hispanic Center (2004) reported that more than 70% of the Latino population did not have a college education. Despite the high percentage of Latinos without a college education, Latinos are the fastest-growing group entering college, representing about 11% of the current college population (Pew Hispanic Center, 2004). By 2020, Latinos will comprise 25% of the traditional (18 to 24) college-aged population (Pew Hispanic Center, 2004). Though the data suggests that the number of Latino college students will continue to increase in the next 15 years, Latinos lag behind other ethnic and racial groups with regard to educational attainment (Fry, 2002). Specifically, Rooney (2002) stated that Latinos demonstrate lower 4-year degree attainment rates than other U.S. ethnic groups.

In 2001, more than 1 million Latinos were enrolled in higher education, but only 40% were enrolled in 4-year institutions (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2001). According to a U.S. Census 2000 Special Report (United States Census Bureau, 2004), only 1 in 10 Latinos who were older than 25 earned a bachelor's degree, with degree attainment rates varying greatly among Latino ethnic groups, which included Central Americans (10%) and Mexican Americans (7%) on the lower end of the scale. Furthermore, a number of factors contributed to the underrepresentation of Latino groups among college graduates, including ethnic and racial injustices in education, variance in college preparation, and a lack of social and cultural capital (Altbach, Berdahl, & Gumport, 1999; Sólorzano, Villalpando, & Oseguera, 2005). As such, the higher education pipeline for Latinos is lined with a series of barriers. Although Latinos have the lowest postsecondary graduation rate among all U.S. ethnic groups, Latino enrollment rates in postsecondary education are at the highest in history (Swail & Perna, 2002).

**Historically Black Colleges and Universities.** Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have played a significant role in the history of American higher education. HBCUs were defined by the Higher Education Act of 1965 as institutions of higher education established before 1964 with the purpose of educating African Americans while remaining open to all groups (White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities, 2011). Today, HBCUs include 105 public and private colleges and universities located in 22 states (White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities, 2011). HBCUs consist of 4-year public and private institutions and 2-year colleges, which are primarily located in the South, with the majority of institutions in Alabama (15), North Carolina (11), and Georgia (10) (White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities, 2011).

The historical mission of HBCUs of educating African American students has been under question for some time by government and education officials in addition to being challenged by the courts, in particular, as it pertains to enrollment policies and whether HBCUs should be recruiting more non-Black students (Gasman et al., 2007; Kim, 2002; Outcalt & Skewes-Cox, 2002; Riley, 2010; Roebuck & Murty, 1993). The 1954 landmark United States Supreme Court case, *Brown versus Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, forbid states from having separate, but equal educational systems (Bell, 2004). This momentous ruling opened the doors for African Americans and other people of color to begin enrolling at predominantly White public institutions, which has simultaneously brought into question the relevancy of HBCUs.

In order to survive in a post-segregation era, many public HBCUs sought to increase the percentage of non-Blacks enrolling or merging with local White institutions,

ultimately leading some HBCUs to become predominantly White by the mid-1990s (Kim, 2002; Lee, 2002). Additionally, after 1954, HBCUs for the first time found themselves having to compete with PWIs for African American students, in particular, academically and athletically talented Black students (Allen & Jewell, 2002; Roebuck & Murty, 1993). Furthermore, HBCUs continue to produce a disproportionate number of African American college graduates in spite of their small numbers in comparison to the rest of the higher education community (Allen, 1992). Moreover, HBCUs continue to experience growth because of non-Black students choosing to enroll along with an increasing African American college going population (Kim, 2002).

The argument has been made by some HBCU administrators that the continued watering down of the historical make up of HBCUs will be at a huge cost to African American students (Gasman et al., 2007; Lee, 2002; Outcalt et al, 2002). Considering this evolving reality, HBCUs “must be careful to preserve their unique and supportive environments” (Outcalt et al, 2002, p. 346) for African American students by embracing a “dual mission role of supporting both their historical African American students and those non-African Americans attending HBCUs in larger numbers” (Outcalt et al, 2002, p. 346). Although some administrators at HBCUs consider increased White enrollment to be proof that their institutions are for all students regardless of race, others worry that the increase is at the expense of Black students (Gasman et al., 2007). Additionally, some HBCU administrators feel that increased diversity could lead to HBCUs changing their historical mission radically and altering their cultural feel as Black colleges, especially at more prestigious HBCUs (Gasman et al., 2007).

In some states, proposals have been put forth that would merge historically Black institutions or higher education systems with their predominantly White counterparts (Gasman, et al., 2007; Lee, 2002). These proposals to merge have come as a result of dwindling state support for higher education, attempts to reduce academic program duplication, efforts to eliminate segregation in higher education, and the persistent questioning by some of the role of HBCUs in today's environment (Allen & Jewell, 2002; Gasman et al., 2007; Lee, 2002; Roebuck & Murty, 1993). Current economic conditions have particularly had a disproportionate impact on HBCUs, which tend to be more dependent than most PWIs on tuition, government assistance, and corporate and foundation giving due in part to little or no endowment funding and low alumni giving (Nealy, 2009). According to Gasman (2009b), a historical commitment to serving disadvantaged low-income students accompanied by lower tuition rates has led HBCUs, unlike PWIs, to be unable to depend on their alumni and tuition for financial support. Specifically, upwards of 90% of students attending HBCUs receive financial aid, and tuition tends to be 50% less than predominantly White institutions (Gasman, 2009b).

Finally, despite economic, political, and societal pressures challenging the historical mission of HBCUs, the changing national demographics and a rapidly evolving higher education landscape are forcing HBCUs to rethink their relevance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Allen & Jewell, 2002; Nealy, 2009; Riley, 2010). HBCUs face competition from for-profit institutions who have surpassed HBCUs in the number of degrees awarded to African Americans (Nealy, 2009; Riley, 2010). Although HBCUs are known for providing a nurturing environment for its students, recent figures indicate that only about 38% of African American students graduate within six years, below the national

average for PWIs (Nealy, 2009; Riley, 2010). Low graduation rates is something that United States Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, stated must be addressed at a symposium of HBCU leaders and faculty at North Carolina Central University in June 2010 (Kelderman, 2010).

*HBCUs and Latinos.* A fast-growing Latino population in combination with increased participation by all groups in prekindergarten to postsecondary education (p-16) has prompted some HBCUs to re-examine their historical missions and broaden their focus on other groups of underrepresented students (Gasman, 2009a; Jewell, 2002; For Chicana/Chicano Studies Foundation, n.d.). Nationally, HBCUs represent 3% of all colleges and universities and enroll 16% of African American students at the undergraduate level (Gasman, 2009a). The percentage of non-African American students at HBCUs is about 15% of their total enrollment (Jewell, 2002). The percentage of non-African American students enrolled in public HBCUs has increased over the past 20 years (Carew, 2009; Thurgood Marshall College Fund, 2006). This increase has resulted in the proportion of Latino, Asian, and multiethnic students enrolling at public HBCUs increasing from 9,729 in 1986 to 16,008 in 2006, reflecting an upsurge of 40% (Thurgood Marshall College Fund, 2006). Additionally, the number of White students attending public HBCUs has decreased significantly from 23,026 in 1986 to 16,205 in 2006, a decrease of 30% (Thurgood Marshall College Fund, 2006).

With a rapidly growing Latino population and declining African American enrollments at HBCUs, these institutions are now actively recruiting Latino students, especially in Texas, North Carolina, and Ohio (Roach, 2005). Moreover, the total enrollment of Latinos at HBCUs has increased slightly from 1.5% in 1976 to 2.3% as of

2004 (Anonymous, 2004). Although the overall number of Latino students enrolling at HBCUs has increased, the figures vary widely by institution (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2004).

In states like North Carolina, which has the second greatest number of HBCUs, after Alabama, the explosive growth in the state's Latino population has forced public officials to think about the implications for postsecondary education (Roach, 2004). HBCUs in North Carolina have been asked by state officials to play a comparable role to predominantly White institutions (PWIs) in the state by assisting with Latino college student enrollment, which is due in part to the Latino college-age population projected to surpass that of Blacks in North Carolina around 2018 (Roach, 2004). Specifically, the University of North Carolina Board of Governors asked the state's five public historically Black universities to increase their overall enrollment by 50% by 2008 (Anonymous, 2000). The request that public HBCUs in North Carolina increase their overall enrollment of Latino students has been complicated by a fast-growing Latino population that has significant challenges, including a high dropout rate, a lower college enrollment rate than Whites and Blacks, and English-language learning needs (Roach, 2004; Scott, 2008).

HBCUs have a legacy of serving students who have been historically denied access to higher education because of segregationist practices at PWIs (Jewell, 2002). HBCUs are well positioned because of their history to be a serious postsecondary education option for the growing Latino college-age population in North Carolina. Though this concept makes sense on the surface given the unique and shared educational challenges of African Americans and Latinos in the United States, it is not as simple as



just admitting Latino college students into HBCUs. As HBCUs continue to diversify and increase the number of Latino students enrolling on their campuses, special attention must be paid to the historical and contemporary context of HBCUs in addition to the unique needs of a fast growing Latino population in the South in order to begin to understand the experiences of Latinos at HBCUs.

**Campus climate.** One of the ways to begin to understand the Latino HBCU experience is by examining how the campus climate is experienced by Latino college students. Milem, Chang, and Antonio (2005) described the campus climate as playing a critical role in fostering an inclusive campus environment in which learning opportunities are maximized and negative outcomes minimized. By accounting for the external and internal forces that serve to shape the campus climate for diversity, environmental conditions can be set forth that would allow students to successfully learn from the diversity opportunities they encounter on campus (Milem et al., 2005).

HBCUs have played a unique role in providing a campus climate that is culturally affirming for African American students (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1998). In addition, some Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) also provide culturally affirming campus environments for the students they serve (Hurtado et al., 1998). Specifically, HBCUs have been shown to “provide more social and psychological support, higher levels of satisfaction and sense of community, and greater likelihood that students will persist and complete their degrees” (Hurtado et al., 1998, p. 284). Given the focus of this study, the updated campus climate framework by Milem et al. (2005) guided the design of this study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to gain a multifaceted perspective on the experiences of Latino college students attending a historically Black university in North Carolina. The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the Latino student experience at an HBCU that is intentionally seeking to promote Latino student success?
2. How is the campus climate, as defined by Milem et al. (2005), experienced by Latino students at an HBCU?

The intended outcome of this study was to identify salient themes related to the phenomenon of interest that are grounded in the institutional context and experiences of the participants. Case study methodology was used to design the study and the revised campus climate framework by Milem et al. (2005) served as a theoretical lens to analyze the data and ground the findings. Specifically, the theoretical framework considers external and internal factors that contribute to shaping the campus climate for students. The five internal components of the framework include: historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion, compositional diversity, psychological dimension, behavioral dimension, and organizational/structural dimension (Milem et al., 2005). Additionally, the two external components include: governmental/political forces and social historical forces (Milem et al., 2005).

### **Significance of the Study**

Two factors underscored the importance of this study: (a) the lack of research focusing on Latino college students attending HBCUs and (b) the active recruitment of Latinos by HBCUs in the South, particularly, in North Carolina (Roach, 2004). The Latino population is growing the fastest in the Southeastern part of the United States

(Fry, 2008). As a result, the study will provide insight into an emerging phenomenon, that is, the increasing number of Latino college students attending an HBCU situated within a region of the country experiencing tremendous growth in the Latino population.

Research on Latino college students has been focused primarily within the context of community colleges, 4-year public institutions, elite private schools, and Hispanic-serving Institutions (Ceballo, 2004; Guardia & Evans, 2008; Hernandez, 2000; Jalomo, 1995). However, HBCUs increasingly have become an option for more segments of the college-going population (Davies, 2007; Jewell, 2002; Peterson, 2006; Roach, 2004 & 2005). With HBCUs actively recruiting Latino students and the increase in Latino students choosing to enroll at HBCUs, this study can contribute to research that seeks to understand the experiences of Latino students at HBCUs in addition to how these institutions can contribute to the educational success of Latinos. Furthermore, ascertaining the personal cost to both Latino students and HBCUs is critical given the new elements that Latino students introduce and the historical mission that HBCUs have of educating African American students (Allen & Jewell, 2002). Consequently, the psychological impact on Latino students as it relates to campus culture and climate within the HBCU context will be examined. Lastly, given the limited research in this area, the study will serve to inform future research exploring the experiences of Latinos at HBCUs.

## **Overview of the Methodology**

This case study examined the experiences of Latino students attending a single historically Black university in North Carolina during the spring 2012 semester. The use of case study methodology was appropriate in terms of exploring an experience within a clearly defined system (Creswell, 1998, 2003; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994, 2003). According to Creswell (1998), a case study is "an exploration of a 'bounded system' or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context" (p. 61). Given the limited research on the Latino HBCU experience, a case study is a particularly appropriate methodology to explore the phenomenon of interest in order to understand how the different factors that comprise the institutional context are shaping the Latino student experience at North Carolina Central University.

## **Definition of Terms**

It was important to define some critical terms guiding this study. The use of the U.S. Census Bureau definitions for both African Americans and Latinos will be used given the reference to national and local demographic trends for both groups in the study.

**African American/Black American:** The United States Census Bureau (2000) defined African American/Black American as a "person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as 'Black, African Am., or Negro,' or provide written entries such as African American, Afro American, Kenyan, Nigerian, or Haitian" (p. 2).

**Latino:** The term Latino was used to describe participants who identified, because of country of origin or familial ancestry, with any of the Spanish-speaking

countries of North America, Central America, and South America, including the Caribbean (United States Census Bureau, 2000). However, research that referenced Hispanic, Latina/o, or a specific ethnicity based on a country of origin (e.g., Mexican, Dominican, etc.) in their work, was cited as such. Furthermore, for this study, I will use the term Latino to be inclusive of both females and males to be consistent in the use of proper Spanish grammar, which calls for the use of the masculine plural when the plural refers to two or more nouns of different genders.

**Case study:** A case study is often defined by its "end product," as a "... intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit" (Merriam, 1998, p. 21).

**Historically Black College or University (HBCU):** HBCUs are institutions of higher education, both public and private, that were founded to provide access to higher education to Black Americans because of educational segregation (Allen & Jewell, 2002).

**Southeastern United States:** This term refers to the region of the United States that consists of the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia.

## **Summary**

This chapter introduced the topic including societal context, purpose of the study, significance and background of the study, methodological approach, and definition of terms. Chapter 2 provides an in depth overview of the growing Latino population and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs). Specifically, the chapter provides a summary of

the theoretical framework, a review of the literature that focuses on the educational pathways and experiences of Latino college students, and the historical development of HBCUs. Chapter 3 provides the researcher's reflexivity and epistemological perspective and outlines the research design. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study. Lastly, Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the findings in relation to the research literature, implications of the study, and overall conclusions.

## **Chapter 2: Review of the Literature**

This chapter will provide an overview of pertinent literature that assists in contextualizing the experiences of Latino students attending an HBCU in the Southeastern United States. Although a significant body of research focusing on the specific phenomenon of interest does not exist, the literature reviewed will serve to connect what is known about Latino college students and HBCUs in order to garner an appreciation for both experiences. The chapter starts with an overview of the theoretical framework guiding the study, a review of Latino educational attainment in the United States that is inclusive of literature related to college pathways, access, and student success. Additionally, the literature on Latino identity development will be reviewed because it will assist with understanding the racial/ethnic identity development of Latino students with consideration to the HBCU context. Lastly, the literature on minority-serving institutions, with a specific focus on HBCUs, will conclude the chapter.

### **Theoretical Framework**

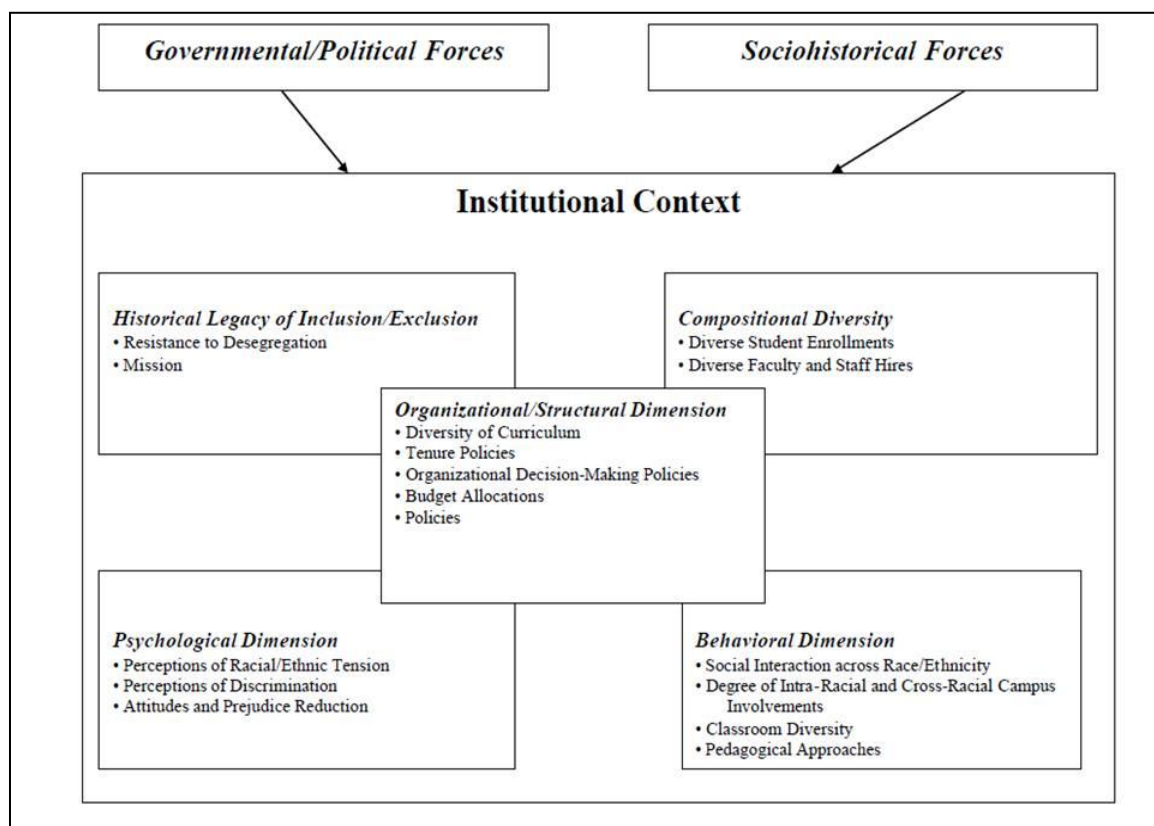
The revised version of the campus climate framework offered by Milem et al. (2005) serves as the theoretical framework guiding this study focused on understanding the experiences of Latino students attending an HBCU in North Carolina. The “majority-minority” dynamic present at the case study site makes the campus climate framework appropriate as a conceptual framework. The original campus climate framework by Hurtado et al. (1998) had four dimensions that account for factors within the institutional environment that serve to enhance or diminish the campus climate for racial/ethnic diversity. Hurtado et al. (1998) defined the campus climate as “the current perceptions, attitudes, and expectations that define the institution and its members” (p. iii). They argued that in order to enhance the climate campus, it needed to be framed within the

context of racial/ethnic diversity so that it could be assessed (Hurtado et al., 1998). The four dimensions reflect the experiences or perspectives that have been historically underrepresented in higher education (Hurtado et al., 1998). Specifically, the four dimensions focus on historical practices of inclusion and exclusion (historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion); the racial/ethnic make-up of faculty, staff, and students (structural dimension); the psychological experience of racial/ethnic students regarding perceptions of the campus environment on issues of racism, discrimination, and prejudice (psychological climate); and how students engage within the campus environment from a racial/ethnic perspective (behavioral dimension; Hurtado et al., 1998). Milem et al. (2005) updated the framework by changing “structural” diversity in the first version to “compositional” diversity in the updated version to signify the numerical representation of different groups on campus. Furthermore, a new “organizational/structural” dimension was added to depict how decisions are made and resources are allocated institutionally (see Figure 4). The updated framework is used as a lens to guide this study.

Hurtado et al. (1998) and Milem et al. (2005) argued that true institutional diversity cannot be achieved by simply increasing the number of minority students, faculty, and staff. They stress that “institutional leaders must learn to think systematically and multi-dimensionally as they consider the types of policies and procedures that will maximize the educational benefits of diversity” (Milem et al., 2005, p. 13). In describing the forces that shape an institution’s ability to incorporate sound diversity practices, the authors describe both external and internal forces that must be considered. External forces refer to governmental policy, programs, and initiatives that can shape the campus climate. For example, the availability of funding for access



programs or affirmative action court decisions can influence institutional practices, which includes encouraging or prohibiting institutions to enroll and employ individuals from racially/ethnically diverse backgrounds.



*Figure 4.* Illustration showing the two external and five internal dimensions of the campus climate framework. Adapted from Milem, Chang, & Antonio (2005)

Historical events also provide context for why institutions are influenced to engage in campus based diversity efforts. For example, the recent involvement of the United States in the Middle East serves as a backdrop for institutions to gauge the campus climate for Muslim students and to consider the types of diversity-related interventions that need to occur inside and outside of the classroom (Nasir & Al-Amin, 2006). External forces interact with internal institutional forces to shape the campus

racial climate for students, faculty, and staff (Hurtado et al., 1998; Milem et al., 2005). The internal forces include the following five dimensions: historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion, compositional diversity, psychological climate, behavioral climate, and organizational/structural diversity (Milem et al., 2005). In brief, an institution's historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion dimension accounts for an institution's history with race relations and other practices of exclusion/inclusion to determine how that history contributes to an institution's present day standing with its diversity practices. For example, what is the continued disparate impact on female faculty members in the sciences at an institution where science professors have always been White males? The compositional dimension reflects the numerical representation of racial/ethnic diversity on campus.

Although most campus leaders and researchers would acknowledge the importance of having a critical mass of racially/ethnically diverse individuals, the authors warn of the pitfalls associated with focusing on this one dimension alone without paying attention to the other dimensions (Hurtado et al., 1998; Milem et al., 2005). The campus climate framework provides a more comprehensive assessment of the campus climate and strategies to positively shape the campus climate for diverse groups inclusive of the complexities involved in managing a diverse campus environment (Hurtado et al., 1998; Milem et al., 2005). The behavioral dimension describes the nature and quality of social interactions between racial and ethnic groups on campus. According to Milem et al. (2005), the general perception is that students of color self-segregate on college campuses where they are the minority, but empirical research shows that multicultural students are

more likely than White students to report interactions across racial lines and to experience same-group interactions as affirming of their experience as minority students.

The authors recommend that institutions provide structured opportunities for cross-racial interactions while cultivating intentional safe spaces for students from similar racial and ethnic backgrounds to experience individual and group validation. The psychological dimension includes “the views held by individuals about intergroup relations as well as institutional responses to diversity, perceptions of discrimination or racial conflict, and attitudes held toward individuals from different racial and ethnic backgrounds” (Milem et al., 2005, p. 17). Milem and colleagues underscored the importance of campus leaders understanding that individuals and groups perceive the institution differently based on their experience within the environment and can shape how individuals choose to engage within the environment. The organizational/structural, a new dimension of the campus climate proposed by Milem et al. (2005), was “reflected in the curriculum; in campus decision-making practices related to budget allocations, reward structures, hiring practices, admissions practices, and tenure decisions; and in other important structures and processes that guide the day-to-day” operations of institutions (p. 18).

### **Latino College Students**

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2000), the Latino population will continue to grow exponentially into the next half century. As a result, colleges and universities will experience an increase in the number of students who identify as Latino, Chicano, Hispanic, or with a Latin American country of origin. Furthermore, the majority of traditional-aged Latino students are more likely to attend college on a full-time basis in

contrast to a popular belief that most Latino students attend part-time (Santiago, Kienzl, Sponsler, & Bowles, 2010; Torres, 2004). The resulting increase in the traditional-aged Latino college student population will require institutions of higher education to understand their diverse experiences and determine the appropriate resources to ensure their success (Ortiz, 2004).

**College pathways and access for Latinos.** Approximately 80% of Latino college students attend public institutions of higher education (Santiago et al., 2010). The majority of Latinos attending college are enrolled at 2-year community colleges, which is more than any other group (Fry, 2002; Martinez & Fernández, 2004). About 40% of Latino 18- to 24-year-old college students attend 2-year institutions, compared to about 25% of White and Black students (Fry, 2002). According to Fry (2002), most Latino students pursue paths into higher education equated with lower chances of obtaining a bachelor's degree, such as being enrolled in community colleges, attending school part time, and delaying or prolonging their education into their mid-20s and beyond (Fry, 2002). The rising enrollment of Latinos at community colleges might be linked to low tuition rates, proximity to home, availability of evening courses, flexible schedules, remedial education, and open admissions practices (Martinez & Fernández, 2004).

A review of access literature reveals that the enrollment of Latinos into an institution of higher education is informed by multiple factors and conditions. A holistic approach must be used to examine the pathway into higher education for Latino students (Moreno, 1998), which includes considering national and state policies, conditional factors such as socioeconomic status and generational status in the United States, as well as institutional factors that influence college choice and enrollment management practices

(Cabrera & La Nasa, 2002). Similar to the way higher education researchers have highlighted institutional and external factors that contribute to the marginalization of racially and ethnically diverse student groups on campus (Hurtado et al., 1998), the current landscape for higher education access in the United States must be examined to ascertain how it is influencing the enrollment trends of Latino students at varying types of institutions (Santiago et al., 2010).

From a policy perspective, national and state efforts to roll back affirmative action practices and limit access to higher education for non-citizens have fostered an unwelcoming environment for Latinos and other groups of students at college and universities (Chapa, 1998; Moreno, 1998; National Council of La Raza, 2003). The Hopwood decision in Texas and the University of Michigan case have curtailed admissions practices that sought to increase racial/ethnic diversity on college campuses seeking to amend historical legacies of exclusion (Chapa, 1998; Hurtado et al., 1998; Milem et al., 2005; The Harvard Civil Rights Project, 2003). In the Hopwood case, a White female denied admission to the University of Texas Law School filed a suit claiming that she was better qualified than minority applicants who were admitted (Chapa, 1998). In the Michigan case, the University's admission process of assigning automatic points to ethnic minority applicants was determined to be unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court (Moses & Chang, 2006). As a result, institutions have had to devise new admission practices in order to comply with the law of the land and offset the effects of the decisions in the Hopwood and the University of Michigan cases in providing access to historically underrepresented groups. Furthermore, another case involving the University of Texas is currently before the United States Supreme Court

challenging the intuition's admissions practices could lead to the outright elimination of the use of affirmative action practices (Carey, 2012).

***Impact of citizenship status.*** Currently, there is an anti-immigration sentiment that has had far-reaching implications for the federal and state governments across the country (Keller, 2007). State legislatures and political groups have sought to deny in-state tuition rates and financial aid support to students who are not U.S. citizens. Each year, 65,000 undocumented students graduate from high schools in the United States (Boggs, 2008; National Council of La Raza, 2003). Unlike their high school peers who are U.S. citizens, many non-citizen students have not been able to attend in-state institutions because of the cost associated with being charged out-of-state tuition rates and not being able to qualify for financial aid because of their citizenship status (Keller, 2007; National Council of La Raza, 2003). The path into higher education for Latino high school student graduates may become easier due to pending legislation. The Dream Act (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors) seeks to eliminate federal provisions that prohibit states from providing in-state tuition rates and expediting the process by which non-citizen students can become permanent residents (Keller, 2007; National Council of La Raza, 2003). About 40% of Latinos in the United States are foreign-born (United States Census Bureau, 2007) and with immigration rates from Latin America projected to increase through 2015 (Saenz, 2004), passage of the Dream Act is crucial for mending the higher education access pipeline for thousands of Latinos.

***Significance of language.*** The ongoing debate within many states on bilingual education and English only laws has further contributed to a chilly educational climate, especially for recent immigrants (Santoro, 1999; Schmid, 2001; Scott, 2008). According

to a U.S. Census Bureau report (2004), more than three fourths of Latinos spoke a language other than English at home. The salient role of the Spanish language in Latino culture serves as one example of the importance of considering cultural differences in seeking to increase the educational attainment of the growing Latino population in the United States.

***College transition programs.*** Since the 1960s, Federal TRIO Programs have been serving underserved communities in the United States (United States Department of Education, 2005). Programs such as Upward Bound and Talent Search have served as a bridge to higher education for many Latino students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds (Oliva & Nora, 2004). Despite the number of disadvantaged students served, TRIO Programs continue to have their funding status debated (American Association of University Professors, 2003; National Education Association, 2005; Pew Hispanic Center, 2004). The effectiveness of TRIO Programs in helping disadvantaged youth attain a college education has been widely debated. Data from the U.S. Department of Education (2005) showed that in 2001, 79% of Upward Bound participants were both low-income and potentially first-generation college students. Furthermore, the same study noted that the most common reasons for the need for services for Upward Bound participants were related to low grades, low achievement scores, low aspirations, lack of opportunity, and low socioeconomic status (U.S. DOE, 2005). Excelencia in Education issued a policy brief noting that 19% of TRIO Program participants are Latino (Santiago et al., 2010).

***Institutional mission.*** Institutional strategies focused on mission differentiation and academic stratification are working against programs that seek to increase access to

higher education (Bastedo & Gumport, 2003). Specifically, mission differentiation seeks avoiding having system institutions share similar missions while academic stratification describes the condition of what happens when academic programs are eliminated at some system institutions and not others (Bastedo & Gumport, 2003). Mission differentiation and academic stratification are believed to reduce duplication of programs and advance efficiency within the academy (Bastedo & Gumport, 2003). Embedded in this agenda of reduction and resource reallocation has been a competitive drive toward establishing elite academic programs at all levels of the postsecondary system: research universities, comprehensive state colleges, and community college systems (Bastedo & Gumport, 2003). At state flagship institutions, such initiatives have served to raise admissions standards (which limit access), reduce need-based funding, and eliminate academic programs of interest to minority and low-income students (Bastedo & Gumport, 2003).

According to Bastedo and Gumport (2003), minorities and students who have a low socioeconomic background stand to be influenced negatively by mission differentiation and academic stratification, as they are the ones more likely to enroll in community colleges and other public 4-year institutions other than the flagship institution. If students do transfer from a community college, remedial courses may not be available to sustain their persistence at the 4-year institution (Bastedo & Gumport, 2003). Furthermore, academic programs of interest that were once available at comprehensive state colleges or universities may be eliminated because of redundancy (Bastedo & Gumport, 2003). As a result, these academic options are no longer available to the students who need them the most (Bastedo & Gumport, 2003). Consequently, Latino students are encountering a shrinking postsecondary access pipeline.



***The effects of rapidly rising college costs.*** Further complicating postsecondary access for Latinos is the continuing rise in the cost of public higher education. The combination of limited state funding and unstable federal funding for financial aid programs has made public higher education inaccessible for low-income students (Lumina Foundation for Education, 2002, 2004; Olivas, 1985; Pew Hispanic Center, 2004; Walpole, 2003). Specifically, Latino students on average receive less financial aid, by type and source of aid, than any other ethnic group (Pew Hispanic Center, 2004). Moreover, the trend toward mission differentiation and academic stratification has resulted in public institutions of higher education providing financial aid to academically high-achieving students, that is, individuals who have traditionally assumed a greater share of the cost of attending college (Bastedo & Gumport, 2003; Olivas, 1985). As a result, students on the margins, academically and financially, are left with an even smaller share of the financial aid pie (Lumina Foundation, 2002; Walpole, 2003).

***Social, cultural, and human capital.*** Given the decreasing availability of financial resources for funding a college education and the lack of “know-how” experienced by underserved communities for attaining educational opportunities, the role of social, cultural, and human capital in the college choice process must be explored (Collatos, Morrell, Nuno, & Lara, 2004; Gonzalez, Stoner, & Jovel, 2003; Hurtado, Kurotsuchi, Briggs, & Byung-Shik, 1997; Saunders & Serna, 2004; Walpole, 2003). Coleman (1990) defined *social capital* as “resources that inhere in family relations and in community social organizations and are useful for the cognitive or social development...” (p. 300); thus the individual has access to resources that are embedded in social networks or associations. Similarly, Bourdieu (1977) defined *cultural capital*

as “the inheritance of cultural wealth which has been accumulated and bequeathed by previous generations...” (p. 488). As such, the concept of cultural capital accounts for how knowledge and preservation of status is transmitted and accumulated over time. Complementing the role that social and cultural capital play in college access is the concept of human capital. According to Schultz (1961), human capital accounts for the accumulation of skills, abilities, and knowledge that an individual acquires over time that serves to guide the individual through social systems in their accumulation of resources. In discussing access of Latino college students to postsecondary institutions, all three forms of capital should be considered.

In the case of Latino students, the lack of access to capital further complicates their entrance into higher education and ultimately their college success. For example, Torrez (2004) highlights the challenges faced by low-income Latino parents in understanding how high schools track students for college. Involving Latino parents in college access programs can serve to increase parental understanding and support for the college choice process (Auerbach, 2004; Cabrera & La Nasa, 2002; Swail et al., 2005; Tomas Rivera Policy Institute, 2004). Similarly, for an individual student, participation in early childhood and precollege bridge programs serve to supplement the capital that students may not have access to at home or in school (Collatos, Morrel, Nuno, & Lara, 2004; Oliva & Nora, 2004). Lacking social, cultural, and human capital continue to plague underserved students throughout the entire length of the educational pipeline. Investments in human, social, and cultural capital increase one’s opportunity not only toward social mobility but also in providing Latino students to higher education.

***Role of gender.*** The overall number of Latino students enrolling at colleges and universities continues to increase, resulting in Latinos being the largest minority group enrolled in higher education (Fry & Lopez, 2012; Hurtado, Santos, Saenz, & Cabrera, 2011). However, differences can be noted in college attainment between Latino females and males (Hurtado et al, 2011). Even with the tremendous increases in the number of Latino students enrolling at four-year institutions, the percentage of Latino males in comparison to Latinas has declined significantly from 57.4% in 1975 to a low of 39.2% in 2006 (Hurtado et al, 2011). In 2009, Latinas earned 62% of the bachelor's degrees awarded, which was up from 50% in 1990 (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011). In 2010, there were 561,000 Latino males enrolled at two-year institutions compared to 611,000 Latinas (Fry, 2011). Furthermore, at four-year institutions, there was a significant difference in the enrollment rates of Latinos, with 567,000 males enrolled in contrast to 769,000 females (Fry, 2011). In addition to enrolling into college at higher rates, Latinas are 20% more likely to graduate from college than their Latino male counterparts (Swail, Cabrera, Lee, & Williams, 2005). The growing disparity in college completion rates among Latinos across gender lines is one of concern for policymakers and stakeholders at all levels (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011).

Despite the disparities in college enrollment and graduation rates along gender lines, Latino college students also face cultural challenges related to gender. Latina college students are more likely to have familial expectations placed upon them that differ from what Latino males have to deal with in the college-going process (Gomez Cervantes, 2010; Sangha, 2012). Specifically, Latina college students may face the expectation that they need to live at home or stay close to home when considering college

attendance in order to assist with familial responsibilities associated with traditional gender roles in Latino culture, which has been associated with the concept of “*marianismo*” (Gomez Cervantes, 2010; Sangha, 2012). Whereas a Latino male leaving the family household to attend college might be supported given traditional cultural roles of Latino males being viewed as the provider for the family, which has been associated with “*machismo*” (Gomez Cervantes, 2010). A Latino male may choose to attend college close to home, enroll at a two-year college, or not complete a four-year degree program due to a desire to assist their family financially (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011). Therefore, in the case of Latino males and females, the importance of traditional Latino family values, “*familisimo*,” can be a significant factor when it comes to college enrollment and completion decisions among Latinos (Gomez Cervantes, 2010; Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011).

**Latino college student success.** An existing body of research focuses on Latino college student success (Galindo & Escamilla, 1995; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2005; Lopez, 2007; Padilla, 1999; Padilla, Treviño, Gonzalez, & Treviño, 1997; Rendón, 1994; Swail, Redd, & Perna, 2003). Student success is broadly defined within the research literature and is frequently institution specific (Lopez, 2007). The general working definition of success is degree attainment (Padilla, 1999; Padilla et al., 1997; Santiago, Andrade, & Brown, 2004; Wolf-Wendel, 1998). Student success in college has been studied using an array of research methodologies, and has generally focused on grade point average, overall academic achievement, student engagement, and graduation rates (Lopez, 2007). Furthermore, the research literature indicates that student success is contextual and varies by institution and student community (Lopez, 2007).

Padilla et al. (1997) examined student success at a research-extensive institution located in the Southwestern United States by exploring what leads students of color to attain a degree. Specifically, they noted that students who were successful tended to have two types of knowledge: insight on how to be successful academically and knowledge about the college-going experience gained by exploring, experimenting, and self-educating within the college environment. The combination of these two types of knowledge assisted students with overcoming barriers, which contributed to their success in college.

Rodriguez, Guido-DiBrito, Torres, and Talbot's (2000) research on Latina college students identified factors that affected student success. Socioeconomic status, cultural and gender-role stereotypes, and under-preparation served as barriers that negatively contributed to degree attainment for Latinas. Moreover, Rodriguez et al. (2000) stated that Latina student success can be enhanced by providing financial aid assistance, systems of academic support, social/cultural support systems, and a campus environment that is inclusive of all students.

***Academic involvement.*** Academic engagement is critical to the retention and success of Latino college students at four-year institutions (Hurtado, 1994). Examples of positive academic engagement experiences include interactions with faculty inside and outside the classroom, exposure to an inclusive curriculum and pedagogy, and connecting with peer groups and peer mentors (Good, Halpin, & Halpin, 2000; Kraemer, 1997; Mayo, Murguia, & Padilla, 1995; Rendón, 1994; Tinto 1993).

Faculty interaction inside and outside of the classroom positively contribute to student retention and success (Astin, 1993; Pascarella, 1980; Pascarella & Terenzini,

1998; Tinto, 1993). Faculty interaction has also led to higher academic achievement (Campbell & Campbell, 1997). An inclusive and validating curriculum and pedagogy include teaching practices that embrace the whole student in the learning process (Kraemer, 1997; Kumashiro, 2003; Rendón, 1994; Tinto, 1993; Tuitt, 2003). Studies have shown that students of color were more likely to be retained when provided with the opportunity to engage with peer groups and mentors (Good, Halpin, & Halpin, 2000; Tinto, 1993). In the case of Latino students, given how crucial academic involvement is to getting the most out of college, institutional commitment to ensuring that Latino students are engaged in the learning process is paramount to overall student success and retention (Hurtado & Garcia, 1994; Kraemer, 1997; Mayo, Murguia, & Padilla, 1995).

***Identity development and validation.*** The literature on Latino identity development is limited, with only a few models providing insight into the complex nature of identity development for Latino college students (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; Helms, 1995; Phinney, 1993; Torres, 2004). Identity development models are helpful for understanding how students develop, but often they do not take into consideration multiple or intersecting identities (Abes, Jones, & McEwen, 2007; Jones & McEwen, 2000). The theoretical models available do not consider all potential intersections of Latino identity such as racial and ethnic identity, transnational experience, multiracial and multiethnic identity development, international/Latin American experience, U.S. geographic location, and gender (Bordas, 2002; Garcia, 1998; Gonzalez-Herrera, Hernandez, & Goddard, 2002; Novas, 1998). In addition, other intersections are not accounted for, including whether a Latino student identifies with the following: Spanish speaker or not, U.S.-born versus foreign-born, U.S. generational status, class status, and

sexual orientation (Bordas, 2002; Garcia, 1998; Gonzalez-Herrera, Hernandez, & Goddard, 2002; Novas, 1998).

Torres (1999) noted that intersections should be considered in order to understand Latino student identity development. Torres' Bicultural Orientation Model (BOM) is composed of four quadrants, which are created by intersecting levels of acculturation and ethnic identity; high and low measures determine the extent to which an individual can function within Anglo and Hispanic cultures. Torres' model has the following orientations: Bicultural (can function competently in both Hispanic and Anglo cultures); Anglo (prefer to function within Anglo culture); Hispanic (prefer to function within Hispanic culture); and Marginal (cannot function adequately in Hispanic or Anglo cultures). The BOM model clearly attempts to capture the diverse identity and cultural orientations that Latino students develop during college.

At the core of Latino identity development is the influence of traditional Latino culture (Bordas, 2002). As such, colleges and universities are in a unique position to validate Latino culture by providing the conditions that allow Latino students to explore who they are within a safe, welcoming, and reflective environment (Rendón, 1994). Awareness about traditional Latino cultural values can assist with fostering a campus environment that is validating of Latino students and encourages their success. Several important values in traditional Latino culture are interpersonal relationships (*personalismo*), strong connections to family (*familismo*), trust being vital to relationships (*confianza*), and communal values (*comunidad*) (Bordas, 2002; Davis, 1997; Gonzalez-Herrera et al., 2002). Additionally, the value that many Latinos place on religion (mainly Catholicism) and the extended family structure (e.g., parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles,

other non-blood-related individuals) (Gonzalez-Herrera, Hernandez, & Goddard, 2002; Hernandez 2002; Kaisner & Pistole, 2003; Torres, 2004). Lastly, though relative to the individual and family, the Spanish language is salient to broad Latino culture along with respect for authority (Gonzalez-Herrera et al., 2002; Torres, 2004).

Latino families can be either supportive of educational aspirations or discourage academic pursuits past the high school level (Ortiz, 2004). The level of understanding about the college experience will differ from family to family, but it is important to note that regardless of the level of understanding, family is important to Latino college students (Gonzalez-Herrera, Hernandez, & Goddard, 2002). For Latino students, organizations such as the Latino Student Union can provide personal connections that are similar to those enjoyed by Latino students with their families and home community (Delgado-Romero, Hernandez, & Montero, 2004; Guiffrida, 2003; Kaisner & Pistole, 2003; Longerbeam, Sedlacek, & Alatorre, 2002).

Latino Student Union and other like organizations (e.g., Latino Fraternities and Sororities) can also allow students to cultivate a sense of family away from home while cultivating a sense of trust within a campus context that can be alienating and unwelcoming for Latino students (Bordas, 2002; Delgado-Romero et al., 2004; Guiffrida, 2003; Kaisner & Pistole, 2003; Kenny & Stryker, 1996). Providing campus conditions that allow students to explore who they are can empower students to counteract the institutional forces (e.g., institutional racism) that can lead to institutional departure (Bean & Eaton, 2000; Tierney, 2000; Tracey & Sedlacek, 1982;). Furthermore, environments that validate the identity development of students can facilitate development and promote positive outcomes in other areas, including increased academic



involvement (Fries-Britt, 2000). Validating campus environments nourish the background characteristics that Latino students bring with them to college, versus expecting Latino students from traditional Latino households and communities to forego their precollege identities (Rendón, Jalomo, & Nora, 2000; Tierney, 1992, 2000).

*Campus climate.* Campus climate conditions influence the experiences of Latino students enrolled in institutions of higher education (Fuentes & Sedlacek, 1991a; Hurtado, 1994; Hurtado et al., 1998; Sutton & Terrell, 1997). Recognized as an underrepresented group in higher education (Longerbeam et al., 2002), Latinos at predominantly White institutions (PWIs) may perceive and experience the campus environment as hostile and unwelcoming, as a result of race, ethnicity, language barriers, cultural dissonance, and institutional stance on affirmative action policies (Fuentes & Sedlacek, 1991a; Hurtado, 1994; Hurtado et al. 1998; Jones, Castellanos, & Cole, 2002). Furthermore, a positive campus climate is much more of a determining factor for success than any precollege variables (Longerbeam et al., 2002).

In light of the institutional challenges associated with managing the campus climate as it relates to diversity, Hurtado et al. (1998) suggested that increasing the number of underrepresented students alone without implementing institutional interventions to maximize cross-student interactions can lead to students of color being dissatisfied with their college experience. Similarly, for PWIs lacking significant numbers of Latino students, alienation and isolation can be experienced by students who do not see themselves reflected in the campus environment (Bordas, 2002; Hernandez, 2002; Jones et al., 2002; Longerbeam et al., 2002). In addition, a negative contributing factor during the campus-adjustment process for Latino students is the high stress

associated with acculturating to a campus environment given the cultural differences sometimes encountered by Latino students on campus (Longerbeam et al., 2002).

### **Minority Serving Institutions**

This section will provide a broad overview of what classifies an institution as a minority serving institutions (MSI) and describes the different types of MSIs, with a special focus on historically Black colleges and universities. MSIs have played a central and unique role in the history of American higher education. With an exponentially growing Latino college population, MSIs will continue to play a significant role in the educational attainment of Latinos and other college student populations (Gasman, 2008).

MSIs are two or four-years institutions that serve a significant number of African American, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Latino, or Native American students (Gasman, Baez, & Turner, 2008). Specifically, institutions are classified as a MSI based on either legislation or the percentage of minority students enrolled (Li, 2007). Historically, Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) provided access to post-secondary education opportunities to African Americans in states where segregation or discrimination were the norm (Lee, 2002).

Under Title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965, the United States Congress deemed a specific set of institutions founded before 1964 and whose main purpose was the education of African Americans as HBCUs (Li, 2007). Similarly, Tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) were designated by federal law under Section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grants Status Act of 1994 and Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978 as serving Native American populations (Li, 2007). TCUs have been instrumental in providing access to higher education to communities in underserved

rural areas and American Indian reservations (Li, 2007). MSIs have included institutions that serve students of color; however, it is important to note that arguments have been made to include under the MSI rubric colleges and universities that serve other historically underrepresented communities (Gasman, 2008). Specifically, Drezner (2008) made a historical and contemporary case for considering deaf-serving institutions as MSIs by drawing a series of parallels that highlight the similarities between both types of institutions. For example, both deaf-serving and historically Black institutions can trace their origins to the interests of individuals in society concerned with advancing the educational plight of African Americans and deaf people (Drezner, 2008).

A number of institutions have earned the designation of Hispanic serving institutions (HSIs). Unlike HBCUs and TCUs that are designated as MSIs by legislative action, HSIs are designated as such based on the percentage of Latino students enrolled (Li, 2007). The “HSI” designation was created in the 1980s by the federal government in order to direct funding to nonprofit institutions where at least 25% of the student body was Latino (Moltz, 2010). Today, there are about 260 HSIs with a number of additional institutions being designated as emerging HSIs (Santiago et al., 2010).

Prior to 2007, an Asian American serving designation did not exist for institutions (O'Brien & Zudak, 1998). In 2007, Congress passed legislation, the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (CCRAA) that contained a designation for federal recognition of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) serving institutions (Park & Chang, 2010). To qualify under CCRAA, institutions need to have a 10% enrollment of AAPI students, a certain number of low-income students, and a lower than average expenditure per student (Park & Chang, 2010). Qualifying institutions can participate in a

competitive grant process that supports the recruitment and retention of AAPI students who have been traditionally underserved by higher education (e.g., Hmong, Laotian, and Cambodian Americans; Park & Chang, 2010).

The enrollment rates of students of color have increased across all institutional types from 1.9 million in 1984 to 4.7 million in 2004, a 146% increase in comparison to 15% for White undergraduate students (Gasman, 2009b; Li, 2007). Although accounting for a significant percentage of the growth in higher education over the last 20 years, African American, Latino, and Native American students primarily enroll at minority serving institutions (MSIs; Gasman, Baez, & Turner, 2008). MSIs educate about 2.3 million students each year, with the majority identifying as students of color (Gasman et al., 2008). MSIs have enrolled a higher percentage of students of color, which increased from 38 % in 1984, 47% in 1994, and 58% in 2004 (Li, 2007).

In 2004, HSIs (Hispanic Serving Institutions) enrolled the largest proportion of students of color (27%), followed by African American serving institutions (non-HBCUs) (16%), Asian American and Pacific Islander serving institutions (8%), HBCUs (5%), and Tribal Colleges and Universities (1%; Li, 2007). Specifically, HBCUs account for only 3% of college student enrollment rates at all postsecondary institutions and enroll 14% of African American students enrolled at the undergraduate level (Mercer & Stedman, 2008). TCUs enroll less than 1% of college students, but enroll 8.6% of Native American students enrolled in higher education, and HSIs enroll only 5% of students enrolled in colleges and universities and over 50% of Latino college students who are enrolled (Mercer & Stedman, 2008). Additionally, a majority of students attending MSIs receive financial aid and come from low income families (Gasman, 2009a; Li, 2007).

Moreover, these institutions are top producers of students of color who go on to teach and earn degrees in the sciences (Gasman et al., 2008). Lastly, with the national goal to increase the number of college graduates by 2020 and given the low percentage of students of color who are graduating in comparison to their representation in the general population, MSIs are in a position to increase the graduation rate for students of color. A more in-depth analysis for each MSI type noted follows.

**Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs).** Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) serve almost 30,000 students at 33 accredited institutions that are located primarily in the Midwest and Southwest (White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities, 2011). TCUs offer a variety of degree programs, including 2-year associate degrees, vocational certificate programs, and bachelor's and master's degrees (White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities, 2011). These institutions are mainly located in rural and underserved communities and serve Native Americans and non-Native Americans in addition to traditional and non-traditional aged college students (White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities, 2011).

With the number of enrolled Native American students at about 1% at many colleges and universities nationally, TCUs are increasingly becoming a higher education choice for Native American students (Pavel, Inglebret, & Banks, 2001). Specifically, TCUs enroll about 8% of the estimated 130,000 Native American students attending institutions of higher education in the United States (Pavel et al., 2001). According to the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (1999), between 1990 and 1996 there was a 36% increase in the number of Native American students attending non-TCUs

from 96,000 to 132,000. In contrast, there was a 62% increase for TCUs during the same timeframe from 6,300 to 10,200 (American Indian Higher Education Consortium, 1999).

From a historical perspective, the development of TCUs dates back 350 years when the first European settlers arrived to what is today the United States of America (Pavel et al., 2001; Stein, 2009). For several centuries, the education of Native Americans was the concern of White Europeans (Pavel et al., 2001; Stein, 2009). This preoccupation with the education of Native Americans was one grounded in the founding of some of our oldest institutions of higher education whose “original charter had a provision to educate [or civilize] the infidels who inhabited the land the newcomers coveted” (Pavel et al., 2001, p. 52). This initial approach of educating the “natives” evolved into a government led process of eliminating from the land the “Indian problem” through genocide and removal policies (Pavel et al., 2001).

