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# SSITA: Seal Serving Institutional Transformation Assessment: Excelencia in Education & Portland State University

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## **SSITA: Seal Serving Institutional Transformation Assessment**

### **Excelencia in Education & Portland State University**

#### **Description**

In the Spring of 2022, Portland State University was invited to participate in Excelencia in Education's pilot Seal Serving Institutional Transformation Assessment or SSITA. This SSITA report is a preliminary institutional assessment of Portland State University's (PSU) efforts to intentionally serve Latiné students and advance degree completion. Between now and June 2023, a committee of faculty, staff, and students will lead the effort to complete a Seal of Excelencia application. We will reach out to all parts of the institution to gather additional information, data, and stories about how units serve our growing Latiné student population. The next round of Seal of Excelencia recipients are announced in the early fall of 2023.

#### **Background and Purpose**

Latino college completion is improving but is not happening fast enough to close gaps in degree attainment. [Excelencia in Education](#) is committed to significantly increasing the number of Latino students attaining college degrees by 2030 in partnership with institutions that are intentionally SERVING Latinos, not just enrolling them.

In 2018, *Excelencia* in Education established the Seal of *Excelencia*, a national certification for institutions that strive beyond enrollment to intentionally SERVE Latino students that advance degree completion. The framework for this certification represents learning from over 20 years of working with higher education institutions and is grounded in *Excelencia's* research, identification of evidence-based practices, and extensive collaboration with a large network of leaders committed to the common cause of Latino student success. *Excelencia* recognizes that developing the institutional capacity to intentionally serve Latino students enhances the capacity to serve all students.

*Excelencia* created the Seal Serving Institutional Transformation Assessment (SSITA) as an approach for developing an institutional profile of Latino students while also building campus support to accelerate Latino student success in higher education. SSITA is a preliminary version of the Seal of *Excelencia* institutional assessment tool and the first step on the Ladder of Engagement. Affiliates engage with *Excelencia* at different levels and through different programs. To help structure these affiliations, track growth, and maintain interaction that best suits the institution, we group support into different levels of engagement—the Ladder of Engagement.

#### **Portland State University Context**

In January of 2022, PSU's President Stephen Percy joined Excelencia in Education's Presidents for Latino Student Success (P4LSS) in the Excelencia in Action (E-Action) network, a national network that includes over 130 presidents and chancellors who have committed to making their colleges and universities learning environments where Latino students thrive.

Additionally, four PSU Affiliates have been named to advance this agenda:

- Cynthia Gomez, Lead Affiliate, Director, Community & Civic Impact
- Perla Pinedo, Affiliate, Executive Director, Multicultural Student Services
- Cristina Herrera, Affiliate, Director and Professor, Chicano/Latino Studies
- Oscar Fernandez, Affiliate, Senior Instructor I, University Studies & Latiné Presidential Fellow

PSU Affiliates engage in communications strategies, interactive webinars, meetings, and one-on-one conversations with Excelencia staff about key issues, topics, and resources impacting Latino student

success. These interactions support the exchange and use of strategic information within the network and provide Excelencia with insights to coordinate projects, foster partnerships, and connect institutions with opportunities and resources to advance a national agenda for Latino student success.

The vision of Portland State as a Hispanic-Serving Institution includes strong ties to our local community, compositional diversity at all levels of the institution, and a rich and rigorous educational experience accessible to students from all income levels and backgrounds. By intentionally serving the largest racial/ethnic group at PSU (as of Fall 2022, 18% of currently enrolled students identify as Hispanic/Latino), we bring this vision to life. To support and reinforce institutional capacity to intentionally serve, Excelencia developed the Seal framework which integrates essential components of transformation into a comprehensive institutional strategy for serving students. The Seal is one of the many ways we demonstrate our commitment to the production of knowledge that advances social equity, a culturally-affirming campus climate where PSU students and employees feel a sense of connection and belonging, and the infrastructure necessary to support all our stakeholders and help them thrive.