The failure of relocation and extermination policies led the federal government to negotiate treaties with Native American tribes in order to exercise control over them and garner their trust (Pavel et al., 2001; Stein, 2009). The relationship between Native Americans and the United States government is one that evolved harshly throughout most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the government receiving much criticism for its treatment of them (Pavel et al., 2001; Stein, 2009). During the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, progress was made to remedy past wrong doings through the Kennedy Report of 1969, which highlighted the need for funding as well as social, economic, and educational assistance for Native Americans. Furthermore, this renewed focus on education led to TCUs having a twofold mission of preserving Native American culture

and history while preparing students for the world of today (Pavel et al., 2001; Stein, 2009).

**Asian American and Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AAPISI).** The White House Initiative on Asian American and Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (n.d.) indicated that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) will make up almost 10% of the population in the United States or over 40 million people by 2050. The AAPI community represents over 30 countries and ethnic groups that speak over 100 different languages (Laanan & Starobin, 2004). There are several AAPI subgroups that have high poverty rates, including Hmong (23%), Cambodian (19%), Laotian (12%), and Vietnamese (13%) communities (White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, n.d.). The high school dropout rate among Hmong (40%), Laotian (32%) and Cambodian (40%) communities is also high. Furthermore, almost one out of four AAPI students has limited English proficiency or resides in a home environment where another language other than English is spoken (Laanan & Starobin, 2004). Moreover, only 14% of Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders who are 25 years of age and older has a 4-year college education in contrast to 27% of the overall population in the United States and 49% of the overall Asian American population (White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, n.d.).

The challenges the “model minority” myth within higher education that portrays Asian Americans as high achievers and model citizens in contrast to other historically underrepresented minority groups in the country (Laanan & Starobin, 2004). Moreover, the data highlights the importance of the AAPISI designation for institutions that have a significant enrollment of underserved AAPI students. Institutions with the AAPISI

designation are able to compete for grant awards that can strengthen support services (e.g., advising) for AAPI students in order to increase retention and graduation rates (Park & Chang, 2010).

**Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs).** With the growth of the Latino population nationally, the number of Hispanic serving institutions (HSIs) has also increased steadily, especially in the Southwest and West (Li, 2007; Santiago et al., 2010). According to Excelencia in Education, almost half of Latino college students attend an HSI (Santiago et al., 2004). Of the institutions identified as HSIs, 3% are private not for-profit 2-year institutions, 41% are private for-profit 2- and 4-year colleges, 32% are public 2-year colleges, 13% are private not for-profit 4-year institutions, and 11% are public 4-year institutions (Li, 2007).

With the national goal of increasing the number of college graduates by 2020, HSIs are positioned to play a vital role in advancing the degree attainment rates of the growing Latino college-going segment of the population. In 2004, Excelencia in Education convened leaders from six HSIs to discuss Latino student success at HSIs by exploring the following areas: (a) understanding what it means for a college to be “Hispanic serving” and how an institution facilitates Latino student success, (b) defining Latino student success, and (c) exploring useful and appropriate indicators for institutions to hold themselves accountable for educating Latinos (Santiago et al., 2004). Six institutions were chosen in part because they represented the three states (i.e., California, New York, and Texas) that enrolled the majority of Latino students (55%) (Santiago et al., 2004).



Three key policy areas and five active practices for facilitating Latino student success emerged from the Excelencia in Education summit (Santiago et al., 2004). Participants agreed that simply enrolling Latino students was not sufficient to earn the designation of HSI, instead the threshold should be one of actively promoting and pursuing Latino student success (Santiago et al., 2004). Another policy area that garnered group consensus was the need to look at Latino student success beyond just degree attainment, including other success factors such as the quality of campus involvement and post-college employment (Santiago et al., 2004). The participating institutional presidents also agreed from a policy perspective penalize HSIs for low student persistence rates, but instead to consider developing multiple measures of institutional effectiveness along with offering incentives to foster Latino student success (Santiago et al., 2004).

The participants agreed that using disaggregated student and institutional data can lead to identifying areas of student need, allocating limited resources to where they are most needed, while stressing the educational success of Latino students. Additionally, partnering with high schools, community colleges, and community organizations was identified as a good practice for facilitating Latino student access and preparation for pursuing a 4-year degree. Furthermore, participants noted the importance of having institutional leaders who strive to facilitate Latino student success by providing active leadership, institutional research, academic programs, support services, student life programs, and other practices that not only improve the success of Latino students, but lead to the success of all students.

**Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).** Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have played a significant role in higher education in the United States. HBCUs were defined by the Higher Education Act of 1965 as institutions of higher education established before 1964 with the purpose of educating African Americans, today there are 105 public and private HBCUs located in 22 states (White House Initiative on Historically Black College and Universities, 2011). HBCUs consist of 4-year public and private institutions as well as 2-year colleges and are primarily located in the South, with the most HBCUs in Alabama (15), North Carolina (11), and Georgia (10; White House Initiative on Historically Black College and Universities, 2011). Approximately 17% of all African American college students attend an HBCU; 28% of bachelor's degrees, 15% of master's degrees and professional degrees, and 10% of Ph.D.'s earned by African Americans are received from an HBCU (Allen & Jewell, 2002; Kim, 2002).

***Historical overview.*** Before the Civil War (1861-1865), educational opportunities for African Americans were limited (Allen & Jewell, 2002; Kim, 2002; Lee, 2002). Institutions like Oberlin College in Ohio and Berea College in Kentucky were ahead of their time in providing access to a limited number of African Americans (Allen & Jewell, 2002). Similarly, pre-college educational opportunities were limited, only occurring informally, with schools like the Institute for Color Youth, started by Quakers from Philadelphia being the exception in providing African Americans with the opportunity to receive a formal education (Allen & Jewell, 2002).

With the passage of the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution after the Civil War in 1865 abolishing slavery, formal educational opportunities became

available to African Americans (Allen & Jewell, 2002). In 1862, United States Senator Justin Morrill led the movement to enhance the public higher education system by creating institutions that focused on agriculture, engineering, and the hard sciences (Allen & Jewell, 2002). This effort culminated in the Morrill Land-Grant Act of 1862, which provided federal government land to the states for the purpose of establishing institutions of higher education to train farmers, scientists, and teachers (Allen & Jewell, 2002). With the exception of Alcorn State University in Mississippi, which was established as a Black land-grant institution in 1871, most land-grants were not welcoming to African Americans, especially institutions in the South (Allen & Jewell, 2002). Given this harsh reality, the second Morrill Land-Grant Act of 1890 attempted to address the exclusive nature of public state institutions by requiring that they open their doors to both Blacks and Whites or establish an alternative institution for Blacks (Allen & Jewell, 2002; Lee, 2002). The Morrill Land-Grant Act of 1890 led to the establishment of 16 Black institutions (Allen & Jewell, 2002).

Although most public higher education institutions focusing on the education of Blacks were founded between 1870 and 1910, several private institutions were founded before this period that included Cheyney University (1837), Lincoln University (1854), and Wilberforce University (1856; Jewell, 2002; Kim, 2002). The American Missionary Association (AMA), the Freedmen's Bureau, and Black churches played a pivotal role in the establishment of these institutions, which served as the foundation for the establishment of HBCUs (Allen & Jewell, 2002; Jewell, 2002). Although both Blacks and progressive Northern Whites were instrumental in laying the groundwork for the formal education of Blacks, their conceptualization of what that education should be

differed greatly (Allen & Jewell, 2002; Jewell, 2002). Northern missionaries and philanthropists viewed their efforts to establish a formal education system for Blacks as a way to assimilate them into Anglo-Protestant culture and to maintain social order in the country, whereas Blacks generally viewed education as a way to facilitate self-resiliency (Allen & Jewell, 2002; Jewell, 2002). Blacks were not able to sustain their educational institutions, which resulted in collaborations that led to the establishment of HBCUs, offering educational opportunities where there were none before, throughout the South (Allen & Jewell, 2002; Jewell, 2002).

***Booker T. Washington versus W.E.B. DuBois.*** Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois advocated differing perspectives on how Blacks should exist in society during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, which influenced the educational experiences of Blacks (Allen & Jewell, 2002). Booker T. Washington was a strong proponent of vocational education and thought it was the best way to prepare African Americans to assume positions in society that required being skilled in various trades (Allen & Jewell, 2002). Specifically, he believed that prosperity for freed slaves and other Blacks was through hard work in vocational trades, which he thought would lead to racial reconciliation between Blacks and Whites (Allen & Jewell, 2002). This approach was generally amenable to Whites it was seen as a way to keep Blacks subservient (Allen & Jewell, 2002; Jewell, 2002). In contrast, W.E.B. DuBois held a different perspective with regards to achieving equality for Blacks, which countered Washington's general approach to education that treated Blacks as second-class citizens (Allen & Jewell, 2002). DuBois agreed that vocational training had its place in the education of Blacks, but felt that talented Blacks with leadership potential should study liberal arts as a better way to

achieve equality and a sense of purpose (Allen & Jewell, 2002). These two divergent perspectives have informed the evolution of HBCUs. Accordingly, many HBCUs today reflect a blending of both perspectives (Allen & Jewell, 2002).

*Compositional diversity.* Though HBCUs were founded to provide African Americans with access to higher education, in the 1850s, they were some of the first institutions in the country to admit students regardless of their background (Jewell, 2002). Despite the hostile segregationist environment in the South, it was common practice for White missionary educators to have their own children in class alongside Black students (Jewell, 2002).

Unfortunately, other HBCUs faced with the threat of losing funding from various sources adhered to the wishes of state legislators and other prominent officials by adopting segregationist practices to limit contact between racial groups (Jewell, 2002). According to Jewell (2002), a number of HBCU alumni who became leaders in the fight for civil rights credited their commitment to racial equality to the transformational experiences they had with liberal White faculty and their children. In addition to the exposure that some Blacks received by attending school with the children of White missionaries, other HBCUs (e.g., Howard University, Fisk University, Atlanta University) also enrolled poor Whites, Native Americans, and foreign nationals from Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean (Jewell, 2002). In this regard, Jewell (2002) stated:

In struggling to survive under difficult circumstances, HBCUs have managed to offer opportunities for self-actualization and social mobility to all who sought them while teaching racial tolerance and producing alumni who have

distinguished themselves as tireless workers for cross-cultural understanding and social justice. (Jewell, 2002, p. 7)

Given the perspective that HBCUs have led the way for access and inclusion, Jewell (2002) argued that HBCUs are currently absent from current conversations on diversity and multiculturalism in higher education. Specifically, he stated:

By rights, they should occupy a leading position in such discussions, offering the insight that they have gained from their past and reliving those lessons as they contemplate their present and future - one in which HBCUs should consider themselves uniquely called upon to provide leadership and to make important contributions in the ongoing quest for a truly inclusive society. (Jewell, 2002, p. 8)

According to Jewell (2002), the most important outcome stemming from the involvement of free Blacks, missionaries, Black churches, and philanthropists in establishing educational institutions for Blacks was the core purpose still shared by HBCUs today, an “ongoing commitment to creating a respect for difference while educating the disenfranchised” (p. 12).

Today, the student profile at HBCUs differs from institution to institution, with some HBCUs having a student body that is majority White (e.g., Bluefield State University at 90% and West Virginia State University at 83%; AAUP, 2011). Additionally, some HBCUs have a significant number of White students enrolled, including Kentucky State University (35%), Tennessee State University (22%), and Fayetteville State University (20%; AAUP, 2011). Institutions that have the highest level of White students enrolled tend to be public (Brown, 2002). Furthermore, HBCUs are

now beginning to see increases in the enrollment rates of Latino, Asian American, and other multiethnic college students (Thurgood Marshall College Fund, 2006). However, HBCUs today continue to deal internally with the lingering effects of societal and institutional discrimination, including issues related to homophobia (e.g., straight versus gay), classism (e.g., middle class versus poor), and racism (e.g., skin color tone: dark skin versus light skin; Jewell, 2002). HBCUs are well positioned to build on their legacy of inclusion by actively recruiting students from other communities of color and seeking to build coalitions that will continue to keep them relevant in the future, and not be perceived as “relics of America’s less enlightened racial past” (Jewell, 2002, p. 19).

*Student experiences.* Although there is a rich body of a literature focusing on the experiences of Black college students at HBCUs (Allen, 1992; Fries-Britt & Turner, 2002; Kim 2002; Outcalt & Skewes-Cox, 2002; Ross, 1998; Wenglinsky, 1997), little attention has been paid to the experiences of White students attending HBCUs (Henry & Closson, 2008; Peterson & Hamrick, 2009), and minimal to no research has explored the experiences of Asian or Latino students attending HBCUs (Davies, 2007).

Prior to the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954, which declared that state laws establishing separate public schools for Black and White students as unconstitutional, the majority (over 90%) of African American college students attended HBCUs (Allen, 1992; Kim, 2002). By the early 1970s, because of the Supreme Court decision of 1954, only one fourth of all Black college students were enrolled at HBCUs (Allen, 1992; Allen & Jewell, 2002; Kim, 2002). Today, many African American students are interested in attending an HBCU due to “the empowering, family-like

environment of small classes, close faculty-student relationships, and life without the daily racial tensions experienced off campus” (Gasman, 2009a, p. 1).

***College choice.*** Freeman (1999) looked at the “considerations” given by African American high school students in deciding on whether to attend an HBCU or PWI. The following three questions guided Freeman’s study: (a) Who and/or what influences the type of higher education institution these students consider? (b) What role does cultural affinity play in the decision-making process for students considering HBCUs? (3) Are students from certain high school types more likely to consider one type of higher education institution over another? According to Freeman, looking at the decision-making process instead of the final decision provides researchers and practitioners with insight into how outreach efforts can be conducted to African American students during the recruitment and college transition process to ensure their success regardless of institutional type.

Several salient themes emerged from Freeman’s (1999) study involving the college choice process of 70 high school students. The first theme, *seeking their roots*, described the experiences of Black students who attended predominantly White high schools, and wanted to attend an institution that had a significant African American population (e.g., HBCUs) in order to have increased engagement with more Black people (Freeman, 1999). The second theme, *lack of cultural awareness*, reflected the experiences of participants in Freeman’s study who wanted to attend an HBCU because they attended high schools where White students and Black students did not know much about the African American experience. Attending an HBCU, then, was a way for African American students to learn about their history. A third theme, *the HBCU*



*connection*, described the experiences of Black high school students who considered attending an HBCU because someone close to them had an HBCU experience. Lastly, the theme of *cultural isolation* described Black students whose schools were in predominantly African American communities. These students gave serious thought to attending PWIs due to having a strong desire to want to share their culture with others. Additionally, students who attended predominantly Black high schools struggled with whether to attend an HBCU because “the real world is not Black” (Freeman, 1999, p. 101). These students internalized the pressure of needing to get exposure to other groups in society, given their experience attending all Black schools throughout their lives.

In a study designed to understand African American students who choose to attend HBCUs, Freeman and Thomas (2002) compared the characteristics of individuals who attended HBCUs in the past, during the 1970s, with those who chose to attend at the time of the study. They analyzed quantitative and qualitative studies from each period. They specifically looked at the research of Gurin and Epps (1975) and Astin and Cross (1981) and compared the findings to a qualitative longitudinal study by Freeman (1999) consisting of 21 high achieving African American students. The following three questions framed the study: (a) How are African American high school students who currently choose HBCUs different from those who have historically attended HBCUs? (b) Who and/or what influences their consideration of HBCUs? (c) What challenges will HBCUs face in continuing to attract a broad range of African American students? Their findings indicated that there were commonalities and consistencies between students who chose to attend HBCUs in the 1970s and at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For example, students from both eras considered the lower costs at HBCUs and the financial assistance

offered by PWIs when deciding their higher education path. Additionally, high achieving Black students who chose to attend HBCUs instead of PWIs, where academic programs were stronger, did so because of their concern for the plight of African Americans in society. Furthermore, students were more likely to attend an HBCU if someone from their sphere of influence (e.g., parent, a close family friend) attended an HBCU. Lastly, Black students from both eras who were culturally isolated prior to college expressed great interest in attending an HBCU.

Using Astin's 1965 student-college matching framework, Bennett and Xie (2003) contrasted the HBCU college-going process with that of students who attended PWIs. The framework has two interrelated processes, with the first focusing on the institutions where students seek admission and the second process explored how institutions select students (Bennett & Xie, 2003). Specifically, Astin argued that students seek institutions that meet their academic goals and the expectations of others (e.g., parents), while institutions are concerned with the composition of the entering class (Bennett & Xie, 2003). Unlike the PWIs described in Astin's student-college matching framework, the core mission of HBCUs is focused on providing access to Black students and cultivating campus environments that nurture African American students. Bennett and Xie noted that unlike PWIs, as reflected in Astin's framework, African American students seek an HBCU experience because of an historical inclusive paradigm of providing access to higher education and an environment that reflects their experience.

Concerned with the high number of African American high school students leaving California to attend HBCUs after the dismantling of affirmative action, Tobolowsky, Outcalt, and McDonough (2005) sought to understand the consideration and

perception of HBCUs held by African American high school students, high school counselors, and parents in post-affirmative action California. The researchers analyzed data associated with a larger study that focused on higher education access, specifically within the University of California system (Tobolowsky et al, 2005). The study included 78 focus groups and 50 individual interviews at 20 Los Angeles area high schools in urban and rural settings (Tobolowsky et al, 2005). In total there were 230 participants, including 158 African American students, counselors, and parents (Tobolowsky et al, 2005). The researchers paid special attention to the African American participants who referenced HBCUs during their interviews (Tobolowsky et al, 2005). Findings were organized into three distinct categories: origins and stimuli that led to predisposition towards HBCU, types of obstacles and attractions in the students' search process (Tobolowsky et al., 2005, p. 67), the role of affirmative action sentiment on the college aspirations of African American students (Tobolowsky et al, 2005).

Students considered attending an HBCU when they had good information about the institution (e.g., directly from the institution or through a family member), made a personal connection with a college representative (e.g., HBCU alumni), or visited the campus to learn about the resources available (Tobolowsky et al, 2005). Although students indicated enrolling in an HBCU as a preferred option for continuing their education past high school, a number of obstacles were identified as having the potential to impede students from California from attending an HBCU (Tobolowsky et al, 2005). Specifically, the location of the institution (i.e., the majority of HBCUs are in the Southeast), misperceptions about the cost to attend an HBCU, or that HBCUs do not offer financial aid were noted (Tobolowsky et al, 2005). Finally, because of the affirmative

action backlash in California, parents, in particular, highlighted a renewed interest in their son or daughter attending an HBCU (Tobolowsky et al, 2005). Parents in the study explained not wanting their children to be exposed to a hostile environment that would judge them based on affirmative action practices for getting into universities like the University of California, Berkeley (Tobolowsky et al, 2005). Additionally, parents in the study perceived the HCBU environment as being more nourishing and committed to the education of African Americans (Tobolowsky et al, 2005). The researchers cited paying attention to all three areas as being important for HBCUs if they are going to successfully recruit African American students who often noted the perceived benefits of the HBCU environment, but were also misinformed about the specifics (Tobolowsky et al, 2005).

*Uniqueness of the experience.* Over the years, scholars have studied the uniqueness of the HBCU experience, especially in comparison to PWIs (Allen, 1992; Allen, Epps, & Haniff, 1991; Fries-Britt & Turner, 2002). Allen (1992) noted some specific differences between African American undergraduates attending HBCUs and PWIs in terms of academic achievement, social involvement, and occupational aspirations. He found that HBCUs tend to enroll Black students who might otherwise not enter college because of financial, social, or academic barriers (Allen, 1992). Furthermore, in contrast to the types of students attending PWIs, Black students experiencing the aforementioned barriers reflect the types of students whom HBCUs have historically served (Allen, 1992). Many Black students attending HBCUs did not experience the unique adjustment issues faced by Black students attending PWIs. Furthermore, in contrast to the types of students attending PWIs, Black students experiencing the aforementioned barriers reflect the types of students whom HBCUs

have historically served (Allen, 1992). African American students at HBCUs also reported a positive self-concept, strong racial pride, and high aspirations (Allen, 1992). Lastly, although the findings suggested that Black students attending HBCUs were at a disadvantage with regard to overall resources available at home and school, they seemed to hold advantages over Black students attending PWIs in areas such as adjustment to college, academic gains, and greater cultural awareness (Allen, 1992).

Building on Allen's (1992) work and using Tinto's theory of academic and social integration as a guiding framework, Fries-Britt and Turner (2002) took a qualitative approach to learning about the experiences of 34 African American juniors and seniors at an HBCU and a PWI. The student participants were persisting successfully towards graduation at both institutional types. Fries-Britt and Turner's overall findings support Allen's (1992) results regarding the unique differences and advantages experienced by Black students attending an HBCU compared to a PWI. Two distinct themes emerged from their in-depth analysis of the lived experience of African American students who attended an HBCU and a PWI (Fries-Britt & Turner, 2002). The first theme reflected the different social and emotional experiences of students in both environments, and the second theme described how the personal energies of students were harnessed for success and confidence building or were channeled in ways that impeded the student from being successful (Fries-Britt & Turner, 2002). A number of sub-themes emerged under the two main themes, including a greater perceived level of faculty and peer support for students attending the HBCU, appropriate levels of social outlets in the HBCU environment genuinely targeted at the Black student experience, and energy spent on mitigating the

campus environment in the case of Black students attending the PWI (Fries-Britt & Turner, 2002).

Although some studies indicate positive gains and advantages for African American students attending HBCUs in comparison to Black students who attend PWIs, Kim (2002) found no significant differences between the two. Kim examined the effectiveness of HBCUs in developing the academic and cognitive abilities of Black college students compared to those attending PWIs using hierarchical linear modeling. Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) data from the Higher Education Research Institute in UCLA from 1985-1994 was analyzed in order to account for the longer average degree completion rates of African American college students (6-year average) compared to White students (4-year average; Kim, 2002). Findings indicated that there was no significant difference between HBCUs and PWIs in their contribution to academic, writing, and math abilities (Kim, 2002). The findings did underscore that HBCUs typically are operating with fewer resources than PWIs, but performing just as effectively (Kim, 2002).

Using naturalistic inquiry, Ross (1998) identified several characteristics that contributed to the persistence of Black males attending an HBCU in overcoming adversity and achieving academically. Ross focused exclusively on the experiences of 17 students involved in a campus-based honorary society. The students noted that an overall nurturing experience contributed to overcoming daily obstacles encountered in their lives during college (Ross, 1998). Specifically, bonding with a significant person(s) in their lives contributed to their capacity to persist, despite the odds, because of the role modeling and guidance that occurs in the relationship(s) (Ross, 1998). Additionally, a

supportive home environment, family (extended family), church (spirituality), and school were key factors that contributed to their persistence at the HBCU (Ross, 1998). This study did not highlight any specific role that the HBCU played in the success of study participants, but instead underscored the role that precollege factors play in persistence (Ross, 1998).

***White student experiences.*** Historically, the mission of HBCUs has focused on educating African American students, but for many years White students have also enrolled at these institutions (Gasman et al., 2007). Furthermore, the focus on underrepresentation in higher education has traditionally been on studying the experiences of students of color at PWIs (Jones, Castellanos, & Cole, 2002). The HBCU context provides a unique opportunity to study the experiences of White students as a minority group on campus. During a mix-method study by Closson and Henry (2008a & b) that targeted eight undergraduate participants (5 Black and 3 White) at a private HBCU in the South, White participants expressed feeling underrepresented at the HBCU and having to think about their White identity.

Another mix-method study conducted by Hall and Closson (2005) explored the experiences of White and Black graduate students attending a public HBCU in the South. Hall and Closson found that White graduate students had a difficult experience adjusting socially to the HBCU environment due to being underrepresented on campus. Exploring White identity within the context of the HBCU environment, Peterson and Hamrick (2009) conducted a phenomenological study of seven White male students attending an HBCU in the South. Specifically, they explored the racial consciousness development of the participants by examining how they made meaning of their academic and social

experiences at the HBCU (Peterson & Hamrick, 2009). The White male participants experienced differences, in comparison to their Black peers, within the following environments at the HBCU: (a) classroom environments, (b) social environments, and (c) greater awareness of race and privilege (Peterson & Hamrick, 2009). Some participants described experiencing discomfort because they were the only White student in class and feeling hyper-visible, especially when class conversations placed the spotlight on them (Peterson & Hamrick, 2009). White participants also described the personal choices they had to make regarding how they chose to socialize within and outside of the HBCU campus environment based on what they believed the “college experience” to be in comparison to what they experienced at the HBCU (Peterson & Hamrick, 2009). Lastly, White participants described their world-view being challenged and experienced personal growth because they were in the minority at the HBCU (Peterson & Hamrick, 2009).

Using data from the College Student Experience Questionnaire, Strayhorn (2010) examined whether White students’ relationships with faculty at HBCUs affected their perception of their college experience. The findings indicated that White students attending HBCUs who engaged with faculty was a significant predictor of satisfaction with their college experience, when controlling for other variables.

***Latino student experience.*** With an increasing number of Latino college students attending HBCUs (Roach, 2005), there is a void in the literature accounting for the experiences of Latino students at HBCUs. A search of the literature produced only one study that specifically examined the experiences of Latino students attending an HBCU (Davies, 2007). Davies conducted an ethnographic study, using a social justice framework, involving seven Mexican American students pursuing a teacher certification



at an HBCU in Texas. Critical race theory, borderlands consciousness, and critical pedagogy were used to explore race, class, gender, and ability of students attending an HBCU. The HBCU inadequately addressed the needs of the seven Mexican American students who possessed unique cultural perspectives and histories. Despite the institutional shortcomings in addressing the resource needs of the Mexican American students, the participants expressed feeling culturally affirmed and connected within the HBCU environment. Lastly, the Mexican American participants indicated that they had negative experiences at the HBCU due to issues related to social-class disparities more than differences due to race.

### **Summary**

This chapter provided an overview of factors influencing Latino educational attainment, with a specific focus on higher education. Understanding the Latino educational context is critical for HBCUs who are actively recruiting and enrolling Latino students. Special attention was paid to the historical legacy and role of HBCUs in educating African American students and emerging populations on their campuses. Additionally, the experiences of students of color and White students at minority serving institutions (MSIs) were explored. It was critical to provide a broad understanding of MSIs, including their origins, unique mission, and student experience due to the focus of this study on Latino students attending an HBCU in the Southeast. HBCUs cannot be studied without having an awareness of the broader landscape of higher education and MSIs.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

This chapter outlines the methodology of this research study. A qualitative paradigm guided the study. Case study methodology was used to learn about the experiences of Latino college students attending a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) in the Southeastern United States (North Carolina). In this chapter, a description of the epistemological perspective guiding the study, case study methodology, procedures for data collection and analysis, and how trustworthiness was established are provided. Lastly, I describe how my lived experience influenced my interest in conducting this study.

#### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to gain insight into the experiences of Latino college students attending an HBCU in North Carolina. The following research questions framed the study:

1. What is the Latino student experience at an HBCU that is intentionally seeking to promote Latino student success?
2. How is the campus climate, as defined by Milem, Chang, and Antonio (2005), experienced by Latino students at an HBCU?

Although the preceding research questions guided the study, it was important for me to stay open to emerging themes and questions during the data-gathering process.

#### **Case Study Research**

A constructivist epistemology considers “all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context” (Crotty, 1998, p. 42). In addition, according to

Broido and Manning (2002), research embedded within a constructivist paradigm should reflect the following characteristics:

1. The researcher-respondent relationship is subjective, interactive, and interdependent;
2. Reality is multiple, complex, and not easily quantifiable;
3. The values of the researcher, respondents, research site, and underlying theory cannot help but undergird all aspects of the research; and
4. The research product (e.g., interpretations) is context-specific. (p. 436)

Hence, a constructivist epistemological perspective views knowledge as being created through social interactions between individuals within the context of the environment (Broido & Manning, 2002). Therefore, this epistemological perspective was appropriate for situating the phenomenon of interest (i.e., understanding the experiences of Latino students attending an HBCU in North Carolina).

A qualitative research approach is ideal for understanding phenomenon about which little is known (Krathwohl, 2004; Mertens, 2005). Moreover, qualitative procedures are meant for understanding and giving meaning to phenomenon that take place within a given situational context (Stake, 1995). Rudestam and Newton (2001) describe qualitative inquiry as providing a framework for understanding the meaning making process (i.e., feelings, thoughts, purpose, motivation, etc.) of study participants. Lastly, Merriam (1998) states, “Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meanings people have constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world” (p. 6).

This study required communicating with a range of individuals to understand the Latino student experience at an HBCU; therefore, qualitative inquiry provided a methodological outline for developing a research design for conducting the study (Krathwohl, 2004; Mertens, 2005). Furthermore, the phenomenon of interest occurred within an institutional context that required me to become familiar with the history and culture of the environment in which the study was conducted. The revised campus climate framework by Milem et al. (2005) served as the conceptual framework that guided my understanding of the Latino student experience within the HBCU environment.

The campus climate framework has five dimensions that account for factors within the institutional environment that serve to enhance or diminish the campus climate for racial/ethnic diversity. The five dimensions focus on historical institutional practices of inclusion and exclusion; the racial/ethnic make-up or compositional diversity of faculty, staff, and students; the psychological experience of racial/ethnic students regarding perceptions of the campus environment on issues of racism, discrimination, and prejudice; faculty, staff, and student engagement with the campus environment from a racial/ethnic perspective; and understanding how institutional policies and practices contribute to furthering or detracting campus diversity efforts (Milem et al., 2005).

A case study research approach was particularly appropriate, versus other forms of qualitative inquiry (e.g., ethnography, phenomenology), to study the experiences of Latino students at an HBCU due to the case site being a clearly defined system (Creswell, 1998, 2003; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994, 2003). As such, case study methodology provided me as the researcher with a research design for gathering as much information as possible

about a phenomenon within a bounded system. Specifically, a case study is a defined or inclusive methodological approach used to gather both institutional data as well as individual information from participants (Creswell, 1998, 2003; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994, 2003). Specifically, Merriam (1998) stated, “A qualitative case study is an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon” (p. xiii). Lastly, Yin (2003) further defined the boundaries of a case study research design by stating the following:

A case study is an empirical inquiry that, (1) investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; (2) copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points: and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion; and as another result, benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. (pp. 13-14)

In this case study, the *system* refers to the research site, an HBCU in North Carolina. Within this bounded system, I was interested in learning directly from matriculated Latino students about their experiences within an educational environment that has historically focused on the experiences of African American college students. Additionally, in order to understand the experiences of the Latino students enrolled at the HBCU, it was essential to obtain the perspective of faculty and staff regarding the presence of Latino students on campus. Three faculty and two staff members were identified based on their reputation for being advocates for diversity, and in particular, for their support of Latino students on campus. Lastly, I gained additional insight into

understanding the broader institutional perspective and experience of Latino students attending this HBCU through a review of relevant documents (e.g., NCCU strategic plan, review of enrollment management data, etc.).

In light of the strengths of the case study research design, it has also received its share of criticism (Yin, 1994). According to Yin, case study inquiry has been traditionally criticized for not being rigorous enough. Additionally, case study investigators have been criticized for not following procedures, allowing bias into their studies, or just being outright careless (Yin, 1994). Another common critique is that a single case study cannot be “scientifically” generalized to a broader population, but the same critique is made of traditional quantitative experiments (Yin, 1994). Lastly, case studies have been traditionally criticized for taking too long and being unreadable because of the volume of content they generate (Yin, 1994). In light of these critiques, it is important for researchers to remember that case studies, like experiments, can be generalized only to theoretical propositions and not to any specific population (Yin, 1994).

**Case study site.** The case site for this study was North Carolina Central University (NCCU) in Durham, North Carolina. NCCU is a historically Black university founded in 1910 and accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (North Carolina Central University, 2012). NCCU was the first publicly supported liberal arts college for African Americans in the nation (North Carolina Central University, 2012). The institution has approximately 8,400 students and offers the baccalaureate degree in 100 fields of study and graduate degrees in about 40 disciplines (North Carolina Central University, 2012). The racial/ethnic make-up of the student

body is 78% African American, 12% White, 1.8% Hispanic, and 1.2% Asian American, and less than 1% international students (North Carolina Central University, 2012).

With its location in the city of Durham, the institution espouses the motto of “*Truth and Service*”; this expression reflects a strong connection to the community in which NCCU is located and a student body that is highly involved in community service initiatives (North Carolina Central University, 2012). The institution was the first in the state to require mandatory community service of its students (North Carolina Central University, 2012.). NCCU has a mission that is both reflective of its historical mission and changing student demographics:

...The mission of the university is to prepare students academically and professionally to become leaders prepared to advance the consciousness of social responsibility in a diverse, global society. The university will serve its traditional clientele of African-American students; it will also expand its commitment to meet the educational needs of a student body that is diverse in race and other socioeconomic qualities... (<http://www.nccu.edu/discover/index.cfm>)

In the spirit of its mission, NCCU encourages its upper-class students and faculty to mentor first-year students in the transition to college life (North Carolina Central University, 2012).

The selection of NCCU was based on its location in North Carolina, where there is a rapidly growing Latino population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). NCCU’s overall enrollment mainly consists of students from North Carolina (90%) (North Carolina Central University, 2010a), which led to a pool of prospective student participants who were mainly residents of the state. Moreover, I identified a gatekeeper at NCCU who

provided access to institutional data and study participants, as well as supported the focus of this research study through the institutional review board process (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2006). I lived and worked at another institution of higher education not far from NCCU, which allowed me to develop collegial relationships with administrative staff at the institution allowing me to obtain institutional support for the study.

Recognizing the growth of the Latino population in North Carolina and in the local community, NCCU committed strategically to recruiting Latino students to the institution (North Carolina Central University, 2004). Specifically, the NCCU Strategic Plan had an objective that called for strengthening the learning environment for all students by increasing the diversity of the student body, while continuing its historical commitment to providing educational opportunities to African Americans (North Carolina Central University, 2004). In order to achieve this objective, NCCU implemented programs and activities to help prepare and attract students from the local Latino community (North Carolina Central University, 2004). In addition, the plan called for providing educational workshops to sensitize faculty, staff, and students to the increasing diversity on campus (North Carolina Central University, 2004). The plan also called for providing culturally diverse organizations and activities to support the increasing diversity of the study body (North Carolina Central University, 2004).

**Human subjects approval.** Institutional review board (IRB) approvals were obtained from the institution where the researcher was enrolled in doctoral studies and the case site in late November and December of 2011. After IRB approvals were granted, data collection began in February 2012. IRB approvals were renewed in the fall of 2012, in case I needed to return to the case site to gather additional data.



## **Sampling Strategy**

According to Stake (1994), once a case site is chosen, the researcher should follow a similar logic in choosing study participants. As a result, criterion sampling was used to identify case participants who provided detailed and rich data about the experiences of Latino students attending an HBCU in North Carolina. Criterion sampling involves identifying participants who meet specific criteria (Mertens, 2005). Therefore, in order to gain an inclusive understanding of the phenomenon of interest, I identified Latino students as well as faculty and staff who contributed insight into the emergence of Latino students at NCCU.

The Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and designated Student Affairs staff assisted me in gaining access to institutional data and study participants. The Vice Chancellor's role in overseeing the enrollment management function of the institution in addition to his senior leadership role on campus, proved vital to identifying key faculty and staff, and student participants. The NCCU campus community was notified about the study via a weekly informational email message on February 13, 2012 (Appendix A). As a result of a low response to the campus announcement, my gatekeeper was in the position to forward the message directly to the 153 students who identified as Latino at the institution during the spring semester of 2012, as noted by enrollment management records (J. Johnson, personal communication, February 20, 2013; Appendix B). Sending the invitation directly to Latino students yielded 11 study participants.

Furthermore, snowball sampling was used to identify additional students to ensure arriving at the goal of interviewing between 10-15 students who met the established

criteria (e.g., achieving gender and class balance; Krathwohl, 2004). Latino students who expressed interest in participating in the study were asked to nominate a fellow student to participate in the study. The students nominated were contacted and invited to participate via email. Two study participants were identified through this sampling process.

An interest survey was administered to the 28 students who expressed interest in participating in the study (Appendix C). From the 28 students who expressed interest in the study, 13 were selected to participate in individual interviews with the objective of having balance across class year, gender, residential/commuter status, and Latino ethnic background to represent to a small degree the diversity among Latinos at NCCU. Before the start of the interview, participants were asked to fill out a demographic questionnaire online at a computer station in the interview room that captured background information such as racial and ethnic identification, citizenship status, and parental educational background. Survey results can be viewed in Appendix D.

My gatekeeper assisted me in identifying five faculty and staff participants using the criteria of institutional length of service and reputation for having a commitment to issues of diversity and Latino student success. The five faculty and staff participants had extensive experience with the institution as an HBCU and witnessed the emergence of Latino students on campus. Each of the five individuals who was suggested to me and invited to participate expressed their interest to participate in the study.

### **Data Collection**

According to Stake (2004), essential parts of a data-gathering plan when conducting case study research includes defining the case, generating a list of research questions, identifying helpers, and sources of data. Furthermore, it is important to note

that case study methodology does not provide a prescribed formula for collecting data, but instead encourages the development of a data collection plan grounded in the research questions while taking into account the availability of time and the need to remain flexible for unanticipated sources of data or emerging issues (Stake, 2004; Yin, 2003).

**Individual interviews.** Qualitative researchers often gather data by interviewing participants (Krathwohl, 2004). When conducting a research study, the phenomenon of interest will be viewed and experienced differently by participants (Stake, 2004). As such, I conducted individual semi-structured interviews with student, faculty, and staff participants, which allowed me to account for differences in descriptions and interpretations of the same phenomenon. Furthermore, given the criterion of institutional length of service and commitment to diversity by faculty and staff, the use of interviews as a data collection method was appropriate for understanding their impressions regarding the Latino experience at the HBCU (Mertens, 2005).

Lastly, the development of interview questions were informed by two overarching questions that guided the study: (a) What is the Latino student experience at an HBCU that is intentionally seeking to promote Latino student success? and (b) How is the campus climate, as defined by Milem et al. (2005), experienced by Latino students at an HBCU? The interview protocols can be found in Appendix E and F. Similarly, interview questions for students and faculty and staff can be found in Appendix G and H. Interview questions were developed to ensure that participants address the five dimensions that make up the campus climate as identified by Milem et al. (2005). For example, questions related to how participants engaged with Latino and African

American students (behavioral dimension), and how comfortable they felt in the classroom (psychological dimension) were posed to participants.

The interviews were recorded using an audio recording device and field notes were taken during the interviews in order to capture unique observations (Creswell, 2003). Interview questions were piloted with professional colleagues in the field of higher education and with Latino students who attended the institution in which I was employed. A single interview with each of the student, faculty, and staff participants was conducted with each interview scheduled for an hour and half.

**Documents and other data sources.** Additionally, I requested and reviewed documents that provided insight into the institutional context for understanding the Latino student experience at the institution (Creswell, 2003; Mertens, 2005; Stake, 2004). I reviewed the NCCU Strategic Plan and institutional mission statement (North Carolina Central University, 2004, 2010c) and enrollment management records verifying the number of enrolled Latino students. In addition, I reviewed newspaper articles focusing on the recruitment of Latino students at HBCUs in North Carolina, university system reports that did not yield relevant information, institutional publications, and the NCCU website. I also communicated with enrollment management personnel at NCCU to inquire about specific recruiting efforts and administrators at the University System level to ask about reports or strategic plans related to Latino students – no actual recruiting efforts, plans, or reports existed specific to Latino students.

### **Data Analysis**

The process of data analysis in qualitative research involves making sense of the gathered information while seeking to extract the deepest meaning possible by

continuously reflecting on the data (Creswell, 2003). The constant review of data makes the process of data analysis difficult in qualitative research because of the typically huge amounts of information to analyze. As a result, it is critical that the researcher reduce the amount of data by organizing and coding the data in order to better understand the phenomenon of interest (Krathwohl, 2004). Furthermore, in case study analysis, this proves even more difficult because the strategies and techniques in data analysis have not been well defined — there is no one formula for data analysis (Yin, 1994).

Given the non-prescribed method of data analysis in case study research, Miles and Huberman (1994) identified the following strategies for organizing data in case study research:

1. Place information in different groups,
2. Design a matrix of categories in which information can be placed within the categories,
3. Develop visual aids to assist with examining the data,
4. Numerically track the occurrence of different events,
5. Examine the tracking of different events by calculating supporting numerical information as means and variances, and
6. Place information in chronological order.

The data analysis strategies identified by Miles and Huberman (1994) informed my analysis of the data collected.

The interview data was analyzed using constant comparative analysis (Glaser, 1965; Hewitt-Taylor, 2001). Given the number of individual participants, constant comparative analysis was adapted to identify salient themes that emerged from the

student, faculty, and staff interviews. Given the amount of qualitative data that was analyzed, compared, and contrasted, constant comparative analysis provided a process for synthesizing the data. Hewitt-Taylor (2001) described constant comparative analysis as a method of coding qualitative data into emergent themes or codes. Data is constantly revisited after initial coding, until it is clear that no new themes emerge (Hewitt-Taylor, 2001). Constant comparative analysis can be used to analyze data from a study that collects one or more sources of data (Hewitt-Taylor, 2001). The use of constant comparative analysis is consistent with Stake's (2003) description of the two ways that data analysis tends to occur when conducting case study research. The first approach is a direct interpretation of the individual occurrence, and the second entails making meaning through the aggregation of the occurrences until meaning can be made of the combined incidences (Stake, 2003).

Creswell (2003) underscored the importance of using a coding process for analyzing data to demonstrate how the researcher arrived at the description of the phenomenon. A table was developed using Microsoft Word to organize and analyze the data according to the following headers: (a) codes, (b) concepts, (c) categories, (d) key categories. My analysis of the data yielded 2439 codes, 1256 concepts, 58 categories, and 5 key categories. The codes served as the first level of recognized themes from the initial review of the transcripts. The concepts column highlighted the themes that emerged from cross-analyzing the codes. The categories column revealed significant characteristics that reflected the experiences of participants at the HBCU. Further analysis of the categories resulted in the identification of five key categories that served as overarching areas of focus for understanding and enhancing the Latino HBCU

experience at NCCU. These five key categories include the decision-making process for enrolling at an HBCU, acclimating to an HBCU, cultural dissonance experienced by Latino students, resulting benefits of diversity from the enrollment of Latino students, and Latino student engagement in the HBCU environment. See Table 1.

Table 1

*Key Categories*

Codes	Concepts	Categories	Key Categories	
2439			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision making process to attend HBCU</li> <li>• Acclimation to the HBCU environment</li> <li>• Experienced cultural dissonance</li> <li>• Resulting benefits of diversity from increased Latino student enrollment</li> <li>• Latino student engagement in the HBCU environment</li> </ul>	
	1256			
		58		
				5

### **Establishing Trustworthiness**

Establishing trustworthiness will inform how individuals will view the results of a study and help them judge transferability to their own context (Creswell, 2003; Mertens, 2005). In qualitative research, trustworthiness refers to the confidence that others can have in the overall research findings (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Ensuring confidence stems from the “continuity and congruence among all elements of the qualitative research process” (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2006, p. 99).

Given the goal of this study to understand the experiences of Latino students attending an HBCU, it was important to capture accurately the perspectives of study participants in order to establish trustworthiness. Specifically, Guba and Lincoln (1981)

described trustworthiness as consisting of four parts: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Each one of the four parts contributes to the trustworthiness of a qualitative study.

**Credibility.** In qualitative research, credibility refers to the accuracy between how study participants make meaning of their lived experience and how the researcher represents their perspective (Mertens, 2005). Shenton (2004) shared 14 steps for ensuring confidence in the researcher's depiction of the phenomenon of interest. Some of these steps include utilizing established qualitative research methods, becoming familiar with the culture of the organization where the study will be conducted, using random sampling versus purposeful sampling, and deploying multiple data collection methods (Shenton, 2004). In addition, the following considerations were also recommended by Shenton (2004): fostering an ethos of honesty among study participants, including the opportunity to walk away from participating in the study; holding frequent debriefing sessions with an advisor or supervisor; and inviting scrutiny of a research project by seeking input from peers or colleagues.

**Transferability.** The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the experience of Latino students attending an HBCU in North Carolina; however, consumers of this research study are able to subjectively come to their own conclusions in determining the applicability of the findings of this study to their own institution (Mertens, 2005). In order for this to happen, the researcher must provide a rich description of "time, place, context, and culture" as it relates to the phenomenon of interest (Mertens, 2005, p. 256). By providing enough detail, the individual must then determine the transferability of the



findings based on their understanding of the study, including the methodology employed (Mertens, 2005).

**Dependability.** According to Mertens (2005), dependability highlights the importance of developing and maintaining a research protocol which shows step by step how a given study will be conducted. Just as important, analysis of the data that leads to new lines of inquiry should also be documented in the research protocol to provide a trail of how the study was conducted (Mertens, 2005). By having a research protocol and tracking changes an open audit can be conducted to verify the dependability of the study (Mertens, 2005).

**Confirmability.** Confirmability refers to the objectivity needed in making meaning of the data to ensure that the interpretation of the data does not reflect the views of the researcher, but instead the perspective of the study participants (Mertens, 2005). Furthermore, the researcher should be able to provide evidence showing how he or she arrived at their findings (Mertens, 2005). By having a trail of evidence supporting how the researcher made meaning of the data an audit of the conclusions derived from the data can be conducted objectively (Mertens, 2005).

Specifically, Creswell (2003) and Mertens (2005) outlined various procedures for validating the accuracy of the findings in a qualitative study. Upon analyzing and interpreting the collected data and identifying appropriate themes, I established trustworthiness by utilizing their recommended procedures:

1. Transcripts and findings were shared with study participants for authenticity (often called member-checking);

2. Researcher bias was clarified from the start of the research process to its conclusion;
3. The presentation of the findings and use of a research protocol provided a detailed trail of how the study was conducted;
4. Triangulation was established by collecting data from multiple sources (e.g., faculty, staff, and student interviews; review of institutional documents).
5. Finally, a peer debriefer and inquiry auditor were used to ensure adherence to the intent of the study and that identified themes coincided with the interview transcripts.

### **Researcher Reflexivity**

According to Creswell (2003), the role of the qualitative researcher is to reflect continuously on his or her own background to ascertain how these experiences may influence the study for better or worse. Additionally, Jones, Torres, and Arminio (2006) stated, “How the researcher positions him or herself within a research study is critical to understanding the lens used to interpret the data” (p. 104). As such, my interest in this research study partially derived from my experience as a Latino growing up in a neighborhood and attending schools (kindergarten through Grade 12) in which African Americans were the majority. I was born in Harlem, New York, and raised primarily in the Bronx in a neighborhood that was a mixture of African Americans and Latinos with roots in the Caribbean (i.e., Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico). As a result, I was exposed to African American life, culture, and history at an early age.

Although my neighborhood in the South Bronx would ultimately become majority Latino, I still recall my friends, classmates, and community members being

predominantly African American. Though I was always conscious of my Dominican/Puerto Rican ethnic identity because of familial and community influences, I was aware that Latinos were a minority group within a community that was primarily African American. These early experiences resulted in having a lifelong appreciation for the African American experience in the United States, specifically in New York City.

I was keenly aware of the African American influence on the larger culture and identity associated with my neighborhood and New York City. For example, during my youth in the 1980s, the elements of what is known today as “hip-hop culture” evolved from unique experiences associated with living in the South Bronx to something that ultimately became mainstream and embraced by individuals from all walks of life. Although Latinos have their place in the historical evolution of hip-hop culture in New York City, it was always clear to me that African Americans were the driving force behind the hip-hop movement. Similarly, Latinos have made their mark on the identity of New York City in communities like Spanish Harlem, influenced in part by Puerto Rican culture and the neighborhood of Washington Heights in Upper Manhattan, which is known as an enclave for people from the Dominican Republic (Haslip-Viera & Baver, 1996). Though I was aware of the Latino presence in the city, my exposure to Harlem and understanding of the historical, cultural, economic, and social significance of the African American experience in New York City provided me with a holistic appreciation and awareness of the richness and the plight of the African American community in the United States.

My understanding of the African American experience and history was supplemented by the curriculum in the schools I attended. I can recall learning about Dr.

Martin Luther King, Jr. in elementary school, the Underground Railroad in middle school, and participating in activities to celebrate Black History Month in high school. Learning about the African American experience in school occurred during a time in which the histories of other minority groups, such as Latinos, were not recognized in the curriculum. Furthermore, my understanding of the African American experience was informed by television shows such as *Good Times*, which depicted a strongly knit, low-income family living in the notorious Cabrini-Green housing projects in Chicago's Near North Side a predominantly African American community, similar to my family's living situation in the South Bronx. I related to television shows like *Good Times*, *Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids*, *Soul Train*, and *The Cosby Show* given the lack of television programming depicting the experiences of non-White racial and ethnic groups. Lastly, I attended a predominantly White institution of higher education in Maine, where only 1% of the students were of color, with the majority of individuals identifying as African Americans from the greater New York City area. Naturally, I bonded with this group of students. As a result, I became a member of the Black Student Union and co-hosted an urban music radio show called *The Sounds of Blackness* with an African American student from New York.

Though my lived experience is not of a Latino student who attended an HBCU, the focus of this research, my experiences had the potential to influence the study. Having lived in a predominantly African American community and an informed awareness of the African American experience in the United States allowed me to enter the case site and engage with the participants and others at the institution with awareness, comfort, and sensitivity. Conversely, because the case site was in the Southeastern

United States, where the increasing growth in the Latino population has led to some tensions between racial groups, the potential existed for participants and institutional contacts to question my intentions as a Latino researcher. Therefore, I needed to remind myself that I was not in New York City, but in the South. Thankfully, I sensed that everyone that I interacted with felt comfortable with me as the researcher, especially the two African American administrators.

Furthermore, I lived in North Carolina, where I followed the emergence of the Latino population in the state along with being aware of the significant number of HBCUs in the region. My experiences, awareness, and educational background informed my role as a researcher and my understanding of the participants and the case site. Specifically, my work in higher education has entailed working closely with Latino students and other diverse student communities, including African American students. Additionally, my experience serving on a research team that focused on Latino student access and success using case study methodology served me well during the research process for this study.

By taking into account my interest and familiarity with the topic, I possessed the desired characteristics of a case study researcher, as described by Yin (2003). Yin noted that case study researchers need the following qualities: the ability to ask good questions and interpret the answers, to be a good listener, to be flexible in approach to allow the unknown to emerge, to have a firm understanding of the issues being studied, and to not be biased by knowledge or preconceived ideas.

## **Summary**

This chapter provided an overview of the methodological approach that I utilized to explore the experiences of a group Latino students attending an HBCU in North Carolina. A case study research design was used given the focus of the phenomenon of interest within a bounded system (Stake, 1995). A criterion sampling strategy was used to identify participants with the assistance of an institutional gatekeeper (Mertens, 2005). Using the words of the participants from the transcripts as data, I used the constant comparative analysis to make meaning of the data (Glaser, 1965; Hewitt-Taylor, 2001). Different strategies were deployed to ensure trustworthiness and account for my own reflexivity and subjectivity as a researcher (Creswell, 2003).

## **Chapter 4: Results**

In this chapter, I provide a descriptive overview of the participants and highlight themes that emerged from the data. The voices of participants, through direct quotes, assist in further explaining the findings. This study examined the experiences of Latino college students attending a historically Black university in North Carolina. A case study research design was utilized because of its appropriateness for examining an existing phenomenon within a defined environment (Yin, 2003). Individual interviews were conducted with 13 undergraduate students, three faculty members, and two campus administrators. The revised campus climate framework proposed by Milem, Chang, and Antonio (2005) guided data analysis. The data were analyzed using constant comparative analysis to identify broad categories and salient themes reflecting the experience of Latino participants at the case site (Glaser, 1965; Thorne, 2000).

This chapter begins with an overview of the participants. A description of the campus climate framework is provided as well as a discussion of findings from student, faculty, and staff interviews in relation to the framework. As the interview questions were mapped to the campus climate framework, the sections of the chapter are organized using the five internal dimensions of the framework: historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion, compositional diversity, psychological dimension, behavioral dimension, and organizational structural dimension (Milem et al., 2005).

### **Study Participants**

A total of 18 participants engaged in the study (13 Latino students, 3 faculty, and 2 administrators). Student participants provided broad perspective on their experience as Latino students attending an HBCU. Additionally, they shared why they chose to

participate in the study. While faculty and staff participants provided longitudinal perspective on both the institution and growing Latino presence on campus.

**Student interest in the study.** Given my interest in learning about the experience of Latino students attending a historically Black university, it made sense as the researcher to ask the interviewees about their interest in participating in the study. By asking this introductory question, the participants provided me as the researcher with insight into their motivation for participating in the study and initial perspective on their experience as Latinos attending an HBCU.

Generally, students expressed being “intrigued” by the study, finding it “interesting,” or describing the study as an “opportunity” to share about their experience at an HBCU as rational for participating. Ana shared, “I think the reason I chose to participate in this study is that it’s intriguing to me they were doing a study for Latinos attending an HBCU university.” Carmen stated, “Well, I chose to participate in this study because being that is a historically Black university I don’t think there are a lot of programs for Hispanics or Latinos, and I felt as though was a great opportunity for me to express myself.” Similarly, Oscar shared, “I feel like Hispanics at HBCUs do not really stand out so this would be a good way to share opinions and get it out there.” Furthermore, Rubi was motivated by helping me as the researcher understand the experience of Latino students attending the University. She shared, “I think it is a great opportunity for you to have an idea of how Hispanic students felt going to Central being a minority in the school that I am going.”

In essence, the opportunity to participate in the study served to affirm their identity as Latino students attending a historically Black institution. Lastly, their



motivation to participate was informed by their desire to share their perspective on the nexus of being Latino at an HBCU.

**Student participants.** The undergraduate student participants were selected with the goal of achieving balance across class year, gender, place of residence, and Latino ethnic background. Faculty and staff participants were selected based on their reputation on campus for lending their voice to issues of diversity, and in particular for their support of Latino students on campus. A 21 item demographic questionnaire was administered to student participants before their interview. A summary of the demographic questionnaire results is provided followed by a biographical profile of each of the student participants with corresponding pseudonym. In order to maintain the anonymity of the faculty members and administrators who participated in the study, minimal biographical information is provided for these individuals.

Of the 13 student participants, there were five first-year students, three sophomores, four juniors, and one senior. Eight of the students enrolled at the University as new students, three students transferred from a community college, and two students transferred from another four-year university. All students had at least one semester of enrollment. The participants had majors in each of the Colleges and Schools at the University: University College (7), School of Business (2), College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (1), College of Liberal Arts (1), School of Education (1), and Nursing (1). The majority of students were enrolled in University College, a unit whose mission is to assist first and second year students with transitioning to the University successfully by creating “a learning environment that fosters academic commitment, civic and community responsibility, school pride and life-long learning” (North Carolina Central

University, 2013a). Many students enrolled into the University through one of several specialized programs that focus on issues of access or fostering academically talented students. However, the majority of participants (8) did not enroll in the University through one of these programs. Two students entered the University through the Honors Program. Two students enrolled from a college-preparatory high school, affiliated with the University, for low-income students, minority students, English-Language learners, and first-generation, college-bound students. One student entered the University through cohort based living-learning community for African American males that focuses on academic readiness and community responsibility. The majority of participants (9) indicated that they were not involved with a campus-based student organization.

Nine of the participants were female and four identified as male. In describing how they identified racially, seven of the student participants indicated “Latina or Latino,” three indicated “Mexican/Mexican American,” two of the participants identified as biracial (Latino/African American and Latino/Southeast Asian) and one student identified as Hispanic. Five of the students identified ethnically as Mexican/Mexican American, three as bi-ethnic (more than one country of origin or cultural background), two as Ecuadorian, and one each as Columbian, Dominican, and Puerto Rican. The majority (8) of participants indicated that Spanish was the primary language spoken at home; four students noted that their family primarily spoke English at home; and one mentioned that both Spanish and English were spoken. Four of the 13 participants were born in the U.S. and their parents were born outside of the United States. Additionally, three participants had grandparents and parents who were born in the United States. Two students were born outside of the U.S. and identified as having naturalized citizenship

and another student indicated that she had permanent residency. Lastly, one student was born in Ecuador and holds an H4 visa and another was born in the U.S., but has one parent who was born abroad in Mexico.

The 13 participants have a combined self-reported grade point average of 3.5 with six of the participants having a GPA between 3.5 to 4.0. A majority of the students (10) were not the first in their family to attend college. Nine of the students had a sibling who attended college. The participants' parents had varying levels of educational achievement. Five participants indicated that their mother earned a Bachelor's (3) or Master's degree (2). Five students had a mother who obtained a high school degree or less. In addition, the majority of the fathers (7) attained some level of post-secondary education with four receiving a bachelor's degree, and three not earning a degree after attending college. Five participants had a father who obtained a high school degree or less. One participant indicated not knowing the highest level of education completed by both parents.

The majority of the students (12) received some type of financial aid. Six participants indicated that they received loans as a form of financial aid, five received need-based scholarships or grants, and five were awarded Federal Work Study. One student was the recipient of an athletic scholarship. Furthermore, when asked if they held employment on or off campus, seven students indicated that they did not work, five worked off campus, and one worked on campus. Finally, the majority of students lived on campus (8) and five off campus with family (3) and without family (2). Table 2 provides a brief biographical overview for each of the 13 student participants.

Table 2

*Student Participant Profiles*

Name	Student participant profiles
Ana	Ana is a female Mexican junior from North Carolina, majoring in English Education with a 3.0 GPA. She lives locally with her family and works off campus. She was born in Mexico and identifies as a permanent resident of the United States. She receives financial aid in the form of non-need based scholarships/grants. Her parents are self-employed and operate a home repair business.
Carlos	Carlos is a Colombian born non-traditional student male senior with a family from North Carolina, majoring in accounting with a 2.9 GPA. Carlos works and lives off campus and does not receive financial aid. He is a naturalized citizen. His father works as an accountant and no employment information was provided for the mother.
Carmen	Carmen is a Dominican female first-year student from North Carolina, majoring in Criminal Justice with a 3.8 GPA. She is currently receiving financial aid and does not work. Carmen resides on campus and is a first-generation American. The working parent works as a taxi driver.
Jennifer	Jennifer is a Puerto Rican female sophomore from North Carolina, majoring in Criminal Justice with a 4.0 GPA. She is a first-generation college student. Jennifer transferred from another four-year university. She lives and works off campus and receives financial aid in the form of need-based scholarships/grants and student loans. Jennifer is involved with a National Honor Society for transfer students and is a third-generation American with her parents and grandparents being born in the United States. Her father works in real estate and her mother does not work.
Katherine	Katherine is a Mexican American female first-year student from North Carolina, double majoring in Psychology and Spanish with a 3.0 GPA. She is currently receiving financial aid and does not work. She resides on campus and is a first-generation American. The working parent is employed as a cashier and her father is enrolled at Central as an adult learner.
Kristina	Kristina is an Ecuadorian female first-year honors student from North Carolina, majoring in Chemistry, Pre-Medicine Concentration, and Athletic Training with a 4.0 GPA. She resides on campus and does not work. She is actively involved with the Student Government Association and a Latino dance group. Kristina is receiving non-need-based scholarships/grants. She was born abroad and holds an H4 Visa. Kristina's mother is an ESL teacher and her father works in admissions for a community college.
Lance	Lance is a junior from North Carolina, majoring in Business Administration/Management with a 3.6 GPA and identifies as bi-racial/ethnic (Mexican-American and Filipino). He lives and works on campus and receives financial aid in the form of non-need-based scholarship/grants. Lance is a first-

generation American. He is heavily involved on campus with several campus organizations, including an honors program, and a historically Black Greek organization. Lance's father works as an information technologist for a technology company and his mother is a fabric worker.

- Luis Luis is a first-year honors male student from Ohio majoring in Political Science with 3.3 GPA. He identifies as biracial/ethnic (African American, Cuban, and Honduran) and both his parents attended HBCUs. Like his father before him, he is looking forward to pledging a Black Greek organization. He is a recipient of non-need-based scholarships/grants and loans. Luis resides in an honors residence hall and does not hold employment. Luis is a third-generation American. His father is a pharmaceutical sales manager and his mother is a high school teacher.
- Monica Monica is a Mexican American female sophomore seeking to major in Nursing with an unspecified GPA. She transferred from another four-year university and lives locally with her family and children. She is a first-generation college student who is paying for school with student loans and through off-campus employment. Monica is a fifth-generation American. Her mother is self-employed as a painter with a painting company and her father is a gardener in Mexico.
- Nicole Nicole is a Mexican American female junior from California, majoring in Physical Education with a 4.0 GPA. She transferred from a community college. She is a varsity athlete on athletic scholarship. She resides on campus and is a second-generation American. Her mother works as a manager at a technology company and her step-father is a custodian.
- Oscar Oscar is a sophomore male from North Carolina, majoring in Computer Science with a 2.9 GPA. Oscar lives on campus and noted that he is not a "legal" citizen of the United States though he was raised in U.S. The University has worked with Oscar to make it possible for him to pursue a college education despite his citizenship status. He is the first in his family to attend college. Oscar's father works for an electronics company and his mother is employed at a dry cleaning store. He attended the Central affiliated high school.
- Rubi Rubi is an Ecuadorian female junior from North Carolina, majoring in Business Administration/Management with a 4.0 GPA. She transferred from a local community college. She is a recipient of need-based financial aid in the form of scholarships and grants. Rubi resides off campus with her family and works full time. She is a foreign born naturalized citizen. Her mother works as a professor at a university in Ecuador.
- Sarah Sarah is a Nicaraguan and Guatemalan female first-year student from North Carolina, majoring in Criminal Justice with a 3.0 GPA. She is currently receiving financial aid and does not work. She resides on campus. Sarah is a first-generation American. Her mother is a small business owner and her father works in construction.
-

**Faculty and staff participants.** In order to get an institutional perspective on the growing presence of Latino students on campus, three faculty members and two administrators were interviewed. With the assistance of an institutional gatekeeper, the faculty members and administrators were identified as having a reputation of being supportive of Latino students. Each of the faculty members are long-standing tenured professors at the University and represent different academic disciplines in the social sciences. The two administrators, one works in academic affairs and the other in student affairs, also have a long-standing association with the campus. All five participants were eager to participate in the study and shared their perspective on the growing presence of Latino students and the factors contributing to the students' success and overall experience at the institution. Three of the faculty-staff participants were male and two were female. Three identified as African American or African whereas one identified as Hispanic and the other as White.

### **Campus Climate for Latino Students at an HBCU**

The purpose of this study was to explore the Latino student experience at a historically Black university in North Carolina using the revised campus climate framework by (Milem et al., 2005). The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the Latino student experience at an HBCU that is intentionally seeking to promote Latino student success?
2. How is the campus climate, as defined by Milem et al. (2005), experienced by Latino students at an HBCU?

They define the campus climate as having five specific internal dimensions that are informed by institutional programs and practices in addition to two external dimensions

that exert force on the institution from the outside. Milem, et al. (2005) highlighted five internal dimensions: historical legacy of inclusion or exclusion of various racial/ethnic groups, compositional diversity or the numerical representation of various racial/ethnic groups, psychological climate refers to the perceptions and attitudes that students hold about their experience at the institution, the behavioral dimension includes intergroup relations on campus between students, and the organizational structural dimension reflects areas such as institutional policies, organizational decision making, and budget allocations. The campus climate framework provides a conceptual lens from which to examine the experience of an underrepresented student population (Latinos) attending an institution of higher education (HBCU). Specifically, the five internal dimensions are grounded in the research literature on the educational benefits of diversity (Milem et al., 2005). As such, the findings of this study will be presented in relation to the campus climate framework.

### **Historical Legacy of Inclusion or Exclusion**

An institution's historical past, artifacts, and practices contribute to the inclusion or exclusion of historically underrepresented students at colleges and universities (Milem et al., 2005). Historically, HBCUs are an outgrowth of segregation practices that kept African Americans from attending college with Whites (Allen & Jewell, 2002). As a result of this history, most students attending HBCUs have been predominantly African American. Still operating under the legacy of societal exclusion, HBCUs have evolved in different ways, but most continue to embrace, promote, and foster the African American experience (Allen & Jewell, 2002). HBCUs have a long history of providing educational access to African- Americans and increasingly are becoming a post-secondary option for

college-bound Latinos (Roach, 2005): a historically underrepresented population in higher education.

**Students' understanding of the legacy of HBCUs.** The existence of HBCUs serves as a reminder of the historical legacy of exclusionary practices in higher education. The participants were asked about their understanding of the significance of historically Black colleges and universities in the United States. Some students expressed having a familiarity with the history and purpose of HBCUs while others had minimal to no awareness. Furthermore, although some students initially stated that they were unaware of the historical significance of HBCUs, they credited the institution with helping them develop a better understanding.

Lance seemed to have a general understanding of the history of HBCU's for African Americans and spoke in depth about the significance of North Carolina Central University as an HBCU:

And the historical presence at North Carolina Central University, in particular, out of all HBCUs, is also an uplifting one, because NCCU has a very significant background in North Carolina, in general. Originally founded in 1909-1910, this was actually one of the first public schools to be established for primarily African Americans. I know it's a huge benefit for this generation, the generation before me, and will be of greater benefit for the generation after.

Lance described not only his understanding of why HBCUs exist, but moreover highlights their continued relevancy for the future. Kristina had a similar understanding of the historical significance of HBCUs in the United States, "from a historical perspective mainly that they were initially started for African Americans because of the racism." Her response, at a basic level, reflects some of the founding principles that informed the establishment of HBCUs. Though Rubi was not aware of the historical



significance of HBCUs, she knew that the institution was predominantly African American with a long history in North Carolina:

Central is one of the oldest or if I am not mistaken, it is the first African American University in North Carolina. In business over 100 years and right now, even though we are in 2012, if I am not mistaken, over 90% of the students are African American only.

Rubi seemed surprised that the institution was still predominantly African American after existing for over 100 years. Luis whose parents attended a historically Black institution, spoke to the value added that HBCUs provide now that societal segregation is no longer a primary motivator for students' enrollment at an HBCU:

They used to be Black colleges that Blacks used to go to when they weren't allowed to attend other institutions. Now, they basically do the same thing except we can choose to go anywhere else, but with the historical value most of us choose to come here.

The exposure Luis received from his parents about the relevancy of HBCUs allowed him to enroll with the type of awareness and appreciation not exhibited by the majority of participants.

*Enrolling without regard to historical mission.* Although some participants had an appreciation or sense of awareness about the historical significance of HBCUs, several enrolled at Central without knowing that it was an HBCU. Katherine stated, "I just know that the majority [of students] are African Americans, but other than that I just take it as a normal university." Similarly, Ana shared, "I don't really have much known about the history [of HBCUs]." Specific to Central she adds, "I don't think it was really meant just for the Black student but for other minority students as well, and I think that to be the possibility of other schools [HBCUs]." Oscar did not know about the historical significance of HBCUs, but he expressed with some uncertainty that enrollment at

HBCUs consisted primarily of African Americans, “I know they are predominantly African American. I am not really sure.”

Monica had a “minimal” level of awareness of HBCUs. Upon inquiring further about the historical significance of HBCUs and Central’s mission, Monica acknowledged learning about the school’s mission, but within the context of academic requirements and the schools focus on service to the community. She replied, “All those mandatory classes that we have to go to, they’re for the benefit of the good.” Here Monica described taking the Dimensions of Learning course that NCCU students must take that provides first-year students with a historical perspective on the institution and its mission in addition to the role of the University in the local Durham community.

*Post-matriculation education and awareness.* Study participants had differing levels of awareness concerning the historical significance of HBCUs, but some students expressed having an increased understanding due to Central’s efforts focused on educating them about the significance of the institution’s status as an HBCU and its role in the community. Nicole, a community college transfer student, did not have a previous understanding of an HBCU prior to enrolling in Central. After enrolling at Central, Nicole indicated, “I’ve learned that Black people, they weren’t, back in the day they weren’t admitted into Colleges so they made special colleges for Black people to attend. There’re still quite a few [HBCUs].” Similarly, Carmen shared how she began the process of learning about HBCUs after enrolling at the institution, “. . . I didn't really know that much about it, but as I got here while taking the extra learning classes and stuff like that where they teach you the history.” Similar to Monica, Carmen here also describes learning about HBCUs in her Dimensions of Learning course. Kristina also

indicated that she learned about the historical purpose of HBCUs as a result of the course, “From a historical perspective, mainly that they were initially started for African Americans because of the racism. That’s mainly my understanding of it.” Carlos learned about HBCUs from the course, “Here at school, there are some classes, information, regarding the Black Universities College, but that’s about it.”

**Decision to attend an HBCU.** In addition to understanding the students’ motivation for participating in the study, it was also vital to understand the participants’ motivation for attending a historically Black institution. The participants decided to enroll at Central for a variety of reasons: good financial value, perception of being a culturally inclusive school, convenient campus location, prior exposure to the University, and perceptions about the quality of academic programs.

***Financial support provided.*** Several students perceived a financial benefit associated with choosing to attend the institution. Students indicated either that the financial aid received made it possible to attend college or that the perceived lower overall cost of attending made their decision to enroll easier. They generally described receiving aid in the form of grants and scholarships. Ana noted, “The financial aid is a lot of help and the scholarships and the grants.” While acknowledging the benefits of the financial aid received, she also noted her status as a “minority” suggesting that the funding received was due in part to the school’s recognition of her minority status. Kristina indicated that “Central was the only university that offered to help me go to school.” She believed that Central provided her with the opportunity to attend college due to the aid she received, “I know that I would not be in school otherwise...” Nicole was motivated to attend Central due to the financial assistance provided to her in the form

of an athletic scholarship, “I got offered a scholarship for athletics, softball, and it’s a division one school. I thought it would be a good opportunity.” Luis clearly indicated what motivated him to attend Central, “It was cheaper.” Whether because of the perceived lower educational costs or institutional financial aid support provided, participants noted that Central was an excellent financial value they could not overlook.

*Welcoming campus.* Although there appeared to be a shared appreciation for the financial value that Central offered, other participants chose to enroll at Central due to a perceived level of cultural inclusion. Students specifically noted selecting Central, because they perceived the environment as more culturally inclusive of them as Latino students. Supporting this assertion, Monica felt that Central “...seems to be more culturally friendly...” Sarah felt she would be “more at home” at Central because “other minorities” were enrolled. Sarah continued, “There are White people, you see Hispanics here too, and other schools that are predominantly White, you see racism and stuff.”

Similar to other participants, Ana felt the “culture” at the institution was a “more comfortable environment” due to the student body being “alike.” Moreover, Lance wanted to attend another institution to pursue engineering, but enrolled at Central because he did not hear from his first choice in a timely manner. Ultimately when offered several opportunities to transfer, Lance continued his enrollment at Central because he felt welcomed at the University: “I never chose to leave NCCU because . . . all the people that I met. I was welcomed with open arms, even though on the outside, appearance-wise, I was different than everybody else.” Lance enjoyed the family environment at Central, which included a community of students, faculty members, and administrators, and he felt accepted:

It's all been heartwarming, like my own home away from home. I know that's a stereotypical thing to say, but that's actually coming through a genuine place, because if I didn't really like it here or if I was treated differently, then I would pack up my things, I would take my ball and go home or go somewhere else where I feel like I'm more surrounded by people that are willing to, I guess, accept me.

*Close to home.* Many participants chose to enroll at the University due to its location. Carlos did not choose to attend Central because it was an HBCU, but instead selected the institution due to its close proximity to his family's house. Jennifer also chose to attend Central due to its location, "I was pretty much looking at the location, and I wanted to be in the North Carolina System, but that [being an HBCU] wasn't really a main factor when I was applying for schools." Ana also selected Central due its close proximity to home, "I also choose it because it's close to home and that would be another reason."

*Prior exposure to the university.* For some of the participants, prior experience with Central contributed to their decision to enroll at the school. Generally, the exposure to the University was not specific to Central being an HBCU, but merely as an institution of higher education. For a couple of the participants, having a family member who attended Central and attending Central's pre-college high school provided the type of exposure to the institution that informed their decision to enroll at NCCU. Katherine's father attended Central, which informed her interest in the institution, "My dad attends here and he loves it. He got me interested in it." Oscar was exposed to the University due to attending the high school on campus, which allowed him to establish connections with several professors and administrators. Oscar noted that he chose to enroll at Central due to the connections that he made with individuals at the University during his enrollment at Early College High School as the main reason for choosing to enroll at Central.

***Academically accessible.*** Study participants also chose to attend Central due to academic-related reasons. Students noted the feasibility in transferring community college credits to Central or the perception that NCCU had lower admissions standards, the institution was viewed by the students as academically accessible to them. Rubi, a junior, described the ease by which she was able to transfer her credits from the community college she attended as well as the positive perception that she had of the University and her academic program. She stated, “Central is one of the most important universities in the Triangle Area and I was able to transfer all of my credits from [my technical college]. The Business School at Central has a very good reputation.” Carmen perceived that HBCUs have lower academic standards, although she considered herself to be a good student. Carmen did not think that she would be able to perform well academically at a non-HBCU:

I honestly felt like I’m a good student, but I felt as though they [HBCUs] have lower expectations sometimes. HBCUs, they have lower GPA requirements and SAT scores. And I honestly felt like if I went somewhere else I wouldn’t match up to their criteria...

***Positive feelings about attending an HBCU.*** Student participants described a broad range of feelings associated with their enrollment at a historically Black institution. Feeling ranged from simple descriptions of enthusiasm to outright relief related to fitting into a campus environment initially perceived as foreign. Overall, students were positive about their feelings of attending North Carolina Central University.

***Supportive academic and social environment.*** Participants generally expressed feelings of joy when asked about their decision to enroll at Central. From Carlos who simply stated, “I mean, it’s great. I like this school;” to Katherine, who shared, “I love it. I love it. It’s great. I’m very glad I did it”; and Nicole who indicated, “I like it here. I’m

glad I made the decision”; students were happily content with their decision to attend Central. In addition to purely liking the institution, feelings of hesitation or doubt with “fitting in” were also expressed when asked about their decision to enroll at the institution. Participants spoke passionately about how they experienced the environment as welcoming and different. Carmen described her feelings about enrolling at the HBCU, “Honestly, I’m like in the middle right now, because at first when I got here, I was like I can’t do this and want to leave because it [HBCU] was so different than what I was used to. But now I’m really, like getting used to it.” She further added, “My classes are going great. I just feel more comfortable now.” She goes on to describe her previous experience living in a diverse environment to now finding herself in a predominantly Black environment, “Like, I was used to a mix of and lots different people and a lot of different, how you say it, ethnicities. At one school, especially because I am from New York, there you have a lot of Hispanics, Whites, Blacks, and Africans. Like from everywhere. So I had to adjust to a school where it is mostly just Black people you know.”

Kristina a very involved first-year student also described being unsure and then becoming more comfortable, “I was wondering how well I would fit in, but other than that it wasn’t a problem. I feel perfectly fine and right home every time that I go.” Luis whose parents attended an HBCU stated, “The school is the perfect size, the people are great, the city around it is fairly nice. It is an interesting place I guess. I feel like I can further my education here.” Monica shared, “I don’t feel that I am just a bank account for the university, but rather a student, someone that they care about.” Moreover, Nicole who hails from the West Coast described, “...I knew it would be different...being on the East

Coast. I knew being at an HBCU it'd be even more different, but like everyone's been friendly. I haven't felt like an outcast here, so I like that." Lastly, Jennifer provides a more middle of the road neutral perspective of being content, "I don't think that, in any way, it affects, either positively or negatively, anything; and based on the location where the school is, it's a plus for me."

While reflecting on their decision to attend an HBCU, participants also described feeling satisfied with their academic experience at the institution. Rubi shared, "I am very pleased with the education that I am getting. So far, the professors that I have are very good professors. The schedule that I have is very flexible. Overall, I think that I made the right decision." Sarah simply stated, "I like it, especially since, they have a good program for my major." Lastly, Lance a highly involved junior spoke to his satisfaction with the academic experience at Central by sharing his perspective on how talented he feels his fellow students are:

I feel like the students here, they have the potential to globally compete with any other student that graduates from any other university. And the only reason why I say that is because there's a somewhat negative popular thinking behind HBCUs not being able to compete with the rest of the world. But in actuality, through the further development I went through with classes, one-on-one with professionals, teachers, this, that and a third, I feel like I am more than ready to compete with more high level schools in which we all hear about, like, Duke University, UNC Chapel Hill, Virginia Techs, things like that.

***HBCU status does not matter.*** Though attending an HBCU had some level of significance for most participants, for some it did not matter. In sharing his feelings about attending an HBCU, Carlos described his focus being on wanting to pursue his education and not being concerned with the HBCU status of the institution, "I don't really do, I don't dwell into races or Black, White color. It's just wanted to get my education. It doesn't really matter." Similarly, Jennifer acknowledged the pride that many feel about



NCCU being an HBCU, but alludes to it not being a factor in her decision to attend Central, "...I know that some people on the campus are extremely proud to be in a historically Black college. I mean, like I said, for me, it didn't really affect my decision either way." While acknowledging that the institution was founded by African Americans, Carmen goes on to describe there not being a difference in how she is experiencing the institution, "...I don't think it's really different from any other school...It was founded by African Americans but other than that I don't feel like it's a whole lot of difference. I really don't think there's much of a difference."

**Benefits of being a Latino student at an HBCU.** Having shared their perspective on why they chose to participate in the study, why they chose to enroll in the school, and feelings about attending the school, participants were asked to share if they perceived any benefits or advantages as Latinos attending a HBCU. Although most participants indicated both perceived benefits and advantages, some did not.

***Minority status advantages.*** Several of the participants noted specifically perceived benefits because of their minority status on campus as Latino students.

Kristina notes a broad range of benefits that she feels she has gained because of her minority status at the institution. Specifically, she stated the following:

I believe that you are set out as a minority and they're willing to help you a lot and I look for diversity in a school. So it helps to give you opportunities... It set me apart from the other students also I'm working in a research lab and the Professor that I'm working with really enjoys that I am from another country but also other people see it as a different perspective.

Similarly, Ana noted multiple perceived benefits to her as minority in choosing to attend Central. These included the financial-aid support she received, the geographic location of the school within proximity to her house, and the perception that Central is a

culturally affirming campus. In speaking to being a minority student on campus, she stated, “I think that I guess the benefits offered to in a way the culture to where we are alike in a way so it’s a more comfortable environment.” Here she describes the benefits of being a minority student within the context of an HBCU with African Americans being the majority group on campus in terms of the campus environment being comfortable for her, noting that she has more in common with the predominant group at the HBCU because of their shared minority status in society. Additionally, Oscar spoke to the same point made by Ana:

In a way, yes, because society makes it seem that the White race is more dominant over African Americans, and Latinos, so being that an HBCU is predominantly a minority school, there is not as much racism and criticism in class and so forth, which makes the learning environment better.

Furthermore, Luis explained that he does not feel judged for his minority status at the institution, “I don’t have to worry about the teachers or any other kind of administration judging me almost for being a minority...Everyone is pretty equal here.” He compares this in contrast to how he thinks he would be judged if he were in a predominantly White institution as a minority student. Nicole also shared that because of her minority status she is easily remembered by her professors, “...I kind of stand out more so the professors know me better, and that’s an advantage.”

In addition to underscoring the above perceived benefits of being a minority student on campus, Lance provided a balanced perspective that highlighted how often he gets asked to participate in institutional functions because of his minority status:

Well, I honestly feel - I have mixed emotions about this one. Being of Hispanic descent everybody else. And because of that, the HBCU wants to spread -- not just NCCU, but a HBCU would want to spread the diversity of the campus. So I’m consistently asked to take pictures, do interviews, or be recorded for videos, things like that to further publicize the diversity on the campus, which at times, I

do feel a little bit discouraged about, because I feel like I'm sometimes getting pinpointed or segregated - I'm like in my own little class, where I'm always going to be called upon because the institution wants to stress the importance of diversity nowadays. I do enjoy helping out my institution, but I know the main reasons why I'm being called upon is because I am diverse from everyone else.

Despite the emotions that Lance described of being asked frequently to participate in the institution's diversity campaigns and functions where diverse students are needed, he also acknowledges that because of his minority status and involvement on campus, he has been able to make a lot of beneficial connections with NCCU officials.

Lastly, Carmen described passionately not receiving any financial-aid benefits because of her Latino status at the University, but concedes a different benefit, "...you can learn from other people, their culture compared to yours." She describes another way in which minority-cultural affirmation takes place in the environment by having students learn from their cultural differences and similarities. Likewise, Sarah recognized the enrollment of minority students at Central as a benefit to herself as a Latino student.

***Financial benefits.*** Whereas some participants noted their minority status on campus as an advantage, others specifically noted the perceived financial aid benefit or lack thereof derived from being a Latino attending an HBCU. Acknowledging the aid she received, Ana stated, "...the benefits definitely as a minority the financial aid is a lot help and the scholarships and the grants." Kristina shared, "I would say that my scholarship, it helped me a lot that I was a minority..." Additionally, Monica stated, "Absolutely yes...this University has more options, more help in terms of scholarship funds [in comparison to the school where she transferred from]. As a matter of fact they [the University] continuously send emails regarding scholarships, financial aid availabilities, working on campus..." Lastly, Sarah simply stated, "Ummm...I get scholarships."

However, some students because of the lack of financial aid available to them perceived not having any benefits or advantages because of their Latino status. For example, Carmen stated the following:

I don't think so there are benefits because like I look for a lot of scholarships and stuff like that, and it's usually for like African American students, especially since it's a HBCU. That's why I don't feel like there's any benefit. There might be a scholarship out there for a Hispanic student, but honestly I haven't seen any benefits.

Similarly, Rubi stated,

I was searching on the scholarships that Central offers and there are not any based on my race. I don't really know about any kind of benefits for Hispanics that I can use going to Central. This was disappointing when I was looking for a scholarship for my race that I could apply for. Central offers over one hundred scholarships.

Whether there was an actual financial benefit or not, some participants associated the benefit of being eligible for financial-aid and scholarship funding with their Latino-minority status.

*No advantages as a Latino.* On the other extreme, some participants also indicated a lack of perceived benefits for being Latino and attending an HBCU. Carlos stated, "I don't feel like it makes a difference. No not really. It's just that I'm here to study it doesn't matter. My race doesn't make a difference." Supporting this assertion, Katherine stated, "I think it's kind of in the middle. Not really, but you know, kind of the same just like everybody else." Rubi further adds, "I don't think there are any kinds of benefits for me, being Hispanic." And Jennifer concluded with, "I really don't think so, no."

**Understanding the HBCU legacy: Faculty-staff perspectives.** Given the exploratory nature of this study with a focus on the Latino student experience at an

HBCU that is actively recruiting Latino students and emphasizing student success, asking faculty and staff participants about the historical significance of HBCUs was appropriate to ascertain the congruence with the perspective of student participants within the context of the campus climate framework. Understandably, faculty and staff shared a deeper perspective on the historical significance of HBCUs. Moreover, they provided a perspective that was broad in scope reflecting their tenure at the institution, historical context of the civil rights movement, and their own self-questioning of the role of HBCUs today.

In speaking to the historical significance of HBCUs and specifically to NCCU's role in the community, Professor Smith stated, "For decades it was the only option available, and for Blacks who wanted to get a higher education. But they [HBCUs] also played an incredible important role in the Black community beyond the education that they provided the individuals." He further added the following:

Certainly in this area and it was well respected [NCCU], it had certain cache, people really tried to get into this university, and it was a big deal when they did. You know after schools got integrated it was seen as we had a tougher and tougher time attracting top notch African American students who were offered scholarships in places like UNC and Duke.

Speaking further to the type of students now attending the institution, Professor Smith elaborated:

We still get...very strong students but I think the niche that we fill is very different then it was prior to the integration of schools. So these days we get many of our students our first generation college students who did B, C, work in high school aren't going to get into research one institutions like UNC and you know NCCU gives them an opportunity that they otherwise might not yet have. A lot of these kids have really good potential but it's undeveloped when they arrive a lot of them have gone to high schools that quite frankly are pretty poor quality, a lot of the students coming from eastern or western Carolina rural counties where the quality of school systems are pretty poor. They arrive here with poor skill sets, poor study habits; we also get some really very capable students. Who are well

prepared for college, who for one reason or another decides they want the experience of an HBCU maybe it's a Black kid who went to a suburban school or that were predominantly White and he has been surrounded by White kids all along his life. He wants the experience of being in a predominantly Black environment, so it's a mixed batch but I would say more of the students are the first kind of students that I was describing.

In responding to the same question, student affairs administrator Moore described the historical role that HBCUs played in developing leaders in the African American community, "They were the schools that educated some of our top leaders in this nation. They were there for Black people when other schools wouldn't allow them to enter. So, they were oftentimes the pride and joy of Black communities." She commented further:

Many Black communities grew up or developed around HBCU campuses, and it became almost like this really nurturing village of proud people that were allowed to grow and develop as leaders; and oftentimes, would take that skill set and put it back into the Black community. So, a lot of times, when you think of some of the major leaders in this country, they were all educated at historically Black colleges and universities.

Making the connection to the civil rights movement, Randall an academic affairs administrator stated, "...many of the professionals who crossed us over the bridge of the civil rights movement were educated at HBCU's. Our parents, our parent's parents, were educated at HBCUs it is just a part of our legacy in history..."

Highlighting the significant role that HBCUs have played in providing a validating and affirming place to those who were maybe denied that space at other types of institutions, Professor Clark shared: "The [historical] significance of it is that we need to have a place whereby people who are never given the same chance by the majority to feel a place of belonging." He further added the following:

But it's not just a place. You have to be active in personalizing that and making it – it deals with identity really. When you are dealing with the White world, for example, from TV, from media, you are bombarded with these images which don't affirm you. But here, not just the looks but interaction, you have that

capacity to feel, okay, I can address you because I look at you as closer to me and you are an extension of me. That is what it really represents to me.

Speaking to a University that is now more open to diversity, Professor Clark described how the current campus climate is conducive to Latinos:

I think it's how you treat [them]. There's more openness now [to diversity at the institution]. I bet you about 1991 we didn't have many [Latinos]. There is also in the community, the perception, if they go to Chapel Hill or NC State, doors are now open. Also here we do appreciate, we're tolerant of... Even the hiring, before you couldn't hire Latinos. You couldn't see a Latino working here. This is where we're kind of changing with the society.

Lastly, Professor Clark stated, "...I feel comfortable here. It [HBCU] is very much relevant, actually more relevant today than any other time."

In addition to a perspective shared by faculty and staff participants that acknowledges the historical significance of HBCUs within a broader societal context and the continue need for them to exist, dissonance was also expressed regarding the existing higher education system that has varying categories of schools. Describing this tension, Professor Guzman, who is of Latin American descent, stated,

There are two positions that kind of cause me sometimes to hesitate a bit. There comes a time when I kind of reject the idea of segregating in any way, and probably there are moments when I feel it is time for this to be a university not a Black university.

Although acknowledging the tension on the one hand, he goes on to say, "At the same time, unfortunately there is still a need for certain things to happen and for certain situations to be told because they still happen." Furthermore, he added,

My tendency is to think that this should be a University with no restrictions, and I reject very much the feeling that some people have that HBCUs are inferior. There comes a time when people have to say for instance Venus Williams is the best tennis player and forget the fact that she is Black because she is not the best Black tennis player. She's the best tennis player period, you see. I would like people to be aware of that. Right now our Law School is according to very specific data on the board exams is the best in the state. It's not the best Black

school in the state. Again when I'm in class it doesn't matter whether I am a Latino, or White, or whatever I am a Professor at NCCU.

*Decision to work at an HBCU.* Similar to asking the students why they chose to attend an HBCU it was also important to understand why this grouping of faculty and administrators committed to the success of Latino students on their campus decided to teach and work at an HBCU. Given the historical exclusionary practices of institutions of higher education, gaining insight into their decision to serve at an HBCU provides perspective on the type of educational environment Latino students are matriculating into in addition to the appeal that HBCUs have for those teaching and serving them. Having never attended or worked at an HBCU, administrator Randall stated,

Well, that's a good question; well I actually did not have the pleasure and the wonderful opportunity to attend at an HBCU, and I have heard about wonderful stories of HBCUs all my life and actually my dissertation is on HBCUs. Written at a wonderful university we all know, and so I wanted this experience to be my professional life.

Similarly, administrator Moore saw the opportunity to work at an HBCU as a way to continue her educational advocacy work:

I had worked at predominantly White institutions before I came here, and saw doing work around...as an opportunity to kind of introduce or further expand that perspective or that lens on an HBCU campus. I hadn't had the opportunity before that to really work as much with students at an HBCU, and thought that I had a skill set that I could bring to the table that would be beneficial to the campus.

Having worked at the institution previously leaving to a PWI and then returning,

Professor Guzman shared the following:

It's an interesting situation because actually I worked also at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which is sort of a flagship of the system, and I returned to NCCU. I have no hesitations what so ever in saying that I'm a man of the left and so my ideology has a lot to do with working at HBCU...That's why I'm interested in that. I enjoy the fact that I'm contributing to the development of a minority that's evidently under privileged.



As an African who pursued graduate education in the United States, Professor Clark was moved to experience a different type of educational environment that coincided with his studies in multiculturalism:

I realized HBCU, though the struggle is similar to what our education system was through colonialism. So, I thought it was a best fit, and that's why I chose to come here...I saw that how whether you are Black or Latina or Hispanic, also a minority, you do need that specific place so that you can feel belonged to, because this country's education system, all the lifestyle, everything is based on law, not the norms. But HBCU is one way you can exercise that...and I saw the need, it is easier in HBCU, because numbers are not only smaller, also you are dealing with people who are really like me in terms of preparation, because I came from a background whereby education was a struggle for me. It cost money, I couldn't afford it, and the majority of our students here...it's the same experience.

He spoke to his passion for working at an HBCU:

So I realized that you have to have a certain philosophical and also passion for being here...I could have just passed my time in NC State. I was in NC State for four years and I would have chosen to stay there and teach there, but when I taught there, I feel students are treated as numbers and there's no relationship. But here even though it's hard and they are struggling, I'm able to talk to someone who looks like you and then we can see do we identify the struggle and I'm still dreaming to address the issue of discrimination. Since historically all HBCUs started because of discrimination. That's the best place to start.

Furthermore, Professor Smith explained that due to a series of events and decision points in his life, how he ended up working at an HBCU. Moreover, he shared in detail that his background as a gay man and growing up in an underserved community prepared him to serve at an HBCU, "... I felt like I would just be a cog in a well-oiled machine [at Duke]. Whereas if I came here, and taught here, I might be able making a more significant contribution, so that ultimately what tipped the balance." Raised in a culturally diverse inner city where he did not get a solid academic foundation, he did treasure the relationships he formed:

[F]rom a life standpoint, I wouldn't trade it for all the tea in China and one of my closet friends there was a Black girl...I think just my friendship with her and

knowing that she came to [a local HBCU], was one of the reasons that initially made me interested in teaching here.

Furthermore, as a result of being gay, he identified as a minority and when challenged by the department chair about his motivation to work at NCCU he stated,

[T]hat I was gay and the experience of being a White gay man in the U.S. is very different, from being a young Black person in America, but I do know what it is like to be feeling like an outsider, and I know what it is like to feel discrimination, prejudice, and different from but you know?" He felt affirmed when hired and shared "I think one of the reasons why he hired me was because he thought that I would add diversity to his faculty in several ways. I was the only white person on the faculty, there were only two men and I was the only gay person..."

Finally, I asked Professor Smith to continue to expand on why his background allowed him to be an ally to Latino students and advocate for diversity issues on campus:

Well that, and when I was in High School before, I came out I had a girlfriend for the last part of high school and she was Puerto Rican and we were very, very close and I was very close to her family and I had other friends who were Puerto Rican almost all the Latinos in [my city] were Puerto Rican. I also worked in a program one summer and through the program became friends with a Latino family...I do feel sort of a connection in some ways my daughter, my partner and I have between us 3 kids and one of my kids my stepdaughter just finished a year in...working at...which is a Latino community center in downtown Durham. I was really excited for her about that...

Overall, faculty and staff participants provided insight into their decision-making process for choosing to work at an HBCU. They were inspired to serve at an HBCU by circumstances in their personal lives as in the case of Professor Smith and by first having the experience of working at a PWI like professors Clark and Guzman and administrator Moore. Regardless of the reason why they ended up working at an HBCU, each person expressed contributing to the success of the types of students who attend the institution as a significant reason for staying at Central.

*Faculty-staff perspectives on Latino enrollment at NCCU.* Given the varying longstanding tenure of the three professors and two campus administrators, I wanted to

ascertain their thoughts on why Latino students were choosing to enroll at NCCU. Additionally, having asked a similar question of the student participants, comparing responses should prove insightful to better understanding why Latino students are choosing to attend Central. Faculty and staff identified key reasons for why Latino students were choosing to enroll at Central. Reasons included the perception and awareness that: students coming from deprived educational and economic backgrounds were more likely to enroll at an institution like Central; the institution is more welcoming of minority students than traditional PWIs; and lower admissions standards, a cheaper tuition, and proximity of the University to the homes of students were possible reasons cited for why Latino students were choosing to attend Central.

Professor Guzman described Latino students choosing to attend Central as not being prepared academically to enroll at more selective institutions, therefore, making Central a better fit for them. Furthermore, he portrays them as first-generation college students, who come from homes where their parents are not able to provide them the help they need to be successful academically:

I'm not sure they are actually choosing, but I think that in many cases they come from families that are not traditionally or formally educated in their original countries. They are the first generation to attend college, and then again reasons for economy, perhaps for reasons also where they didn't do that well in the previous steps, testing, high school etc. because they didn't have the language, didn't have the proper set up, if their parents are outside of the household they probably were not able to give them the help. They couldn't either because they have real problems with language skills, etc. So, those students are kind of in a situation that is not the best to aspire to go to Chapel Hill or Duke which are Universities with an incredible national reputation etc. which demands very, very high scores. Whereas Central it is making an effort to get better and get more demanding but it still not at the level of any of the major Universities in this country.

Additionally, Professor Smith shared, “It’s cheap, it’s not too difficult to get into, it’s right here in the community you can live at home if you need to...” Furthermore, academic affairs administrator Randall stated,

It is an excellent education; it’s an inexpensive education dollar per dollar we are able to give. We are in the UNC system so the quality of education that we get is comparable and at a lower cost, this is centrally located, and we are located near the hub of where a number of Latino communities are in the state.

Lastly, student affairs administrator Moore noted the following:

I think some of it is access. NCCU is very good about trying to meet people where they are, so it could be financially making education more accessible to students; sometimes the location is ideal if folks need to live at home. You have, we have this urban setting, and so we’re close to a lot of things, a lot of major highways. So if people needed to still live at home for either financial reasons or other reasons for support, they can still go to school here. We have lots of courses in the evening, so you can work during the day and still go to class and get your degree. So I think the versatility and the accessibility of the university is very, very appealing to Latino students.

### **Compositional Diversity**

Compositional diversity accounts for the numerical representation of underrepresented students on campus (Hurtado et al., 1999; Milem et al., 2005). The policies and programs within an institution of higher education contribute to increasing compositional diversity of a campus (Hurtado et al., 1999; Milem et al., 2005). NCCU’s strategic plan communicates a commitment to actively recruiting Latino students (NCCU Strategic Plan, 2004). Since 2000, the Latino student population at NCCU has grown by more than 300% (NCCU Enrollment Management, 2011). Specifically, during the five-year period (2004-2009) the number of Latino students enrolling at NCCU increased 15% from 95 in 2004 to 143 enrolled students in 2009 (University Fact Book, 2009 & 2004). And by 2011 the number of enrolled Latino students stood at 166 (University Fact Book, 2011). As noted by the participants, the increase in the number of Latino students has led

to an awareness of their presence in different facets of campus life. The participants' attitudes and perceptions of the institution's compositional diversity as it pertains to Latinos were explored.

**Participants' awareness of Latino compositional diversity.** The participants were asked about their perception of Latinos on campus (i.e., students, faculty, & staff). Generally, student participants expressed differing perspectives on their awareness of other Latino students and Latino faculty and staff on campus. Participants who indicated knowing another Latino student at NCCU typically established the relationship within a residence hall, class, or some other mode of networking. Students who expressed an awareness of Latino faculty, the association was typically made through the Spanish department. Participants who indicated knowing Latino staff tended to reference individuals who were housekeepers and janitorial personnel. Lastly, several participants also shared not being aware of any Latino students.

*Connecting with Latino students.* Despite the lack of a significant Latino student presence on campus, some of the students who indicated having Latino friends shared that they met them in class. Carlos stated, "I have a couple of Latino [friends], whom I'm taking classes with. We just happen to be in the same class." Similarly, Katherine and Kristina also shared that they met other Latino students in class. Kristina noted, "We get together if we're having trouble with a test or something and we get together to study and we start socializing from there." Lastly, Sarah shared how she met other Latino students, "...in the cafeteria, or we had classes together." A couple of students indicated that they knew Latino students who also went to their high school. Ana shared, "Not many [Latino students], but yes, there are some Latinos from my high school [at Central]."

Several students also made connections with other Latino students through the honors program at the institution. Participants discussed the shared living environment in the residence halls that allowed for connections to be made in the honors program. Luis, also an honors student, added, “There are a few that live in my building or in the honors program. We talk, we have that bond, we have that connection, but it doesn’t mean that we have to be best friends because of it?” Katherine and Kristina also met other Latino students through the honors program. Katherine indicated that one of her close friends was also an honors student.

Participants also described meeting fellow Latino students in other ways such as through the use of social media, participation in varsity athletics, and traditional peer to peer networking. Luis mentioned seeing Latino students on campus and connecting with them via Facebook, “I see them around campus, especially during orientation ...on the Facebook page for Central.” He further added, “You can tell who is Hispanic by their name...Hispanics usually message each other like, ‘Hey, can you speak Spanish? Where are you staying?’ Stuff like that. So that’s how I met them primarily.” Nicole, a varsity student athlete, shared that she met other Latinos through the athletics community at the University, “Different sports; like I have a teammate, she’s not full, she’s Mexican too but she’s mixed. Then a couple people on the baseball team and volleyball teams.” Furthermore, Oscar mentioned meeting Latino students through networking with others and approaching Latino students directly, “I met some through other friends and others by just going up to them and asking them where they are from. Some are from Mexico, so we have speaking Spanish in common.” Lastly, Lance who is heavily involved on

campus indicated meeting Latino students through some of the student organizations that he has been involved with:

[M]y freshman year, I was a part of a Latin dance team on campus--it was called Los Salseros... Even if they didn't dance, they were still welcome to come. We still had a lot of people of my ethnicity come out just to meet and socialize with other people on campus.

Lance also described a networking approach to meeting other Latinos:

Another main organization was the Student Government Association, SGA... I was the only Latino leader on campus. So, I also got to meet a few of those through them; and of course, through the power of networking, because one Latino introduces me to one of their friends that's Latino, and so one and so forth down the line.

Four students also indicated not knowing other Latino students. Carmen admitted that she did not know any Latino students at NCCU, but she did recognize them on campus:

No I don't. I mean, I've seen some, but I haven't met any. Like I haven't talked to any people, any Latino. Because I can tell... I just look at somebody and I say, "Oh, she's Hispanic." You know by their hair... the way their hair is, or by their skin color... by the way they speak and talk.

Jennifer shared, "I don't, no. And in my classes on campus, there were no Latino students in my classes, so that's probably the reason why I didn't interact with anyone." Rubi indicated that she did not know any Latino students. Lastly, Professor Smith described the lack of a Latino student presence on campus, "I don't [think] there's a critical mass of Latino students here yet to really have much of a voice on this campus. I don't think they have really made their presence known."

***Presence of Latino faculty and staff.*** Students expressed having varying levels of awareness of and interaction with Latino faculty and staff. Jennifer shared, "I have seen names in the [faculty] roster that I thought might be Latino, but [I] never had classes with

or interacted [with Latino faculty], as far as needing help with anything. I have not.”

Nicole also heard about Latino faculty on campus, but had yet to meet any, “I’ve heard of a few Spanish professors but I haven’t had to take Spanish.” Similarly, Oscar stated, “I have not seen any. There is a teacher, the Spanish teacher. I don’t really see any Latino or Hispanic faculty members here.” Again, Rubi simply stated, “No. There are none.”

Although some participants had no engagement with Latino faculty and staff, some expressed having direct contact. Sarah was aware of Latino faculty on campus and took a class with a Latino faculty member, “Um, there are. I think, like, my English Professor is Hispanic, and her last name is Professor Gonzalez... The Spanish Professors are also, some of them are Hispanic.” Additionally, Monica stated,

I haven’t had any, not yet. Yes, I am aware of some Latino faculty in the Spanish department, as a matter of fact. I take English public speaking class currently and I had to make sure that my credits for Spanish were taken so that I don’t have to retake it. And I was able to see that there were quite a few Latino or Hispanic professors.