### **Portland State University SSITA Contributors**

- Lead Author
  - Cynthia Carmina Gómez, Lead Affiliate, Director, Community & Civic Impact, Office of the President
- Co-Authors
  - Oscar Fernandez, Affiliate, Senior Instructor I, University Studies & Latiné Presidential Fellow
  - Cristina Herrera, Professor and Director, Chicano/Latino Studies
  - Emanuel Magaña, Latino/a/x Student Services Coordinator
  - Allyson Meyers, Research Analyst, Office of Institutional Research and Planning
  - Perla Pinedo, Affiliate, Executive Director, Multicultural Student Services
  - Rebecca Rodas, Student Organization Advisor, Student Activities and Leadership Programs
  - Tania Sanchez, Associate Director of Multicultural Recruitment, Office of Admissions

### **Structure**

- The SSITA includes six sections: 1) Contact, 2) Background, 3) Enrollment, 4) Faculty/Staff Representation, 5) Completion and 6) Leadership
- Each section is separated by a page break
- PSU responses are in italics

**SECTION 1: CONTACT INFORMATION****Institution Name**

*Portland State University*

**State**

*Oregon*

**Institution Type \***

*4-year, public*

**HSI Status \***

**Is your institution an HSI (Hispanic Serving Institution)? Institutions federally defined as an HSI have at least 25% Hispanic full-time equivalent undergraduate enrollment.**

*No*

**Primary Contact:**

*Cynthia Carmina Gómez*

**Title:**

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## SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

**Provide an overview of your institution, including the community and student populations you SERVE. (500-word maximum)**

*Portland State University (PSU) sits at the heart of Portland, Oregon, with a 75-year history incubating ideas, convening stakeholders to tackle tough challenges, and graduating thousands of students to serve as our City's principal workforce. From our founding to serve veterans home from World War II, we have been committed to meeting the needs of individual students and society as a whole. We first opened in 1946 as the Vanport Extension Center for 220 students in Vanport, a city built to house wartime shipyard workers. After surviving a devastating flood in 1948, we moved three times before finding our permanent home in 1952 in the heart of downtown Portland, Oregon. Since then, we have grown into Oregon's most diverse urban public research university with 24,000 students and more than 200 degree programs. Half of PSU's 24,000 students come from under-represented backgrounds, making it one of the most diverse institutions in Oregon. PSU is ranked #1 in Oregon in social mobility, according to U.S. News & World Report. Additionally, CollegeNet has ranked PSU in the top 10% nationally for social mobility, proving the University's ability to advance low-income, first-generation students and advance their economic prospects. (Source: <https://www.pdx.edu/portland-state-university-facts>)*

*By the numbers: Student Enrollment for Fall 2021*

### *Student Diversity*

- *White: 52%*
- *BIPOC: 37%*
- *Latino: 18%*
- *Asian: 9.5%*
- *Black or African American: 3.9%*
- *Native American: 1.1%*
- *Multi-Ethnic: 5.9%*
- *Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0.5%*
- *Other: 5.1%*
- *First Generation Students: 46.2%*
- *Students with Children: 25%*

*By the numbers: Minoritized Student Populations Growing (218-Present)*

- *We serve 24K students, 79% of whom are from Oregon*
- *124,724 alumni live in Portland*

- *46% of our students are Pell Eligible, undergraduates who come to PSU with exceptional financial needs*
- *48% of our students come from diverse geographic, ethnic, and racial communities*
- *46% are First Generation students whose parent(s) did not complete a four-year college or university degree*
- *In Fall 2020, PSU's incoming first-year class was majority students of color*

*AANAPISI. We recently crossed the threshold to qualify as an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) with over 10% Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander undergraduates*

*Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution Status. We are an Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution, with 18% of our students identifying as Latiné. In the Fall of 2020, Latiné students were at 16%. In the Fall of 2019, Latiné students were 14% of the population. Fall 2018, 13%. That is a 26% increase since 2019.*

*We expect to be a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), reaching 25% Latiné undergraduate enrollment within the next 3-5 years.*

## SECTION 3: ENROLLMENT

**FAST FACT:** In 2018-19, Latinos were the second largest group enrolled in higher education (21%) compared to Whites (54%), African Americans (13%), and Asians (7%).

Enrolling Latino students is needed before an institution can intentionally SERVE Latino students in college. This section provides an opportunity to share your institution's efforts in enrolling Latino students.

### Fall Enrollment – Undergraduate \*

Please provide at least one year of data on your institution's undergraduate enrollment (Fall).

Fall Enrollment - Undergraduate*	2019-20	2020-21	% change 2020 to 2021
All Students	20320	18656	-8.2%
Hispanic Students	3280	3363	2.5%
% Hispanic	16.1%	18.0%	11.7%

\* Fall Enrollment data includes the headcount of undergraduate students enrolled in the institution in the fall of the academic year. In IPEDS, enrollment data include total fall enrollment at the undergraduate level and includes Grand Total and Hispanic Total race/ethnicity variables.

### Enrollment Strategy

Describe your institution's strategy for intentionally SERVING Latino students through enrollment.