Likewise, Kristina stated, “Yes, yes I have some of the Spanish teachers. Even though I am not currently taking Spanish, they say hello to me. They ask me how I’m feeling. They are very open and nice to me.” Ana also discussed positive experiences that she had with Latino faculty in the Spanish department while acknowledging the few number of Latino faculty on campus:

Yes, not many [Latino faculty], I think most of them that I have encountered are, would be the communications building which is basically Spanish English professors. I have gone to one of them for advice. I think that as Latinos themselves they are willing to help you...

In addition to interacting with Latino faculty, Ana also described her experience with Latino janitorial staff on campus:



I see some of them; if not the majority of them I've seen some of them I don't notice the staffing crew you know works at the desk or you I think staff also includes cleaning. I had encountered them, now they are little bit more friendly and I think they're happy to see other Latinos that's there. The person that I have encountered...I don't know what his job description is but I always see him just cleaning and doing any kind of janitorial duties. He always speaks, "How are you doing?" - you know, so it's a little bit more of a friendly interaction than with others.

Similarly, Carmen described seeing a custodian on campus that she believed to be Latino, "I've seen one custodian. I'm pretty sure she's Hispanic because I've heard her speak Spanish before." Lance, who served as a resident assistant, described his observations of Latino staff on campus from his vantage point:

[W]hen I say I made friends with administration, faculty and staff, I've come to realize a lot of the janitors and housekeepers are all of Latino descent. And because I'm a resident assistant and I like to get to know everybody, I got to know a lot of them throughout the years of working with them . . .

Observing that other students did not interact much with the custodial staff, she said,

But I like to talk to them a lot, just to get to know them and get to know where they came from...The housekeeping staff, as a whole for the entire campus, you'll see that there are a lot of Latino people that are working for the campus that are part of the janitorial and the maid staff.

*Living up to its legacy of inclusion.* Faculty and staff participants tended to perceive the increase in the Latino student population as a good strategic opportunity for the institution. Moreover, the faculty and staff members thought that admitting Latino students allows the University to live up to its legacy of inclusion and to provide its students (mainly African American) with access to racially/ethnically diverse peers, in preparation for their entry into a society that is changing demographically, locally and globally. Specifically, the societal divide between African Americans and Latinos was viewed as a possible opportunity to bring both groups together at NCCU. Each of the

faculty and staff participants also expressed disappointment that faculty and staff appointments were not reflective of the growing Latino student population on campus.

Randall, an academic affairs administrator, expressed enthusiasm, which was also shared by other faculty and staff interviewed for this study, regarding the growth in Latino students at the University:

It's an honor for our institution to have the [Latino] students, and it provides a wonderful lab for us all to learn so much about one another. North Carolina Central University hopefully will begin to take advantage of [the increasing number of Latino students], in the coming years.

Similarly, Professor Clark argued that the increase in Latino students matches the original mission of the institution to provide increased access to higher education and contributes to a better learning environment for students by incorporating the benefits of diversity:

It's a wonderful...it matches the intent, the intention for creating this institution because if you look historically, that was the purpose of creating, to educate the people who had less chance to go elsewhere...the more I've had Latino students come into my class and wider the diversity, the better the discussion and learning takes.

Furthermore, student affairs administrator Moore highlighted that it is great that Latino students are choosing to attend the HBCU, but the institution must make sure its programs and services are attentive to the needs of the Latino student population:

Well, I think it's exciting, and I think that it also is a call to action for HBCUs because there's a lot of interest and focus on programming for Black students, or I should say, Black students that do not identify as Hispanic or Latino. They [the institution] are very prideful about the types of programs and services they provide for Black students. But the call to action has been, we have to be broader and more inclusive to make sure that our programming is not excluding other people who may not identify as being Black; or those that identify as Black, but also Hispanic, that they have a way of embracing all those identities and not having to give up one or the other. So, it's really a great time for HBCUs to think more broadly and to expand and develop.

Lastly, Professor Smith stated, "...I don't [think] there's a critical mass of Latino students here yet to really have much of a voice on this campus. I don't think they have really made their presence known."

Professor Guzman further noted the political and perceived hostile climate in North Carolina regarding the increase in the state's Latino population in relationship to the state's African American population. The professor believed that the institution can assist in bridging the gap between both groups in the state by allowing Latinos and African Americans to engage with one another on campus:

In addition to that, I think that I could say to you that I'm very happy. Because there is a certain divide, and it is my position that the divide is being carefully engineered between the African American Community, and the Latino Community. Well, if we have them here all together that will be at least demystified.

Faculty and staff participants expressed enthusiasm for the increasing Latino student population on campus and highlighted the benefits of having a more diverse student body. However, concern was expressed over the lack of Latino faculty and staff representation on campus. Student affairs administrator Moore described her perception of the lack of Latino faculty and staff on campus:

It's not reflected. I mean, again, it's anecdotal because I don't have the actual numbers of faculty, but I know who I encounter. The folks that I encounter--I've been here five years, and in that time, I can only think of two faculty who identify as Latino that I've encountered in the five years.

Expressing a similar concern, Professor Smith noted the challenges posed by traditional faculty culture in the professoriate hiring process (i.e., the replication of self through the faculty recruitment process by seeking to hire individuals who resemble them in the areas of race, gender, research focus, etc.). Very disappointed in the outcome, he described two attempts within his own department to diversifying the faculty by offering a position to

talented Latina faculty, one of whom took a job with her hero at another university and the other deciding based on a family situation. He said “. . . We try like hell to recruit.”

While acknowledging the concentration of Latino faculty within his department,

Professor Guzman also expressed concern about the lack of faculty and staff

representation on campus:

[T]here are very few Latinos on the Faculty, and they are practically all in this department. I don't know anybody [Latino staff/administrators] and I've been here many years. I don't know any Latinos in administrative positions. I don't know any Latinos in high administration.

Professor Clark described the evolution that he has witnessed during his tenure at the

institution in the hiring practice of faculty who are competent as scholars and have a

commitment to diversity:

There is more effort put towards recruiting diverse faculty in deeds as opposed to, you know what they say. You know how we say; we need diversity, but same old, same old, the only one. Now we have more Latino professors and also more students are coming, because those students, Latino professors too, have tracked like [professor's name], is an excellent one, and he goes to Africa and it brings experience. That's what I mean when I say recruiting people. You need to recruit people who bring the experience, not just because of the color of their skin. You check the diversity, they bring experience, and you're just not hired by your academic credentials only. Interviews and the committees are becoming more intentional and that has also attracted the kind of people who would change the culture, to be more accepting than before. I've seen the changes, I've been here 10 years, and I've seen the evolution.

### **Psychological Climate**

The psychological dimension of the campus climate framework captures the perspectives and attitudes regarding “intergroup relations as well as institutional responses to diversity, perceptions of discrimination or racial conflict, and attitudes held toward individuals from different racial and ethnic backgrounds” and from diverse constituent groups (Milem et al., 2005, p. 17). Moreover, they argued that how

individuals see themselves within the campus environment influences how they engage with and view the “institution, its mission, and its climate” (p. 17). As such, it is important to learn about Latino students’ perspectives regarding their experience at Central, and similarly, the attitudes held by faculty and staff about the experiences of Latino students on campus.

Overall, students described experiencing a relatively positive psychological climate on campus. Participants expressed feeling good about the institution while specifically highlighting the caring nature of faculty and staff, their positive academic experience in the classroom, and the availability of involvement opportunities at NCCU. Although students generally expressed having an overall positive attitude about Central, they also clearly described being perceived as different on campus. Furthermore, faculty and staff participants provided invaluable insights into the transformational changes and dynamics occurring in the local community as a result of the growing Latino population. Furthermore, they shared perspective on the possible barriers getting in the way of African American and Latino students learning from each other.

**Welcoming community at NCCU.** The majority of student participants generally described having a positive experience at Central. Specifically, Latino students described having a strong affinity for the institution and the people they have interacted with on campus. They described a welcoming environment that included establishing meaningful and helpful connections with faculty, staff, and students.

Ana noted having a good experience at Central, and highlighted that she has received the help she needed from her advisor:

So far, my experience at Central has been good, I mean, I haven't had any problems. I think that I've been able to find, I guess in, my advisors [have] given me the help I needed. Well, I would say it's a good experience.

Carlos described a host of factors that contributed to the positive experiences that he had at Central:

It is a positive experience. I like the school...you know, demanding, good teachers are the most important part that I want to know about. Oh yeah, no it's a good school. I like the people. Most of the people I'm with, you know in class with, we share the same interests, same classes.

Similarly, Katherine felt a part of the NCCU community. Katherine indicated that the welcoming environment at NCCU was better than the other schools she visited during the process of choosing a college:

It's been very fun, and I feel like I really fit in. I really like it - the people. Especially like the staff. And just the other students, they seem a lot more welcoming than all the other universities I actually went to go visit. Just the classes also work out very well. The most would be, again I was surprised to be so welcomed.

Nicole also described having a positive experience with the people she interacted with on campus. She also felt a great deal of pride representing the institution as a member of the softball team:

It's been good so far. I met a lot of people so far. They've been pretty friendly. All my classes have gone pretty well so far and there are a lot of good teachers here. The most [I like] is being on the softball team and being able to represent the school and you know meeting all these new people too.

Luis also shared his affinity for the people he has engaged with during his time at the University:

I enjoy the most, probably the people. There's never a dull moment at Central. Never is there a dull moment. The population seems to be a really nice one. Haven't had any issues with any other people no one has ever been nasty or anything like that. The teachers overall mostly are great.

Oscar described, very enthusiastically, his like for Central and the people who he has met at the institution, “I enjoy it at Central. I have always been a diverse person so getting along with people is fairly easy for me. I love this school and the connections that I have made...I like everything about the school.” Sarah summarized the overall general sentiment shared by the student participants regarding their experience at Central, “It’s been fun, well; I like it, like I would recommend it.”

*Central cares.* In addition to describing an overall positive student experience, due in large part to the people at NCCU, participants described the caring nature of the institution. The students described an institution that cares about them as individuals and their overall success. Lance described his appreciation for the quality of communication between students and the administration in addition to the family-feel of the campus, “I enjoy the communication among students and administration. The communication and, like I said, going back to the family orientation, because if that wasn't here, then I probably actually wouldn't be attending North Carolina Central University.” Oscar also described having a positive experience with administrative staff, particularly an individual he met as a result of working on campus who helped him become involved on campus:

The administration because they are really nice people. They seem like they really care about you and your classes and they help you. I met the director of strategic planning at my job and I talked to him. He’s the one that got me involved in school. He helped me a lot during the summer. This just shows how nice they are.

Monica spoke passionately about feeling valued as a person at the University, after transferring from a much smaller institution where she felt she was “a tiny little fish in a big sea.” Specifically, she appreciated the resources available and the institution’s efforts

to keep track of her academic progress, including through timely emails and even mandatory meetings with her academic advisor:

I know I made the best decision from switching from the other [institution] to this one just because of all the resources that are available to me. They check in with me, my advisor, we have mandatory meetings on a regular basis, and I didn't have that before. ...I feel that they're keeping track of me, I feel that they want me to do better and that's what these meetings are for, to see how I'm doing, do I need help anywhere? To provide [me with] resources if I do [need them] and that's what I like the most.

Kristina described the understanding and support she received from African American students after sharing with them that Central was the only institution that provided her with financial support despite not being a U.S.-citizen:

People [African American students] would start to understand and get into the story, and I would tell them the things that I did like writing letters to people to see if they would offer me money and then eventually how Central was the one to help me.

Furthermore, Administrator Randall noted that the majority of Latino faculty are associated with the foreign languages program, but more importantly, Latino faculty try to sustain a sense of Latino identity on campus for students that is inclusive of non-Latino campus allies:

Like I said, now there are Latino faculty here, it's not like there are not [any]... The most of the modern foreign languages [faculty] are [Latino]. Yeah they are, quite frankly, and that, faculty do reach out to the folks across campus. So there is an identity on campus, but it is really underground and under the wire right now. Students and the faculty do nurture that identity. There are allies [like] myself and some other folk, I mean when they asked me to come and do this project with our Brazilian students; I was like okay; I'm happy to do so, I'm happy to be seen as an ally.

Although the overwhelming sentiment among Latino students was that Central was a caring institution, a couple of students shared experiences with service units on campus that reflected poor customer service an issue probably experienced by non-Latino



students as well. Luis stated, “What I enjoy the least is sometimes the customer service when you are calling the financial aid office last minute trying to get everything sent through. It gets rough. That’s about it.” Rubi, who works full-time, spoke passionately about her dislike for the level of customer service that she has experienced at the institution. Specifically, she noted experiences with her academic department and with the financial aid office at Central:

I am not very pleased with the administration service. I think that customer service at Central needs to be improved, especially the administration department where you go to submit forms. When you need to reach someone in the administration department by phone it is very hard to get an answer. It takes about three days for them to return your call.

***Positive academic environment.*** The participants described having favorable interactions with faculty, staff, and students and felt valued by the institution particularly noting a positive classroom climate. Kristina indicated what she enjoyed the most about her experience at Central, “I would say I enjoy my classes the most, specifically some classes that I find challenging like my organic chemistry class.” Similarly, Rubi shared her satisfaction with Central’s accessible class schedule for students who want to take classes at night, “I am pleased with the academic information I am receiving...I have enjoyed the flexibility of the schedule the most. They offer curriculum for students in the evening.” Lastly, Nicole offered, “All my classes have gone pretty well so far and there’s a lot of good teachers here.”

In speaking about her classroom experience, Ana noted that her professors contributed to her having a positive experience - specifically their embracing of Latino students in class:

I think they enjoy having a Latino student in their class. I think that they want the other classmates to be in a different environment I guess with different people that will help them in the learning process; so far it's been a good experience.

Similarly, Lance shared the difference that professors have made in his classroom experience by remembering his name, often as the only Latino in class:

Because of that [being the only Latino], the professors easily know my name after the first day, so they don't even have to look at the roster or anything like that to call me out - that's already an immediate connection. We're already developing a relationship, because I know the professor by name, of course, the professor knows my name.

Participants felt comfortable even being the only Latino in any particular class. Jennifer shared, "I would say that it didn't change, or there was no difference; you know, for being a Latino, it didn't change my class experience, say, from the person sitting next to me, their experience." In the same vein, Sarah noted that her professors have treated her like other students in class, "Well it's – we're all treated the same. So, it's good. We put our input into what the teachers; like our questions and stuff. We'll agree with each other and sometimes we won't, but it's good." Nicole also shared that her experiences in one class enabled her to feel comfortable as the only Latino student in other classes:

At first it was a little different for me. I wasn't used to being the only Hispanic person in the classroom, so I was a little intimidated at first, but now I'm used to it. I feel comfortable with everyone and I get along with all my classmates. People, who sit around me talk to me, introduce themselves, so I've made friends just in the classroom. I felt more comfortable.

Speaking to making connections with students in classes where he is the lone Latino student, Oscar shared how he breaks the ice by greeting students in Spanish:

That is where I also meet people because they are aware that I am Hispanic because usually when I talk to them I greet them in Spanish. That is when they asked me if I can help them with their Spanish. I get to interact more in the classroom.

Underscoring the participants' sentiment of the classroom climate as being generally inclusive of Latino students, Professor Smith noted that faculty at Central would welcome student diversity in the classroom, "I would imagine a lot of faculty would be excited to have Latino students in their class, because of the diversity it would bring to their classroom..."

Professor Clark noted the challenge that some Latino students experience in class when they have difficulty speaking English:

[Y]ou see some [students] feeling like I don't speak English well, and you can see their non-verbal. As a person who has had the capacity to experience how speaking a second language is, I reach them and I say, look, I don't care how broken it is, just say what it is. Everybody has an accent. I have one, you have one, they all have one, but that can affect them in the classes whereby their faculty who are unlike me, which expects you to come there speaking English. . . . a little prejudice inside them, because you're getting a break I never got, I don't have a chance to even feel. See that kind of tension and I tell the students don't give that excuse to the professor to mistreat you, because it's the same with African students. They have less English proficiency and even when it comes to writing, you need to seek help. There's writing lab over here, they don't go because they're afraid to be labeled.

Professor Clark explained that the classroom climate could be improved for Latino and other minority students when the institution is challenged to account for the differences that students bring to campus, although he indicated that the climate for Latino students has seen some improvements:

So, they realize, okay, these people understand my struggle, if it's a class. Sometimes there is a question most Black people and I see it in college too. They [African American students] don't like when you speak in Spanish in front of them. I say turn around okay, well. You're speaking English all the time in front of them. Once in my class [a student said to me], "I love your class because yeah, you understand me." Because the issue is not the accent, the issue is to listen and to follow directions. You have the same need to be conscious, and that's the other piece. If HBCUs are challenged to become aware of identity, by default, or because of the courses, experiences, the interaction. So you find now that we have had like several, last five years, we have had a lot of Latino food, activities being done, the students in the papers. You couldn't see that before.

Academic affairs administrator Randall noted that African American students are oftentimes unaware of Latinos, as opposed to actually having ill will towards them:

On that, more of a macro level, I just think that it is a matter of our wonderful students that just have no clue about... I just think that it is a clueless thing. Like I said, on a micro level when you get down [to] the residence hall, then you may see some conflicts around you. No food, clothes or music and those kinds of things or language, but on the macro level of things I just think its ignorance.

Furthermore, student affairs administrator Moore wondered aloud about the classroom climate for Latino students based on the types of comments she has heard faculty and staff make about Latinos:

You know, I'm not really sure. I would definitely be guessing at that, because that's not where I have the most experience or interaction. But again, just knowing the comments I've heard that comes out of faculty and staff's mouths, I can imagine that there's been some of those types of comments that slip out in the classroom; or either that they don't address something that a student has said that might be problematic. But that's really just my guess; I don't have an actual example of that. But I would imagine that the experiences are consistent across co-curricular activities, as well as in the classroom.

**A perceived hospitable campus environment for Latino student involvement.**

In addition to describing an overall positive experience with faculty, staff, and students and in the classroom, the student participants described a hospitable campus environment for getting involved. Specifically, Latino students noted Central's commitment to engaging in the broader local community, Greek life opportunities, and general campus activities (e.g., student government). In addition to getting involved with campus activities, students also described some of the benefits (e.g., meet peers, academic success) associated with actively engaging with their classmates inside the classroom.

When asked to describe her experience on campus and what she liked the most, Carmen jubilantly provided an overview of many of the involvement opportunities at Central:

They have a lot of activities, extracurricular, athletics; it's really just everything packed in one. The most I will have to say, it's always, it's always like activities going on campus. There are always activities for you to get engaged. Like there are always people advertising either a community service or this program or as SGA, SAB...

Luis also spoke passionately about involvement opportunities on campus, at an HBCU, in contrast to what he perceived his high school classmates experienced at the colleges and universities they attended:

It's been interesting. A lot of stuff that I know my White friends from high school do not experience ever. The Greek experience is something that I look forward to because my dad was in Omega Psi Phi, and I would very much like to be that too. The Greek scene at HBCUs is way different than any other school or any other state school. It's very interesting. There're constantly Black speakers coming to the school. I think a week ago or so Gabriel Union and like some other people came to speak on President Obama's behalf and they didn't do that for any other schools, not even any other HBCUs around here.

Monica appreciated Central's commitment to the broader community and the opportunities provided to students through a community service requirement:

What I like most is the involvement of the community about the university more than anything they continuously announce, make announcements about how you can participate and how they participate and what things the university participates as a whole in. Yes, well as a, I guess when the spring semester and the fall semester all Central students have to provide at least 15 hours of community service. They have different things that you can sign up for with the Salvation Army or different organizations. The participation of Central has always been I guess has always been shown in the community, and that's just to me, it's a passion.

Describing the role Central has had in supporting the local community including the building a Habitat for Humanity House, she went on to conclude:

I am very passionate about helping out in the community as much as I possibly can. I volunteer as much as I can, typically twice a week in my children's school.

So participation in the community is very important to me, and I'm glad Central does it.

Lance who is actively involved on campus and shared how his involvement enabled him to become well known on campus. He is proud to be recognized as a student leader, "I've kind of developed that image of being, I guess, a go-to person." He credits attending an HBCU for his level of engagement within the institution. In addition, Lance shared that he is regularly recognized on campus and has been selected to represent the institution due to his ethnic identity and high level of involvement on campus:

The more that I was active in [the] student government association or student activities, going to basketball games, all those small little chances everywhere made me more noticeable, and then people want to get to know me and talk to me, because I was (1) involved, and (2) I was different, (3) being a Latin, I thought it'd be good to know people. If someone didn't know somebody, I could link them up to somebody else because everyone knew that they knew me, so I could be able to tie them up together. I think I would have been involved, probably not as much as NC State or any of the neighboring schools, simply because unfortunately, and this is one of the things I guess I should have said that I least like, because of my ethnicity and my leadership, both of those two combined, not separately, but my leadership and my ethnicity, I feel as if I was someone put on a pedestal actually.

While participants discussed their level of involvement with traditional campus activities, students also shared how they engaged in the classroom environment. Luis shared,

I sit in the front, in class, in all my classes because I have a vision [issue] so I need to be up there and that way the teacher sees my face at all times. It's something my dad taught me. He wants me to be out there, and let my name be known. I don't really have a problem with any interactions. I'm usually one of the louder speakers in the classroom - especially when we have discussions and stuff like that.

Similarly, Carmen also shared how she engages in her classes to ensure her learning and academic achievement:

Being in the classroom I feel like it's the same with any classroom...if I feel comfortable, sometimes, shy person, but if I feel comfortable, I'm just going to go and get in front of the class and do whatever I have to do to get my grade. So, I mean it's the same to me really; it's just learning.

**Latino student perspectives on campus diversity at NCCU.** The participants shared their impressions regarding diversity on campus. Students made specific reference to the need to have others on campus who reflect their experience along with sharing how their exposure to African Americans, prior to attending Central, informed their outlook on campus regarding diversity.

Ana reflected about the academic guidance she received and noted the need to have Latino staff and faculty on campus who could advise students outside of the Spanish language major; the majority of Latino faculty were affiliated with the English Department and Mass Communications Department. Carmen also shared her desire to have more people on campus who she could relate to from a cultural perspective, said, "...and what I dislike most would have to be that I don't have anybody that I can really relate to." Carmen disliked that there was a lack of Latinos on campus, and she shared her perspective with regards to attending a university where the majority of the students are African American. "I would describe it as the same, like the people they all act [the] same like any other people I've been to school with except, there's more of them." While also acknowledging that African Americans are the majority group on campus, Jennifer provided a perspective that described the diversity of the institution:

Although the majority of the students are African American, there is a mixture. So to me, it's almost - the way I look at it, it's almost just like any other college. Well, in a classroom, there'd be Hispanic people, there would be, of course, African Americans, and then there would be White people. There was someone from England or Australia [in class], you know, there's people from pretty much different countries there.

Similarly, Kristina shared,

Like I was saying, I feel like a part of the school, a little bit, because they have some diversity there. I feel right at home. Sometimes I don't like the food, I miss

my food back at home but other than that I feel like I am treated like everybody else. I enjoy my classes.

Monica felt the Latino student population was visible on campus, “I’ve seen a decent population of Latino students at Central.”

Speaking further to the perceived inclusiveness of the campus, Katherine stated, “. . . I was surprised to be so welcomed [at Central].” Likewise, Carlos felt as if he shared commonalities with other students who attended Central, “You know most of the people I’m with . . . you know we share the same interests, same classes.” Additionally, Kristina stated, “. . . I feel like I am treated like everybody else [on campus].” Unlike the students who perceived varying levels of diversity and inclusiveness on campus, Oscar acknowledged that there was a lack of Latinos at Central, but expressed an appreciation for attending an institution with people who were from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds:

I have always been a diverse person so getting along with people is fairly easy for me. I love this school and the connections that I have made. It is different because there are not a lot of Hispanics. It is nice to be surrounded by people that are not the same race because you get to know how other people from around the world think, and they share their opinion with you.

Lance reflected on the lack of racial/ethnic diversity at Central and shared the opportunity he has to travel to nearby institutions to interact with students who are not African

American:

NCCU does accommodate what I want to know and what I want to learn through the partner institutions that are close by, like, Duke University is 5 minutes up the road, or the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, which is 20 minutes down the road. So if I am ever feeling deprived of getting to know others outside the African American race, I was always offered the opportunity to travel to UNC or to travel to Duke or travel to NC State just to get more of a, I’ll say, culture shock.



Faculty and staff participants described a campus community that is tolerant of Latino students, but that was not fully prepared to have them on campus. Specifically, they noted missed institutional opportunities for students to learn cross-culturally in addition to describing the surrounding University community as one that is increasingly reflecting the growing Latino population, but that continues to harbor stereotypes about Latinos. Professor Smith highlighted both the tension between Blacks and Latinos and provided an example of progress in the local community with the hiring of a Latino police chief and the growing Latino gay community in Durham:

I just know that traditionally there has been this tension between Black and Latino communities...A positive step is that the [local] chief of police is a Latino from Harford, Connecticut. He is running a force that is probably predominantly African Americans. In terms of a really interesting city, that's 45 percent White and 40 percent African American and 15 percent everybody else. I think the Latino community may be either 9 percent now...

Additionally, Professor Smith described the growing presence of the Latino community locally by sharing what he observed at the gay pride parade:

So, I try to get Colors [NCCU's GLBT group] to go to [a] gay pride march, which is held every year in Durham...I bring this up, because in the last couple of years [a] huge Latino presence in the gay pride parade really interesting and young Latinos you know, teens to early thirties, floats, cars, lots of drag because that is a big part of the Latino gay scene. Sarah and I went to this gay scene drag contest, a beauty contest in Durham, and it was packed, and it was like the international Miss Latino contest. So, there was Miss Mexico, Miss Honduras, and Miss Guatemala and there were a lot of gay people there, man, there were whole Latino families. I mean grandparents and little kids, you know? I was like "wow."

Professor Clark specifically described one of the tensions between Blacks and Latinos in the community that is rooted in longstanding stereotypes:

The only thing I see is a stereotype, because the people who hire...that's the problem, it's not a problem of the Latinos, not a problem of an African American. It's the people who hire the people who come to work to do the menial jobs African Americans used to do...But you cannot tell the Latino who's here...not to go get the job, but that's the only job he can get. You don't blame him. I think

that sentiment is there, to be honest with you, in the community... The game is that you're exploiting them and then displacing the capacity of African Americans to integrate, working together, because you are getting them for cheap.

In light of the embedded tensions in the community between Blacks and Latinos, Professor Smith described the transformational changes occurring in the K-12 public school system with the potential to positively influence relationships between both groups in the future:

I mean there are a lot of Latino kids in the Durham public schools. My daughter, the one who worked at El Centro is now working in a before and after-school program at Jackson Elementary School that is literally [a] stone throw from our house. It used to be an all-White school... Then it became mixed, Black and White, and now it is very mixed - Black, White, and Latino...

In addition to the local community climate described by Professors Smith and Clark, student affairs administrator Moore shared her perspective on the campus climate for Latino students, faculty, and staff at Central:

I think that what they're encountering most of the time is a university that is unapologetically focused on Black students... if you don't identify as being Black, then you either have to have this mentality where you just kind of get your education here, and then you get your nurturing and your cultural experiences elsewhere, or you have to learn to assimilate. So maybe you are actually giving up some of your culture in order to blend in with Black culture, so that you can be accepted on this campus... And not just students, but I think also faculty and staff.

Though Moore described a campus climate at Central that mainly focused on the African American student experience, Professor Guzman draws a parallel between the cultural similarities of African Americans and Latinos:

Probably so, I think culturally, Latino students are much closer to afro-descendants than they are to, and I say this with quotations, "White people." Family values, the importance of even food, there are very many similarities. In addition to that, let's not forget that a large amount of the Latinos are, after all, African descendants. There is a certain affinity.

Administrator Moore acknowledged the sentiment of similarities expressed by Professor Guzman and underscored Professor Clark's perspective on how stereotypes serve as a wedge in the relationship between African Americans and Latinos:

I think that there are some pieces that they recognize as being a shared experience around discrimination and oppression, but I also think that they are still very caught up in some other way that we hear in the media about, you know, who immigrants are, well, assuming that they're immigrants, and then, what they think immigrants are and what they are about. I was just talking to my colleague about how even just recognizing the real diversity around people who identify as Latino/Hispanic, and you know, all the many countries that are connected to that culture, versus just calling everybody Mexican and things like that...

African American and Latino students may be able to create a common foundation from which to forge a shared understanding due to having similar socioeconomic backgrounds. Professor Smith described the current campus community as being more open to non-African American students attending Central than in previous years. However, he shared that African American students at the institution have consistently not shown an interest in other cultures, which extends to other groups (e.g., Nigerian and Kenyan students) and not just Latinos. Professor Smith described some of the difficulties experienced by African students at Central:

[T]here's a much larger African population on our campus than Latino, with a lot of students from Nigeria and Kenya. There are real tensions between the African American students and the African students...I think they sometimes feel like students look at them as weird. When I talked to the African students and expressed interest in their culture, they're really excited to talk to me about it because it doesn't seem to be that much interest or curiosity about their background, their culture. I said all that, just to say that, I think it's nothing particularly to the Latino experience. I think that our students [African American] traditionally have not just been all that open to or interested in other cultures...

Additionally, academic affairs administrator Randall also noted that Central is not taking full advantage of the learning opportunities that exist as a result of having racially and ethnically diverse students on campus:

Right now they are probably experiencing North Carolina Central in the same way that I might have experienced my undergraduate institution (a predominantly White institution). That it was, I think that North Carolina Central University will hopefully in the coming years, do more to take advantage of the fact that we have students here that can teach us so much culturally, that we can exchange with one another. I'm not sure we're taking advantage of that and I think our Latino students know that we are not taking advantage...

Although participants noted the potential that exists on campus for African American and Latino students to learn from each other given their commonalities and differences, Administrator Moore explained that strong relationships might not exist due to Latinos encountering discrimination on campus and the lack of a Latino student organization:

I think that they are still encountering discriminatory practices. I know what I've heard people say, what comes out folks' mouths, students, faculty and staff who do not identify as Latino. I can imagine that some of those comments and thoughts come out when they are interacting with students. So those can be some very negative and very demoralizing experiences...I don't really see a lot of programming, particularly for Latino students on our campus. We don't even have, as far as I know, a Latino student organization, at least not an officially-recognized one...And so, there's just really no way for students to officially connect on this campus in a social way.

*Making meaning of being Latino at an HBCU.* Students were asked to share what it meant for them to be a Latino student at Central. Some participants felt proud to be a Latino student at the University whereas others did not believe that being Latino at an HBCU had any significance.

Jennifer noted that being a Latino student at Central meant that she was adding to the diversity of the campus and contributing to the representation of Latino students on campus, "I guess it just means that I'm adding to the mixture, right. I mean, as a Latino student in a historically Black college, I'm representing the Latinos in the school."

Similarly, Monica stated that it was an achievement for her as a Latino student to be at Central, particularly because she was serving as a trailblazer for the Latino students who entered the institution after her:

Yes, personally as a Latino student at Central, it's a great accomplishment. Being a Latino woman and being able to see other Latinos attending this university and not only that but also the early college bound, I guess that Central has with other local schools, and seeing those Hispanic children also coming to this University and taking classes here and obtaining credits for, that is just, it makes me feel very important. It's up lifting as a Hispanic student here.

Rubi was proud of the academic achievements of Latinos at Central:

I am proud to be one of the few Latino students on a campus where most of the students are African American. We are smart and sometimes we are in the top students based on the GPA grades so I am very proud of being one of the few Latino students at Central.

Oscar did not initially think that it was significant that he was a Latino attending Central, but upon reflection, he noted that as a first-generation college student it meant that he was serving as a role model for other Latinos:

I don't think it really means anything. I think it just shows more because there are not a lot of Hispanics that graduate from high school and there are even less going to college. I guess that means that Hispanics and Latinos are striving up here and trying to represent us. Yes, because I am the first one to go to college and for my parents, I am the first one to graduate high school so it means that I am trying to set an example for other Hispanics and Latinos and my other siblings.

Some students did not believe that being Latino at Central had any significance.

Nicole stated, "I just feel like any other student here at Central. I don't think it's anything special." Sarah described not thinking of Central as an HBCU and only as a place to pursue one's education, hence being Latino at the school had no significance for her, "I mean, I don't think of it as an HBCU, I just think of it like regular college. I am here to get my education, get my degree and move on." Lastly, Carlos also shared that the significance of it all rested with him pursuing his education at Central, "...but like I said

before, I'm here to study. I'm here to get a degree. It doesn't really [matter], I don't focus on that, on the difference.”

***Feeling different.*** The student participants consistently described feeling different at Central. Latino students described standing out within the majority African American community because they thought that they were perceived as just being different. Participants who were multi-ethnic or multiracial noted that the majority of students did not know their racial/ethnic background or they were believed to be African American because of their skin color. Students also described feeling different in the classroom, dining hall, and because of their accent. However, some students did not feel different. Moreover, this simple quote from Carlos summarizes the sentiment expressed by most participants when describing feeling different on campus, “Well, I mean I feel a little different because it is what? A 95% Black school...”

As noted previously, Nicole described feeling different as the only Latino person in her classes, but grew more comfortable overtime:

At first it was a little different for me. I wasn't used to being the only Hispanic person in the classroom, so I was a little intimidated at first, but now I'm used to it. I feel comfortable with everyone and I get along with all my classmates...

Kristina wondered if her professors questioned why she enrolled at Central, “I don't know if the teachers, like I said before, they are curious as to why I'm there and why I decided to attend an HBCU...” While Kristina grew to feel comfortable with often being the only Latino student in her classes, Rubi often experienced some nervousness when speaking in classes due to her accent:

I feel like I am the only Hispanic student there. In the beginning, it was a little strange but overall I feel very comfortable...because of my accent, I have to speak clearly when I do presentations or projects in front of everybody. I always feel a little weird...

Oscar described feeling different when a fellow classmate made a disparaging comment about “Mexicans” coming into her place of employment and when he has to speak in front of his speech class and read aloud in English:

[S]ometimes there are comments out of students in my English class. We were discussing something about jobs, and this girl said she used to work at Aeropostale, the clothing store. She said that she did not like it because all of these Mexicans came in, and then she realized that I was sitting behind her, and she apologized...

Feeling different was expressed by students who described being the only Latino student in their classes and those who were not perceived by others as being Latino, which included students who were multi-ethnic or multiracial who did not fit the profile of a “Latino looking person.” Carmen shared how she often gets viewed differently by students who are not aware of her ethnic background, and try to determine her race. Carmen expressed a desire for students to proactively learn about her Dominican heritage:

Well, I get viewed differently sometimes, like they can't say you're Black or you're White. And sometimes, most of the time they don't really know what my ethnicity is...I want someone to be like, oh your Dominican, and asked me questions about myself. But usually, I wouldn't say people stay away from you, but they aren't really interested, like I want them to be, because I'm like one in 100 out there. Yeah, they assume that I am Black, or mixed or something.

Luis, who has Cuban and Honduran heritage, is often mistaken for being African American. Being different meant some adjustment during each new class due to professors being unable to pronounce his name. Luis also described himself as “exotic” among his friends because of his ability to speak Spanish and order items off Mexican restaurant menus:

It makes me kind of unique, almost exotic around my friends, especially since I can speak Spanish...Since I'm Afro-Hispanic, I look like every other African

American student. A lot of people have no idea, not even when I talk, but once they hear my last name, they'll be like, "Wait, can you say that one more time?" Then they're like, "Where's that from? What are you?" And I have to tell them that I'm Cuban, I'm Honduran. It makes the first day every year in every single class very interesting. Most of my teachers butcher my name and like spend half of class trying to learn it...

Similar to Carmen and Luis, Nicole, who identified as Mexican, is often mistaken for being Asian when she is on campus:

Well, a lot of people don't think I am Hispanic. I've gotten Asian, so it's weird for me. Yeah, people think I'm something else. I think people are assuming the wrong things about me. They don't normally know what I really am...

Student participants also described feeling different because of the food on campus and due to experiences associated with being one of a few Latinos on campus.

Kristina described missing her mother's cooking:

Basically I just miss my mom's cooking verses just a general cooking and I know the cooking is not oriented towards Hispanics. It's more towards the African Americans, the fried chicken, when at home I get like plantains and guacamole, so I miss that.

Additionally, Kristina was questioned by African American students about why she enrolled at Central an HBCU:

I have some students that I've never seen before just come to me and say, "Why are you here?" I felt like the way that they were asking was slightly negative. Like saying I shouldn't be there so I would start explaining how I came here because I received a scholarship. They were like, "Why did you receive a scholarship?" I would just tell them, this is what happened, and I wasn't allowed to apply for financial aid in any school and I'm not allowed to work because of my visa [situation]. I can't receive a lot of scholarships because I don't have a Social Security number. They are not really saying the question [why did Central assist her] they just kind of took the story and said, "Okay, I understand why you're here. I appreciate the fact that you went through all of that and that someone was willing to help you." They see Central more as a type of University that's helpful to students.

Rubi described how she feels when she walks across a room on campus and perceives that everyone is looking at her:



I think other students, sometimes turn around and look at me like, “What is she doing here?” Sometimes I feel that way when walking into the library or the bookstore because I am the only one that looks different. Physically I am different from everybody. Sometimes there are 20 or 30 African American students and I am walking into the room and probably subconsciously, the people turn around and look at me. Sometimes they start talking to each other, but I do not know if they are talking about me and what I am doing in that room...

Although some students described varying degrees of feeling different at Central, a few indicated otherwise. Katherine stated, “It’s nothing different than any other thing that I’ve experienced. It’s very normal. I don’t feel left out, and I don’t feel singled out in any way. I’m just a student like any other.” Monica also described not feeling different among her peers, “How can I say it? I don’t feel any different than other students of any other race or anything like that.” Lastly, Carlos stated, “I sit in class, do class. Nobody sees me, well I don’t feel like, anybody sees me like different. We’re just all kids.”

Latino student participants described in their own voice how they experienced feeling different at Central. Additionally, faculty and staff participants provided additional insight into the phenomenon of Latino students feeling different, in part because of stereotypes held by African American students of Latinos. Professor Clark described how stereotypes that are held by African Americans about Latinos contribute to fostering an unwelcoming climate:

There’s still a thing, you’re kind of invading my space... You see the way they warm up slowly. Yeah you are different and your difference is not because you are threatening, it’s that you are taking my space. Then they look at, we don’t have jobs no more, the long, that’s stereotypes. Then you can hear, “They need to speak English.” Then someone should stop them, to say, “Okay, we understand you, why don’t you understand them?”

Professor Clark added that sometimes students are made to feel different in the classroom due to having an obvious accent:

I can see, even in the class with the accent piece, I can see how they feel alienated a little bit. Black students sometimes are not tolerant about that [others speaking differently]. I could cut it [the tension], sometimes I could see it [the tension], and detect that tension...

Administrator Randall noted that the lack of awareness by African American students about Latinos might influence how the two groups of students engage with each other:

No, not anti in a sense of where, you know we hate you, not in that way, but you know I guess the ignorance of when folks may see um with Black folks, quite frankly, see Latino people in a restaurant serving food or whatever and then the ignorance about who is taking whose jobs. You may see, you may hear that and not even said with venom, not said with venom just sort of it's almost like we are articulating something you heard someone else say, and you just start speaking it out your mouth because you don't know better to shut-up. Excuse me but not with venom more with ignorance more out of just ignorance of people when you have no idea or no clue or don't know or have not interacted with folk, and you just start repeating what you hear someone else say. I guess that would be the kinds of things that I would hear every now and then.

Furthermore, Administrator Moore specifically noted that the majority of Latino staff on campus work in housekeeping and maintenance and that this reality could also contribute to how African American students view Latinos:

I would say just more about just off-handed comments...a lot of our housekeeping and maintenance staff are people that are Latino, and this idea about them being less than. So, it's socio-economic, as well as racial and ethnic. And it's so funny, because that's what people did with Black folks, you know. So, it's like this idea that Black people are kind of taking up the mindset of the oppressor and doing the same thing to another group...

### **Behavioral Climate**

The behavioral dimension of the campus climate framework captures the nature and quality of social interactions on campus, “between and among individuals from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, and the quality of intergroup relations” (Milem et al., 2005, p. 15). Specifically, Hurtado et al. (1999) noted that the behavioral dimension consists of the following components: “(a) actual reports of general social interaction, (b) interaction between and among individuals from different racial/ethnic backgrounds, and

(c) the nature of intergroup relations on campus.” Within the context of this study, understanding how Latino students engage across the campus environment with fellow students, faculty, and staff is essential to understanding the Latino student experience at NCCU.

Latino students generally described having favorable interactions with African American and Latino students, faculty, and staff. In a few cases, participants noted having difficult interactions. Latino students also described having varying levels of engagement within the campus community inclusive of involvement with campus activities, interactions between students outside and inside of the classroom, and other factors within the environment that fostered student engagement. Faculty and staff participants further described positive/negative interactions among students.

**The quality of student engagement.** In order to gain insight into the quality of campus engagement for Latino students, it was necessary to ascertain the nature of the interactions between African American and Latino students and among Latino students. A constant theme was the overall positive experience that Latino students described having at Central. At the core of this theme is the quality of the interactions that Latino students described experiencing with fellow students. Overall, Latino students described having positive levels of engagement with African American and other Latino students. The quality of interactions between students was described within the context of out-of-classroom experiences and in the classroom experiences. Latino students who described having a minimal level of engagement with either African American or Latino students were often unable to do so because of off-campus commitments and their commuter status, but this was not the case for every student. Additionally, faculty and staff noted

that Latino students needed to assert themselves more in fostering relationships in order to improve the quality of their interactions with African American students. They indicated that Latino students who immersed themselves into campus life fared better than Latinos who kept to themselves in their interactions with African American students.

***Making connections across differences.*** A hallmark of the Latino participants' experience at Central was the quality of their interactions with others within the institution. Specifically, Latino students noted their interactions across differences as being meaningful to their experience at Central. For Latino participants, engaging with other students was often a byproduct of their classroom experience.

Ana, who resides off campus, noted the importance of engaging with her peers at Central, which usually related to fulfilling her academic course work requirements:

I don't reside on campus, but I still have a lot of interactions with my classmates on and off campus. I feel that kind of need to meet some other people while you're going through this whole year of college, so it's not a lot of interactions, it's mostly regarding school. We are there to help each other, but I do interact with students from school. Not with events like I said, just basically, I guess you can say school projects and school work.

Carlos also resides off campus and described having positive interactions with fellow students, with the majority identifying as African American:

It is a good interaction. I mean I don't feel like they treat me any different because I'm a different race, different color. I deal with, of course mostly Black [students], but you know they're nice... See there's some people that I, like at any school, I suppose you got some people that you are taking two, three, four classes with. Those are my [friends], you know. I have a couple of White guys who I'm taking classes with. I have a couple of Latinos, whom I'm taking classes with and a few Blacks.

Monica, like Ana and Carols, resides off campus with her family. She explained that her interactions with students on campus have been very positive and different from what she

experienced as a child in rural Virginia where she was often asked, “What are you?” and at the school where she transferred that made her feel bad:

[I]t’s like they don’t really see a race or a color, they just see you as part of the team, and they’re very friendly...And they’re always willing to help. I’ve never had anybody say anything derogatory or anything mean in any way, shape or form in any interactions period. Absolutely, and that to me, makes a difference.

Another student who lives off campus with her family, Rubi noted that her interactions with students at the University are minimal and limited to three students she takes classes with (one White student and two African American students). Despite the limited interactions with fellow students at the University, Rubi described having personally meaningful interactions with her three classmates whom she found helpful largely because of working on class assignments together:

The three students that I interact with frequently are seniors, and it has been great, but because they are seniors, they are about to be gone. They have helped guide me in certain things. They have experience with the campus, and they have been telling me where I need to go and what I need to do in different cases. They have been a great help during this time. They are very nice people, but they are about to be gone from Central in a few months.

Jennifer, another off-campus student, took courses on campus and online. She explained that the students she interacted with at Central, in the classroom and online, are “friendly” and shared a common goal of obtaining an education. “So you know we’re all there to learn, to get done what we need to get done, and to get a good grade. We all share that common goal, so we all work together for it, specifically in my classes.” Nicole, a varsity student athlete from the West Coast, lives on campus. Nicole also found fellow students at Central to be very helpful and friendly, although she mainly spends time with her teammates and other student athletes:

A lot of people say hi, and I’m not used to that, being from the West Coast. Yeah, like people you don’t know say, ‘hi, how are you,’ so...I say ‘hi’ to a lot of people

every day. People are helpful too, like if I ask someone a question, or if I don't know where I'm going or something, I can ask someone for help, and they'll be like, 'oh yes,' just go this way. Sometimes like people will walk you towards where you need to go.

Luis is Afro-Latino and resides on campus, and is often mistaken for being African American. He described having a diverse group of friends at Central:

You meet people in class, your friends, people you can work with like in groups and stuff. One of my closest friends, I met him last semester in our chemistry class. He's actually one of the White students who goes here. I've never had a problem with him with anything regarding race or anything. I know he's dating a Caribbean descent woman, so I know he doesn't have a problem with that. My roommate is also White; I haven't had a problem with him at all. Then the majority of my other friends are Black; they have no problem with it.

Kristina also lives on campus and noted having normal interactions with her fellow students, but stated that she is often mistaken for being White by her fellow students.

Being mistaken for White has provided Kristina, who was born in Ecuador, with the opportunity to share about herself with others and bridge the gap between her and fellow students:

I would say they're normal like everybody else is, but the majority of the time people don't know I'm from a different country. They think I'm White. When they hear about it, they're just surprised, and they start asking questions; how it was like and how I ended up in HBCU. It didn't really bother me that much, but I do enjoy telling people about it. I do enjoy them asking questions and getting to know me a little because I know it's the difference in who I am. I know that sometimes people wonder, especially at the very beginning of the year. They wonder how I ended up here, and they love asking these questions. They ask me where I am from. What it was like to be there [in my native country]. How long I've been living here. They ask me how long it took me to learn English, things like that.

Furthermore, Kristina described the role that being an honor student has had on her interactions with fellow students in the honors' residence hall and honors' classes:

A lot of the people that I associate with are through the honors program because we all live in the same building. My other friend Juan, he's from Mexico, but I met him through there [the honor's program] and then other friends are just

through classes. We get together if we're having trouble with a test or something, and we get together to study, and we start socializing from there...

Kristina enjoyed being able to interact with diverse students, particularly from different geographic regions, at Central:

I stay with a very diverse group; I get along with the foreign students. A lot of them are on the tennis team and stuff like that. I would say my closest friend would be Lucy. She's from Mexico but I also really get along with her roommate, and I have another friend, my boyfriend Justin...I love getting along with different diverse groups of people. So I have people from New York, Mexico, people from Colorado, people from the West Indies.

Lance, a junior and student leader, explained the personal approach he takes in sustaining a family-like environment for himself and other students on campus:

I don't want to keep using the word family all the time, but I refer to everyone as my brothers and sisters. I like to think that we're that close, and in some aspects, we are that close. I communicate with everyone who walks past me, everyone who looks in my general direction because I want to keep a family relationship with all those people. As far as, I guess, like groups and organizations that I'm a part of, I try to stay very active in those. I feel like it's my job to act like a role model to those who are just coming into the organization, and try to further their development with their communication skills, their presentation skills, their networking skills, things like that. So I try to remain as positive and as social as I possibly can.

From a faculty and staff perspective, Professor Clark shared the approach he uses in facilitating classroom experiences that allow students from different backgrounds to interact with each other without worrying about offending their classmates:

You don't have to explain yourself or apologize. I hear Black students apologizing when they want to say something which they say outside [of the classroom], and it's supposed to be said in front of Latino or White [students]. They say, 'I don't mean to offend you,' I say, 'No, no, no, do not say that in my class anymore. Just say what you say and let the person decide whether it is offensive or not.' But other places people avoid talking about...

Professor Guzman noted that African students have a more difficult time than Latinos at Central connecting with African Americans. He shared that in his entire teaching career

at the institution he has never had a Latino student share with him any feelings or experiences reflecting acts of discrimination:

I do not see animosity. I do not see displacements of any sort, and I do not see conflict at all. I have not seen that in my own classes, but again, we're talking right now a very small percentage. So, no I have seen actually more animosity towards Africans than towards Latinos. Absolutely, perhaps I know it's not a lot, but it's for instance, we have a colleague from Africa he's a native French speaker, and he told me once that his students...in a somewhat aggressive manner said you're not Black your African. Now I have never heard of anyone accusing anyone that you are one of those Mexicans or one of those Latinos. The Latino students who entered this office have never ever told me that they feel discriminated...Africans have harder times than Latinos as far as my experience is concerned.

Student affairs administrator Moore observed students who attempted to get involved with Black student organizations and other activities on campus while noting that some Latino students kept to themselves:

I've seen a mixed bag. I think that some students have done their best to just kind of blend in and make friends, and be able to become involved in the organizations that are out there that are primarily Black, and certainly be an active member of those groups. But then I've also seen groups of students who, at least visibly, you know, you can't always go by that, but at least visibly, seem to be Latino who, they just kind of hang together. So I've seen them kind of walking to class, coming out of class, but I don't see them anywhere else, like in social or university-wide gatherings and events and things like that, I never see those students.

Academic affairs administrator Randall noted that the small number of Latino students on campus has by default minimized the types of issues that might accompany a larger increase in the Latino study body:

I think that the interactions are easy. I think that one of the issues that we are having, oh goodness, I forgot the name of the guy, who does this theory about groups and population. That we haven't reached a critical point of, there being enough students yet, because right now it has grown by 300 percent. But the numbers are still so small relatively to the larger population, that you don't yet have the kind of group issues that you might get when the population becomes larger, and does seek more of an intragroup identity.



***Black-Brown student relationships.*** Latino participants generally described having positive interactions with other students. They were asked specifically to share their perceptions about the quality of engagement between Latinos and African American students. Given that Central is an HBCU with a predominantly African American student body, the participants' perceptions of African American and Latino student interactions provided salient insight into the campus climate for Latino students at Central.

Oscar spent a significant amount of time on campus as a student at the NCCU affiliated high school, prior to enrolling at Central. He described having a difficult time making friends and connecting with African American students, "It is difficult to make new friends, especially with African Americans. I just feel like they do not actually want to talk to anybody that is not their race." He noted, "Most African American friends that I have made I am helping them with their Spanish class." He resolved to have a diverse group of international student friends with whom he believed he shared more similarities:

Most of my friends are not African American. I have a friend who is from Nigeria. I have a friend from Korea. I have a White friend and a couple of African friends. We have a lot in common. We are all from different countries, and we hang out, but not with African Americans. I mean, just by the struggles with coming to another country and learning the language and sports wise too. They like soccer, and I like soccer too. African Americans do not really play soccer. They stick more to basketball and football. I guess that is what brought us closer together.

Carlos is largely focused on his students and noted, "I'm just here to do my work, study, talk to people and that's it; nothing else," yet counted two African American students among his close classmates. He shared that most Latino students try to engage with African American students, but he had a Latina friend who refused to interact with African American students because she did not feel a part of the community at Central, so she "tries not dealing with them - not to have anything to do with them. She doesn't feel

part of the group. She wants to stay away, I guess, kind of separate.” Lance, who prides himself as a student leader who is able to connect with both African American and Latino students and said, “I socialize with a lot of people.” He shared that most Latino students do not engage with African American students on campus:

But I feel like a majority of the Latino students segregate themselves more so from the African American students, not because the African American students try to put them in their own little bubble, but because I feel like the Latino students feel a little bit more comfortable being amongst their own race and ethnicity, if that makes sense.

While sharing that she has a close group of African American friends who reside in her residence hall, Carmen described having to change her behavior around them, especially when speaking to her mother in Spanish:

I have some really close African American friends; some females who live in the same residence hall as me. So I really just, sometimes I feel like I have to change my behavior to kind of interact with them and especially if I'm talking to my mother. Because I speak Spanish to my mother, so they're like, if I'm on the phone with her or something, I feel like I have to move away and talk to her. Because they're like what are you talking, what are you saying? Like I don't want them to feel like I'm saying something about them or something like this, but yeah, sometimes I feel like I have to change myself.

Unlike Oscar who expressed having a difficult time connecting with African American students, Ana described interacting with African American students who expressed interest in Latino culture:

I mean there's not really a big interaction [with African Americans] because there are few Latinos that attend Central... We get along; we give them a little more insight [into Latinos]. I know they have some questions, especially because most of them [African Americans] major or take Spanish classes. I see some of them are really intrigued about, you know being in Spanish clubs for things like that, so they do come up, and you know, ask me all kinds of questions, and they want to talk about all the extracurricular activities regarding Latin culture. I feel like some of them do, but because there is not really much attention put into these clubs, I think because of the lack of Latinos that they wish that they could participate if there were more resources. I think their interaction between each other is just like any other person, so that's it.

Luis identifies as Afro-Latino and viewed relationships between Latinos and African Americans on campus as friendly:

It seems friendly, because we are always socializing among each other. I never see or feel any negativity in any way shape or form [from African Americans]. I've never observed that not even between Hispanics or Latinos and African Americans or just in general. I haven't really noticed any hostility at all whatsoever, it seems positive.

Furthermore, Luis provided additional insight into the interactions between African American and Latino students by distinguishing between Latinos, who have a closer connection to their or their parents' Latin American country of origin and Latinos, who were born and raised in the United States:

For the most part, it depends like if your parents are from out of the country, like they were not born here. I see that a lot of the students tend, like if their parents weren't from here, they tend to want to assimilate more. Like being with whatever culture they're around so they try to assimilate to like the more Black culture where people like me who are half and half it's we want to show the Hispanic side or the Hispanic culture where as they want to kind of like dull it down and kind of hide it. So they don't seem too Spanish, especially when their parents are calling them on the phone talking to them in Spanish, they're still talking to them in English.

Nicole described African American and Latino relationships as being very positive, simply shared, "You don't have any problems there. I don't feel like there are tensions or anything [with African American students]." Similarly, Sarah stated:

Yes, I think it is good, like we get along perfectly. I don't know [what makes it work], I guess because we all see each other as one people. I mean, there are many people over here; there is no racism or anything, so that's all I think.

Lastly, Kristina noted the curiosity and mutual respect shared between Latinos and African American students:

We're Spanish, and people look at us like we're different, but in a positive way because we have a different experience from everybody else. I would say they treat each other in the same way they would treat anyone else, but I know there

are a lot of joking around. We have friends that will try to say stuff in Spanish and speak like that sometimes, it's amusing. Other than that it's just like it was anybody else.

From a faculty/staff perspective, administrator Moore shared her observation that Latino students who get involved with existing Black student organizations appear to fair off better in their interactions with African American students than Latino students who do not get involved. She stated, "The ones that, you know, have really made a concerted effort to join and be a part of the organizations that are established on campus, they seem to have good interaction, seem to have cordial relationships and friendships."

Additionally, she described a negative encounter a Latino student experienced as a result of being subjected to a disparaging comment while participating in a volunteer service initiative with African American students:

I have personally witnessed a situation where some students were volunteering for a program that we do, and there was one student who identifies as Mexican-American, who encountered another volunteer who is Black, make a very derogatory comment about Mexicans...and she thought it was funny, and for some reason, it didn't even seem like she had a clue that might be a derogatory statement - and no one checked her. I had to check the student. So, the fact that there wasn't even that kind of social cue around the students that what she said was not okay was just very interesting to me. That student that identified as Mexican-American, she still had to work with that group for the rest of the semester, with that comment having hung in the air. So even though I checked it, and I made a comment and let them know that wasn't okay, she still had to deal with that, knowing that they said that and interacting with them for the next few months.

***Interactions between Latino students.*** In addition to asking Latino students about their experience with African American students at Central, it was also necessary to inquire about their engagement with other Latino students at the institution. With one of the fastest growing Latino populations in the country, North Carolina has experienced Latino migration from localities both within and outside of the United States. Though still

a small percentage of the overall student body at Central, the ethnic diversity reflected in the participants is representative of the Latino diversity at the local and state levels. As such, it was just not enough to gauge the level of engagement with African American students as the majority group on campus, but also with Latino students, the group that the student participants may be more likely to identify with from a “Latino identity” perspective.

Overall, the student participants described a broad range of experiences with fellow Latino students. Experiences included friendships, mere associations, minimal interaction with Latino students, and outright isolation from each other. Ana shared that she has not connected with another Latino student and has yet to have a Latino student in any of her classes; she speculated, “[M]aybe definitely if I was staying on campus, you know it would be something that I would, you know focus on, but in most of my classes I haven’t had the opportunity to have another Latino student.” Similarly, Jennifer shared that she has not seen any Latino students and that going home right after class makes it more difficult for her to meet Latino students; she does not engage in “[L]ots of extracurricular activities, so that’s probably the reason why I haven’t seen others. But I actually have not come into contact, while on campus, with another Latino student.” Rubi also indicated that she has not had contact with fellow Latino students because she goes to work immediately after her classes. Oscar, who described having a difficult time making friends with African American students, shared that he typically meets other Latino students on campus. However, he feels that Latinos are not accepted at Central and don’t “fit in”:

I met some through other friends and others by just going up to them and asking them where they are from. Some are from Mexico, so we have speaking Spanish

in common. It is not as strong as it would be if we were all together. We just feel like the other people are always talking about us. I feel like we are not accepted. Yes, Sir. Most of us want to fit in. I wish we did, but we are not as strong...

Nicole, a varsity athlete, met and engaged with other Latinos as a result of being involved in athletics, "A few, not too, many in different sports, like I have a teammate, she's not full...she's Mexican too but she's mixed. Then a couple of people on the baseball team and volleyball teams." Like Oscar and Nicole who described meeting and interacting with other Latinos on the campus (i.e., classes, residence halls), Sarah explained that she met a mixed-race Latino friend in the dining facility and in several of her classes before realizing that she resided in her residence hall. However, despite having a Latino friend at the institution, Sarah shared that she rarely sees Latino students interacting with one another:

Well, I have a best friend, her name is Nancy, she isn't really whole [Latino], but she is mixed; she is Black and White, and we get along. We live on the same floor; that's how we met, and well in the cafeteria, or we had classes together. We just probably noticed each other, probably went 'Hey!' that's how I guess Hispanics are, like when you see another Hispanic you just go up and talk to her. Well, I rarely see them [Latinos] interacting, because we are all spread out, in a way. Yeah, we live in different places and there are not a lot, but there are some.

Some students reported strong bonds with other Latino students or observe others as having good within group interactions. Lance, a student leader, straddles the African American and Latino communities on campus and noted that he believes a strong relationship among Latinos exists on campus:

It's strong. I believe it's very strong because we tend to like to help each other out. We're very limited in numbers, so of course, we're going to try to figure out who everybody is and want to make everybody feel comfortable in our setting and in our environment here at NCCU. So, it's a very positive strong communication, to say the least.

Kristina, also a student leader on campus, provided an example of the strong relationship she has with a fellow student as the only Latinos in student government:

I would say they are also normal [the interactions between Latinos]. I would say they [Latinos] are closely bonded. For example, in my student government meetings, I'm the Senator, the freshman Senator, and the Vice President sometimes when he gets angry or annoyed, he'll say, 'Ay caramba' or 'Ay dios mios' and he will look at me, as I am the only Latino person in there, and will just laugh it off. I just feel like it's a little connection between all the Hispanics just because it's a slightly different part of us, than everybody else.

Additionally, Kristina described her interactions with other Latino students as well as her perceptions of the Latino community at Central:

Yeah, very friendly – [there is] not really any hostility here going on, so, yeah friendly. My roommate [is Latino]. I also have another friend who I went to high school with [who is Latino], and she's also here, and her boyfriend [he is Latino]. We normally just hang out when we see each other. Actually yes - another one of my close friends [is Latino]. He's one of the honor students here. I also have another, we're not exactly friends, but acquaintances; she's in my class. And that's about it. It's pretty much the same - yeah, very positive.

Luis a first-year student described how provided a multifaceted perspective on his interactions with other Latinos and on how he is perceived by them:

I see them around campus, especially during orientation, on the Facebook page for Central. You can tell who's Hispanic by their name so all the Hispanics usually message each other like, 'Hey, can you speak Spanish? Where are you staying?' Stuff like that. So that's how I met them primarily.

Luis further explained that most Latino students he interacted with are not aware that he is Latino until they get to know him or hear him speak Spanish. Additionally, he described being treated differently by some Latino students because he does not have stereotypical Latino physical features:

Everyone is really friendly to each other, for the most part. In my case, most people don't know I'm Hispanic until they hear my name, or they hear me speak Spanish or something like that so. Most people don't, like most other Hispanics don't even know until they actually get to know me. So once they get to know me

they're like "oh hey." And other times they're not as buddy, buddy as they usually are with other Hispanics. It's a little weird; it's okay though. I understand I don't have the Native American look as Mexicans or the obvious Hispanic features, but I don't mind it because when it comes down to it if you want to have a conversation in Spanish, we can have a conversation in Spanish. If you want to talk about our background, we can talk about our background. If someone asks, I will tell them. I have no problem with it; I'm proud of it...

Additionally, Luis noted that interactions among Latinos seem positive, in part because he often sees Latino students together in small groups around campus. Lastly, Katherine explained that Latino students tend to develop an "automatic friendship" because there are so few on campus:

We seem to really come together because we know it's kind of rare. So as soon as we see that we have that in common we sort of interact very well. So it's an experience. When I say to come together, I really mean we just kind of connect on that friendship level. Like it's kind of like automatic friendship.

Professor Guzman also shared that Latino students tend to stay together due to there being few Latinos on campus:

They have a tendency to stick together but then again, in a situation, there are very few. They don't even have a powerful Latino student association. Yes, oh yes. We have a Latin American Festival, and there we get a lot of our organizations from the community. It's on campus. Yes, yes, and there you see a bunch of Latinos together. Still the group is a very small group...

Administrator Moore noted that Latino students appear to interact with one another, but questioned whether doing so is out of survival as minority students on campus or because they have formed formal friendships with each other:

Well, I would imagine just based on what I know about Black folks, and having been at predominantly White institutions for a long time, you have a tendency to just seek each other out and hang out together as a survival technique. Sometimes it's not even because you're all that compatible with each other, but what you do have in common is, kind of, this experience as a minority. You know, they walk together to class and that type of thing, but not really sure if that's a larger social relationship, do they all hang together all the time, did they know each other before, are there any other close relationships. Or is it more just like, this is the



person I'm with as I move around this campus because this is where my comfort zone is and this is how I feel like I can make it here. That part, I'm not really that clear about, but they just seem to be connecting - there's usually like 2 or 3 students that'll be walking together, but they really seem to be connected in that way.

Professor Clark theorized that in some cases Latino students may choose not to interact with each other in order to not be viewed as intolerant or to try to fit in. Furthermore, he noted that Latino students need to engage with each other in order to build-up and exercise their self-advocacy potential as a Latino community:

They do get affected with that minority complex syndrome...The minority student complex is they might intentionally not engage with each other when you need that. Because they are being accused of being intolerant in the room, because they are speaking their language. I should not feel bad about that. The only thing is in the context of the socialization. Also they should be more assertive in terms of requiring activities like speakers, interactive sessions, have discussions about that.

Administrator Randall stated that relationships among Latino students appeared to be cordial given the low overall numbers, but cautioned that with higher numbers divisions across ethnic lines may merge, which will present a whole other dynamic to the Latino community at Central:

When I see Latino students together, I see that it is a vibrant and healthy and wonderful interaction. When percentages relative with the overall population is so low...then folks don't care if you're from Mexico, or if you're from Puerto Rico. Can I just talk to you about this? Then there is more of a group identity. When the populations get larger from particular countries and regions then folks get more of a specific regional identity, or whatever. But the interactions that I have seen are healthy...

***Interacting with faculty and staff.*** Student participants generally described having positive experiences engaging with faculty and staff at Central. Specifically, the student participants described engaging with faculty and staff members who were committed to their success as students and went out of their way to be accessible.

Furthermore, some participants noted having a good relationship with Latino faculty even if they were not taking a Spanish course and with Latino housekeeping and janitorial staff at the University. Despite the overall positive nature of the interactions between Latino students and faculty/staff, a few participants described also having difficult interactions.

Carmen described having friendly and welcoming exchanges with faculty and staff on campus, “Actually they will come up and just ask me about my day. We'll speak and just go on about our day.” Furthermore, she noted the overall friendliness and accessibility of faculty at NCCU:

They have very friendly professors. They give a lot of opportunities. They have a lot of, like the office hours, they're like, ‘Oh you can come and talk to me about anything if you have any problems.’ So they are really helpful. They just, like the African American faculty members they're really, really friendly. They just want to help you learn and succeed and everything. That's about it.

Similarly, Katherine shared how helpful and positive she found the faculty, including Latino faculty members, at Central, “Also very positive; they're very active. They're very...one on one with you. And yes, it's good. It's pretty much the same [with Spanish faculty]. They are very professional, as I was saying. It's you know, very positive.”

Carlos also described faculty members as accessible and helpful:

In the School of Business, I mean the faculty, but I suppose everywhere it's the same thing. They have office hours, if you want to talk to them, they are accessible, you know, make an appointment, and show up at the office. It's a good interaction. They're helpful.

Carlos had limited interaction with Latino faculty, but he described engaging with other diverse faculty during his time at Central:

I don't know any Latino teachers here; I'm pretty sure there is. I have a professor who is Indian, he's really good. And then the other one, she's American, but she's Togolese. Her parents are Togolese, but she's really good too. Then some Black. Then there's a guy, I don't know where he's from. It's been okay.

Jennifer described having positive interactions with her faculty members, who were primarily African American:

I believe that all but one of my instructors has been - no, all but two - has been African American. My interactions with them have been great. I've learned a lot, and they're very helpful. I mean, just in the way that a professor should be helpful. I mean, I am a perfectionist, so I want what I'm doing, something like a big project, and I was actually working with an African American student. We were both kind of the same way, so we interacted with the professor a lot to make sure that we got that 'A' on that project. She was very helpful. Any questions I had, any doubts I had with any work or anything, I always felt that I could go communicate with the professor.

Although faculty members were viewed as friendly and accessible by individual student participants, Kristina described observing similar interactions between African American faculty and other non-African American students. Furthermore, she noted the positive interactions she had with Latino faculty:

I would say they are like normal. I like going and talking to my teachers a lot and they sometimes do ask me questions. They do ask me where I'm from; they do wonder why I came here. They think they do that a lot to different students that are not African American. They ask them how come they decided to come here or why. To me it just seems like curiosity. They don't say it in a bad way or anything like that that makes me feel very different or anything like that. Yes, yes I have some of the Spanish teachers. Even though I am not currently taking Spanish, they say hello to me. They ask me how I'm feeling. They are very open and nice to me.

Likewise, Oscar believed that he thinks that faculty and staff help students regardless of their racial/ethnic background. Moreover, he shared a personal experience that he had with a staff person from Central while in high school, who assisted him with securing a scholarship that made it possible for him to attend Central:

They help the students, no matter where they are from. I met him at my job. We had a meeting and talked about what I wanted to do after high school. We talked for a couple of weeks and then we narrowed it down to where I was going to go to school. I told him about my issue of not having papers and how I really wasn't planning on going to college because of that even though I really wanted to. He stepped in and talked to the person that was in charge of the administration, the

person that was in charge of the scholarships, and he just went all over the place. He managed to get me an international scholarship so I could study here. I'm not saying that he put his job aside, but he put in a lot of time for me.

Nicole described positive interactions with staff in the athletics department as well as having supportive professors who understood her athletics schedule:

It's been positive so far. I've interacted with a lot of people in athletics, like the coaches in the department and my athletic counselor. He's been really helpful. He helped set up all my classes and made sure I was in the right courses. Personally, he looked at my schedule. That was really helpful. My professors, I've had to miss some classes, you know, but I've talked to them about it. They've understood and haven't penalized me for missing class; they've been really understanding.

Ana described having positive interactions with her own professors and advisors, but, she found it difficult to communicate with other faculty and staff at the institution:

Yes [positive], definitely my interactions, I guess you can say with faculty and other staff they are very different from my professors and my advisors. A lot of them are very difficult to communicate with, but I think that if you're willing they can do it and they, still being willing to help too. It's understandable that they have a lot of things to do but sometimes it's a little difficult to contact them or receive a response or help. I think, like I said before with the other staff that is not your professors or advisors it's even more difficult to get an actual answer from them...

Ana added that while she has not taken a Spanish course she found Latino professors to be helpful:

[M]ost of them that I have encountered are, would be [in] the communications building which is basically Spanish English professors. I have gone to one of them for advice. I think that as Latinos themselves they are willing to help you more... not just because you're Latino, but because...I don't know, it seems if you are willing to make an effort to ask them regarding their, um how can I say this, their department...but I have also found help from the Latino staff.

In addition to having positive interactions with faculty at Central, Ana also shared establishing a friendly relationship with a Latino janitorial worker who always greets her:

I see some of them, if not the majority of them I've seen some of them, I don't notice the staffing crew you know [who] works at the desk or you, I think staff

also includes cleaning. I had encountered them now they are little bit more friendly and I think they're happy to see other Latinos that's there. Yes the person that I have encountered...I don't know what his job description is but I always see him just cleaning and doing any kind of janitorial duties...he always asks how you are doing, so it's a little bit more of a friendly interaction than with others.

Whereas Ana described having some difficulty communicating with some faculty, Luis shared the difficulty that his professors have had with the pronunciation of his last name in addition to sharing an example of when he felt "picked on" in class for being Latino:

Every day on the first day of class when the teachers have to go through roll to find out who's in the class, who's actually showing up to class I can tell when they get to my name because they get to that H and then they just pause and look at their class roll all hard and intently then they try and they always fail so badly and then I have to repeat it for them multiple times and they still ask...Yeah, so then they ask, "Where's that from? How am I supposed to pronounce this?" I'm like its "Spanish, it's Cuban." And they're like, "Oh you're Cuban blah blah blah." My world literature teacher, any time something Spanish comes up she looks right at me and even though there's this girl in my class who's from Ecuador, but she looks right at me every time because when we were introducing ourselves I told everyone that I was Hispanic.

Lance described his interactions with faculty and staff like being with a family that has raised him since he first arrived on Central's campus:

[M]y interactions with them are really good. I see them more as, like, my second mothers or fathers because they've been taking care of me ever since I came to NCCU. So I could rely on them, they're more than willing to have open arms. But it's just because I'm different from everybody else, but they just have that family oriented feeling here at Central. I applaud them about taking on that persona, because I know at other institutions, it's so big that one administrator can be taking care of 40 different students, as opposed to being here at Central, it's only like one administrator to about 10 or 15 students.

Additionally, and like some of the other student participants, Lance came to realize that the majority of the people who hold the housekeeping and janitorial jobs are Latino and felt compelled to establish a relationship with them:

But also, when I say I made friends with administration, faculty and staff, I've come to realize a lot of the janitors and housekeepers are all of Latino

descent...And because I'm a resident assistant and I like to get to know everybody, I got to know a lot of them throughout the years of working with them...none of the students really tend to - they just tend to overlook the janitors and the house maids and things like that, because they just see them cleaning up and just not talking to anybody. But I like to talk to them a lot, just to get to know them and get to know where they came from...You'll see that there are a lot of Latino people that are working for the campus that are part of the janitorial and the maid staff.

**Campus engagement through participation.** The student participants had positive experiences on campus as a result of participating in campus activities, which also enabled them to engage with other students. The student participants were more likely to be involved than not with campus activities. For Latino students who were not involved, commitments such as work, family, and commuting were often noted as reasons for not engaging in campus activities. Overall, participants who were involved were involved in traditional campus activities such as student government, athletics, and Greek life in contrast to being involved with Latino specific activities.

***Latino student involvement.*** Like placing markers on a continuum that runs from highly involved to not involved, Latino students described varying degrees of campus involvement. Describing her level of involvement at NCCU, Kristina shared, "I'm in a dance group, Los Salseros. I really enjoy it because it's something of my culture I...bring to campus. I also share ideas with other students who are not even Hispanics; they just enjoy doing this type of dancing." Additionally, Kristina, who was a student senator in high school and now at Central, wanted to continue serving in student government during college, "Yes it was something that I had done previously at my old school, The School of Science and Math. I just had been a senator there and I wanted to continue pursuing that [at Central] because I enjoyed it very much." Nicole was mainly involved with varsity athletics as a member of the NCCU softball team, "With varsity softball, but

nothing else as of yet.” Sarah expressed not being involved with any campus activities, but expressed interest in joining the intramurals program at the institution.

Luis, whose father attended an HBCU and was a member of a Black Greek letter organization, was involved in the honors program at Central and wanted to pledge a fraternity the following year, “I’m in the honors program, chancellor's scholar program. I am trying to get into this leadership program, and that’s about it. And maybe next year I’ll be a Greek.” Already a member of a Black Greek letter organization, Lance described his level of involvement at Central:

I am a part of numerous honor societies...I'm a part of a Black Greek lettered organization. I'm a part of the Student Government Association. I'd previously been a part of a few dance teams, just to get to know other people, a few honors programs as well. [And] yes, [a resident assistant and orientation leader.]

Lance was involved in a significant number of organizations; he acknowledged the lack of Latino-based organizations at Central:

So, I'm not going to say that Central doesn't have groups that are strictly focused on that [Latinos], because that would be false. The only thing I would say about that is, that Central has organizations -- or the number of African American organizations, of course, outnumbers the number of organizations that Latino or Hispanics have.

Oscar was not initially involved with campus activities and mentioned his lack of awareness about campus involvement opportunities; he was provided with the opportunity to tutor Latino elementary school children on Saturdays:

Nothing really, but I do tutor elementary students on Saturdays. They had this session where a lot of organizations came to Central to try to recruit people to volunteer for them. I received a lot of offers about tutoring students because they were Hispanic students that could not understand the material or did not speak English well. I signed up with them.

Although volunteering in this capacity seemed rewarding to Oscar, he noted that he has a lack of awareness of campus involvement opportunities and felt that most experiences were not open to him as a Latino student:

I am not really informed about them and I feel like they don't really apply to me. When I think of organizations I think of fraternities. I guess I feel like the outsider, like I'm left out. That is why I really do not seek to join any.

Oscar's perceptions about campus activities not being geared toward Latino students appears to have translated into a lack of involvement on campus. Ana noted that living off campus and fulfilling academic major requirements were barriers to her involvement at Central:

I was actually [involved] before taking the Spanish courses that I'm taking now. I was actually in the French club and that was about the only activity that I participated at the university. I think the reasons [why I am no longer involved] are I wanted to actually participate in other activities. I just think when you reside off campus it's a little bit harder to keep up with the events. When I was in the French club my first year and I wasn't working, I didn't have too many things to worry about so I had the opportunity to join the club. You know, as the years go by you have to focus on other things especially going into your major. It leaves less time for you to participate in activities when you have to do field experiences and other classes especially community service.

Carmen stated that she was not involved because she tends to be introverted and has not found a group that interests her:

I'm not involved in any activities on campus. It's not that I haven't found anything. I'm just not that interactive. Like sometimes I stay to myself, and I just felt like I haven't found anything that I'm really gung-ho for, like I'm just going to go and do this. This is what I really want to do.

Several students indicated that they were not involved in campus life. Carlos lives an hour away and indicated that he did not have time to become involved on campus, "I work, I have a family; I don't have time for, I just come here to get my education."



Monica, another student who works and resides off-campus with her family, explained her lack of campus involvement:

Not currently, I was working full-time and going to school full-time as of last year. And I was a nontraditional student this year is when I joined Central, and I'm just sort of trying to find my way around things on campus. I haven't been active with any activities. I'm typically active in community activities outside of here that typically have to do with my children and their school.

Similar to Monica and Carlos, Jennifer also has a family responsibilities that require her to leave campus after class in order to pick up her kids from school because she lives an hour away from campus. Professor Guzman also described an inability of Latino students to become involved on campus due to needing to work and family responsibilities:

Another situation that we go back to, the economy here, the vast majority of our students work outside. These are people who cannot afford coming to school, and doing the campus social life. I think that has a little to do with it. They have to help their families; they have to take care of their brothers and sisters. Those who are in college right now have a tendency to have two or three younger brothers [or sisters]. In most cases, both their parents work. They also have, I think it is interesting to note also they have a specific role within their family dealing with the culturalization process. They are the ones that speak English; they are the ones who tend to answer the phone. They don't have a lot of time to socialize. It's a situation that I'm sure will change gradually...

*Inclusive campus activities.* The Latino student participants described being involved with different types of organizations and activities that prompted positive interactions with fellow students. The student participants were also asked to comment on campus activities that they perceived to be inclusive of all students or a diverse cross-section of students. Although it was not easy for participants to point to one event that was focused on bringing all students together, students identified several events they felt contributed to cross-cultural interactions, which also helped them feel a part of the NCCU community.

Carmen, who shared that she has not been involved in campus activities because nothing interested her, noted that few experiences are offered that bring diverse students together:

I feel like any student can join any organization, but I haven't heard of any organization that relay, liked brings every type of student together. I haven't heard of any. I mean they have like dances and stuff like that, but that's all I can really think of.

Katherine, and other students, however described college activities (e.g., student government) and opportunities (e.g., community service) that promote involvement, which also have the potential to bring a cross-section of students together:

Well definitely all the clubs that are available like SGA (Student Government Association) would be a very good example because it's obviously the whole student body, whoever chooses to participate. Well, aside from sports there will be events that are held here. Like maybe there's a concert for the students and you know we come to that, we get to do that. Or [the] community service [requirement] where we all will have to do a little working together.

Carlos, because of his responsibilities to family and work was not able to get involved with campus life, but acknowledged that Central's community service requirement provided him with the opportunity to engage with other students. In explaining her individual involvement with a campus-based salsa dance group for students, Kristina noted that she was the only "full Hispanic" in the group, with the rest of the organization comprised of mainly non-Latino students. Lance who is biracial and was also involved with the salsa dance group at some point during his time at Central that provided events that showcased Latino culture:

I know one thing they did every year was host an event called, Culture Shock. It was like a 3-hour event where they brought in Latin music, Latin dancers from Duke and UNC to come perform, and basically just give the campus a culture shock within itself to further expand the diversity and show more to the African American students that there's more than, I guess, like the stereotypical rap, hip-hop, R&B kind of music.

Luis, a first-year student, said, “we have multi-cultural things” nothing “November is like Hispanic Heritage Month. Well I think it’s kind of a National thing.” He observed, “Central had some things going on for that to celebrate Hispanic culture” and recalled that the cafeteria at Central recognized National Hispanic Heritage Month by having a menu that contained traditional Mexican cuisine recalled that the cafeteria at Central recognized National Hispanic Heritage Month by having a menu that contained traditional Mexican cuisine. Additionally, Luis described a campus program during Hispanic Heritage Month that focused on biracial identity among Latinos, which proved to be of personal interest, perhaps because of his own biracial background. Furthermore, he noted that the program was well attended because professors required their psychology classes to attend:

[T]here was a seminar that I went to with a friend and it was a psychological thing about Hispanics. I can’t remember what it was called but I know that it was about being biracial and about being Hispanic in this country and stuff like that. Yeah, there were all kinds of students because a lot of students had to go for their psychology classes. So I was interested and a friend of mine she had to go for her psychology class so I just went with her.

Reflecting further on his first-year at Central, Luis also described new student orientation as an experience that served to bring the entire incoming class together, which resulted in him making significant connections with members of the first-year class:

[O]rientation and for that first week is basically devoted to the freshman. And we have all kinds of events that go on. And basically, everything is to get you to know everyone in your class so that you have friends going into the school year, and you have some relationships and connections with people by the time you get to class so you already know half the class by the time you get there. Yes, it worked really well. I got to class and in almost every one of my classes that had a majority of freshman students; I knew most of them or had a very good friendship...

Nicole, a varsity athlete, described campus events such as sporting events and African American cultural shows, as ones, she felt comfortable attending, and that she thought were examples of campus events, which served to bring students together:

I only have like the dances in the gym, and they have like fashion shows and stuff every once in a while, and I'm not sure what else. Yeah, I've been to a dance and a fashion show one time. They had like a step show the last semester. I went to that. Yeah, they have sporting events like the football games and basketball games. I've been to those and other sporting events too.

Lance and Oscar described campus organizations with a mission of bringing students together cross-culturally. Lance described a University effort to expose students to cultures from other countries called SAGE (Student Affairs Global Experience):

I served as an intercultural ambassador for that organization...this is an organization based on bringing multiple cultures to the campus of North Carolina Central University through, whether it was dining, whether it was bringing different types of food from different countries, or even bringing in speakers speaking about global aspects from their own countries, and the effects on our country, things like that.

Oscar described an effort by a fellow student who created a student organization with the mission of bringing together diverse students on campus to share their experiences at the institution:

My friend had a meeting for a group called [Projects Stage]. She was trying to start a diversity group. I went to that one [meeting]. We just introduced ourselves and told where we were from and our struggles. We just told stories about ourselves. That's pretty much what went on, but nothing too big.

In responding to a question about inclusive campus organizations or events with the aim of bringing segments of the Central community together, Ana described an event that she did not perceive to meet the diverse backgrounds or interests of the attendees. She provided her own insights on what she would have done differently to make the event more inclusive of its attendees:

I think there was one particular event. I don't remember what it was for...I know they didn't invite all students...I know they didn't do it intentionally...they just focus on what most of the students would like to hear...I'm talking about music [and food]...so I think I would definitely make sure everyone is comfortable in the event. I would definitely have music that involved different types of music that involved any other cultural groups. Definitely, the food would also be different not too different but also try to incorporate different foods. And then I would also involve any activities that could also not just be, how can I say it? You could actually watch and catch attention with those other groups [and not just African American students].

Professor Guzman also noted an inclusive event that his Spanish class offers through the Spanish Club that is meant to bring students together, in particular, African American and Latino students:

[A]t that particular festival, you see Afro descendants, Latinos dancing together, they are really participating on equal grounds. Generally, when there is a language difficulty. I notice they are very cooperating like the African Americans asking how do you say that, what does that mean, and the Latinos responding very well...

Professor Guzman explained further that the University is aware of the presence of Latinos on campus, but is not doing anything specifically to bring Latinos into the fold of the campus community:

I'm not happy about that. I think an effort [can be] made but the campus still does not have a conscious of the fact that as a community we all are here...Although we do have a very small group, they're just not too cohesive. They don't quite know how to work together...It's just that at the moment. There seems to be nothing specifically geared towards that community. I'm not saying there is any type of discrimination against the community. I'm just saying that I do not see anything that is from the Administration point of view geared specifically towards the Latino students.

Professor Clark added that efforts to bring Latino students into the fabric of the campus have been challenging due to the existence of stereotypes and misconceptions held by African American students regarding Latino students:

[P]eople try to speak politically correct because they are scared of offending somebody. That is still lingering. There are some initiatives that are faculty led

that have brought students together but there's still a lot of sensitivity around communications. There's still a thing, you're kind of invading my space. I see that and I [seek] it through the classroom sometimes. You see the way they warm up slowly. Yeah you are different and your difference is not because you are threatening, it's that you are taking my space. Then they look at, we don't have jobs no more...that's stereotypes. Then you can hear they need to speak English. Then someone should stop them, to say okay, we understand you, why don't you understand them? That's their stereotype...you have to explain yourself a little bit, make an effort to say okay, I know you will understand when I speak Spanish because I express myself better intimately, and I'm not talking about you...

Administrator Randall noted that, the Chancellor of the institution is on board with bringing Latino students to campus and is supportive of their inclusion into the campus. Additionally, she shared an example of a campus political event that could have been much more inclusive of Latino issues given their relevancy to the Latino students in attendance, but also to the rest of the audience:

I know that on the top administrative level, our Chancellor is there. He's totally there. He totally gets it, sees it, and he is like, let's be proactive about doing this and bringing more Latino students to campus. On a practical level, how that plays out every day, I don't think there has been enough understanding or education to [try to be inclusive from an institutional perspective]...I just think that it's not even on an [institutional] level. For example...we had all the Obama people here at this big Obama Rally. And we were talking about one of the big issues, was talking about college, entry into college, and the affordability or whatever. And that was an ideal place to talk about the issue of students, Latino students even being able to even be admitted, students who were not born in the country, but who grew up...In some cases, you can't throw people out of K through 12, but lots of people are invisible until they get to college, and then it's like, I can't go to college. That whole issue was an opportune time to raise that question because that's a huge issue in our country right now, and it has to do with the whole piece of young people and education...and not one conversation at all, and that would have been an ideal place to raise that very real issue. If it never affects any of the people and there were Latina students in the room, but it's like it is an issue for us because it is an American issue that has to do with higher education in the young people.

Administrator Moore compared the experience of Latino students at Central to what Black students experience at a predominantly White campus. She shared that an

intentional effort was made to bring to campus a Latina keynote speaker, who was well known to most students in order to provide variety to the regular series of Black speakers who visit Central. However, administrator Moore wondered if African American students would have attended the program if the speaker were a lesser-known Latino speaker:

I would say they're not [inclusive]...this is the same stuff that they deal with, Black kids [at PWIs]. We have Hispanic month celebrations, you know, just like predominantly White campuses; this might be the only thing you might see for Black folks is Black History Month. And then there may be something that's cultural around performance, which would be like salsa dancing or something like that. But other than that, I don't really see anything...the [campus] did a program with America Ferreira, and it was intentional to bring her [a Latina speaker], because all the speakers that they ever bring to campus are Black people...So we thought it was really important to have a non-Black speaker, and she does a lot of wonderful work around student action for farm workers, and a lot of stuff around women's empowerment. So we thought she was just a great choice in general, not because she's a Latina, but the fact that she's a Latina was really icing on the cake...But it also makes me wonder if someone who was not tied to popular culture was brought, would anybody even care...I'm just wondering if we brought Dolores Huerta to campus, would anybody show up. So we've still got a long way to go.

Administrator Moore noted that the campus celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month, but shared that it is often organized by the International Studies Office. As such, the annual celebration rarely has a focus on the experiences of Latinos in the United States, but instead has an international Latin American focus:

Normally, our international studies office or International Students Office spearheads that. But one year, the student union staff was very involved, because the director was Latina - well, she was African American and Latina, and so she identified with both of those racial ethnic groups. So, she saw that as really important to be a part of. So, that was one time when Student Activities was part of it...Now, I haven't gone every year, but the ones I saw, it was more international. Like, they would do a film series, and it would be about some political or social issue in a Latin American country. They would do something around food, something around performance...there didn't seem to be as much focus on Latin-Americans, or people that live in the U.S. and their experience. Mostly, students who identify with the international student's office; either they

are students who emigrated here or their parents are immigrants, or they have...a more global mindset about how they approach life. Those are the ones that appeal to, more than anything, not just your average student that just kind of goes to class and goes back to their room, and maybe does one organization. It wasn't a broad audience like that.

### **Organizational/Structural Dimension**

Milem et al., 2005 affirmed and expanded the campus climate framework proposed by Hurtado et al. (1999). They included an additional dimension, the organizational/structural dimension, which encompasses institutional structures and processes (e.g., academic curriculum, institutional decision making practices, reward structures, hiring practices, enrollment management policies). Exploring the organizational/structural dimension of this historically Black institution will provide insight into the preparedness of the institution to serve its growing Latino student body.

Specifically, North Carolina Central University (NCCU) noted in its Strategic Plan of 2004-2009 an objective to “Strengthen the learning environment for all students by increasing the diversity of the student body...” while continuing a commitment to its historical mission of providing educational opportunities to African Americans (North Carolina Central University, 2004). Within this objective there was a specific goal to “Implement programs and activities to help prepare and attract students from the local Latino and Hispanic populations” (North Carolina Central University, 2004). Furthermore, the goal stated, “Provide workshops to sensitize faculty, staff, and students to differences within a multi-cultural community and establish, where needed, organizations and activities for students with varied interests and backgrounds” (North Carolina Central University, 2004). Though the revised Strategic Plan, NCCU 2020, does not specifically mention Latino student recruitment as the previous plan did, it does



reference the need for the institution to respond appropriately to a state environment with “demographic shifts, intense competition for students and declining state appropriations,...” further noting that “the University must change the narrative around the contemporary role of HBCUs” (North Carolina Central University, 2013b).

**Challenging and supportive campus environment.** Latino students described an overall climate of challenge and support at Central. The student participants were asked to identify factors that contributed to their success and to share recommendations that would enhance their experience as Latino college students at Central. Many of the perspectives and ideas shared by the students align with dimensions of the organizational/structural climate. Some students described a lack of institutional focus on their experience as Latino students, while others felt that aspects of their experience at Central contributed to their success as college students. Areas of challenge included the lack of programmatic initiatives aimed at Latino students and experiencing cultural isolation described by some participants due to the low number of Latinos on a campus of 8,400 students. Factors the participants identified as contributing to their success included engaging with faculty and staff who expressed an ethos of care, familial support, financial assistance, and involvement in programs that facilitate a sense of community.

***Just like everyone else.*** The student participants described receiving support from their professors and family members, but some indicated experiencing challenges similar to those of other students. Katherine described receiving a lot of support at Central, and that she often forgets that she is different within an environment that is predominantly African American, “It’s very strong [the support] considering I feel so at home that I just forget, you know that I’m different.” Carlos noted that he has

experienced few challenges as a Latino student at Central, “No, not really - I mean we all have the same challenge, which is getting [an] education, getting good grades. That’s the only challenge I can think of.” Rubi indicated that the challenges she has experienced are not any different than those experienced by other students attending the University, “No, I think that I probably have the same challenges, as far as what I need to accomplish, that everybody has at the University.” Additionally, Rubi did not feel as if she was treated differently at Central because of her racial/ethnic background, “I don’t think that they treat me any different from other students because I am Latino.” Jennifer also expressed that she receives the same level of support as her peers at the institution. Finally, Sarah stated that she feels just as supported as other students at Central, “Well, we’re all supported. So me being Hispanic, it doesn't change anything...”

Although Latino students generally affirmed that they felt supported by individuals they interacted with at the University, some participants found it difficult to engage with administrative offices when seeking assistance. Luis expressed his frustration with trying to reach one office by phone, “Calling the offices can be a problem sometimes...Sometimes they don’t answer. Sometimes they are just so busy that they don’t get around to answering so you’re on the phone for hours. No it’s not supportive at all...” Ana also expressed frustration completing a community service requirement because appropriate levels of staff support were not available to assist her in meeting this expectation:

I think that one of the things that their faculty or the school overall just focuses on getting you to do [is] community service...At first, I didn’t see it as a problem, you know it’s something I think we should all do as students, serve our community. But when you have classes and work and when you reside off campus and even when you stay on campus it’s difficult to do your community service hours. I know they asked for 15 hours per semester, and it’s hard when

you have classes to go to, you have work to worry about, and then you have to actually find your own community service...makes it very difficult to do, and it's one of the things that I think has kept many students from actually registering for classes and I myself had a problem with it because of a misunderstanding and then there is no person that you can actually go to. It's just very difficult to get through to them, and I think that's the main issue at Central.

**Cultural isolation.** The majority of student participants described having an overall positive experience at Central, but they also expressed a need for an increased presence of Latinos in order to foster a greater sense of community and expression of Latino culture at the institution. Ana described some of the difficulties she experienced as a result of being one of a few Latinos on campus and not having other Latino students to connect with culturally:

[B]ut as the only Latino, I would say some of the challenges that I face would be definitely not having that interaction with your own cultural group and being able to learn from each other regarding our history. Regarding any of our cultural traditions, I think that's one of the main challenges and being able to overcome those factors, of that negativity, of what other cultures think about you...

Furthermore, Ana described the lack of Latino faculty and staff and having few Latino specific organizations as factors contributing to the difficulty she has experienced as a Latino student at Central:

I don't really think that there is a great support as a student, as a Latino student... You will [need to] find someone that can help you and support you as a Latino student. I think that there is no specific group that you can go to. I think, like I said you just have to find those professors that are willing to help or are in the department, like the Spanish department but other than that, no. I definitely think that some of the things that I've seen that would keep me from being successful have definitely been the lack of staff support...

Carmen indicated not having any specific challenges that would keep her from being successful at Central, but expressed a desire to have others like herself who she could relate to at the institution:

I'm different obviously from an African American student here, but I wouldn't say I have any challenges. Just that sometimes I feel like I need somebody who's like me, you know. And I don't have that here; I haven't found that here yet. I'm talking about mostly students who I can hang out with and interact with you know, study with because obviously, I would feel more comfortable, so I would do more things with them.

As one of the few Latino students on campus, Oscar described the internalized pressure he feels with wanting to be recognized by his African American peers on campus. When he is not acknowledged by his peers, he conforms by retreating and not trying to stand out:

I guess trying to make a name for myself on campus at Central because, like I mentioned Hispanics do not really stand out here. There are not a lot of us here so I guess that would be the main struggle. I guess when we are expressing our opinions and stuff like that I feel like people want to listen to people that look like them. That just makes me want to go with the crowd.

Further adding to the sentiment of isolation described by Oscar, Lance shared the difficulty he experiences as a Latino student who is continuously made to feel like the “other” when references to “we” and “us” are made by professors in class or a campus presenter addressing a predominantly African American audience at the institution. Lance finds it challenging to reconcile where he fits into an environment where comments regarding the African American experience are typically referenced, while trying to remember his own cultural background and experiences:

It may not be a challenge to other people's eyes, but to my eyes, it is. Here it is: In classrooms, the professors [are] consistently saying, like, “we, we, we - we do this, we do that, and we as a whole do this.” So, when my professors say “we,” I've got to remember that I'm not necessarily a part of this kind of group [African Americans]. Like, I'm in a different sect; so I've got to keep up with what they're saying to keep up with the [African American] culture and course, but I've also got to keep up with my own ethnicity as well.

Lance provided additional insight into the tension he feels as an active student on campus who often attends campus lectures, and must continuously assess the relevancy of the message being conveyed:

A lot of the speakers that they bring on campus, or events, or anything of that nature, a lot of it is focused on the uplifting and empowerment of African American people...I still like to listen to the overall message of whoever is speaking, whatever's going on in class, but at the same time, I feel like there could be more focus on, I guess, a more broader standpoint. Like, they not focus primarily on African American people...I don't see the world as Black and White; I see the world as, we're all humans, we all have to help each other to succeed...I do have to come to peace with the fact that I am at a historically Black...university, and conversations like these will come up - they come up quite often...

**Structural factors contributing to student success.** The student participants expressed experiencing forms of cultural isolation within an institutional environment designed to promote and foster the African American experience. However, Latino students described factors in the environment that contributed to their success at Central. Specifically, the students described the support received from faculty, staff, and fellow students. Additionally, some students referenced the financial assistance provided by the institution as a major factor that allowed them to pursue higher education.

*Central faculty, staff, and students making a difference.* Despite the small presence of Latinos on campus, student participants described the positive difference that faculty, campus staff, and fellow students have made in their experience at Central. Though it is not clear whether there is an institutional effort to hire or cultivate a particular type of faculty/staff person with student success in mind, student participants consistently noted how instrumental they had been. Ana described the role that her professors have played, and that despite their different backgrounds, her English professors have been instrumental to her success:

I think that definitely the person that has contributed to my success at Central is definitely, are some of my professors. I'm an English major so some of them have been my English professors. They come from different parts themselves [backgrounds], different places...they are not Latinos themselves, but they have interacted with the Latino community, and I think those are the people that I've gotten the most help from...

Katherine also noted how helpful her professors have been to her success, "Definitely all of my professors. If they see that maybe I could be stronger in a certain aspect of the class, they will approach me. It's not like they will avoid it in anyway. They will definitely approach me." Additionally, Sarah stated that both her professor and academic advisor have been instrumental in helping her understand what she needs to do to be successful at Central:

My criminal justice professor, he helps us a lot - like his students. My academic advisor, he makes sure you're on the right track and makes sure that I get good grades. Their advice, their positive statements, and their suggestions on how to be successful [have been helpful].

Several students mentioned multiple individuals who have been instrumental in their success at Central, including individuals associated with the honors program and one person who earned their degree from the institution. Kristina noted three individuals affiliated with Central who played a pivotal role in her educational journey:

I would say one of my Professors, Dr. Jones. I talked to him early on, and he offered me opportunities in his research lab and so right now I'm conducting research with him. I would say the people in charge of the honors program, Mr. Bank and Mrs. Watkins who are constantly checking up on the University honors program students. Then somebody who's not even a part of the Central community [at this time], she was a graduate of Central; she got her Masters from there. She's my counselor from high school. She is the one who through everything [helped me] to receive my scholarship as I was looking for a way to attend school.

Luis appreciated the importance that has been placed by the honors program and the Chancellor on academic success. Luis mentioned that he has easy access to his

professors and that individuals associated with the honors program has been particularly helpful in terms of helping him excel academically:

Well, I know the Chancellor; he's very adamant about having everyone in the school excel. They moved the minimum grade-point average to 2.0 I believe so they are forcing everyone to excel. All the teachers are pretty helpful, since it's a smaller school everyone has the ability to go see the teacher during the office hours if you want. You can call them, you can email them, and you usually get [a response] back unless it's like one of the English teachers that don't use computers except like once a day. I would say the head of the university's honors program. He pushes us pretty hard; they always have events for us. We have our own dorm for the honors program as freshman...He has a big part of that because it's a quieter dorm so I can just study in my room. Everyone that I have my honors classes with and even my other classes with happen to live in my dorm so it's nice when you need to go ask what the homework was or what did I miss in class today...if I ever need anything we can go to them and ask them first...We have our own advisor being in the honors program so basically they've made it very easy on me to excel and get the grades that I do.

Nicole also described her professors as being accessible. She also viewed her teammates and coaches as contributing to her success at Central:

[I]t's really good here. People always see how I'm doing and make sure I'm adjusting well and stuff. Yeah, friends, and the athletic department. I think mostly my teammates, and my coaches play a big part, and I think my teachers too...they've helped...their doors are always open, their office hours and stuff. If I ever have questions or need stuff, I can just email any of my teachers, and a lot of them are good at helping, responding and getting me help when I need it.

While stating that more Latino students are needed on campus, Carmen noted that her African American friends had contributed to her success, "I get a lot of support from my friends. We just help each other and give each other advice. Friendship is really my support system right now." Lance spoke at length about how he was supported and mentored in becoming a campus leader. Furthermore, he shared that the support he received from faculty, staff, and students inspired his unwavering commitment to Central and the leadership he provides as a student leader:

It's very positive support...because they support me in that aspect [my development] - that's why I have so much love for my institution. Also, I feel like the support is a mutual agreement. If I get support from my faculty and staff, and even the students, then of course, I'm going to support them; and because we have this mutual understanding, it just furthers the relationship, I have with everybody. I remember I had one of my mentors here at Central, they told me - if you find yourself leading others, you'll soon be able to bring some of them with you as you start to lead...So overall, I just feel privileged that I had the support from a lot of people here at Central, and that I was provided these kind of opportunities that I can bring back to the students that I'm here with.

Academic affairs administrator Randall affirmed the sentiments expressed by Latino students regarding the role of faculty and staff in contributing to students' success.

Administrator Randall shared that informal faculty and staff networks have served as a source of support for Latino students:

Our Latino faculty, yes there are some, but there are no special [initiatives] that I know of or have been announced across campus...there are some underground networks where faculty and staff do reach out to students and also there are some Latino staff...but it's not an overt 'this is the resource or these are the set of resources for you.' ...it's not an official part of an organized entity - one-on-one mentoring, social gatherings, including people in specific kinds of activities . . . all [are] done informally...

Student affairs administrator Moore described the parallel between the informal faculty and staff networks that mentored and nurtured African American students at PWIs with what is happening at Central with Latino students:

[T]hey probably, just like Black students do in predominantly White campuses, they [Latinos] probably find one or two people who, you can call them a mentor if you want, but one or two people who are just kind of their go-to who they feel like they can trust and who can support them. They probably rely on the nurturing and the encouragement of those people, no matter what race or ethnicity those mentors are, but they probably rely on them to help them through the experience . . .

***The need to develop institutional cultural competencies.*** Similar to sentiments expressed by the students, administrator Randall also noted the need for individuals and



the institution to develop cultural competencies in order for Central to better serve its Latino student population:

[A]s an African American person, I want to make sure I'm coming correct myself. I would appreciate having more information and education even though I have worked in a number of [Latino] communities I still need to learn more... You've got to put languages that are more accessible, you have to be in places that are more accessible to other folks, and sometimes you just have to be present and get over your fear of being present. You will be surprised that there are friends everywhere.

In addition to recognizing the need for cultural competencies training, administrator Moore argued that any perception of Latino students taking away from the needs of African American students at Central should be challenged. Furthermore, she noted the need for the institution to understand that despite having minority status in the broader society that there is the potential for African American and Latinos to be discriminate against each other:

[O]ne, is a mindset that if we allow a focus to change to other underrepresented groups [Latino students], that will not diminish the services and programs and experiences of Black people. I think that's one of the things that, you know, we're kind of fighting against - this idea that there's [not] enough for everyone. And then, secondly, I think that it's kind of overcoming some... misinformation that people have. It's hard for people who consider themselves to be a racial minority to believe that they might actually discriminate against another racial minority. So, you know, getting people on board to realize that they really do need to be educated and get diversity training and that kind of thing, and that you're not automatically exempt because you're also a racial minority. I think overcoming those two things would be really the most crucial pieces as we move forward with this... there are allies on this campus... there are a lot of people that really believe that we need to be doing more, and are open and willing to do more. So it's not that there's no one who cares about this. I think it's more just finding a more formalized structure in how the university meets the needs of Latino students is what's missing. So there're a lot of willing people, but just not the formal structure.

**Strengthening the organizational structure for Latino students.** In addition to sharing the factors that have served as sources of support that contributed to their success

at Central, the student participants also provided recommendations that they thought would serve to improve the overall campus climate for Latino students at the institution. Consistently, students referenced the need to increase the number of Latino students on campus and establishing Latino student organizations in order to mediate the cultural isolation that some students experienced. Increasing the number of Latino students and student organizations were also viewed as being able to provide students some needed affirmation of their presence at the institution. The faculty and staff participants offered similar recommendations that would improve the campus climate for Latino students.

*Developing Latino student life and services.* Ana recommended establishing Latino student organizations to assist in building community among Latino students, which was also viewed as an outlet that could assist non-Latino students to engage with Latino students:

I think that they should definitely establish organizations to help Latino students and actually bring them together. You know to have more [organizations] so that the students can have interactions with each other, and then I know that other students at Central, non- Latinos, they are willing to, you know to participate in clubs and actually interact with Latinos, but there are no organizations...We take into consideration their culture, and I wish that they would also be able to take into [consideration] our culture...And I think acknowledging the Latinos at Central would really make a big difference - not just for Latinos but for the students overall.

Similar to Ana, Carmen suggested the creation of a Latino-focused student organization, which would assist her in meeting other Latino students. She also thought that individuals on campus needed to become more culturally aware, particularly because many individuals have a lot of stereotypes regarding Latinos:

I just feel like they should have something for everybody like, if they had a Latino Association or something, I would really, I would join. Because who wouldn't want to just see people come from their background or have something in common with somebody that they can share. So I feel like if they had a Latino

organization that I would join and that would just help me, especially to get to know more people on campus. I just feel like people...they should get to know Latinos before they actually have a perceived notion of who they are, or where they come from or what they're doing here. I just feel like they should get to know them before they just think, oh, she crossed the border. Or you know something ignorant like they always think. Like I feel like they should get to know everybody. And they should know that everybody is not Mexican or from one culture; that there are more Latinos that come from other places. We're not just one kind of people.

Similarly, Administrator Moore indicated that an officially recognized Latino student organization was needed:

I don't really see a lot of programming, particularly for Latino students on our campus. We don't even have, as far as I know, a Latino student organization, at least not an officially-recognized one, if there's an informal group of students who are meeting and doing things that may be the case. That was very surprising for me when I came to this school, is that there's not even a student organization . . . there's just really no way for students to officially connect on this campus in a social way.

Ana also noted that advisors and faculty members were needed who had the cultural competencies to understand and work with Latino students:

I think besides creating organizations, I think that definitely they should have advisors that will be able to help Latino students...I'm not trying to say that all the advisors or professors need to help Latinos. I think that they should have some understanding regarding the Latino community and the culture and tradition and the language. Definitely having a support system for the Latinos...would help us with our education.

Luis suggested the creation of a Spanish language or Latino living-learning community to assist students in meeting individuals from similar backgrounds:

Maybe they have clubs and stuff for multicultural students, even Latino students, but I feel like they should make [a] more homey environment for Latino students. I know some schools, they have like living-learning communities with all Latino students or all Spanish-speaking students in the same dorm or same floor or house . . .I think something like that could be beneficial to get us all together since I don't know how many there really are at Central. I think that would be beneficial for some of us. Or at least to have like a place like that to go, just to be around other people of the same descent or similar descent.

Kristina suggested that having campus events for Latinos, even if only a couple of times a year would assist Latino students in meeting their peers. Additionally, she mentioned having an institutional communication mechanism in place geared at Latino students to inform them of opportunities that they might not know about that could also serve to bring them together:

[E]ven though I eventually found my Latino friends...I think it would be good for them to maybe hold some activities or something once or twice a year to bring all the Hispanics together for them to get to know each other. Maybe give up more of an outlook on other things we can do to come together for many opportunities that we have, but just don't know about.

Professor Clark suggested developing an orientation program for Latino students to assist in their transition to Central. Additionally, he recommended establishing a peer mentoring program to connect incoming Latino students with a Latino or non-Latino continuing student who has been successful at the institution:

[W]e don't have a special orientation for Latino students...we have minority, Black in the HBCU, Black, minority programs...Then you have to also generalize that back to the [regular orientation program]...but here we do need that [Latino student orientation], a mentoring program, the system that pairs a senior with a junior, the Latino could be paired with another Latino who's been successful here and also intentionally paired with someone else from another culture because we have now more African and more foreign students...although [the] population of foreign students increased, it's really Latinos [who have] increased [the most at the university].

Administrator Randall discussed the cultural isolation that Latino students may experience. Randall also stated that the institution needs to facilitate structured conversations between Latino and African American students because many do not know how to engage with each other:

I can imagine and have been in situations before where you feel invisible. Just the feeling of invisibility...everybody is very pleasant here, but wouldn't it be nice if someone asked me about or engaged me in a conversation about X...Not having

any idea, not even a clue what those conversations are or what those conversations might be or ways to engage folks, just having no clue...there's such a rich opportunity to engage around the Latino/Afro-American stuff in our culture that we could be doing and need to be doing, really need to be doing. In the very same ways that now people live in the communities with each other and walk right pass each other just literally walk right pass one another and have no clue of how to get the conversation going.

Administrator Moore indicated that the University System of North Carolina has challenged institutions in the system to prepare for the fast-growing Latino population entering higher education. However, Moore mentioned that no formal programs or training opportunities exist at Central:

[UNC] General Administration, so the governing body over the 16 state supported universities, they have an initiative. One of their primary focus areas is Hispanic students - that's the word they use - Hispanic students...I don't know if the money has shown up yet, but they're going to be putting some financial resources into making sure that there are programs and services for Latino students. NCCU would be a part of that, because it's mandated from that entity. And so that would mean that all the chancellors of those schools would be required to show how they're addressing those things as part of their strategic plan. So I know that here, they're working on getting money, like, grant funding and things like that. They've been working closely with the North Carolina Hispanic Business Association, and been developing and cultivating a relationship with them, as well. But as far as what I've seen as formal programs, I haven't seen that yet. It's been more just kind of hit or miss...not a coordinated effort on our campus, and certainly not as much training around just being inclusive, and not saying things that are going to be derogatory or bring any particular group down - I haven't seen that yet.

Professor Clark noted that current initiatives, mainly geared towards first-generation college students, should meet the needs of all racial/ethnic groups, including the small number of Latino students enrolled at Central. However, he explained that as the population grows, the institution will have to revisit its approach to supporting Latino students:

I do think that Central does some things...right...and are actually getting better and better... Like I say, when they're [Latino students are] larger, when they begin to be larger sub-groups on campus, I think the campus will have to shift

again in its understanding of education, but right now I think that some of the things we just do well, with first-generation students, translates across cultures. They translate with White students who are low wealth students and are first generation, with our Afro-American students, and with our Latino students.

***Recruiting Latinos.*** Katherine proposed that Central recruit more Latino students, faculty, and staff to assist in making Latinos feel more comfortable, which was also mentioned by most of the student participants. Katherine indicated, “I’d like for more Latinos to be here...It’s a great place to be. Yeah, definitely for the student body to have more Latinos. [Recruiting] faculty that would be great also because that would make Latinos feel more at home.” Nicole also expressed a similar sentiment, but like other student participants, she discussed the positive experiences she has had at the institution:

I just want to mention that it would be great if there were other Latino students...It is a great place to go, and the fact that it is an African American University...doesn’t mean that we cannot go and apply...

Furthermore, Luis suggested that the University consider providing financial support for prospective Latino students in order for the Latino student enrollment to increase:

Maybe like a Hispanic grant...scholarship would help. It would get a lot more Hispanics to come to this school that don’t really have the opportunity to go to school...It would help people decide to go to school here.

Lastly, Lance shared his perception that Latino students are hesitant to apply to HBCUs, which is why the institution should engage in more intentional outreach to Latino students:

I think a lot of Latino students are kind of shy, or they shy away from applying to HBCUs, because of the known fact that they're going to be outnumbered when it comes to ethnicity...I've traveled across, all across the country visiting HBCUs. I know a lot of HBCUs try to publicize their institution about being diverse, just so they can get the crowd - the multicultural crowd into the institution to further develop their diversity. I'm not saying they're not trying hard enough or their

efforts aren't working, but I feel like there could be a lot more done to further attract multicultural students to [an] HBCU.

Professor Guzman shared that he was not aware of any specific efforts to recruit Latino students and was surprised to learn that Central mentioned recruiting Latino students in its strategic plan. Furthermore, he explained that his department (Spanish) should be notified in order to assist with efforts to recruit Latino students:

I quite frankly do not see any specific efforts to recruit Latino Students. I'm not seeing any of that. In fact, it's something that if it happens, most of the members of our department would need to be aware of that, notified, asked to contribute in some way. That has not happened. It has not happened yet. Again, I'm thinking in terms of percentages, and I don't think we are there yet. But I think some people are aware that this is going to happen - going to happen sooner [rather] than later...

Administrator Randall described the point in the evolution of any racial or ethnic group on campus when a critical mass is reached leading to the majority group recognizing the collective presence of the minority group. Specifically, she explained that Central is not at the critical point where the majority group takes notice of the presence of a minority group beginning to influence the campus environment. Randall stated,

[T]he percentage that a group has to have before other people even notice... we [are] not at that critical point yet where people outside the Latino culture would look and say 'oh, and you're speaking Spanish when ya'll together.' It's not at that point yet.

***Partnering with Latino students to recruit Latinos.*** Latino students have consistently described their affinity for Central, while expressing a desire for there to be more Latinos at the University. In their desire to have more Latino students at Central, the student participants suggested messages that could be conveyed to prospective Latino students about the University. Participants noted that they would stress key factors such

as the size of the institution, its affordability, and a campus climate welcoming of students of color.

Ana noted that she would recommend that Central share with Latino high school students that the campus community may not be aware of “Latino culture,” but that the institution is a place where the construct of being a minority is understood. Despite offering this recommendation, she stated that she would encourage students to explore institutions that had better cultural diversity:

I think that I would recommend them [Latino students] to attend Central...like I said it's been a good experience. You have people that don't understand your cultural background, but they don't look at you differently, which is a good thing, you know. You are a minority, just like any other person there, so they understand, I'm going to say your demographics. I'm not going to say cultural background because of course it's a little difficult at Central for everyone to understand your culture and traditions when there's not that many Latinos there. I think that a high school student that's graduating, Central would be a good option. If you are willing to get the help, then you will receive help. It's been a good experience. I would recommend it, but encourage Latino students to find other schools where there is more cultural diversity.

Luis stated that he would emphasize to high-school students the small size of the student body and the affordability of attending Central. He also mentioned that he would stress the difference between being a minority student at an HBCU versus a PWI by stressing that faculty and staff are less likely to marginalize students because of their racial/ethnic backgrounds:

[I]t's a nice size, where you don't see too many people or you don't see the same people every day, but it's small enough that your teacher knows your name...like everything is within 10 minutes of each other on campus...It's pretty affordable compared to other schools, especially around here, like this is the least expensive one. You won't have to face any problems [like] the teachers may be pushing you aside or thinking maybe that you can't excel as much as another student because of your heritage, which is nice.



Lance indicated that he would convey to prospective students that Central is a quality institution and that he has felt at home at the University:

I'd tell them to look at North Carolina Central University, it's a great institution. It is more than capable of competing with other institutions. The one thing that I can guarantee here at Central is that you feel more than at home than actually being at home. Every time I say, or I'm in Durham, away from my home town, I don't say I'm going back to my dorm room - I say, I'm going home. North Carolina Central University is a home to me, and has been for the past three years, and will be for the next 1-1/2 years. So one thing that I can guarantee is that if you do attend North Carolina Central University is that you'll feel like it's a second home to you, and you'll start relaying that message to yourself, that it is a second home.

*The role of financial support in the recruitment of Latino students.* Study participants consistently mentioned the excellent education and lower cost of attending Central in comparison to other schools they considered. In addition, several student participants shared that attending college would not have been possible if not for the financial support provided by the institution. It was shared earlier that a mentor and a Central administrator worked diligently on behalf of Oscar, who does not have U.S. citizenship, to secure an international student scholarship, which made it possible for him to attend the University. In a similar situation, Kristina shared that the financial assistance that Central provided allowed her to attend college. She viewed Central as committed to students, including Hispanic students:

I'm not sure if I would say that I'm different from any other student. I know that this school did look at my situation as a Hispanic student that wouldn't otherwise have attended college because of my recent situation, but they offered me a scholarship because of that. Yes, otherwise I wouldn't be able to apply to FAFSA or receive any type of financial aid. The scholarship specifically came from the school. I think they try to help out students more because I know I'm not the only person that received this scholarship that was in the same situation as I was that otherwise they wouldn't have gone to school. So I think Central really just tries to get into like the more personal side...verses any other public University that's a lot bigger that doesn't care as much about the students just maybe more about the numbers they get in and the money.

Rubi noted that she liked having the flexibility to schedule her classes at convenient times so that she could also work. Furthermore, the transfer student scholarship that she received also made it possible for her to enroll at Central:

A very important factor that helps me to be successful at the University is, first of all, the schedule, which is great for me and the scholarship that I received based on my GPA, when I applied for it. There was a lady named Sharron that works on the transfer scholarships. She was very helpful because she offered me a scholarship which is a great help because I do not have to pay for full tuition.

*Cultivating outreach to Latino families.* In addition to recognizing the role that faculty and staff played in their success at Central, student participants mentioned how instrumental their families were in either discouraging or encouraging their enrollment at the institution. Participants described receiving different types of familial support, which included ultimately letting them move away from home to attend Central to supporting their child's decision to attend an HBCU.

Both Kristina and Carmen shared how their parents were initially hesitant to support their enrollment at Central. Kristina's parents were not supportive of her decision to attend Central initially due in part to cultural expectations of her as a female as well as a lack of understanding of the college-going process in the United States and her ineligibility to receive financial aid because of her residency status. Central ultimately provided her with an international student scholarship that allowed her to enroll at the institution:

I feel like my parents...they worry a lot because I am away from home, and I know if I were in Ecuador, I would not be away for school at any given time, unless I was married. Sometimes they worried, and that stresses me out a little bit, but other than that I don't think so. My mom will call especially, every single day; morning, afternoon, and night. She wants me to come home often, and I can't do that because I have other commitments to attend to. Especially for student government or dance practice stuff like that...they expect me to come and visit, and that's lightly annoying sometimes...I wouldn't say my parents were a whole lot supportive. They didn't feel like I was going to gain anything my senior year

when I was searching for a school to go to, places to apply. They weren't [supportive]. I feel like this is a culture thing that they didn't completely understand – like paying for applications or having to apply in the first place. They weren't supportive for that kind of thing. They always just questioned: why do we have to pay this, why do we have to pay this? Why do we have to fill out these forms? Yeah they didn't feel that because of our financial situation and resident situation that I would be going to a community college nearby [instead of going to a four-year institution].

Carmen shared that her mother was hesitant to support her attendance at Central because she perceived the university to be at a remote distance despite actually being a few hours away:

Well, I get a lot of support from my mother. At first, she was kind of hesitant about my coming here since, the whole faraway thing, because I am far from her...

Oscar shared that he received support from his family and friends. His parents played a particularly important role because he was inspired by their hard work and that they wanted a better life for him than the one they had:

My support is mainly from my family, mainly my parents. When I first started going here they encouraged me. Also, my friends encourage me. We used to always get together and work on homework together. I feel pretty supported by friends and family. It gives me more motivation, especially from my parents because I see them get up at five o'clock in the morning and six o'clock, tired and go to work, and my dad comes back tired and full of mud, and he gets hurt and stuff. He tells me that he wants me to be better than him working-wise. He does not want me to go through the struggles that he is going through. That makes me want to stay in school and do better.

Lance spoke to the support he received from his parents beginning with them being an inter-racial couple coming of age in an era where the practice of segregation was the norm. Their experienced as shared with Lance served as a foundation for him to ultimately choose to attend an HBCU:

Primarily, the support of my parents - my father is of Mexican-American descent, and my mother is of Filipino descent. So, of course, that day and age when they were growing up, they were still going through segregation...Even before I

applied to Central, my father researched the entire school, and he said, hey, did you know this is a historically Black college; and I said, yeah, I know it's [a] historically Black college. He asked me how I felt about it, and I said, 'I really don't see Black, I mean, a school is a school.' I've heard great things about the institution; I heard great people came out of the institution. It sounds like a great school, let's go look at the campus. He said, okay, as long as you're comfortable with it, then I'm comfortable with it...So, my parents' support and acceptance of me attending an HBCU, and things like that; not even just my parents, but my sister as well, just having their support, having them behind me. They love to come visit the campus; they love all my friends that I met in the faculty and staff that I take on as my second mothers and fathers. They love everything, and they enjoy - they pride themselves on the fact that I chose a great institution...

Administrator Moore underscored the sentiment expressed by the Latino students regarding the role their families have played in their success. Specifically, she noted the important role that family can play throughout the college career of Latino students at a place like Central:

[F]or some of our students that commute and live nearby, they probably go and get refueled when they get home, knowing they're in their family structure, and then going back to school and get that done, and come back and get refueled, and you just do that until you graduate...

### **Summary**

Chapter 4 presented the findings of the study grounded in the data collected from participants. The major themes that emerged were presented using the campus climate framework (Milem et al., 2005). Overall, participants described a strong affinity for the institution while highlighting numerous ways to improve the experience for Latino students attending the HBCU. Chapter 5 will present a discussion of the results, implications for practice, directions for future research, and limitations of the study.

## **Chapter 5: Summary and Discussion**

In this chapter, I review the findings of the study in relationship to the literature on Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and Minority serving institutions (MSIs), college choice and transition, Latino college students, and student engagement. Discussion of implications for practice and directions for future research are also presented. Lastly, limitations of the study are provided.

The lack of research focused on Latino college students attending HBCUs and the active recruitment of Latino students by HBCUs in the South informed this study (Gasman, 2012; Turner, 2006; Roach, 2004). The specific purpose of this study was to gain insight into the experiences of Latino college students attending an HBCU in North Carolina. The following research questions framed the study:

1. What is the Latino student experience at an HBCU that is intentionally seeking to promote Latino student success?
2. How is the campus climate experienced by Latino students at an HBCU?

A qualitative methodological research approach proved appropriate for exploring the phenomenon of interest. A case study research design was used because of the parameters it provides for examining an experience within a clearly defined system (Creswell, 1998, 2003; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994, 2003). This study involved interviewing 13 students and 5 faculty and staff members to begin to understand the experiences of Latino students attending an HBCU in North Carolina.

### **Overview of Findings in Relationship to the Campus Climate Framework**

The revised campus climate framework by Milem et al. (2005) provided a theoretical lens from which to develop the study and analyze the results. The framework

provides two external and five internal dimensions from which to examine the campus climate for racial and ethnic groups on college campuses. The background of the study, literature review, and interviews with faculty and staff provided insights related to the two external dimensions, governmental-political forces and social-historical forces. The information related to the external dimensions served to provide a contextual backdrop for examining the Latino HBCU experience using the internal dimensions of the campus climate framework. The five internal dimensions of the campus climate framework (Milem et al., 2005), historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion, compositional diversity, psychological dimension, behavioral dimension, and organizational/structural dimension, were explored via interview questions asked of the student, faculty, and staff participants.

**External environment.** From a social-historical perspective, the growth of the Latino population in North Carolina has been driven by immigration from various Latin American countries, migration from other geographic regions of the United States, and a high birthrate among Latinos (Kasarda & Johnson, 2006; Lee, 2007; Pew Hispanic Center, 2005). The Latino population growth in North Carolina has forced government officials and the educational system in the state to grapple with the reality of what this increase means for the educational system (K-16; Kasarda & Johnson, 2006; Lee, 2007; Pew Hispanic Center, 2005). Furthermore, from a governmental-political perspective, the tremendous growth in the Latino population prompted state officials to challenge the University of North Carolina System and historically Black institutions in the state to do their part to prepare for a Latino college-going population that will exceed the African American college-going population in the state by 2018 (Anonymous, 2000; Anonymous, 2004; Roach, 2005, 2004). Moreover, according to Milem et al. (2005) and Hurtado et

al. (1998), external forces interact with internal forces to shape the campus climate for a given population of students. It was evident from the study that external events, including a fast-growing Latino population in North Carolina and the response by state officials to this growth is being reflected in what is happening at North Carolina Central University.

**Internal environment.** The Latino student participants mainly expressed that they were unfamiliar with the historical significance of HBCUs. Specifically, participants were unaware of the historical significance of HBCUs in increasing the educational access of African Americans. The participants gained an increased awareness of HBCUs through a seminar required of first-year students that focused on the mission and heritage of the institution within a broader historical context. Table 3 details the emergent and sub-themes revealed by the data. Generally lacking an awareness of the historical significance of HBCUs, Latino students typically enrolled at the institution for reasons related to affordability, proximity to home, welcoming environment, previous exposure to the institution, and academic accessibility (e.g., feasibility of transferring community college credits).

Related to the historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion dimension, participants described an overall positive experience once enrolled while sharing perceived benefits, if any, stemming from being a Latino student attending an HBCU. For example, some participants perceived receiving academic opportunities, financial assistance, and cultural affirmation because of their “minority” status within the HBCU environment. However, others did not perceive any benefits because of their Latino identity and felt they were treated like any other student on campus. Moreover, faculty and staff participants

expressed an informed understanding of the historical significance of HBCUs, which reflected in their rationale for serving at an HBCU. Faculty and staff's awareness of the historical context in which HBCUs were founded served to shape their views about the emerging presence of Latino students on campus.

Table 3

*Historical Legacy of Inclusion/Exclusion*

Emergent theme(s)	Sub-theme(s)
Students' understanding of the HBCU legacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrolling without regard to historical mission</li> <li>• Post-matriculation education and awareness</li> </ul>
Decision to attend an HBCU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial support provided</li> <li>• Welcoming campus</li> <li>• Close to home</li> <li>• Prior exposure to the university</li> <li>• Academically accessible</li> </ul>
Positive feelings about attending an HBCU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive academic and social environment</li> <li>• HBCU status does not matter</li> </ul>
Benefits of being a Latino Student at an HBCU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial benefits</li> <li>• No advantages as a Latino</li> </ul>
Faculty/Staff understanding of HBCU legacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision to work at an HBCU</li> <li>• Faculty-staff perspectives on Latino enrollment at NCCU</li> </ul>
Corresponding quotes	
<p><b>Nicole</b> - "I've learned that Black people, they weren't, back in the day they weren't admitted into Colleges so they made special colleges for Black people to attend. There're still quite a few [HBCUs]."</p>	
<p><b>Jennifer</b> - "I was pretty much looking at the location, and I wanted to be in the North Carolina System, but that [being an HBCU] wasn't really a main factor when I was applying for schools."</p>	
<p><b>Kristina</b> - "I was wondering how well I would fit in, but other than that it wasn't a problem. I feel perfectly fine and right [at] home every time that I go."</p>	
<p><b>Oscar</b> - "In a way, yes, because society makes it seem that the White race is more dominant over African-Americans, and Latinos, so being that an HBCU is predominantly a minority school, there is not as much racism and criticism in class and so forth, which makes the learning environment better."</p>	



The faculty and staff participants indicated that the historical mission of HBCUs to provide access to higher education was applicable to the growing Latino population in North Carolina, especially for Latino students who did not meet the academic requirements of other institutions in the University of North Carolina System or individuals looking for cultural affirmation.

The compositional dimension of the campus climate framework provided a lens from which to ascertain the perceptions of the student participants regarding the presence of Latinos at Central. Latino students described varying levels of awareness regarding the presence of other Latinos on campus. Responses ranged from students being aware of other Latino students on campus or within specific programs or classes to not having any awareness of other Latino students at Central. The lack of a noticeable Latino student presence on campus was often mentioned as a concern by Latino participants. Additionally, the participants expressed an awareness of Latino faculty who were affiliated with the Spanish department. Moreover, the presence of Latino staff was overwhelmingly within the ranks of housekeeping staff. Faculty and staff participants were cognizant of the growing presence of Latino students, but were unaware of any specific institutional efforts to recruit Latino students (See Table 4). Similar to the student participants, faculty and staff expressed that Latino staff were concentrated within housekeeping and that Latino faculty were primarily represented within the Spanish department. The faculty and staff participants expressed that more needed to be done to recruit and retain Latino faculty and professional staff. Finally, faculty and staff participants indicated that African American students would benefit from increased compositional diversity.

Table 4

*Compositional Diversity*

Emergent theme(s)	Sub-theme(s)
Participants' awareness of Latino Compositional Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting with Latino students</li> <li>• Presence of Latino faculty and staff</li> </ul>
Corresponding quotes	
<p><b>Carlos</b> - "I have a couple of Latino [friends], whom I'm taking classes with. We just happen to be in the same class."</p> <p><b>Ana</b> - "Not many [Latino students], but yes, there are some Latinos from my high school [at Central]."</p> <p><b>Luis</b> - "There are a few that live in my building or in the honors program. We talk, we have that bond, we have that connection, but it doesn't mean that we have to be best friends because of it."</p> <p><b>Carmen</b> - "No I don't. I mean I've seen some, but I haven't met any. Like I haven't talked to any people, any Latino. Because I can tell. I just look at somebody and I say oh, she's Hispanic. You know by their hair, the way their hair is, or by their skin color. By the way they speak and talk."</p> <p><b>Jennifer</b> - "I don't, no. And in my classes on campus, there were no Latino students in my classes, so that's probably the reason why I didn't interact with anyone."</p> <p><b>Nicole</b> - "I've heard of a few Spanish professors but I haven't had to take Spanish."</p> <p><b>Carmen</b> - "I've seen one custodian. I'm pretty sure she's Hispanic because I've heard her speak Spanish before."</p>	

In exploring the psychological dimension of the campus climate framework, it was important to understand how individuals viewed themselves within the campus environment and how they chose to engage on campus (See Table 5).

Table 5

*Psychological Climate*

Emergent theme(s)	Sub-theme(s)
Welcoming community at NCCU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central cares</li> <li>• Positive academic environment</li> </ul>
Perceived hospitable campus environment for Latino student involvement	
Latino student perspectives on campus diversity at NCCU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making meaning of being a Latino at an HBCU</li> <li>• Feeling different</li> </ul>

## Corresponding quotes

**Katherine** – “It’s been very fun, and I feel like I really fit in. I really like it - the people. Especially like the staff. And just the other students, they seem a lot more welcoming than all the other universities I actually went to go visit. Just the classes also work out very well. The most would be, again I was surprised to be so welcomed.”

**Monica** – “I know I made the best decision from switching from the other [institution] to this one just because of all the resources that are available to me. They check in with me, my advisor, we have mandatory meetings on a regular basis, and I didn’t have that before...I feel that they’re keeping track of me, I feel that they want me to do better and that’s what these meetings are for, to see how I’m doing, do I need help anywhere? To provide [me with] resources if I do [need them] and that’s what I like the most.”

**Kristina** – “Like I was saying, I feel like a part of the school, a little bit, because they have some diversity there. I feel right at home. Sometimes I don’t like the food, I miss my food back at home but other than that I feel like I am treated like everybody else. I enjoy my classes.”

Overall, Latino students generally described feeling comfortable on campus, although the participants provided feedback for improving their experience at the institution. The student participants expressed feeling welcomed and cared for at Central. These were sentiments that were also reflected in how the students described their academic experience at the institution, including the classroom environment.

Although Latino students described a campus environment that was not intentional about cultivating Latino student life, they generally felt comfortable and safe to participate in campus life activities. Furthermore, the participants expressed a positive attitude about how they felt as Latino students enrolled at an HBCU despite the lack of a significant presence of other Latinos on campus. In addition, the Latino student participants generally expressed that being a Latino student at the institution had personal significance, especially in terms of serving as a role model for other younger Latinos who were not yet in college.

Despite these positive sentiments, the student participants still noted the need to have Latino faculty and staff on campus who could understand the diversity in their cultural backgrounds and experiences as Latino college students. Additionally, several participants described feeling different and isolated at times, as if they were the only Latino student on campus. This sentiment was expressed by students who were not well connected with either Latino or African American students. These students tended not to be aware of other Latino students on campus and felt disconnected from African American students highlighting how the perceived lack of compositional diversity contributes to feelings of not belonging (Milem et al., 2005). Lastly, the faculty and staff participants indicated that while the number of Latino students has increased on campus, the institution has not adequately addressed the campus climate for said students.

The behavioral dimension of the campus climate framework accounts for the quality of interactions between and among groups on a college campus (Milem et al., 2005). Latino students tended to describe having positive interactions with African American and Latino students inside and outside of the classroom. For Latino students

residing off campus, peer interaction was typically regulated to the classroom environment. Moreover, the faculty and staff participants noted that Latino students who were involved with campus life seemed to benefit by having frequent contact and quality interactions with African American students (See Table 6).

Table 6

*Behavioral Dimension*

Emergent theme(s)	Sub-theme(s)
The quality of student engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making connections across differences</li> <li>• Black-Brown student relationships</li> <li>• Interactions between Latino students</li> <li>• Interacting with faculty and staff</li> </ul>
Campus engagement through participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Latino student involvement</li> <li>• Inclusive campus activities</li> </ul>
Corresponding quotes	

**Rubi** – “The three students that I interact with frequently are seniors, and it has been great, but because they are seniors, they are about to be gone. They have helped guide me in certain things. They have experience with the campus, and they have been telling me where I need to go and what I need to do in different cases. They have been a great help during this time. They are very nice people, but they are about to be gone from Central in a few months.”

**Oscar** – “It is difficult to make new friends, especially with African-Americans. I just feel like they do not actually want to talk to anybody that is not their race.” He noted, “Most African-American friends that I have made I am helping them with their Spanish class.”

**Ana** - “I mean there’s not really a big interaction [with African-Americans] because there are few Latinos that attend Central... We get along; we give them a little more insight [into Latinos]. I know they have some questions, especially because most of them [African-Americans] major or take Spanish classes. I see some of them are really intrigued about, you know being in Spanish clubs for things like that, so they do come up, and you know, ask me all kinds of questions, and they want to talk about all the extracurricular activities regarding Latin culture. I feel like some of them do, but because there is not really much attention put into these clubs, I think because of the lack of Latinos that they wish that they could participate if there were more resources. I think their interaction between each other is just like any other person, so that’s it.”

The organizational/structural dimensions of North Carolina Central University (NCCU) were explored, including the institutional structures, processes, and practices that impact the campus climate for Latino students. NCCU contained an objective in its Strategic Plan of 2004-2009 aimed at enhancing the learning environment by increasing the diversity of the student body while also instituting initiatives meant to foster an environment conducive to a diverse student community (NCCU, 2004). Table provides details about the NCCU organizational and structural dimensions.

Table 7

*Organizational/Structural Dimension*

Emergent theme(s)	Sub-theme(s)
Challenging and supportive campus environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural isolation</li> </ul>
Structural factors contributing to student success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central faculty, staff, and students making a difference</li> <li>• The need to develop institutional cultural competencies</li> </ul>
Strengthening the organizational structure for Latino students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing Latino student life and services</li> <li>• Recruiting Latinos</li> <li>• Partnering with Latino students to recruit Latinos</li> <li>• The role of financial support in the recruitment of Latino students</li> <li>• Cultivating outreach to Latino families</li> </ul>
Corresponding quotes	
<p><b>Carmen</b> – “I'm different obviously from an African-American student here, but I wouldn't say I have any challenges. Just that sometimes I feel like I need somebody who's like me, you know. And I don't have that here; I haven't found that here yet. I'm talking about mostly students who can hang out with and interact with you know, study with because obviously, I would feel more comfortable, so I would do more things with them.”</p>	
<p><b>Sarah</b> – “My criminal justice professor, he helps us a lot - like his students. My academic advisor, he makes sure you're on the right track and makes sure that I get good grades. Their advice, their positive statements, and their suggestions on how to be successful [have been helpful].”</p>	

Though there were no specific institutional initiatives intended to foster Latino student life on campus, the organizational/structural environment of the institution seemed conducive to supporting Latino student success, although there is room for improvement. Latino students who participated in the study described a challenging and supportive environment in which they felt cared for and supported in their educational pursuits, in particular by their faculty and some administrative staff.

The sentiment of “support” was affirmed by the faculty and staff participants who described the formation of informal faculty/staff networks that included individuals who reached out to and supported Latino students. Some frustration was expressed regarding a few administrative offices, but it appeared that issues were generally experienced by all students at the University rather than just Latino students. Even though students described having a positive experience overall, they noted the need for cultivating Latino student life on campus. For some student participants, the availability of a Latino student organization could minimize the degree of cultural isolation experienced by a number of the students. Additionally, faculty and staff participants noted the need for the institution to facilitate the development of cultural competencies at NCCU in order to better serve Latino students. Lastly, students shared strategies that could strengthen the organizational structure in support of Latino students. For example, the establishment of partnerships between the institution and students could assist in increasing the enrollment of Latino students.

### **Discussion of Findings in Relationship to the Literature**

The campus climate framework by Milem et al. (2005) guided this study. The following five key categories emerged from this case study that explored the experiences

of Latino students attending North Carolina Central University: decision to attend an HBCU, transition to Central, cultural fit, benefits of diversity, and campus engagement. Specifically, these five key categories consist of the decision-making process for enrolling at an HBCU, acclimating to an educational environment that places an emphasis on the African American student experience, fitting in culturally in an environment that honors African American culture and history, the institutional benefits of diversity derived from the increasing presence of Latinos on campus, and the level of engagement exhibited by Latino students as an emerging minority group at a historically Black institution. The five key categories depict the continuum of Latino student participants from the point of choosing to attend an HBCU to being immersed in the HBCU experience. The five key categories are discussed in relationship to the literature to provide insight into a phenomenon in which little is known and a lack of research exists: the experiences of Latino students who enroll at an HBCU (See Table 8).

**Decision to attend an HBCU.** As an institution of higher education, Central was perceived by the student participants as a University that could meet their academic and personal needs, whether or not they were academically high-achieving. The students were generally unaware of the historical significance of attending an HBCU, but tended to be aware that the institution was a predominantly Black institution. As a result, the HBCU status of the institution did not appear to weigh heavily in their decision to enroll at Central. However, for some participants, the make-up of the institution as predominantly Black was a factor in their decision to enroll (i.e., it was not a PWI). The student participants noted the following reasons for choosing to attend Central over other



colleges: perceived financial value of attending NCCU, welcoming campus environment, academically accessible, and close proximity to home.

Table 8

*Mapping of Key Categories to Campus Climate Framework*

Campus Climate Framework	Key Categories
Historical Legacy of Inclusion/Exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision making process to attend HBCU</li> <li>• Acclimation to the HBCU environment</li> <li>• Experienced cultural dissonance</li> <li>• Latino student engagement in the HBCU environment</li> </ul>
Compositional Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision making process to attend HBCU</li> <li>• Acclimation to the HBCU environment</li> <li>• Experienced cultural dissonance</li> <li>• Latino student engagement in the HBCU environment</li> </ul>
Psychological Dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acclimation to the HBCU environment</li> <li>• Experienced cultural dissonance</li> <li>• Latino student engagement in the HBCU environment</li> </ul>
Behavioral Dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acclimation to the HBCU environment</li> <li>• Experienced cultural dissonance</li> <li>• Resulting benefits of diversity from increased Latino student enrollment</li> <li>• Latino student engagement in the HBCU environment</li> </ul>
Organizational/Structural Dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision making process to attend HBCU</li> <li>• Resulting benefits of diversity from increased Latino student enrollment</li> <li>• Latino student engagement in the HBCU environment</li> </ul>

***Financial value.*** The lower average cost of tuition and the perceived level of financial aid awarded were factors that contributed to students enrolling at the institution. Public and private HBCUs have on average lower tuition, room, and board costs than traditionally White institutions (Thurgood Marshall College Fund, 2008; O'Brien &

Zudak, 1998). Accordingly, given the focus of HBCUs on access, these institutions also have on average a higher percentage of students on financial aid; 86% overall with 41% of students receiving Pell Grants (Nealy, 2009; O'Brien & Zudak, 1998; Thurgood Marshall College Fund, 2008). At Central, over 5,500 students received grants and scholarships for the 2011-2012 academic-year with close to 80% receiving Federal Pell grant awards (North Carolina Central University, 2012). Wenglinsky (1997) compared the college choice process of students who chose to enroll at an HBCU versus a PWI and found that students were more likely to choose an HBCU because of the “generous financial aid package” (p. 96) received and lower tuition rates. In another study exploring the college choice process of African American high school students considering HBCUs and PWIs, Freeman (1999) noted that the availability of financial aid weighed heavily in the decision making process.

Gasman et al. (2007) noted that White students have come to “realize the economic bargain that many Black colleges offer – a sound education with a low tuition” (p. 7). Furthermore, two student participants who were not U.S. citizens indicated that efforts by Central to identify private scholarship funding made it possible for them to enroll at the institution. Although efforts on a national level to pass the DREAM (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) Act have failed in Congress some states have passed or considered versions of the measure (Sullivan, 2007). Overall, the current hostile environment regarding immigration on a national level is not conducive to students who are not U.S. citizens to benefit from traditional financial aid programs and in-state tuition rates, which makes pursuing a college education difficult (National Council of La Raza, 2003; O'Brien & Zudak, 1998).

*Welcoming campus environment.* Gasman (2008) and O'Brien and Zudak (1998) have noted that minority serving institutions (MSIs) enroll the majority of students of color. Additionally, O'Brien and Zudak (1998) stated, "One reason for the MSI enrollment gains is that these institutions have succeeded in meeting the special needs of African American, Hispanic, Asian and American Indian students. Although these groups are different in many ways, they also share several common characteristics" (O'Brien & Zudak, 1998, p. 7). The student participants in this study indicated that they chose to attend Central because they perceived that the environment would be more welcoming of them as minority students in comparison to attending a PWI, which they assumed would be more hostile. According to Ancis, Sedlacek, and Mohr (2000) and Nora and Cabrera (1996), the perception of racial prejudice may negatively impact the college experience of minority students attending PWIs, thus perhaps making HBCUs a more attractive option. Rendón, Garcia, and Person (2004) noted that the perceptions that students of color have about the educational environment are important, especially if students experience culture shock, feelings of inadequacy, a lack of confidence, feelings of isolation, and perceive being stereotyped or discriminated against.

*Academic accessibility.* In reflecting about their decision to attend Central, a number of the student participants noted that the HBCU environment was one where they could see themselves academically. Some of the participants were attracted to Central because the institution had a good academic reputation, learning communities like the honors program, an honors living and learning community, and a University College unit that focused on student success during the first and second year of college. Additionally, a couple of student participants applied to Central because they believed the institution

had lower academic expectations because it was an HBCU. According to Gasman (2008), a disproportionate percentage of students of color enroll at Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) despite their exponential growth within the general college-going population. Furthermore, students of color, in particular, African American, Latino, and American Indian students face unique barriers that could play a role in their college-choice process (Gasman, 2008; O'Brien & Zudak, 1998). Many students of color may consider or choose to attend an MSI due to these barriers, which includes experiencing educational disparities prior to arriving on campus and enrolling as non-full-time degree-seeking students (O'Brien & Zudak, 1998).

*Proximity to home.* For a number of the student participants, the proximity of Central to their home was a key factor in choosing to attend the institution; 11 of the 13 participants were from North Carolina, either residing locally or within a reasonable driving distance (i.e., 1 to 3 hours). In traditional Latino culture, concern for the family tends to be an important factor in the college-choice process for Latino students (Dayton, Gonzalez-Vasquez, Martinez, & Plum, 2004). Oftentimes, Latino students weigh their educational options against their familial obligations, while often opting to attend college closer to home (Nelson Laird, Bridges, Morelon-Quainoo, Williams, & Holmes, 2007). Additionally, in the case of African American students who attend HBCUs, Freeman (1999) noted that financial considerations influence their decision to attend college close to home. Furthermore, O'Brien and Zudak (1998) reported that first-year students attending public HBCUs were more likely to attend an institution 10 miles or less from their place of residence than first-year students enrolled at other types of institutions.

**Transition to college.** Students often recalled initial experiences at Central as being pivotal in terms of assisting in their overall transition into and through the institution. For a couple of the student participants, previous exposure to the institution aided their transition to the institution. In a number of cases, participation in new student orientation allowed for informal connections to be made between Latino students. Additionally, some of the student participants indicated that they were able to be successful at Central because they received advice and guidance very early on from individuals associated with University College, an academic unit with the mission of assisting in the transition of first and second-year students through the University. For several others, participating in a living learning community during their first semester proved beneficial due to making connections with other Latino students and African American students. Furthermore, a required first-year seminar assisted the student participants in learning about the historical significance of the institution as an HBCU. Moreover, the students indicated that they experienced an easier transition into the university because the faculty, staff, and students who they engaged with were generally welcoming.

Literature that focuses on how students experience college indicates that practitioners should pay special attention to how students transition into college (Barefoot, 2000; Clark, 2005; Guiffrida, 2009; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Hurtado, Carter, & Spuler, 1996; Tinto, 2005). Tinto (2005) noted the importance of establishing the right institutional conditions that foster student success, especially during the first year of college. Hurtado and Carter (1997) stated, “An initial orientation to a college's social, academic, and physical geographies is essential to students feeling that they belong in

their college” (p. 339). Barefoot (2000) provided an overview of key components that should be present during a student’s first year, which includes student engagement with their peers and faculty members. Guiffrida (2009) examined the relevancy of human developmental theories for supporting students through their transition to college. She suggested that in addition to providing students with adequate academic preparation, funding, and information about the college transition process that considering human development theories can be helpful in terms of supporting students as they transition through college and in the development of programmatic interventions. Therefore, in the case of Latino students attending HBCUs, consideration has to be given to the campus climate and types of programs that aid their transition to college.

Hurtado et al. (1996) noted that the college transition process for Latino students contributes to the development of feelings of attachment to the institution and their academic, social, and personal-emotional adjustment. Additionally, they underscored that the transition process for Latino college students is influenced in various ways by the campus climate. Specifically, Hurtado et al. (1996) indicated that the quality of the transition during the first year for Latino students contributes to developing the competencies needed for a successful transition to the second year of college. Furthermore, they stressed that attention should be paid to the relational dynamics between Latinos and students from other racial/ethnic groups because peer interaction can have a significant negative or positive impact on their transition to the institution. Hurtado et al. (1996) recommended the implementation of programs that facilitate intergroup interactions and understanding, versus simply allowing Latino students and

the majority group to adjust to one another, in order to minimize the development of issues that can negatively affect the college transition experience for Latino students.

Hurtado et al. (1996) indicated that the extent to which Latino students engage with students from diverse racial/ethnic groups can assist in the college transition process. Specifically, they found that the quality of cross-racial interactions can influence how Latino students feel about the campus racial climate, and in the process impacting their transition to the institution positively or negatively. Furthermore, they emphasized the role that upper-class students, including resident assistants, can play in the successful transition of Latino students to the institution. Hurtado et al. (1996) also stressed that there is value in connecting first-year Latino students with each other, but the real benefit comes from the wisdom gained by first-year Latino students from upper-class students.

*Learning communities.* After the completion of an orientation program, the transition experience typically continues with a number of different programs and initiatives that serve to assist students with their adjustment to college, both academically and socially (Barefoot, 2000), contributing to a sense of belonging to the institution. Such programs include joining a first-year living learning community (LLC) or a learning community (LC) that does not have a residential component. Several of the Latino students participated in a living learning honors program, which assisted the students with the transition process, college adjustment, connecting with other Latino students, engaging cross-culturally with non-Latinos, and being exposed to institutional resources. Living learning communities have been described as “programs in which undergraduate students live together in a discrete portion of a residence hall (or the entire hall) and

participate in academic and/or extra-curricular programming designed especially for them” (Inkelas, 2008, p. I-2). Additionally, Inkelas and Weisman (2003) noted that students participating in LLCs were more likely to achieve higher outcomes and become involved on campus than students who did not participate in LLCs.

In a study examining African American student persistence in relation to a first-year honors learning community at an HBCU, Reames, Anekwe, Wang, and Witte (2011, p.3) stated that students who participate in LLCs experience “strengthened campus tolerance for different cultural, ethnic, and gender groups. In these communities, students are required to work together in mutually positive ways within their classes. They must embrace students from backgrounds different from their own”. In the case of the Latino participants who lived in the honors LLC, the experience of living and learning together with students who were different from themselves provided meaningful and comfortable opportunities to engage cross-culturally, in the process, aiding their transition to the institution. The findings of this study support the potential that living learning communities have for assisting in the transition and adjustment of Latino students attending HBCUs.

Inkelas, Daver, Vogt, and Leonard (2007) highlighted the importance of the transition experience for first-generation college students who often face numerous challenges in the process of obtaining their degrees. Inkelas et al. (2007) results indicated that first-generation college students who participated in LLCs were more likely to have an easier transition than similar students who did not participate in an LLC. Given the saliency of diversity-related issues experienced by Latino students who matriculate at a historically Black institution, LLCs appear to have the potential to assist Latino students



with their transition to an HBCU environment, but as noted previously, further research is needed.

*First-year seminars.* First-year seminars hold great potential for assisting Latino students with transitioning to an HBCU environment, especially as it pertains to having a shared learning experience regarding the historical significance of HBCUs. Additionally, first-year seminars can be instrumental in terms of helping students learn about campus resources and providing cross-cultural learning opportunities. Student participants noted how their required Dimensions of Learning seminar helped with their transition to Central, which included learning about NCCU's role as an HBCU, both historically and contemporarily.

According to Barefoot (2000), the majority of higher education institutions in the U.S. offer first-year seminars to assist students in their transition to college. Clark (2005) noted that regardless of the type of first-year seminar, these learning communities typically have three main objectives: "developing academic skills, providing an orientation to campus resources and services, and facilitating self-exploration/personal development" (p. 310). Keup and Barefoot (2005), in a study using longitudinal data from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program, concluded that first-year seminars are effective for helping first-year students in their transition to college.

*Welcoming faculty, staff, and students.* Latino student participants generally expressed feeling welcomed at Central. Closson and Henry (2008a&b) found that the participants in their study, focused on the transition of White students to an HBCU, expressed feeling underrepresented at the HBCU, but they indicated feeling welcomed and having good support from faculty at the institution. This finding differs from what

the research has reported regarding the hostile campus environment often experienced by African American and Latino college students attending PWIs (Ancis, Sedlacek, & Mohr, 2000; Jones, Castellanos, & Cole, 2002; Nora & Cabrera, 1996). Specifically, Closson and Henry (2008a&b) noted that White students who were in the minority at an HBCU did not experience the overt acts of racism that have been historically experienced by students of color at PWIs. An earlier study by Hall and Closson (2005) studied the experiences of White graduate students who attended an HBCU, which yielded similar results to the follow-up study in 2008. Hall and Closson (2005) found that initial concerns held by the White graduate students about being a minority student in the HBCU environment were tempered by the positive nature of their transition to the institution. The sense of comfort experienced by the White undergraduate (Closson & Henry, 2008) and graduate students (Hall & Closson, 2005) who attended an HBCU in both studies was similar to the feelings of connectedness experienced by Latino students who attended an HBCU in Texas (Davies, 2007).

**Cultural fit.** According to Coffey (1999), “[C]ultures are not in themselves homogeneous, and never were. So who is a stranger or a member, an outsider or an insider, a knower or an ignoramus is all relative and much more blurred than conventional accounts might have believe” (p. 22). Furthermore, Lee (2002) stated, “[M]ajority and minority race participants in higher education must recognize the power of culture on the institution’s climate, and the extent to which culture and climate either promote or deter equal opportunity for the...educational success of diverse peoples” (pp. 366-367).

Despite the minority group status of Latinos among a predominantly African American population at Central, the student participants all had different perspectives regarding their sense of fitting in culturally within the institution. Some student participants indicated feeling at home at the institution whereas others noted that they felt culturally invisible, which sheds light on the psychological climate (Milem et al., 2005) for the Latino student participants. The Latino participants wanted to fit in culturally in an educational environment different from anything they had experienced before. The student participants seemed to have an awareness of their presence on campus as Latino students while striving to form connections on campus, whether specifically within the classroom or broader campus environment. Latino students who resided on campus appeared more conscious of cultural differences between them and their African American peers than Latino students who commuted to Central. Commuters mainly referenced the classroom environment as their point of reference when reflecting on their experience at the institution whereas residential Latino students had a perspective that extended to the broader campus environment (e.g., acknowledging the lack of and longing for familiar Latino foods in the school cafeteria). Another example includes an Afro-Latino student participant who fitted in culturally in ways that were different from other Latino students who expressed feeling isolated, because he had parents who attended an HBCU and was perceived as Black by fellow students.

Davies (2007) used Anzaldua's (1999) concept of "borderlands consciousness" as a lens for understanding the experiences of Latino students seeking teacher certification at an HBCU in Texas. Anzaldua (1999) stated that the "borderlands are physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races

occupy the same territory, where under, low, middle and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy” (p. 19). As a result, Davies (2007) argued that the traditional “Black-White binary” used to view race relations was no longer appropriate for understanding the shared experiences of African American and Latino students, both of whom are striving for an equitable education within a societal system that has placed them at the margins (p. 250).

For Davies (2007), HBCUs from a historical perspective represent an educational space at the margins of higher education where Black and Latino students bring with them multiple identities and cultural experiences that serve to inform how they navigate the institutional “borders” they encounter (p. 251). These borders influence how they make meaning of their interactions with each other inside and outside of the campus environment (Davies, 2007). Davies concluded that unlike other studies, which report that students of color on predominantly White campuses are “committing cultural suicide” (Hernandez & Jacobs, 2004, p. 10) at times in order to assimilate into the dominant culture her participants did not exhibit signs of “dissociating from their families and communities to attend” (Davies, 2007, p. 283). Although my student participants longed for cultural affirmation and structures that supported them as Latino students, I did not detect that they, including Afro-Latino participants, wanted to suppress their cultural identities in order to fit into an educational environment that was highly shaped by its history as an HBCU.

Considerable research has studied the experiences of White students attending HBCUs (Hall & Closson, 2005; Closson & Henry, 2008b; Peterson & Hamrick, 2009); however, few studies have explored the experience of Latino students attending HBCUs.

Peterson and Hamrick (2009) explored the experiences and racial consciousness of full-time White male undergraduates attending a public HBCU in the South. Their findings showed that White students encountered a welcoming classroom and campus environment, but challenges were also experienced due to coming to terms with their minority student status and developing an awareness of their White privilege. Socially, the White students in the study turned to a predominantly White institution/community located nearby in order to engage in a social scene that was culturally reflective of the social/party scene they were accustomed to prior to enrolling at the HBCU (Peterson & Hamrick, 2009). Similarly, Closson and Henry (2008) noted the difficulty that White students experienced as a result of negotiating their minority student status within an HBCU environment where they felt generally comfortable, but had to deal with the awareness that some Black students felt that Whites were inherently racist.

**Benefits of diversity for Black and Latino students.** HBCUs have been challenged by different internal and external reasons to diversify their student bodies (Closson & Henry, 2008; Brown, 2002; Outcalt & Skewes-Cox, 2002). Furthermore, some have argued that the historical legacy of inclusion at HBCUs serves as a rationale for welcoming other student groups who have historically been marginalized (Jewell, 2002). Faculty and staff participants noted that African American students, in particular, stood to benefit from the increased exposure to Latino students and diversity in general given what awaited them when joining the workforce in addition to a society whose demographics are changing rapidly, locally and globally. Faculty and staff participants acknowledged that the benefits that could be derived from exposure to diversity,

specifically through engagement with Latino faculty and administrative staff, is an area where the institution is greatly lacking.

Given the case made for cross-cultural learning by faculty and staff participants, Milem et al. (2005) stated that diversity is about, “engagement across racial and ethnic lines comprised of a broad and varied set of activities and initiatives” (p. 4). They further noted that, “campus communities that are more racially and ethnically diverse tend to create more richly varied educational experiences that enhance students’ learning and better prepare them for participation in a democratic society” (Milem et al., 2005, p. 6). Therefore, if African American students are to benefit educationally from the presence of Latino students, more intentionality needs to occur with increasing and managing the institution’s compositional diversity (Milem et al., 2005).

According to Mayhew, Grunwald, and Dey (2005), “Part of the process involved with identifying and making sense of the factors that contribute to creating a positive climate for diversity on campus involves soliciting information from all members of the campus community” (p. 64). Furthermore, Hurtado et al. (1999) noted, “An important principle underlying this conceptualization of the climate for diversity is that different racial/ethnic groups often view the campus differently, a fact that has been confirmed in numerous studies” (p. 3). In the case of Latino students at Central, they described the benefits they would gain by having more Latino faculty and staff on campus who could relate to them from a cultural perspective and better understand their experiences as Latino students at the institution. The Latino student participants described feeling culturally isolated due to the lack of opportunities to connect with Latinos on campus. The student participants also described engaging with African American peers who

lacked an awareness of the racial and ethnic diversity of Latinos. Milem et al., (2005) stated that Latino students who perceive a lack of institutional commitment for diversity are more likely to experience “higher levels of alienation...and lower scores on college adjustment and sense of belonging...” (p. 11).

Several of the Latino participants described the educational benefits derived from attending an HBCU such as learning about the diversity in the African American community. In addition, they also noted the educational benefits of engaging with other types of students at Central (e.g., White and international students). Some of the student participants described feeling proud to attend Central because they were adding to the diversity of the campus and in the process serving as role models for future Latino students (i.e., paving the way for others). Student, faculty, and staff participants described a need for an increase in the compositional diversity of Latino faculty, staff, and students. The participants also shared examples of the benefits that Latino students received as a result of engaging in cross-cultural interactions, in particular with African American students and non-Latino faculty (e.g., a Latino student who resides in the honors LLC or who is the only Latino on one of the institution’s sports teams;(Antonio, 2001).

**Student engagement.** Despite the absence of a formal Latino student life, student participants described being involved in the campus environment, which was generally viewed as hospitable. The majority of the student participants described being involved with a broad range of activities, which included community service, Greek life, and student government. In addition, the students highlighted the benefits of engaging with peers in the classroom, particularly in terms of academic success and establishing peer

relationships. Interview questions tried to ascertain the nature of the relationships between Latinos students and African American students, Latino students, and faculty/staff. Overall, the student participants generally described having quality interactions inside and outside of the classroom with their peers regardless of whether they were Black or Latino. Faculty and staff participants noted that Latino students who made the effort to become involved on campus appeared to have better relationships with African American students than Latino students who kept to themselves. However, for a few of the student participants, their status as a commuter or non-traditional student made it difficult for them to be involved with campus activities and to engage consistently with fellow students, Latino or African American, outside of the classroom environment. Moreover, student participants generally described having positive experiences engaging with faculty and staff at Central, in particular, with those who appeared to be committed to their success and who made themselves easily accessible.

Research on college student development indicates that the time and effort a college student dedicates to meaningful activities can influence their development cognitively and personally (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Hurtado and Carter (1997) noted that involvement in different types of campus related activities contributes to the college adjustment of Latino students and the development of connections to an institution. Specifically, Hurtado and Carter (1997) noted that involvement in religious and external community-based organizations appear to contribute to Latino students having a stronger sense of connection to their institution. Additionally, Hurtado and Carter (1997) reported that religious and external community-based organizations provide Latino students with the opportunity to stay connected with



their community of origin and helps make the adjustment to college more meaningful (e.g., tutoring low-income Latino students at a local elementary school). Several of the student participants mentioned factors that made their experience at Central meaningful, which included Central's involvement in the community, which they appreciated, and the community service requirement that the institution has of its students. As such, the internal and external environments should be examined when seeking to assist Latino students in their transition to an HBCU environment.

Nelson Laird et al. (2007) conducted an examination of National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data to determine how well PWIs and MSIs serve African American and Latino students. Because of their historical legacy, HBCUs were deemed to be better suited than PWIs for engaging and contributing to the success of African American students (Nelson Laird et al., 2007; Outcalt & Skewes-Cox, 2002). In the case of Latino students, Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) when compared to PWIs were found to not contribute significantly to the engagement and success of Latino students based on the following measures: "active and collaborative, learning, supportive campus environment, higher-order thinking, student-faculty interaction, and satisfaction with college" (Nelson Laird et al., 2007, p. 51). Though further research is needed to determine the role of engagement on Latino student success at HBCUs, these findings raise questions regarding whether Latino students stand to benefit from their matriculation at an HBCU in similar ways to African American students who have benefited as a result of an HBCU legacy that reflects a commitment to their success both in college and in society.

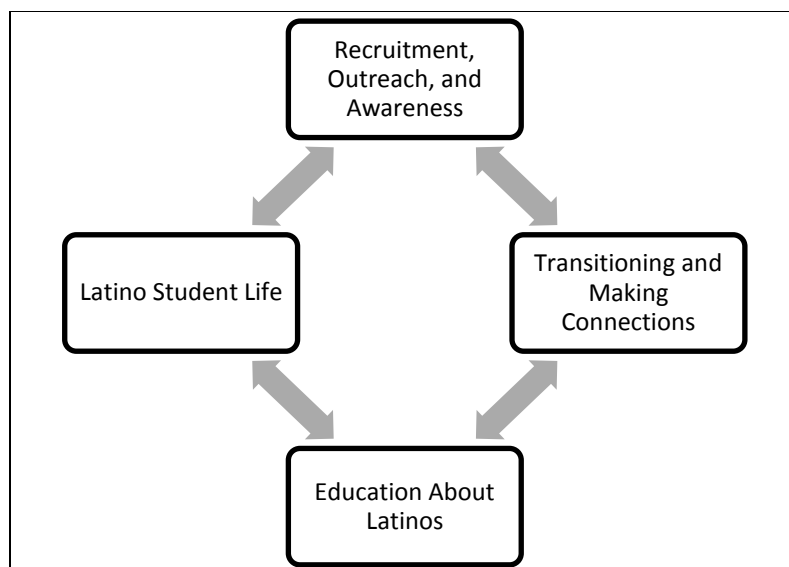
Strayhorn (2010) examined the influence of faculty-student relationships on the satisfaction of White undergraduates attending HBCUs. Findings indicated a positive correlation between the quality of student-faculty interactions and satisfaction with the HBCU experience (Strayhorn, 2010). While White HBCU students are considered to be part of the majority racial group in society differing from Latinos as a societal minority group, this study provides a rationale to explore further the influence of student-faculty relationships on the satisfaction of Latino students within an HBCU environment. The Latino participants generally felt satisfied with their experience at Central in part due to the positive exchanges they had with their professors, despite the cultural isolation expressed by the participants and the perceived lack of Latinos on campus.

Bridges, Cambridge, Kuh, and Leegwater (2005), studied student engagement at Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) participating in the BEAMS (Building Engagement and Attainment for Minority Students) initiative. BEAMS is a multi-year collaboration between the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), funded by the Lumina Foundation for Education intended to reduce the gap in higher education attainment for African Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians (Bridges et al., 2005). Specifically, BEAMS was developed to support the collection and use of data to "...guide and support MSI campuses in undertaking systematic changes that would positively influence student engagement, learning, and success" (Bridges et al., 2005, p. 32). Findings related to the BEAMS project included encouraging the use of data in institutional planning and providing faculty and staff with professional development opportunities to learn how to use data in the process of identifying strategies and solutions that can contribute to the

success of African American, Hispanic, and American Indian students at MSIs (Bridges et al., 2005). HBCUs should use pertinent data to inform their response to the growing presence of Latino students, similar to the recommendations offered by Bridges et al. for Minority Serving Institutions. In the case of Central, assessing the campus climate can provide insights regarding the experiences of Latino students as well as the services needed to support their overall success at the institution.

### **Implications for Practice**

Implications for practice are shared based on the findings of this study. Although the findings from this study may not be applicable to every HBCU institution, the results certainly provide practitioners with insights regarding strategies that can be used to support the Latino HBCU experience and maybe transferable to other contexts. The findings of this study identified five critical areas to focus on when seeking to conduct outreach and provide support to Latino students within an HBCU context: the college decision making process, transition to the institution, cultural fit, benefits of diversity, and campus engagement. These five areas informed the development of the HBCU Latino Engagement Model intended to foster Latino student engagement during the college decision process and while transitioning to and during college. Furthermore, the model places an emphasis on educating the campus community about Latinos in order to address issues related to cultural awareness in the process noting the educational benefits that are derived when African American and Latino students engage with one another in an HBCU setting. Lastly, the model highlights the importance of developing Latino student life and engaging with Latino alumni (see Figure 5).



*Figure 5.* HBCU Latino engagement model.

**Recruitment, outreach, and awareness.** It was clear that the Latino students in the study were not fully aware of the historical significance of HBCUs until they took a required first-year seminar course that exposed them to the history of Central and to the significance of it being an HBCU. The student participants noted that they chose to enroll at Central due to the proximity of their home to the institution and because it was a good financial value. In some cases, participants were discouraged from attending because Central's status as an HBCU was questioned by friends or loved ones. Although Central noted in its strategic plan a desire to recruit Latino students, the findings did not support an intentional focus on increasing the enrollment of Latino students.

To increase the recruitment of Latino students, one recommendation would be to create a formal recruitment plan that involves educating Latino high school students about the historical significance and relevancy of an HBCU education for them as Latinos. The recruitment plan should include time-tested programs that are offered at other non-HBCU institutions, which includes outreach to Latino parents and families in

the college-going process (Auerbach, 2004). One example of such a program is the Future and Families (F&F) program, a college access program designed to foster literacy about the college-going process among the parents of first-generation Latino college students (Auerbach, 2004).

Programs designed to increase the awareness of Latino parents can address a variety of issues, including campus safety, cultural, and social norms on campus, and the financial aid process (Auerbach, 2004), as well as information about the historical significance and relevancy of an HBCU education. Central and other HBCUs should consider asking currently enrolled Latino students to assist prospective students and their parents, which could result in the formation of important connections with individuals on campus. In addition, currently enrolled Latino students can assist their peers, after enrolling, in having a positive experience at the institution.

Though the percentage of Latino students has increased significantly over the last decade at Central, the compositional diversity (Milem et al., 2005) at the institution is such that the student participants would routinely go long periods of time without seeing other Latino students on a campus of 8,400 students. As a result, recruitment goals for Latino students should be adopted in order to achieve a critical mass. This recommendation coincides with an objective in Central's Strategic Plan that underscores enhancing the learning environment for all students by increasing the compositional diversity of the student body, while continuing its historical mission of educating African American students. However, with a critical mass also comes the institutional responsibility of determining "how much diversity is enough to achieve the educational

benefits of diversity” (Milem et al., 2005, p. 16) and what organizational structures are needed to support institutional diversity outcomes.

There is also a concurrent need for increased outreach and recruitment of Latino faculty and staff. The student participants regularly commented on their desire to have Latino faculty and staff employed at the institution who could understand and appreciate their lived experiences prior to and during their time at Central. Faculty, staff, and student participants noted that the few Latino faculty members on campus were concentrated within the Spanish department and Latino staff members primarily served as housekeepers and food servers. Specifically, faculty and staff participants were not aware of anyone within the administrative ranks who identified as Latino or who identified by their Latin American country of origin.

Milem et al. (2005) suggested that “having a diverse faculty ensures that students see people of color in roles of authority and as role models or mentors” (p. 25). Faculty of color are more likely than other faculty to include diversity-related content in their courses and to incorporate active learning and student-centered pedagogy (Astin et al., 1997; Milem et al., 2005). To diversify the faculty, a coherent and sustained faculty diversity initiative must exist for progress to be made. However, it is important to note that the majority of the student participants indicated that they had favorable interactions with Black and White faculty inside and outside of the classroom as well as meaningful interactions with Black and White administrative staff. The student participants expressed a longing to interact with someone like themselves while still speaking positively about their interactions with non-Latino faculty and staff on campus. Central has the opportunity to build upon the existing commitment to student success held by

current faculty and staff by beginning the process of recruiting Latino faculty and staff who traditionally have not considered serving at an HBCU, but who are also committed to the personal and academic success of underrepresented students in higher education.

***Recruitment practices at other HBCUs.*** As noted in Chapter 1, HBCUs are actively recruiting Latino students to assist with meeting enrollment goals, diversifying their student bodies, and positioning themselves to be a viable educational option for the fastest growing segment of the population (Anonymous, 2000; Anonymous, 2004; Roach, 2005, 2004). In its strategic plan, Central called for implementing programs and activities to help prepare and attract students from the local Latino community (NCCU Strategic Plan, 2004).

Though this particular study focuses on one institution in North Carolina, other HBCUs have been actively recruiting Latino students during the past decade (Roach, 2005). Examples of the recruitment strategies used by other HBCUs include: hiring Spanish-speaking college recruiters (Tennessee State University, Howard University, and Winston-Salem State University); targeting high schools with a predominant Latino student population (Central State University and Morehouse College); advertising in publications that cater to Latinos (Hampton University and Johnson C. Smith University); establishing partnerships with Latino community-based organizations (Kentucky State University); translating recruitment and financial-aid materials into Spanish (Delaware State University); hiring a full-time position to teach English as a second language to faculty and staff (Prairie View A&M University); and working with campus-based Latino student organizations to make the campus more inviting to prospective Latino students (Texas Southern University).

**Transitions and connections.** In addition to focusing on the recruitment of Latino students, attention should be given to the student transition process because the creation of meaningful connections with peers and faculty is vital to the quality of their educational experience (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2007). Colleges should design specific programs and intentional experiences for Latino students to meet and engage with each other (Astin, 1993). A couple of the student participants noted that their experience during new student orientation was a time when they began to formulate informal connections with other Latino students. Additionally, several others mentioned the difference that their first-year seminar made during their college transition due to increasing their awareness of the relevancy of receiving an HBCU/Central education. As such, Central has the opportunity to evaluate and enhance existing programs (e.g., orientation) and services to improve the transition experience for Latino students entering the institution in order to ensure their engagement and success.

Excelencia in Education (2012) recognized a program at a PWI that serves as a model for addressing the access and retention of Latino college students in part because it has a full-time staff member who focuses on enhancing the orientation experience of Latino students and parents alike, while increasing students' awareness about the scholastic and cultural contributions of individuals of Latin American descent. Hiring a full-time staff member who is charged with recruiting Latino students and aiding in the student's college transition would assist Central in achieving its strategic goals.

Approximately half of the student participants lived on campus whereas the other half lived off campus, which is reflective of Central's larger student body. Latino students affiliated with the honors living learning program described having an



overwhelmingly positive experience in terms of connecting with the institution, other Latino students residing in the same living environment, and with faculty and staff mentors involved with the LLC. Scholars over the years have shared the benefits gained by first-year students who are residing on campus (Schroeder & Mable, 1994; Upcraft & Gardner, 1989). Within the context of the campus climate framework, Milem et al. (2005) argued that all students should be required to live on campus during their first year in order to assist students with transitioning to the institution. On many large campuses, it is not feasible for all first-year students to live on campus. Furthermore, Milem et al. (2005) stated, "the challenge is to integrate commuting students into residentially based programs or other student activities so that all students experience frequent and sustained interaction with as broad a cross-section of the student body as possible rather than building commuter student lounges..." (p. 29).

Given the need to connect Latino students with each other and with African American students at Central, the perspective shared by Milem et al. (2005) regarding connecting commuter students with the campus-based activities should be considered. Milem et al. (2005) also noted that students who have family responsibilities, full-time jobs, and external or additional commitments face similar challenges in terms of becoming involved in campus activities.

Strategies that seek to aid the transition of Latino students to the institution should also involve upper-class Latino students, African American students, and faculty and staff allies to demonstrate a level of commitment and support by the institution to the success of incoming Latino students. The student participants struggled to identify community events that were intentionally meant to be inclusive of all students on campus

short of sporting events or campus performances that they found interesting. Existing events should be reviewed and new traditions developed in order to bring the Central community, inclusive of Latino students and other diverse groups, together at the start of the academic year and throughout the Fall and Spring semesters. Events, such as first-year student convocation and community-building experiences, could be leveraged to convey a message of inclusiveness to Latino students while honoring the institution's history.

There is a "majority-minority" dynamic associated with Latinos attending an HBCU due to being in the minority at these institutions where the majority of students are African American, it would then be prudent for institutions to pay attention to the quality of interactions between transitioning Latino students and African American students. The relationship building that can be facilitated between Latino and African American students during new student orientation and other targeted efforts could go a long way to assisting Latino students in their transition to the institution.

**Campus education about Latinos.** According to Milem et al. (2005), the "intentional fostering of a positive campus racial climate is critical to achieving the benefits of diversity" (p. 22). They further added, "institutions need to understand how their policies and practices influence student perceptions of institutional commitment to diversity and intergroup relations" (Milem et al., 2005, p. 22). Although the previous statements by Milem et al. addressed a broader perspective related to institutional diversity practices, they also specifically addressed what institutions can do through policies and practice to address specific behaviors that have the potential to contribute to a hostile campus climate for all students.

One of the frustrations expressed by the student participants was a lack of awareness on campus about the backgrounds and experiences of Latinos at Central. The Latino student participants were diverse: residential and commuter students, traditional-aged, non-traditional aged with families and full-time employment, students who were racially and ethnically diverse, and students who were born in the United States and abroad. Additionally, the students in the sample were primarily high-achieving academically. Furthermore, faculty and staff participants noted the need for cultural competency training for their peers at the institution given some of the culturally biased attitudes they observed among their colleagues towards Latinos. This recommendation coincides with action steps identified in Central's strategic plan, which calls for providing educational workshops to sensitize faculty, staff, and students to the increasing diversity on campus (North Carolina Central University, 2004). Therefore, education that increases the awareness of the campus community about Latinos can reduce bias-related attitudes and can create a more welcoming campus climate for Latinos.

Because of the increasing Latino presence on campus and in the local community, another recommendation would be to develop an educational campaign to generate awareness regarding the diverse backgrounds of Latino students, faculty, staff, and community members who make up the broader Central community. This recommendation is one that was echoed by faculty and staff participants who shared numerous observations from their time at Central in which derogatory comments were made about Latinos. In addition, student participants also shared examples of classroom experiences in which fellow students made comments about Latinos that were biased or inaccurate. Educational campaigns would have the potential to address perspectives held

by African American students and staff members, as noted by faculty and staff participants, regarding the perception that Latino students take away opportunities from African American students and Latino staff members take jobs away from African American members of the local community. In summary, such an effort could minimize bias related incidents between Latinos and African Americans at the institution and within the historically African American local community.

**Latino student life.** Along with the expressed need to increase the presence of Latinos on campus, the other major area of concern described by the student participants was a desire to have Latino student life at Central. An institutional focus on infusing or reallocating resources to cultivate Latino student life would only serve to harness the generally positive feeling that Latino students expressed about their experience at Central. In several cases, the Latino student participants described having meaningful relationships with African American students, faculty, and staff. Some student participants noted that Central offered Latino students a supportive racial climate, in comparison to a PWI, although they desired a structured institutional focus on the experiences of Latino students. A similar finding was reported by Davies (2007) who found that Mexican-American students pursuing a teacher certification at an HBCU in Texas also expressed experiencing a positive racial climate, but wanted to see more of an institutional focus on the Latino student experience.

To enhance Latino student life, changes are needed, which includes implementing the recommendations mentioned previously and providing Latino-centered cultural spaces and student organizations that have a Latino focus (Patton, 2010). According to Milem et al. (2005), "Campus racial climates are negatively affected when students of

color feel culturally isolated or unsupported in their exploration of their ethnic heritage and identity...” (p. 24). The experiences of Latino students can be enhanced if a safe space is provided where they can examine their individual and collective identities, particularly in light of the racial/ethnic diversity among existing Latino students at Central, the lack of perceived interest from African American students in learning about the cultural backgrounds of Latinos, and shared examples of isolated incidents of cultural bias towards Latino students.

Milem et al. (2005) underscored the important role that racial and ethnic student organizations play in the experiences of students; multicultural student organizations were not found to be a barrier to the development of interracial friendships and interactions. The formation of Latino-based student organizations should not serve as a barrier to Central realizing the diversity benefits of an increasing Latino student population. The formation of Latino student organizations as a part of a broader cultural space should serve as a point of departure for Latino students from which to engage within and across the HBCU environment. The student participants often mentioned the establishment of a “Latino student group” as a possible solution for connecting Latino students with one another.

Milem et al. (2005) identified fraternities and sororities as posing a challenge in terms of facilitating interracial contact between students because of their homogenous histories and the commitment by its members to being highly involved with their organizations, which does not allow much time for anything else that could lead to cross-cultural engagement. Central has an active Greek life community at the institution. A couple of the student participants shared that they were members of historically Black

Greek organizations and that they had a positive experience as Latino members. A growing part of Latino student life on many campuses is Latino fraternities and sororities (Guardia & Evans, 2008; Muñoz & Guardia, 2009). The establishment of Latino fraternal organizations should be considered as Central explores the development of Latino student life at the institution, especially considering the culturally rich and active Black Greek scene on campus.

*Latino alumni relations.* Another recommendation related to fostering Latino student life is cultivating and engaging Latino alumni at the HBCU, with the goal of garnering institutional support from alumni and preparing currently enrolled Latino students to serve in a similar capacity in the future. Alumni can serve as a wonderful example and role model as Latinos who successfully graduated from an HBCU. These very same alumni can then be pursued to participate in different aspects of Latino student life at the institution (e.g., Latino recruitment, welcome events). Historically, HBCUs have struggled to cultivate an alumni donor base (Gasman, 2009; Nealy, 2009), as such, consideration should be given to incorporating a strategic focus on including Latino alumni as part of any future outreach plans to alumni.

Moreover, as it pertains to Latino student life, Central in its strategic plan identified creating organizations and activities for students who contribute to the compositional diversity on campus in order to ensure their success at the institution (North Carolina Central University, 2004). As of the date of this study, students, faculty, and staff participants were not aware of any organizations or activities intended to ensure the success of Latino students or other diverse groups at the institution.

Lastly, the formation of Latino student life at Central could lead to a number of outcomes that support the historical mission of HBCUs while being particularly relevant to Latino students as a growing segment of the college-going population in the Southeastern United States. Latino student life at an HBCU, like Central, should serve to aid the transition of Latino students and assist with facilitating their engagement and sense of community during and after their time at the institution.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Given the limited research on the experiences of Latino students attending HBCUs (Davies, 2007) and the exploratory nature of this study, there exists great potential for conducting research that is both broad in scope and specific in its focus. The need for this research is further underscored by the reality of the growing Latino college-going population in North Carolina and throughout the Southeastern United States where the majority of HBCUs are located.

The utilization of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, separately and in combination, can assist in answering research questions related to different aspects of the Latino experience at an HBCU. For example, in using the campus climate framework, a quantitative study may not provide the depth of understanding of the psychological climate for Latino students. Additionally, deploying a longitudinal research design can provide insight into the Latino/HBCU experience over an extended period of time at either one or multiple institutions. For example, a researcher could follow a first-year cohort over a four-year period at one institution to gain insight into the cohort's overall experience or at multiple institutions across the Southeastern United States to understand the strategies deployed by HBCUs in assisting first-year Latino

students with transitioning to their campus environments. Furthermore, different theoretical perspectives and existing research on college students can assist in making meaning of the data. For example, student identity development theory and leadership development theoretical perspectives can be applied or modified accordingly to begin to understand how Latino students develop personally and as student leaders within the HBCU context.

In relation to the findings of this study, additional research would further shed light into the growing phenomenon of Latinos enrolling at HBCUs. Each of the emergent themes of this study can be explored further to arrive at a richer understanding. The themes include the college decision making process for Latinos, the transition of Latinos during the first year, whether HBCUs are a cultural fit for Latinos, determining the educational benefits of diversity to HBCU students when campuses become more diverse with the inclusion of Latinos, and understanding how Latino students engage within the HBCU environment. For example, as it relates to college decision making process, researchers can explore the appeal that HBCUs have for Latino students or a subset of Latino students (e.g., Latinas). Once enrolled, researchers can examine the college transition process for Latino students to see what specific efforts might contribute to their success during the first year at an HBCU.

A retrospective study of fourth year Latino students can focus on how they negotiated their sense of identity and culture during their time at an HBCU. From a cross-cultural perspective, the college relationships between African American and Latino students can be studied to learn what they are learning from each other by having a shared HBCU experience. Finally, researchers can study Latino student engagement to



explore whether the experiences they choose to get involved with an HBCU setting is influencing their educational attainment. The implications for future research are abundant, both in terms of expanding on findings from this study and areas yet to be explored.

### **Limitations**

Practitioners and researchers should take into account limitations associated with this study when considering the findings. This study was conducted as an exploratory study meant to gain insight into the Latino HBCU experience at one institution within North Carolina. The student participants represent a small sampling of all four undergraduate class years; however, the study was not meant to focus on any specific class year (e.g., sophomore year) or racial/ethnic group (e.g., Black Dominicans). Furthermore, the study explored factors specific to the state of North Carolina and the institution itself. Clearly, although the majority of HBCUs are in the Southeastern United States, each state has unique circumstances that shape the experiences of Latinos within a particular state. These unique circumstances reflect the social-historical forces and governmental-political forces noted by Milem et al. (2005) in the campus climate framework. For example, in one state there may be a progressive educational agenda for Latino youth and in a second anti-Latino immigration policies/climate. At individual HBCUs, different forces (e.g., financial survival, commitment to diversifying the institution, state educational policies) are driving the recruitment of Latino college students so the findings may not be applicable across all HBCU institutional types (e.g., public versus private) given their unique histories and institutional contexts (Freeman, 1999; Gasman et al., 2007).

Another limitation of this study is that it was conducted at a particular point in time with participants who reflected on their lived experiences. Student perspectives were not explored over an extended period of time. As such, the study does not explore changes in attitudes or development over time. The student participants included individuals from each class year, thus the study did not explore the experiences of students from a given class year (e.g., an exploration of the first-year experience of Latino students attending an HBCU).

My personal disclosure to participants as Latino in some instances and being perceived as such in others may have been a strength; however, this could also be viewed as a limitation. According to Reese, Danielson, Shoemaker, Chang, & Hsu (1986), “Survey researchers have long been aware that interviewers can affect the very responses they are assigned to gather” (p. 563). More importantly, researchers have also noted that race is the most critical interviewer characteristic in exerting a “systematic and significant biasing effect, particularly on answers to race-related questions” (Reese et al., 1986, p. 563). To counter this potential effect, I refrained from sharing specific information about myself or my perspective regarding Latino issues, but instead focused on the participants and hearing their perspective. In addition, I also used a peer debriefer and inquiry auditor to make sure that the intent of the study was conducted as proposed and that the findings were appropriate and based on the interview transcripts. Though I sensed that the student participants felt comfortable speaking with me, I am not sure if their awareness of my being Latino contributed to how they responded to the questions posed and how they felt about me as the researcher. I believe that this dynamic was more

evident in my interviews with the faculty and staff participants who treated me as an expert related to Latino college students or a peer.

Although the study was meant to be exploratory in nature, it must be noted that the Latino student participants represented various ethnicities and racial groups within the Latino diaspora. This presents the opportunity to explore the HBCU experience from the perspective of different types of Latino racial and ethnic groups. For example, a researcher could conduct a longitudinal comparison study looking at the differences in the HBCU experience of a Latino of African ancestry and Afro-Cuban heritage as compared to a Latino of European ancestry and Colombian heritage. Such individual and collective racial/ethnic differences, though touched upon, were not explored in depth in this study. Further exploration could provide a more accurate depiction of how Latino students experience the HBCU environment, especially considering the historical racial context in which they were founded and developed under.

Another limitation of the study is the high cumulative grade-point average (GPA) of 3.5 of the Latino study participants. Their academic achievement was significantly above the overall GPA (2.98) for all Latino students enrolled at Central in the spring semester of 2012. While the average GPA for all Latino students during the spring 2012 reflects an academically achieving population, the significant difference raises questions about the applicability of the findings to the general Latino student population at Central.

Lastly, case study research encourages the use of multiple sources of evidence, including institutional data and documents (Yin, 2003). Given news reports suggesting state officials and the university system in North Carolina asking public institutions of higher education in the state to do their part to absorb a growing Latino college going

population (Roach, 2004), I requested evidentiary information about Latino initiatives from the UNC General Administration (Appendix I). According to two UNC General Administration officials, no official reports or related documents existed indicating a focus on Latino students at the system level (Appendix J). Similarly, despite the reference to recruiting Latino students in their strategic plan (North Carolina Central University, 2004), NCCU shared not having any strategic documents focusing on the recruitment of Latino students or the development of campus programs for Latino students, but instead referenced a strategic focus on diversifying the student body.

Specifically, an enrollment management administrator stated the following:

NCCU's recruitment efforts this year includes increasing diversity and inclusiveness as well as reaching more high performing students across the state of North Carolina. In addition, we are also looking for additional ways to forge partnerships with individuals and organizations to help make this a success. As of now, our website and most of our literature will show an emphasis on diversity and inclusiveness - please see our most recent Open [House] Flyer attached. (M. Robinson, personal communication, October 7, 2010; See Appendix K)

Online research uncovered a brief student newspaper article from 2001 with the headline "*NCCU Recognizes Latino Students*," referencing the establishment of a Latino student organization – the Latin American Student Organization (LASO; Appendix L).

The purpose for creating the organization included helping, "NCCU recruit more Hispanic students, expose other students to different cultures, and help Hispanics adjust to life at NCCU." In the spring of 2012, when this study was conducted, there was no longer a LASO on campus, yet the number of Latino students at Central had steadily increased since 2001.

## **Conclusion**

Dwayne Ashley, former President and CEO of the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund stated in a news article focusing on the recruitment of Latinos by HBCUs, "I do want to caution that our schools aren't trying to change their historic mission on African American students. We see this as an opportunity to expand our mission and find students who are a natural fit" (Axtman, 2004). HBCUs have a long rich history of graduating African American students who have made significant contributions to society while also serving as institutions of higher education that traditionally serve academically and financially disadvantaged students (Redd, 1998).

In the present study, I explored the experiences of Latino students attending an HBCU in North Carolina. The tremendous growth in the Latino population in North Carolina over the last decade and the high number of HBCUs in the state made for a perfect case site from which to conduct this study. The students in this study found Central to be academically accessible, an excellent financial value, generally welcoming of them, and a good institutional fit. Findings from this study provide insight into the experience of a diverse group of Latino students who valued their educational experience at the institution, but who also highlighted areas that can be improved upon to enhance their HBCU experience as Latino students. Given the lack of research in this area, I hope that this study will inform future research considering the growing trend of Latino college students attending HBCUs.

## Appendix A: Announcement to NCCU Community about the Study

**From:** Announcements  
**Sent:** Monday, February 13, 2012 11:19 AM  
**To:** NCCU-Faculty and Staff; NCCU-Students  
**Subject:** Campus Announcements-Feb. 13



# NCCU Campus Announcements

### EVENTS

#### Zumba for Heart Health

The Recreation and Wellness Department, in partnership with the Student Activities Board, will host "Ready, Set, HEART" Zumba Party tomorrow at 7 p.m. in the Student Union lobby. All participants are encouraged to wear their best RED workout attire in honor of healthy heart awareness. There will be a candy bar and prizes for the person or organization that brings the most people. For more information, contact Casi Johnson at [cjohnso1@eagles.nccu.edu](mailto:cjohnso1@eagles.nccu.edu)

#### African-American Read-In

James E. Shepard Memorial Library joins millions of readers in the 23rd National African-American Read-In sponsored by the Black Caucus of the National Council of Teachers of English. James E. Shepard Memorial Library will offer a Read-In featuring storytellers Jessica Adams and Laurel Jones from Durham County Public Library. They will read to the children from NCCU Child Development Center on Thursday from 10 a.m. to noon in Room 140 in Shepard Library. For more information, contact Vernice Faison at 530-6220 or [vfaison@nccu.edu](mailto:vfaison@nccu.edu).

#### 2012 University Speech Competition

The 2012 speech competition, "Put a Ring on It: the State of Cotemporary Relationships" will take place on Feb. 16 at 6:30 p.m. in the B.N. Duke Auditorium. Competition finalists include: Zevandah Barnes, Bailey Clemmons, Crystal Cotton, Ice'es Green, Jaleel Hunt and Britney Jenkins.

### CAMPUS SPECIALS

#### Campus Recreation Membership Special

Campus Recreation is offering an amazing deal to faculty staff and alumni get a head start on your New Year's Fitness resolutions.

Become a charter member and join today for only \$99 (offer good through March 15) for a full year. If you pay before March 15, you will be covered until March 15, 2013, and it will lock you in at the lowest rate of \$120 annually (\$10 monthly).

After March 15, you will have the option of paying \$12 monthly through payroll deduction for 12-month employees. \$15 monthly for 10-month employees.

Membership includes:

- Full access to newly renovated state-of-the-art wellness center.
- Extended hours of access to wellness center 6 a.m. – 11 p.m.
- Newly renovated pool
- Group exercise classes (includes Zumba on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and other class offerings).
- Newly renovated racquetball courts
- Intramural sports leagues and tournaments

Please call or email Reva Adams-Bell at 530-5136 or [radamsbell@nccu.edu](mailto:radamsbell@nccu.edu). You must pay at the Hoey Administration Building in the Bursar's office and carry your receipt to the Eagle Card Office in the Biology Building to receive an ID.

### VOLUNTEER/SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES

#### Latino/Hispanic Undergraduate Students Needed for Research Study

The Office of [REDACTED] and a doctoral student at the University of Maryland are seeking Latino/Hispanic college students at NCCU to participate in a research study to learn about the experiences of Latinos at an HBCU. Participation will involve a 90-minute interview — by phone, in person or by Skype. The interviews will be conducted in February. Participants will receive a \$30 Visa gift card. If you would like to

participate, please contact Salvador Mena at [smena@umd.edu](mailto:smena@umd.edu) or 919-448-5250. You must be 18 or older.

#### Latino/Hispano Estudiantes Universitarios Necesarios para Estudio de investigación

Estudiante de doctorado en la Universidad de Maryland está buscando estudiantes latinos/hispanos en NCCU para participar en un estudio de investigación para conocer las experiencias de los Latinos en un HBCU. Participación implicará una entrevista de 90 minutos, por teléfono, en persona o por Skype. Las entrevistas se realizarán en febrero. Los participantes recibirán una tarjeta de Regalo Visa de \$30. Si le gustaría participar en este estudio de investigación, póngase en contacto con Salvador Mena en [smena@umd.edu](mailto:smena@umd.edu) o 919-448-5250. Usted debe ser 18 años de edad o más para participar.

## Appendix B: Electronic Invitation to Latino Students

### Invitation to Participate: Study on Latino/Hispanic College Stud... [REDACTED]

Good Afternoon:

Please assist the Office [REDACTED] in improving the experience of NCCU Latino students by participating in the study below:

My name is Salvador B. Mena and I am currently a doctoral candidate in College Student Personnel at the University of Maryland. The title of my dissertation is "The New South: A Case Analysis of Latino Students Attending a Historically Black University in North Carolina." The purpose of my study is to learn about the experiences of Latino students attending a historically Black university (NCCU).

This is an important study because of the growing number of Latino college students enrolling at historically Black institutions.

You have been identified as someone who, through your role on campus, is involved with shaping the Latino student experience at Central. As such, you are in the position to provide perspective on the growing Latino student population on your campus. In addition to interviewing students, it is critical to the success of this study to have the perspective of faculty and staff. Your participation will be kept confidential with the use of a generic title such as "administrator" or "faculty member" in the dissertation.

If you agree to partake in this study, you must commit to participating in a single one-on-one interview with me, the researcher. I plan to conduct fa

culty/staff interviews in March 1 and 2 2012.

If you are interested in participating in the study, you will be asked to complete a Research Consent form. Faculty/staff participants will receive a \$30 gift certificate from Target retail stores as a thank you for your assistance.

If you have any questions regarding the study or your participation, please do not hesitate to contact me

([smena@umd.edu](mailto:smena@umd.edu) or 919-448-5250). If you are interested in participating, please respond to this email message by Friday, February 24, 2012.

Thank you in advance for your interest. I hope to hear from you in the upcoming week/s.

Sincerely,

Salvador B. Mena  
 Doctoral Candidate  
 Department Counseling, Higher Education, and Special Education  
 College Student Personnel Program  
 University of Maryland

[REDACTED]  
 North Carolina Central University  
 Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management  
 [REDACTED] Student Services Building  
 1801 Fayetteville Street  
 Durham, North Carolina 27707  
 [REDACTED]

**Appendix C: Online Student Interest Survey**

## Student Participant Interest Survey

**1.**  
What is your name?

**2.**  
Are you 18 years of age or older?

- Yes
- No

**3.**  
Gender

- Female
- Male
- Other

**4.**  
Are you a North Carolina resident?

- In-State Student
- Out-of-State Student

**5.**  
What is your class standing?

- 1st year student
- 2nd year student
- 3rd year student
- 4th year student



5th year or higher student

Graduate student

**6.**

What is your availability for an in person 90 minute interview at NCCU the weekend of MONTH #nd-#th between 10am-7:00pm? Please select all that apply. You will be contacted in advance to identify a specific 90 minute time slot.

Friday 10:00am - 7:00pm

Saturday 10:00am - 7:00pm

Sunday 10:00am - 7:00pm

**7.**

If you are not available during the specified times to interview in person, would you be available for an interview via phone or Skype (video conferencing) at a mutually agreeable time?

Yes

No

**8.**

Contact Info:

Phone Number

Email Address

Skype Name

### Appendix D: Demographic Questionnaire Results

*Question #1 - What is your class year?*

1 <sup>st</sup> year student	5	38%
2 <sup>nd</sup> year student	3	23%
3 <sup>rd</sup> year student	4	31%
4 <sup>th</sup> year student	1	8%
5 <sup>th</sup> year or higher student	0	0%
Total	13	100%

*Question #2 - In applying to NCCU you were a:*

New student non-transfer	8	62%
Transfer from community college	3	23%
Transfer from another 4-year university	2	15%
Other, please specify	0	0%
Total	13	100%

*Question #3 - What College are you enrolled in?*

University College	7	54%
College of Behavioral & Social Sciences	1	8%
College of Liberal Arts	1	8%
Nursing	1	8%
School of Business	2	15%
School of Education	1	8%
College of Science & Technology	0	0%
Other, please specify	0	0%
Total	13	100%

*Question #4 - Are you affiliated with any of the listed NCCU programs?*

Aspiring Eagles Program	0	0%
Centennial Scholars	1	8%
First in Flight	0	0%
Futures	0	0%
ISSTEM	0	0%

Josephine Dobbs Clement Early College High School	2	15%
SMASS Summer Camp	0	0%
Project U	0	0%
Students Transforming Society Social Justice (STSSJ)	0	0%
Eagle Women's Village	0	0%
University Honors Program, Chancellor Scholars	2	15%
Not affiliated with any of the listed programs	8	62%
Total	13	100%

*Question #5 - What is your major or intended major?*

Accounting	1	7.75%
Business Administration	2	15%
Chemistry (Pre-Med)	1	7.75%
Computer Science	1	7.75%
Criminal Justice	3	23%
English Education	1	7.75%
Nursing	1	7.75%
Physical Education	1	7.75%
Political Science	1	7.75%
Psychology, Spanish	1	7.75%
Total	13	100%

*Question #6 – What kind of financial aid did you receive?*

Did not receive financial aid	1	8%
Loans	6	46%
Need-based scholarship or grant	5	38%
Work-study	5	38%
Athletic Scholarship	1	8%
Other, please specify	0	0%
		100%

*Question #7 – If you currently work, where do you work?*

Currently don't work	7	54%
Work on campus	1	8%
Work off campus	5	38%
Both on and off campus	0	0%
Total	13	100%

*Question #8 – What is your current living situation?*

Live on-campus	8	62%
Life off-campus (not with family)	2	15%
Live local with family	3	23%
Total	13	100%

*Question #9 – Please indicate the city/town, county, and state you reside in:*

Durham, NC	5	38%
Charlotte, NC	1	8%
Wake Forest, NC	1	8%
Monroe, NC	1	8%
Henderson, NC	2	15%
Mebane, NC	1	8%
Out of State	2	15%
Total	13	100%

*Question #10 – Please indicate your citizenship and/or generation status.*

My grandparents, parents and I were born in the U.S.	3	23%
My parents and I were born in the U.S.	0	0%
I was born in the U.S., but my parents were not	4	31%
I am a foreign born, naturalized citizen	2	15%
I am a foreign born, permanent resident	1	8%
I am on a student visa	0	0%
None of these apply to me	1	8%
My parents were born in US,	0	0%

but I was not		
Other, please specify	2	15%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My mom and I were born in the U.S., but not my father</li> <li>• I am foreign born on an H4 visa</li> </ul>		
Total	13	100%

*Question 11 – What is the highest level of education completed by your father?*

High school or less	5	38%
Some college	3	23%
Associates degree	0	0%
Bachelor's degree	4	31%
Master's degree	0	0%
Doctorate or Professional degree	0	0%
Don't know	1	8%
Total	13	100%

*Question 12 – What is the highest level of education completed by your mother?*

High school or less	5	45%
Some college	2	18%
Associates degree	0	0%
Bachelor's degree	1	9%
Master's degree	2	18%
Doctorate or Professional degree	0	0%
Don't know	1	9%
Total	13	100%

*Question 13 – Are you the first in your family to attend college?*

Yes	3	23%
No	10	77%
Total	13	100%

*Question 14 – Do you have any siblings who have attended or graduated from college?*

Yes	9	69%
No	4	31%
Total	13	100%

*Question 15 – What do your parents do for work?*

1	Taxi cab driver
2	Cashier
3	My mom is a manager at a high-tech company. My step-father is a custodian at a convalescent home.
4	My dad works for an Electric company and my mom worked at a dry cleaners.
5	My father is a pharmaceutical sales manager and my mother is high school special education teacher.
6	Mother is self-employed. She has a painting company. Father is a gardener in Mexico.
7	Mother: ESL Teacher for Vance County Schools/Vance Granville Community College Father: Recruiting Counselor for Vance Granville Community College.
8	Father passed away and mother is a teacher at the University of Ecuador.
9.	Self-employed Roofing Company.
10.	My father is a real estate agent and my mother does not work.
11.	Father: Information Technologist for IR Technologies Mother: Fabric Worker for the United States Marine Corps.
12.	Mother is a small business owner, Father works in construction.
13.	My father is an accountant.

*Question 16 – What is your cumulative GPA?*

4.0 – 3.5	6	46%
3.4 – 3.0	4	31%
2.9 – 2.5	3	23%
2.0 – 2.4	0	0%
3.5 Average	13	100%

*Question 17– What is your Race (e.g. Black, White, Latino/a, Multiracial, Biracial, American Indian, Asian Pacific Islander, etc.)?*

Latina/Latino	7	54%
Mexican/Mexican American	3	23%
Biracial	2	15%

Hispanic	1	8%
Total	13	100%

*Question 18– What is your Ethnicity (e.g. Chicana/o/Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Salvadorian, etc.)?*

Dominican	1	8%
Mexican/Mexican American	5	38%
Ecuadorian	2	15%
Puerto Rican	1	8%
Colombian	1	8%
Bi-Ethnic -Mexican American/Filipino -Cuban/Honduran -Nicaraguan/Guatemalan	3	23%
Total	13	100%

*Question 19– What is the primary language spoken in your home?*

Spanish	8	61%
English	4	31%
Spanish & English	1	8%
Total	13	100%

*Question 20– What is your gender?*

Female	9	69%
Male	4	31%
Other	0	0
Total	13	100%

*Question 21– Are you involved with any campus student organizations?*

Yes	4	31%
No	9	69%
Total	13	100%





### **Appendix E: Individual Student Interview Protocol**

My name is Salvador Mena and I am a PhD candidate at the University of Maryland. Thanks for agreeing to participate in this study on the experiences of Latino college students attending an HBCU in North Carolina. I am looking forward to getting to know you and learning about your experiences at North Carolina Central University.

Before we start, you will need to read and sign an informed consent form. This form will tell you about the study and requires you to sign acknowledging that you agree to participate. [*Allow time for interviewee to review and sign consent form.*] Do you have any questions at this time? Please note you can withdraw from participation at any time.

I am going to record this conversation so that I can listen to it later and transcribe our conversation. I will share the written transcript of our conversation with you before I begin to analyze it to make sure that it reflects our conversation here today.

In order to maintain confidentiality, I would like you to choose a pseudonym that I will use in any written material related to this study. Please write your *pseudonym next to your name in the sign-in sheet provided.* [*Provide time for the participant to select a pseudonym.*]

At this time, I would also like for you to fill out this demographic questionnaire that will provide me with additional information about you and your background. [*Allow 10 minutes for the questionnaire to be filled out.*]

For the purpose of our conversation, I will use the term “Latino” as an inclusive term for people who identify with any of the 19 Latin American countries. You can use whichever term you feel comfortable with during our conversation (e.g., Hispanic or Mexican American). In my study, I will use the term that you use to refer to yourself and others.

Let us begin. I will start by asking you some introductory questions.

### **Appendix F: Individual Faculty/Staff Interview Protocol**

My name is Salvador Mena and I am a PhD candidate at the University of Maryland in College Student Personnel. Thanks for agreeing to participate in this study on the experiences of Latino college students attending an HBCU in North Carolina. I am looking forward to getting to know you and learning about your experiences with and perceptions about the growing Latino student population at North Carolina Central University.

Before we start, you will need to read and sign an informed consent form. This form will tell you about the study and requires you to sign acknowledging that you agree to participate and that you can stop at any time. [Allow time for participant to review and sign consent form.] Do you have any questions at this time?

With your permission, I am going to record this conversation so that I can listen to it later and transcribe our conversation to paper. I will share the written transcript of our conversation with you before I begin to analyze them to make sure that it reflects our conversation here today.

In order to maintain confidentiality, I would like you to choose a pseudonym that I will use in any written material related to this study. [Provide time for participant to select pseudonyms.]

For the purpose of our conversation, I will use the term “Latino” as an inclusive term for people who identify with any of the 19 Latin American countries. You can use whichever term you feel comfortable during our conversation to refer to Latino students (e.g., Hispanic, Spanish, etc.). In my study, I will use the term that you use during our conversation.

Let us begin. I will start by asking you some introductory questions.

## Appendix G: Individual Student Interview Questions

- **Why did you choose to participate in this study?**
- **Why did you choose to attend an HBCU versus another institution?**
  - How do you feel about your decision to attend this institution?
  - What is your understanding of the historical significance of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCU) in the United States?
  - Do you think there are benefits or advantages for you as a Latino attending an HBCU? *If yes, what benefits and advantages?*
- **How would you describe your experience at Central?**
  - What do you enjoy the most and least about being a student at Central?
  - What does it mean to be a Latino student at Central?
- **Can you describe your interactions with students on campus?**
  - Who are your close friends that you socialize and study with?
  - Do you have Latino student friends/acquaintances on campus?
    - How you meet them?
  - How would you describe the interactions on campus between Latino students and African American students?
  - How would you describe the interactions on campus between Latinos?
- **Can you describe your interactions with Faculty and Staff on campus?**
  - Have you interacted with any Latino faculty or staff on campus?
    - In what context?
    - Are there any Latino faculty members on campus?
    - Have you taken a class with a Latino faculty member?
  - How would you describe your interactions with other non-Latino faculty and staff on campus?
- **What kind of activities are you involved with on campus?**
  - Are you aware of any activities that contribute to bringing all students together?
- **How would you describe your classroom experience as a Latino?**
- **As a Latino student at Central are there challenges that you are facing?**
  - How would you describe the support you receive as a Latino student at Central?
  - Who or what has contributed to your success as a student at Central?
  - Is there anything specifically that has kept you from being successful at Central?
- **How do you think you are personally perceived on campus?**
  - How do you think Latino students are perceived by non-Latinos on campus?
  - Have you experienced any anti-Latino sentiment on Central's campus or in the surrounding community?

- **Is there anything that you would like for me to know that we have not discussed? Consider other experiences that you have had in addition to the experiences of other Latino students that are not here today.**

## **Appendix H: Individual Faculty & Staff Interview Questions**

- **Why have you chosen to serve/work at an HBCU?**
  - How would you describe the historical significance of HBCUs in the United States?
  
- **Since 2000, the Latino student population at NCCU has grown by more than 300%. How do you feel about the growth of this population on campus?**
  
- **Why do you think Latino students are choosing to attend Central?**
  
- **Given your awareness of Latino students on campus, what is your perception of how they are experiencing Central?**
  - Are there issues that you perceive as being unique to Latino students at Central?
  
- **Given the increase in the Latino student population to what extent is this growth reflected in faculty and staff ranks?**
  
- **How would you describe the interactions of Latino students with other students on campus?**
  - How would you describe the interactions between Latino students and African American students on campus?
  - How do you think African American students perceive Latino students on campus?
  - How would you describe the interactions between Latino students (other Latino students)?
  - Are you aware of any anti-Latino sentiment on Central's campus or in the surrounding community?
  
- **How inclusive do you think campus activities are of Latino students?**
  
- **What do you know about how Latino students are experiencing the classroom environment?**
  
- **What do you think is contributing to Latino student success at Central?**
  - Are you aware of any special efforts or resources developed to ensure the success of Latino students at Central?
  - From your perspective what are the challenges and barriers that Latino students experience at Central?
  
- **Is there anything that you would like for me to know that we have not discussed? Please consider other experiences you or your colleagues may have had with Latino students.**

**Appendix I: Information Request from University of North Carolina General Administration**

From: Mena, Salvador B [mailto:[smena@email.unc.edu](mailto:smena@email.unc.edu)]

Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2011 4:06 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Dissertation Assistance

Hello [REDACTED],

My name is Salvador Mena, and I serve as the Director of Strategic Initiatives and Planning for Student Affairs at UNC Chapel Hill. We met briefly once when [REDACTED] for at a GA meeting early in my tenure here.

I'm currently working on my dissertation proposal. I'm planning to conduct a single case study on the experiences of Latino students attending an HBCU in North Carolina (NC Central). The article below (see highlighted in yellow) references "state officials" expecting HBCUs to play a role in Latino college student enrollment. This article is the only document that I have been able to find that speaks to HBCUs playing more of a role with the increasing Latino college going population in North Carolina.

Are there any public documents that are available through General Administration you can share supporting what is noted in the article below? I looked at the reports that were listed on your website, but none specifically referenced the system or HBCUs in particular, playing more of a role. Looking through the budget documents I noted that some schools proposed budget items that were targeted at the Latino community, but that was about it.

Any assistance that you can provide with providing any additional insights would be greatly appreciated. If there are no documents, any perspective that you can provide from your perspective at GA on the phenomenon described below would be helpful as I would be able to cite the communication in the study.

Thank you,  
Salvador

**Appendix J: Response from UNC General Administration to My Information Request**

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Thursday, April 21, 2011 5:08 PM  
To: Mena, Salvador B  
Cc: [REDACTED]  
Subject: RE: Dissertation Assistance

I do well remember when you sat in for [REDACTED] a while back. Saw [REDACTED] on a recent CBS clip on TV.

I apologize for the delay in responding, can't find an email that shows I did. I am not aware of specific UNC system and HBCU efforts specifically targeted for Latino students. Via this email I am pulling in [REDACTED] who works with CFNC with high school students and families in her role as our Spanish Services Coordinator. She may have some perspectives.

One resource for you to read (if you have not already) is the UNC Tomorrow Report found on the UNC system website at <http://www.northcarolina.edu/nctomorrow/index.htm> (it is all good but see especially sections 4.2 and 4.3 in it)

And, also look at the white paper reports at <http://www.northcarolina.edu/nctomorrow/reports/index.php> with a focus on K-12 and higher ed.

Again, sorry for the delay, hope this helps some.

\*\*\*\*\*

[REDACTED]  
The University of North Carolina General Administration  
P.O. Box 2688, 910 Raleigh Road Chapel Hill, NC 27515-2688

## Appendix K: NCCU Open House Flyer 2010

**Talk** with faculty and students.  
**Visit** the residence halls.  
**Tour** the campus with an Eagle Ambassador. **Hear** what students have to say about NCCU. **Discuss** academic and scholarship opportunities.  
**Enjoy** NCCU at its finest!



# SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23

### ON-SITE ADMISSIONS

for high school and transfer students

### REQUIREMENTS

- Complete Application (including North Carolina residency form)
- \$40 Application Fee (cash, money order, or checks)
- Official High School/College Transcript(s) (must be in an envelope sealed by a high school/college official)
- For transfer students only, Confidential Statement
- Official SAT / ACT w/ Writing Scores

Submit all official documents at the registration table between 8 – 9 a.m. Applications are reviewed in the order they are received.

**DOORS OPEN at 8 a.m.**  
**PROGRAM BEGINS at 9 a.m.**  
**FOOTBALL GAME at 2 p.m.**  
 NCCU VS. BETHUNE COOKMAN UNIVERSITY

### EVENT LOCATIONS

**Opening Session:** McDougald-McLendon Gymnasium  
**Academic Fair:** LeRoy T. Walker Complex

REGISTER ONLINE [WWW.NCCU.EDU/OPENHOUSE](http://WWW.NCCU.EDU/OPENHOUSE)  
 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION **1-877-667-7533**

**Special Accommodations:** Please notify us by Oct. 8 if you require assistance for disability, medical, or dietary needs. We can arrange transportation but cannot supply wheelchairs or equipment.



## Appendix L: 2001 Student Newspaper Article

10/29/2012

Campus Echo Online - Campus News

# Campus

---

North Carolina Central University

February 8 2001  
Vol. 92, Issue 5

[Current Issue]

Front Page

**Campus News**

A & E

Sports

Opinions

Q & A

Echo comic

Letters

Corrections

Sound Off

Archives

Staff

Ad Rates

Contact us

E-mail Notify

Letter to Alumni

---

**NCCU Year  
in Pictures**

---

**Spring 2001  
Publication Dates:**

- Feb. 8
- Mar. 1
- Mar. 29
- Apr. 26

The online edition is updated  
one day after the above  
publication dates.

---

**NCCU home**

---

Sign up to receive an e-  
mail everytime a new  
Campus Echo issue goes

## NCCU recognizes Latino students

By Nicole Allen

Paul Goldblatt, NCCU director of residential life, has formed the Latin American Student Organization. LASO's goal is to promote awareness of the various Latin cultures on NCCU's campus. It has approximately 20 members.

Goldblatt hopes the club will help NCCU recruit more Hispanic students, expose other students to different cultures, and help Hispanics adjust to life at NCCU.

The club meets every Thursday in the Student Union at 10:40 a.m.

- [back](#)

## References

- Abes, E. S., Jones, S. R., & McEwen, M. K. (2007). Reconceptualizing the model of multiple dimensions of identity: The role of meaning-making capacity in the construction of multiple identities. *Journal of College Student Development, 48*(1), 1-22.
- Albach, P.G., Berdahl, R.O., & Gumport, P.J. (1999). *American higher education in the twenty-first century: Social, political, and economic challenges*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Allen, W. R. (1992). The color of success: African-American college student outcomes at predominantly White and historically Black public colleges and universities. *Harvard Educational Review, 62*(1), 26-44.
- Allen, W. R., Epps, E. G., & Haniff, N. Z. (1991). *College in Black and White: African American students in predominantly White and in historically Black public universities*. Stonybrook, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Allen, W. R., & Jewell, J. O. (2002). A backward glance forward: Past, present, and future perspectives on historically Black colleges and universities. *Review of Higher Education, 25*(3), 241-262.
- American Association of University Professors. (2003). *Federal budget: AAUP recommendations*. Retrieved from <http://www.aaup.org/govrel/fedbudget/budrx.htm>
- American Indian Higher Education Consortium (1999). *Tribal colleges: An introduction*. Retrieved from [http://www.aihec.org/colleges/documents/TCU\\_intro.pdf](http://www.aihec.org/colleges/documents/TCU_intro.pdf)

- Ancis, J. R., Sedlacek, W. E., & Mohr, J. J. (2000). Student perceptions of campus cultural climate by race. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 78*(2), 180-185.
- Anonymous. (2000, July 6). A mandate for more students: HBCUs shore up their images in effort to boost enrollments. *Black Issues in Higher Education, 17*(10), 20.  
Retrieved from <http://diverseeducation.com/article/707/>
- Anonymous. (2004). Which Black colleges are putting out the welcome mat for Hispanic students? *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, 46*, 70-71.
- Antonio, A. L. (2001). Diversity and the influence of friendship groups in college. *The Review of Higher Education, 25*(1), 63-89.
- Anzaldúa, G. (1999). *Borderlands: La frontera*. San Francisco, CA: Aunt Lute Books.
- Astin, A.W. (1993). *What matters in college?: Four critical years revisited*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Auerbach, S. (2004). Engaging Latino parents in supporting college pathways: Lessons from a college access program. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 3*(2), 125-145.
- Axman, K.. (2004). Black colleges' new outreach: Hispanic students. *The Christian Science Monitor*. Retrieved from <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/1025/p03s01-ussc.html>
- Barefoot, B. O. (2000, January). The first-year experience. *About Campus, 4*(6), 12-18.
- Bastedo, M. N. & Gumport, P. J. (2003). Access to what? Mission differentiation and academic stratification in U.S. public higher education. *Higher Education, 46*, 341-359.

- Bean, J., & Eaton, S. B. (2001). The psychology underlying successful retention practices. *Journal of College Student Retention*, 3(1), 73-89.
- Bell, D. A. (2004). *Silent covenants: Brown v. Board of Education and the unfulfilled hopes for racial reform*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Bennett, P. R., & Xie, Y. (2003). Revisiting racial differences in college attendance: The role of historically Black colleges and universities. *American Sociological Review*, 68(4), 567-580.
- Boening, C. H., & Miller, M. T. (2005). New student orientation programs promoting diversity. *The Community College Enterprise*, 11(2), 41-50.
- Boggs, G. R. (2008). Why Congress should revive the Dream Act. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/article/Why-Congress-Should-Revive-the/29614/>
- Bordas, J. (2002). Latino student achievement from access to leadership. *Concepts & Connections: A Newsletter for Leadership Educators*, 11(1), 7-8.
- Bourdieu, P. (1977). Cultural reproduction and social reproduction. In K. Karabel & A. H. Halsey (Eds.), *Power and ideology in Education* (pp. 487-511). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Bridges, B., Cambridge, B., Kuh, G., & Leegwater, L. (March 22, 2005). Student engagement at minority-serving institutions: Emerging lessons from the BEAMS Project. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 2005, 125, 25.
- Broido, E. M. & Manning, K. (2002). Philosophical foundations and current theoretical perspectives in qualitative research. *Journal of College Student Development*, 43(4), 434-450.

- Brown, M. C. (2002). Good intentions: Collegiate desegregation and transdemographic enrollments. *The Review of Higher Education*, 25(3), 263-280.
- Cabrera, A. F., & La Nasa, S. M. (2002). Hispanics in higher education. In J. Forest & K. Kinser (Eds.), *Higher education in the United States: An encyclopedia* (pp. 309-313). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.
- Campbell, T. A., & Campbell, D. E. (1997). Faculty/student mentor program: Effects on academic performance and retention. *Research in Higher Education*, 38(6), 727-742.
- Carew, L. E. (2009, September 15). Diversity increases at public historically Black colleges. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/article/Diversity-Increases-at-Public/48410/>
- Carey, K. (2012, March 4). Justice and equity are on the line in Fisher v. Texas. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/article/JusticeEquity-Are-on-the/131044/>
- Ceballo, R. (2004). From barrios to Yale: The role of parenting strategies in Latino families. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 26(2), 171-186.
- Chapa, J. (1998). *The Hopwood decision in Texas as an attack on Latino access to selective higher education programs*. Retrieved from <http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/research/latino97/Chapa.pdf>
- Clark, M. R. (2005). Negotiating the freshman year: Challenges and strategies among first-year college students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 46(3), 296-316.

- Closson, R. B., & Henry, W. J. (2008a). Racial and ethnic diversity at HBCUs: What can be learned when Whites are in the minority. *Multicultural Education, 15*(4), 15-19.
- Closson, R. B., & Henry, W. J. (2008b). The social adjustment of undergraduate White students in the minority on an historically Black college campus. *Journal of College Student Development, 49*(6), 517-534.
- Coffey, A. (1999). *The ethnographic self: Fieldwork and the representation of identity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Limited.
- Collatos, A., Morrell, E., Nuno, A., & Lara, R. (2004). Critical sociology in K-16 early intervention: Remaking Latino pathways to higher education. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 3*(2), 164-179.
- Coleman, J. S. (1990). *Foundations of social theory*. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cross, P., & Astin, H. (1981). Factors influencing Black students' persistence in college. *Black students in higher education, 76-90*.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Sage.
- Davies, J. H. (2007). *Emerging pride of place: Mexican American teacher candidates' perceptions and experiences within a historically Black university in Texas*.

(Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation). The University of Texas at Austin.

Retrieved from

<http://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/3196/daviesd35651.pdf?sequence=2>

Davis, M. A. (1997). Latino leadership development: Beginning on campus. *National Civic Review*, 86(3), 227-236.

Dayton, B., Gonzalez-Vasquez, N., Martinez, C. R., & Plum, C. (2004). Hispanic-serving institutions through the eyes of students and administrators. *New directions for student services*, 2004(105), 29-40.

Delgado-Romero, E. A., Hernandez, C., & Montero, H. (July 01, 2004). Mapping the development of Hispanic/Latino/a student organizations: A model at the University of Florida. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 3(3), 237-253.

Drezner, N. D. (2008). Arguing for a different view: Deaf-serving institutions as minority-serving. In M. Gasman, B. Baez, & C. S. V. Turner (Eds.), *Understanding minority-serving institutions* (pp. 18–27). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Excelencia in Education. (2010). *Latino college completion: North Carolina*. Retrieved from

[http://www.edexcelencia.org/sites/default/files/state\\_facts/North\\_Carolina.pdf](http://www.edexcelencia.org/sites/default/files/state_facts/North_Carolina.pdf)

Excelencia in Education. (2012). Examples of excelencia: What works for Latino students in higher education. Retrieved from

<http://www.edexcelencia.org/sites/default/files/examples2012compendium02.pdf>

- Ferdman, B. M., & Gallegos, P. I. (2001). Racial identity development and Latinos in the United States. In C. L. Wijeyasinghe & B. W. Jackson II (Eds.), *New perspectives on racial identity development: A theoretical and practical anthology* (pp. 32-66). New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Fisher v. University of Texas (2012).
- For Chicana/Chicano Studies Foundation. (n.d.). *Black colleges recruiting Hispanic students*. Retrieved from <http://forchicanachicanostudies.wikispaces.com/Black+Colleges+Recruiting+Hispanic+Students>
- Freeman, K. (1999). HBCs or PWIs? African American high school students' consideration of higher education institution types. *The Review of Higher Education, 23*(1), 91-106.
- Freeman, K., & Thomas, E. G. (2002). Black colleges and college choice: Characteristics of students who choose HBCUs. *The Review of Higher Education, 25*(3), 349-358.
- Fries-Britt, S. (2000). Identity Development of High-Ability Black Collegians. *New directions for teaching and learning, 2000*(82), 55-65.
- Fries-Britt, S. L., & Turner, B. (2002). Uneven stories: Successful Black collegians at a Black and a White campus. *The Review of Higher Education, 25*(3), 315-330.
- Fry, R. (2002). *Latinos in higher education: Many enroll, too few graduate*. Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center.
- Fry, R. (2008). *Latino settlement in the new century*. Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center.



- Fry, R. (2011). *Hispanic college enrollment spikes, narrowing gaps with other groups*. Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center.
- Fry, R. A., & López, M. H. (2012). *Hispanic student enrollments reach new highs in 2011: Now largest minority group on four-year college campuses*. Washington, D.C: Pew Hispanic Center.
- Fuertes, J. N., & Sedlacek, W. E. (1991a). *Barriers to leadership development of Hispanics in higher education* (Research Rep. No. 4). College Park, MD: University of Maryland, Counseling Center.
- Fuertes, J. N., Cothran, M., & Sedlacek, W. E. (1991b). *A model for increasing Hispanic student involvement in U.S. campuses* (Research Rep. No. 13). College Park, MD: University of Maryland, Counseling Center.
- Galindo, R., & Escamilla, K. (1995). A biographical perspective on Chicano educational success. *The Urban Review*, 27(1), 1-29.
- Garcia, B. (1998). *The development of a Latino gay identity*. New York, NY: Garland.
- Gasman, M. (2008). Minority-serving institutions: A historical backdrop. In M. Gasman, B. Baez, & C. S. V. Turner (Eds.), *Understanding minority-serving institutions* (pp. 18–27). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Gasman, M. (2009a). Historically Black colleges and universities in a time of economic crisis. *Academe*, 95, 3-7.
- Gasman, M. (2009b, October 11). Minority serving colleges deserve more respect. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/article/Minority-Serving-Colleges/48726/>

Gasman, M., Baez, B., Drezner, N. D., Sedgwick, K. V., Tudico, C., & Schmid, J. M.

(2007). Historically Black colleges and universities: Recent trends. *Academe*, 69-77.

Gasman, M., Baez, B., & Turner, C. S. V. (2008). *Understanding minority-serving institutions*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Glaser, B. G. (April 01, 1965). The constant comparative method of qualitative analysis. *Social Problems*, 12(4), 436-445.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Piscataway, NJ: Aldine Transaction.

Gomez Cervantes, A. (2010). Breaking stereotypes by obtaining a higher education: Latinas' family values and tradition on the school institution. *McNair Scholars Journal*, 14, 4.

Gonzalez-Herrera, V., Hernandez, M., & Goddard, K. E. (2002). Leadership and Latinos: A blending of cultures. *Concepts & Connections: A Newsletter for Leadership Educators*, 11, 1-4.

Gonzalez, K. P., Stoner, S., & Jovel, J. E. (2003). Examining the role of social capital in access to college for Latinas: Toward a college opportunity framework. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 2(2), 146-170.

Good, J. M., Halpin, G., & Halpin, G. (2000). A promising prospect for minority retention: Students becoming peer mentors. *Journal of Negro Education*, 69(4), 375-383.

- Guardia, J. R., & Evans, N. E. (2008). Factors influencing the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members at a Hispanic serving institution. *Journal of College Student Development, 49*(3), 163-181.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1981). *Effective evaluation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Guiffrida, D. A. (2003). African American student organizations as agents of social integration. *Journal of College Student Development, 44*(3), 304-319.
- Guiffrida, D. (2009). Theories of human development that enhance an understanding of the college transition process. *The Teachers College Record, 111*(10), 2419-2443.
- Gurin, P., & Epps, E. (1975). *Black Consciousness, Identity, and Achievement: A Study of Students in Historically Black Colleges*.
- Hall, B., & Closson, R. B. (2005). When the majority is the minority: White graduate students' social adjustment at a historically Black university. *Journal of College Student Development, 46*(1), 28-42.
- The Harvard Civil Rights Project (2003). *Reaffirming diversity: A legal analysis of the University of Michigan affirmative action cases*. Retrieved from [http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/policy/legal\\_docs/Diversity\\_%20Reaffirmed.pdf](http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/policy/legal_docs/Diversity_%20Reaffirmed.pdf).
- Harvey, W. (2003). *Minorities in higher education 2002-2003*. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education (ACE).
- Haslip-Viera, G., & Baver, S. L. (1996). *Latinos in New York: Communities in transition*. Norte Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

- Helms, J. E. (1995). An update of Helms's White and People of Color racial identity models. In J. G. Ponterotto, J. M. Casas, L. A. Suzuki, & C. M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counseling* (pp. 181-198). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hernandez, J. C. (2000). Understanding the retention of Latino college students. *Journal of College Student Development, 41*(6), 575-588.
- Hernandez, J. C. (2002, Fall). A qualitative exploration of the first-year experience of Latino college students. *NASPA Journal, 40*(1), 69-84.
- Hernandez, R., & Jacobs, G. (2004). The drift of Latino students through public higher education: Testimonies on slipping through the cracks of the iron cage. In R. E. Ybarra & N. Lopez (Eds.), *Creating alternative discourses in the education of Latinos and Latinas* (pp. 1-8). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Hewitt-Taylor, J. (2001). Use of constant comparative analysis in qualitative research. *Nursing Standard, 15*, 39-42.
- Howell, A., & Tuitt, F. (2003). *Race and higher education: Rethinking pedagogy in diverse college classrooms*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Educational Review.
- Hurtado, S. (1994). The institutional climate for talented Latino students. *Research in Higher Education, 35*(1), 21-41.
- Hurtado, S., & Carter, D. F. (1997). Effects of college transition and perceptions of the campus racial climate on Latino college students' sense of belonging. *Sociology of Education, 70*(4), 324-345.
- Hurtado, S., Carter, D. F., & Spuler, A. (1996). Latino student transition to college: Assessing difficulties and factors in successful college adjustment. *Research in Higher Education, 37*(2), 135-157.

- Hurtado, S., Inkelas, K. K., Briggs, C., & Rhee, B. S. (1997). Differences in college access and choice among racial/ethnic groups: Identifying continuing barriers. *Research in Higher Education*, 38(1), 43-75.
- Hurtado, S., Milem, J. F., Clayton-Pedersen, A. R., & Allen, W. R. (1998). Enhancing campus climates for racial/ethnic diversity: Educational policy and practice. *The Review of Higher Education*, 21(3), 279-302.
- Hurtado, S., Milem, J., Clayton-Pedersen, A., & Allen, W. (1999). *Enacting diverse learning environments: Improving the climate for racial/ethnic diversity in higher education*. (ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report). Retrieved from [http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?\\_nfpb=true&\\_ERICExtSearch\\_SearchValue\\_0=ED430514&ERICExtSearch\\_SearchType\\_0=no&accno=ED430514](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED430514&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED430514)
- Hurtado, S., Santos, J. L., Saenz, V. B., & Cabrera, N. L. (2011). Advancing in higher education: A portrait of Latina/o college freshmen at four-year institutions, 1975-2006. Higher Education Research Inst.
- Inkelas, K. (2008). *National study of living-learning programs: 2007 report of findings*. Retrieved from <http://drum.lib.umd.edu/bitstream/1903/8392/1/2007%20NSLLP%20Final%20Report.pdf>
- Inkelas, K. K., Daver, Z. E., Vogt, K. E., & Leonard, J. B. (2007). Living-learning programs and first-generation college students' academic and social transition to college. *Research in Higher Education*, 48(4), 403-434.

- Inkelas, K. K., Drechsler, M., Szelényi, K., Kim, Y. C., McCarron, G. P., Soldner, M., & Mainieri, T. (2007). National Study of Living Learning Programs. *UW-Madison Customized Report*. Retrieved from [http://undergraduate.uncg.edu/about/forms/2007\\_NSLLP\\_Final\\_Report\[1\].pdf](http://undergraduate.uncg.edu/about/forms/2007_NSLLP_Final_Report[1].pdf)
- Inkelas, K. K., & Weisman, J. L. (2003). Different by design: An examination of student outcomes among participants in three types of living-learning programs. *Journal of College Student Development, 44*(3), 335-368.
- Jalomo, R. E. (1995). *Latino students in transition: An analysis of the first-year experience in community college*. Tempe, AZ: Arizona State University.
- Jewell, J. O. (2002). To set an example: The tradition of diversity at historically Black colleges and universities. *Urban Education, 37*(1), 7-21.
- John, E. P. S., & Hotel, S. I. (2010). *Student access and success: Strategies for historically Black colleges and universities*. Retrieved from <http://web.nccu.edu/hbcu-conference/speeches/StJohnPaper.pdf>
- Jones, L., Castellanos, J., & Cole, D. (2002). Examining the ethnic minority student experience at predominantly White institutions: A case study. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 1*(1), 19-39.
- Jones, S. R., & McEwen, M. K. (2000). A conceptual model of multiple dimensions of identity. *Journal of College Student Development, 41*(4), 405-414.
- Jones, S. R., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. (2006). *Negotiating the complexities of qualitative research in higher education*. New York, NY: Routledge.

- Kaisner, L., & Pistole, M. C. (2003). College adjustment in a multiethnic sample: Attachment, separation-individuation, and ethnic identity. *Journal of College Student Development, 44*(1), 92-109.
- Kasarda, J. D. & Johnson, J. H. (2006). *The economic impact of the Hispanic population on the state of North Carolina*. Chapel Hill, NC: Frank Hawkins Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise.
- Kelderman, E. (2010, June 3). Duncan challenges Black Colleges to improve teacher training and graduation rates. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/article/Duncan-ChallengesBlack/65774/>
- Keller, J. (2007, April 13). State legislatures debate tuition for illegal immigrants. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/article/State-Legislatures-Debate/6540/>
- Kenny, M. E., & Stryker, S. (1996). Social network characteristics and college adjustment among racially and ethnically diverse first-year students. *Journal of College Student Personnel, 37*(6), 649-655.
- Kim, M. M. (2002). Historically Black vs. White institutions: Academic development among Black students. *The Review of Higher Education, 25*(4), 385-407.
- Kochhar, R., Suro, R., & Tafoya, S. M. (2005). *The new Latino South: The context and consequences of rapid population growth*. Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center.
- Kohn, L. T. (1997). *Methods in case study analysis. Technical publication* (No. 2). Washington, DC: The Center for Studying Health System Change.

- Kraemer, B.A. (1997). The academic and social integration of Hispanic students into college. *Review of Higher Education*, 20(2), 163-179.
- Krathwohl, D. (2004). *Methods of educational and social science research* (2nd ed.). Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.
- Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Schuh, J. H., & Whitt, E. J. (2005). *Student success in college: Creating conditions that matter*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Kumashiro, K. (2003). Against repetition: Addressing resistance to anti-oppressive change in the practices of learning, teaching, supervising, and researching. In A. Howell, & F. Tuitt, (Eds.), *Race and higher education: Rethinking pedagogy in diverse college classrooms* (pp. 45-68). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Educational Review.
- Laanan, F. S., & Starobin, S. S. (2004). Defining Asian American and Pacific Islander—serving institutions. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 127, 49-59.
- Lee, A. (Project Coordinator). (2007). *New faces: Latinos in North Carolina. A curriculum-based media project about the Latino community's culture & economic contributions to North Carolina* [DVD]. Retrieved from [http://www.workingfilms.org/newfaces/video\\_clips.html](http://www.workingfilms.org/newfaces/video_clips.html)
- Lee, W. Y. (2002). Culture and institutional climate: Influences on diversity in higher education. *The Review of Higher Education*, 25(3), 359-368.
- Lemelle, T. J. (2002). The HBCU: Yesterday, today and tomorrow. *Education*, 123(1), 190-197.
- Li, X. (2007). *Characteristics of minority-serving institutions and minority undergraduates enrolled in these institutions* (NCES 2008-156). Washington, DC:



- National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/2008156.pdf>
- Longerbeam, S. L., Sedlacek, W. E., & Alatorre, H. A. (2002). *In their own voices: What do the data on Latino students mean to them?* (Research Rep. No. 5). College Park, MD: University of Maryland, Counseling Center.
- Lopez, M. A. (2007). *Examining dimensions of Latina/o college student success: An analysis of individual persistence and success.* (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation). University of Maryland: College Park, MD.
- Lumina Foundation for Education. (2002, January). *Unequal opportunity: Disparities in college access among the 50 States.* Retrieved from <http://www.luminafoundation.org/publications/monographs/pdfs/monograph.pdf>
- Lumina Foundation for Education. (2004, February). *Expanding college access: The impact of state finance strategies.* Retrieved from <http://www.luminafoundation.org/publications/fiscalindicators/fiscalindicators.html>
- Martinez, M. & Fernandez, E. (2004). Latinos in community colleges. In A. M. Ortiz (Ed.), *Addressing the unique needs of Latino American students* (pp. 51-62). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mayhew, M. J., Grunwald, H. E., & Dey, E. L. (2005). Curriculum matters: Creating a positive climate for diversity from the student perspective. *Research in Higher Education, 46*(4), 389-412.

- Mayo, J.R., Murguia, E., & Padilla, R.V. (1995). Social integration and academic performance among minority student success in college. *Journal of College Student Development, 36*, 125-135.
- McClain, P. D., Lyle, M. L., Carter, N. M., DeFrancesco Soto, V. M., Lackey, G. F., Cotton, K. D., & Kendrick, J. A. (2007). Black Americans and Latino immigrants in a southern city: Friendly neighbors or economic competitors? *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race, 4*(1), 97-117.
- Mercer, C. J., & Stedman, J. B. (2008). Minority-serving institutions: Selected institutional and student characteristics. In M. Gasman, B. Baez, & C. S. V. Turner (Eds.), *Understanding minority-serving institutions* (pp. 28-42). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mertens, D. M. (2005). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Milem, J. F., Chang, M. J., & Antonio, A. L. (2005). *Making diversity work on campus: A research-based perspective*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Sage.
- Moltz, D. (2010, February 5). The emerging Hispanic-serving institution. *Inside Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2010/02/05/hsi>

- Moreno, S. E. (1998, December). U.S. Latinos and higher education. *IUPLR Briefing Papers*, 1(6). Retrieved from [http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICwebPortal/Home.portal?\\_nfpb=true&\\_pageLabel=ERIC\\_Search](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICwebPortal/Home.portal?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=ERIC_Search)
- Mortenson, T. (2003, November 3). Demographics and demographic change in American higher education. Retrieved from <http://www.sc.edu/fye/resources/assessment/essays/Mortenson-11.3.03.html>
- Moses, M. S., & Chang, M. J. (2006). Toward a deeper understanding of the diversity rationale. *Educational Researcher*, 35(1), 6-11.
- Muñoz, S. M., & Guardia, J. R. (2009). Nuestra historia y futuro (Our history and future): Latino/a fraternities and sororities. In C. L. Torbenson & G. S. Parks (Eds.), *Brothers and sisters: Diversity in college fraternities and sororities* (104-132). Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.
- Nasir, N. I. S., & Al-Amin, J. (2006). Creating identity-safe spaces on college campuses for Muslim students. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 38(2), 22-27.
- National Center for Educational Statistics. (2001). *Digest of education statistics 2001*. Washington, DC: Author.
- National Center for Educational Statistics. (2004). *Historically Black colleges and universities, 1976 to 2001*. Washington, DC: Author.
- National Council of La Raza (2003). *Immigrant student legislation*. Retrieved from <http://www.nclr.org/content/publications/detail/2637/>

- National Education Association (2005). *Joint statement of priorities for the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act*. Retrieved from <http://www2.nea.org/he/leg-news/jointhea.html>
- Nealy, M. J. (2009). Pride and peril: Historically Black colleges and universities. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 26(14), 18-19.
- Nelson Laird, T. F., Bridges, B. K., Morelon-Quainoo, C. L., Williams, J. M., & Holmes, M. S. (2007). African American and Hispanic student engagement at minority serving and predominantly White institutions. *Journal of College Student Development*, 48(1), 39-56.
- Nora, A., & Cabrera, A. F. (1996). The role of perceptions of prejudice and discrimination on the adjustment of minority students to college. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 67(2), 119-148.
- North Carolina Central University. (2004). *Strategic plan 2004-2009*. Retrieved from [http://www.nccu.edu/\\_files/documents/strategicplan.pdf](http://www.nccu.edu/_files/documents/strategicplan.pdf)
- North Carolina Central University. (2010a). *NCCU at a glance*. Retrieved from <http://www.nccu.edu/aboutnccu/index.cfm>
- North Carolina Central University. (2010b). *University facts book*. Retrieved from <http://www.nccu.edu/academicaffairs/rep/facts.cfm>
- North Carolina Central University. (2010c). *University mission*. Retrieved from <http://www.nccu.edu/aboutnccu/mission.cfm>
- North Carolina Central University. (2012). *NCCU facts: 2011-2012*. Retrieved from [http://www.nccu.edu/formsdocs/proxy.cfm?file\\_id=1868](http://www.nccu.edu/formsdocs/proxy.cfm?file_id=1868)

- North Carolina Central University (2013a). *University College*. Retrieved from <http://www.nccu.edu/academics/universitycollege/>
- North Carolina University (2013b). *Strategic plan 2020*. Retrieved from [http://www.nccu.edu/formsdocs/proxy.cfm?file\\_id=1224](http://www.nccu.edu/formsdocs/proxy.cfm?file_id=1224)
- North Carolina Central University, Office of Public Relations, (2010, August 19). *NCCU earns top ranking* [Press release]. Retrieved from <http://www.nccu.edu/news/index.cfm?id=8A586F1D-19B9-B859-78B75EFDDFA4B018>
- North Carolina Institute of Medicine. (2003). *NC Latino health, 2003: A report from the Latino health task force North Carolina institute of medicine in collaboration with El Pueblo, Inc.* Retrieved from <http://www.nciom.org/wp-content/uploads/NCIOM/projects/latino/latinopub/fullreport.pdf>
- Novas, H. (1998). *Everything you need to know about Latino history*. New York, NY: Penguin Putnam.
- O'Brien, E. M. & Zudak, C. (1998). Minority-serving institutions: An overview. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 1998(102), 5-15.
- Oliva, M., & Nora, A. (2004). College access and the K-16 pipeline: Connecting policy and practice for Latino student success. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 3(2), 117-124.
- Olivas, M. A. (1985). Financial aid packaging policies: Access and ideology. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 56(4), 462-475.
- Ortiz, A. M. (2004). Promoting the success of Latino students: A call to action. In A. M. Ortiz (Ed), *Addressing the unique needs of Latino American students* (pp. 89-97). San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

- Outcalt, C. L., & Skewes-Cox, T. E. (2002). Involvement, interaction, and satisfaction: The human environment at HBCUs. *The Review of Higher Education*, 25(3), 331-347.
- Padilla, R.V., Treviño, J., Gonzalez, K., & Treviño, J. (1997). Developing local models of minority student success in college. *Journal of College Student Development*, 38(2), 125-135.
- Padilla, R.V. (1999). *Chicana/o college students: Focus on success*. Retrieved from Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities website:  
<http://www.hacu.net/images/hacu/padilla2.pdf>
- Park, J. J., & Chang, M. J. (2010). Asian American and Pacific Islander Serving Institutions: The Motivations and Challenges behind Seeking a Federal Designation. *Online Submission*.
- Pascarella, E. T., (1980). Student-faculty informal contact and college outcomes. *Review of Educational Research*, 50(4), 545-595.
- Pascarella, E. T. & Terenzini, P.T. (1998). Studying college students in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Meeting new challenges. *The Review of Higher Education*, 21(2), 151-165.
- Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (2005). *How college affects students: A third decade of research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Patton, L. D. (2010). *Culture centers in higher education: Perspectives on identity, theory, and practice*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Pavel, D. M., Inglebret, E., & Banks, S. R. (2001). Tribal colleges and universities in an era of dynamic development. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 76(1), 50-72.

- Peterson, R. D. (2006). *White, male, and "minority": A study of racial consciousness development among White male undergraduate students at a public historically Black university* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (AAT 3229114)
- Peterson, R. D., & Hamrick, F. A. (2009). White, male, and "minority": Racial consciousness among White male undergraduates attending a historically Black university. *The Journal of Higher Education, 80*(1), 34-58.
- Pew Hispanic Center. (2004, June). *Federal policy and Latinos in higher education*. Retrieved from <http://pewhispanic.org/reports/report.php?ReportID=32>
- Pew Hispanic Center. (2005). *Hispanics: A people in motion*. Retrieved from <http://pewhispanic.org/reports/report.php?ReportID=40>
- Pew Hispanic Center. (2006). *The state of American public opinion on immigration in spring 2006: A review of major surveys*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewhispanic.org/files/factsheets/18.pdf>
- Phinney, J. S. (1993). A three-stage model of ethnic identity development in adolescence. In M. E. Bernal & G. P. Knight (Eds.), *Ethnic identity: Formation and transmission among Hispanics and other minorities* (pp. 61-79). Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- Reames, E. H., Anekwe, O., Wang, C. H., & Witte, J. E. (2011). Honors program learning community outcomes among first-year university students. *Research in Higher Education Journal, 11*, 1-16. Retrieved from <http://www.aabri.comwww.aabri.com/manuscripts/11781.pdf>

- Redd, K. E. (1998). Historically Black colleges and universities: Making a comeback. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 1998(102), 33-43.
- Reese, S. D., Danielson, W. A., Shoemaker, P. J., Chang, T. K., & Hsu, H. L. (1986). Ethnicity-of-interviewer effects among Mexican-Americans and Anglos. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 50, 563-572.
- Rendón, L. I. (1994). Validating culturally diverse students: Toward a new model of learning and student development. *Innovative Higher Education*, 19(1), 33-51.
- Rendón, L. I., García, M., & Person, D. (Eds.). (2004). *Transforming the first-year of college for students of color*. Columbia, SC: National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, University of South Carolina.
- Rendón, L.I., Jalomo, R.E., & Nora, A. (2000). Theoretical considerations in the study of minority student retention in higher education. In Braxton, J.M. (Ed.) *Reworking the student departure puzzle* (pp. 127-156). Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Riley, L. R. (2010, September 28). Black colleges need a new mission. *The Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved from <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704654004575517822124077834.html>.
- Roach, R. (2004, September 1). Surging in the Southeast: North Carolina HBCU's expected to play significant role in facilitating college access for the increasing Latino population in the region. *Black Issues in Higher Education*, 21(16), 32.
- Roach, R. (2005). HBCUs reach out to Latino students. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 22(16), 28-29.



- Rodriguez, A. L., Guido-DiBrito, R., Torres, V., & Talbot, D. (2000). Latina college students: Issues and challenges for the 21st century. *NASPA Journal*, 37(3), 511-527.
- Roebuck, J. B., & Murty, K. S. (1993). *Historically Black colleges and universities: Their place in American higher education*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Rooney, M. (2002, September 6). *Report on Latino-American students notes high college- enrollment rate, lower graduation rate*. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/article/Report-on-Latino-American/115279/>
- Ross, M. J. (1998). *Success factors of young African-American males at a historically Black college*. Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- Rudestam, K. E., & Newton, R. R. (2001). *Surviving your dissertation: A comprehensive guide to content and process* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Russell, M. L., & Atwater, M. M. (2005). Traveling the road to success: A discourse on persistence throughout the science pipeline with African American students at a predominantly White institution. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 42(6), 691-715.
- Ryu, M. (2010). *Minorities in higher education: Twenty-fourth status report*. Washington, DC: American Council on Education.
- Saenz, R. (2004). *The demography of Latino immigration: Trends and implications for the future*. Presented at the American Sociological Association Congressional Briefing on Immigration. April 19, 2004. Retrieved from [http://www.asanet.org/search\\_results.cfm?q=Saenz](http://www.asanet.org/search_results.cfm?q=Saenz)

- Saenz, V. B., & Ponjuan, L. (2011). *Men of color: Ensuring the academic success of Latino males in higher education* (Policy Issue Brief). Retrieved from Institute for Higher Education website: [http://www.ihep.org/assets/files/publications/m-r/\(Brief\)\\_Men\\_of\\_Color\\_Latinos.pdf](http://www.ihep.org/assets/files/publications/m-r/(Brief)_Men_of_Color_Latinos.pdf)
- Sangha, S. (2012, November 13). *Latinas attend college in record numbers, but stay close to home*. Retrieved from Fox News Latino website: <http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/lifestyle/2012/11/13/latinatas-attend-college-in-record-numbers-but-stay-close-to-home/#ixzz2CXto80SH>
- Santiago, D. A., Andrade, S. J., & Brown, S. E. (2004). *Latino student success at Hispanic-serving institutions: Findings from a demonstration project*. Retrieved from Excelencia in Education website: <http://www.edexcelencia.org/sites/default/files/LSSatHSIs-Jan2004.pdf>
- Santiago, D. A., Kienzl, G. S., Sponsler, B. A., & Bowles, A. (2010). *Ensuring America's future: Federal policy and Latino college completion*. Washington DC: Excelencia in Education and the Institute for Higher Education Policy. Retrieved from <http://www.edexcelencia.org/research/EAF/FederalPolicy>
- Santoro, W. A. (1999). Conventional politics takes center stage: The Latino struggle against English-only laws. *Social Forces*, 77(3), 887-909.
- Saunders, M., & Serna, I. (2004, April). Making college happen: The college experiences of first-generation Latino students. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 3(2), 146-151.
- Schmid, C. L. (2001). Educational achievement, language-minority students, and the new second generation. *Sociology of Education*, 74, 71-87.

- Schroeder, C. C., & Mable, P. (1994). *Realizing the educational potential of residence halls*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Schultz, T.W. (1961). Investment in human capital. In K. Karabel & A. H. Halsey (Eds.), *Power and ideology in education* (pp. 313-324). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Scott, M. C. (2008). Resegregation, language, and educational opportunity: The influx of Latino students into North Carolina public schools. *Harvard Latino Law Review, 11*, 123-156.
- Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information, 22*, 63-76.
- Sólorzano, D. G., Villalpando, O., & Oseguera, L. (2005). Educational inequities and Latina/o undergraduate students in the United States: A critical race analysis of their educational progress. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 4*(3), 272-280.
- Stake, R. E. (1994). Case studies. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 236-247). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Stein, W. J. (2009). *Tradition and culture in the millennium: Tribal colleges and universities*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Strayhorn, T. L. (2010). Majority as temporary minority: Examining the influence of faculty-student relationships on satisfaction among White undergraduates at historically Black colleges and universities. *Journal of College Student Development, 51*(5), 509-524.

- StudySpanish.com (2012). *Plural forms of nouns*. Retrieved from <http://www.studyspanish.com/lessons/plnoun.htm>.
- Sullivan, L. G. (2007). Preparing Latinos/as for a flat world: The community college role. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 6(4), 397-422.
- Suro, R. (2002). *Counting the "other Hispanics": How many Colombians, Dominicans, Ecuadorians, Guatemalans and Salvadorans are there in the United States?* Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center.
- Suro, R., & Singer, A. (2002). *Latino growth in metropolitan America: Changing patterns, new locations*. (Survey series). Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy in collaboration with the Pew Hispanic Center.
- Sutton, E. M., & Terrell, M. C. (1997, Winter). Identifying and developing leadership opportunities for African American men. *New Directions for Student Services*, 1997(80), 55-64.
- Swail, W. S., Cabrera, A. F., Lee, C., & Williams, A. (2005). *Latino students and the educational pipeline. Part III: Pathways to the bachelor's degree for Latino students*. Washington, DC: Educational Policy Institute and Lumina Foundation for Education.
- Swail, W. S., Redd, K. E., & Perna, L.W. (2003). *Retaining minority students in higher education: A framework for success*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Swail, W.S. & Perna, L.W. (2002). Pre-college outreach and early intervention programs. In D. E. Heller (Ed.), *Condition of access: Higher education for lower*

*income students* (pp. 15-34). Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers (ACE/Oryx Series on Higher Education).

Thorne, S. (July 01, 2000). Data analysis in qualitative research. *Evidence-based Nursing*, 3, 68-70.

Thurgood Marshall College Fund. (2006). *Demographics report*. Retrieved from [http://www.thurgoodmarshallfund.net/images/pdf/tmcfdemographicreport05\\_06.pdf](http://www.thurgoodmarshallfund.net/images/pdf/tmcfdemographicreport05_06.pdf)

Thurgood Marshall College Fund. (2008). *2008 annual report*. Retrieved from <http://thurgoodmarshallfund.net/images/pdf/2008annualreportvertical.pdf>

Thurgood Marshall College Fund. (2011). *Demographic report 2006*. Retrieved from <http://www.thurgoodmarshallfund.net/media/publications>.

Tierney, W. (2000). Power, identity, and the dilemma of college student departure. In J. Braxton (Ed.). *Reworking the student departure puzzle* (pp. 213-234). Knoxville, TN: Vanderbilt Press.

Tierney, W. G. (1992). An anthropological analysis of student participation in college. *Journal of Higher Education*, 63(6), 603-618.

Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Tinto, V. (2005, January). *Taking student success seriously: Rethinking the first year of college*. Paper presented at the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Intersession Academic Affairs Forum, California State University, Fullerton. Retrieved from <http://fdc.fullerton.edu/events/archives/2005/05-01/acadforum/Taking%20Success%20Seriously.pdf>

- Tobolowsky, B. F., Outcalt, C. L., & McDonough, P. M. (2005). The role of HBCUs in the college choice process of African Americans in California. *The Journal of Negro Education, 74*(1), 63-75.
- Tomás Rivera Policy Institute. (2004). *Caught in the financial aid information divide: A national survey of Latino perspectives on financial aid*. Reston, VA: Sallie Mae Fund.
- Torres, V. (1999). Validation of bicultural orientation model for Hispanic college students. *Journal of College Student Development, 40*(3), 285-298.
- Torres, V. (2004). The diversity among us: Puerto Ricans, Cuban Americans, Caribbean Americans, and Central and South Americans. In A. M. Ortiz (Ed), *Addressing the unique needs of Latino American students* (pp. 5-16). San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Torrez, N. (2004). Developing parent information frameworks that support college preparation for Latino students. *The High School Journal, 87*(3), 54-62.
- Torrez, N. (2004). Developing parent information frameworks that support college preparation for Latino students. *The High School Journal, 87*(3), 54-62.
- Tracey, T. J., & Sedlacek, W. E. (1982, March). *Noncognitive variables in predicting academic success by race*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, NY.

- Trent, W., & Gong, Y. (2006). Achieving justice and equality in US higher education: An exemplary program to increase the participation of underrepresented Students of Color. *Advances in Education in Diverse Communities: Research, Policy and Praxis*, 5, 387-420.
- Tuitt, F. (2003). Afterword: Realizing a more inclusive pedagogy. In A. Howell, F. Tuitt (Eds.), *Race and higher education: Rethinking pedagogy in diverse college classrooms*, (pp. 243–268). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Educational Review.
- Turner, D. (2006, August 5). Black colleges recruit Hispanics. *USA Today*. Retrieved from [http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/education/2006-08-05-blackcolleges\\_x.htm](http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/education/2006-08-05-blackcolleges_x.htm)
- United States Census Bureau (2000). *Overview of race and Hispanic origin*. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/cenbr01-1.pdf>
- United States Census Bureau (2003). *2003 American community survey summary tables: Language spoken at home for the population 5 years and over*. Retrieved from [http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DTGeoSearchByListServlet?ds\\_name=ACS\\_2003\\_EST\\_G00\\_&state=dt&mt\\_name=ACS\\_2003\\_EST\\_G2000\\_P034&\\_lang=en&\\_ts=312593516932](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DTGeoSearchByListServlet?ds_name=ACS_2003_EST_G00_&state=dt&mt_name=ACS_2003_EST_G2000_P034&_lang=en&_ts=312593516932)
- United States Census Bureau (2004). *We the people: Hispanics in the United States*. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/prod/2007pubs/censr-18.pdf>
- United States Census Bureau (2009a). *2009 American Community Survey 1-year estimates*. [Microsoft Excel file]. Retrieved [http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ADPTable?\\_bm=y&-](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ADPTable?_bm=y&-)

qr\_name=ACS\_2009\_1YR\_G00\_DP5&-geo\_id=04000US37&-context=adp&-  
ds\_name=&-tree\_id=309&-\_lang=en&-redoLog=false&-format=

United States Census Bureau. (2009b). *Hispanic heritage month 2009: Sept. 15–Oct. 15* [Fact sheet]. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/pdf/cb09-ff17.pdf>

United States Census Bureau. (2009c). *Race and Hispanic or Latino: 2000*. [Microsoft Excel file]. Retrieved from [http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/GCTTable?\\_bm=y&-geo\\_id=01000US&-\\_box\\_head\\_nbr=GCT-P6&-ds\\_name=DEC\\_2000\\_SF1\\_U&-redoLog=false&-format=US-9&-mt\\_name=DEC\\_2000\\_PL\\_U\\_GCTPL\\_ST7](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/GCTTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=01000US&-_box_head_nbr=GCT-P6&-ds_name=DEC_2000_SF1_U&-redoLog=false&-format=US-9&-mt_name=DEC_2000_PL_U_GCTPL_ST7)

United States Census Bureau. (2010a). *North Carolina state and county quick facts*. Retrieved from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37000.html>

United States Census Bureau. (2010b). *Percent change in the Hispanic or Latino population by county: 2000-2010*. Retrieved from <http://blog.videominutes.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/U.S.-Census-Bureau-Percent-Change-in-Hispanic-or-Latino-Population-by-County-2000-to-2010.bmp>

United States Department of Education (2005). *History of the federal TRIO programs*. Retrieved from <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/triohistory.html>

University of North Carolina Board of Governors. (2004). *Supplement to long range planning 2004-2009*. Retrieved from <http://www.northcarolina.edu/reports/index.php?page=download&id=27>

Upcraft, M. L., & Gardner, J. N. (1989). *The freshman year experience: Helping students survive and succeed in college*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.



- Walpole, M. (2003). Socioeconomic status and college: How SES affects college experiences and outcomes. *The Review of Higher Education*, 27(1), 45-73.
- Wenglinsky, H. (1997). *Students at historically Black colleges and universities: Their aspirations & accomplishments*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing.
- White House Initiative on Asian American and Pacific Islanders. (2011). *White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders Key Facts and Figures*. Retrieved from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/aapi/data/facts-and-figures>
- White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. (n.d.). *Asian American and Pacific Islander facts*. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/list/asian-americans-initiative/aanapisi.html>
- White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (2011). *List of accredited HBCUs*. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/list/whhbcu/edlite-index.html>
- White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities (2011). Retrieved from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/12/02/executive-order-13592-improving-american-indian-and-alaska-native-educat>
- Wolf-Wendel, L. E. (1998). Models of excellence: The baccalaureate origins of successful European American women, African American women, and Latinas. *Journal of Higher Education*, 69(2), 141-86.
- Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case study research: Design and method*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and method*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