*Our Enrollment Management leadership team has intentionally hired qualified bilingual and bicultural staff to better serve our Latinx students and families. Throughout the year, we host several bilingual programs, including our Spanish Information Session, Spanish Financial Aid Sessions, Bilingual Admitted Student Reception, and Bilingual Orientation Sessions.*

*Additionally, our multicultural admissions team focuses on providing application and next steps workshops at the local high schools to help students navigate the admissions and financial aid process. We have also partnered with community organizations that largely serve Latinx students and families, such as Latino Network, College Possible, Adelante Mujeres, Centro Prosperidad, Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber, and C.A.M.P. Through our partnership with these types of organizations, we have been able to effectively connect with our Latinx community and even partner to help provide various scholarships, such as our PDX Dreamer Scholarship.*

*Our Latinx student percentage is higher than the Latinx percentage of Multnomah County, which is 12%, and also higher than our state's percentage, which is 14%.*



## **Service Area**

**Does the Latino undergraduate representation at your institution mirror the Latino representation in your local service area?**

Yes

## **Programs and Practices**

**Describe at least one specific program/practice that supports your institution's progress on Latino student enrollment (aligned to your data provided). For each, include a) a description and how your institution sustains or scales each practice and b) evidence of effectiveness with disaggregated data (i.e., participation, race/ethnicity, impact).**

### **Practice 1 – Program Description (150-word maximum)**

*Latino/a/x Student Services (LSS) provides academic support services, advocacy, and connections to campus and Latino/a/x community services and resources to new incoming 1st year, transfer, and continuing students. LSS ensures academic success, retention, and graduation of students through culturally inclusive services that build a strong sense of community and belonging.*

*The GANAS Scholars Program, a year-long support program, helps students transition to PSU from high school and community college. Developed with a Latinx cultural lens, it caters to first-generation, low-income students.*

*This program accepts 40-45 new students annually and provides financial assistance for the first year. It provides holistic advising through peer mentoring, programming, and developmental workshops. Students learn to navigate the university while developing a sense of community and building a support network. Themes include cultural identity, community integration, and learning strategies, such as study skills, time management, financial literacy, and effective communication.*

### **Evidence of Effectiveness (150-word maximum)**

*The GANAS program has created a significant impact on Latinx students. The program has had an average year-1 to year-2 retention rate of 88% between 2010-2021. The 6-year graduation rate also averages 66% for all eligible students. GANAS has illustrated a positive impact on students that are in the program. This program is overseen by Latino/a/x Student Services and illustrates its impact on the larger Latinx community at PSU.*

### **Practice 2 - Program Description (150-word maximum)**

*La Casa Latina is a resource center at Portland State University where Latine students and allies come to build and connect with the community, develop leadership skills, empower their individual and collective identities, and participate in various academic and cultural activities to support their academic success. The mission of La Casa Latina is to enhance the Latine*

*student's experience on campus by providing cultural, social, and academic events. Additionally, La Casa Latina also seeks to raise awareness of the rich diversity of the Latine community on campus.*

### **Evidence of Effectiveness (150 word maximum)**

*La Casa Latina leads and develops culturally affirming programming for students to engage and build community. La Casa Latina hosts several cultural events throughout the year, several of which had more than 100+ attendees this 2021-2022 academic year. Additionally, La Casa Latina has had close to 2,500 individual visits in the last three terms from students, staff, and faculty across campus. Overall, La Casa Latina contributes to the sense of belonging of PSU Latine Students and positively impacts their persistence.*

### **Practice 3 - Program Description (150 word maximum)**

*Spanish Information Sessions is a collaborative effort between Portland State's Admissions and Campus Visits Office to allow Spanish-speaking families to visit campus and obtain all necessary information in their native language. These sessions are done on Saturday mornings and are held once a month. The program starts with an information session, where students and families are informed about the admissions process, financial aid, scholarships, and general information about Portland State. During this time, students and parents can ask questions and contact their admissions counselor. After the information session, students and families participate in a campus tour and experience what it would be like to be a student at Portland State. At the end of the tour, counselors are available to answer any questions. We end the visit with lunch at our campus dining hall.*

### **Evidence of Effectiveness (150 word maximum)**

*Our Spanish Information Session breaks down the language barrier for many of our Spanish-speaking families. This program offers a welcoming environment for Spanish-speaking parents and families to ask questions and gain a better understanding of the college process. For many, college is a family decision, and through these sessions, we can help communicate how parents can help support their students and help them feel more at ease with the process. By providing our sessions on Saturdays, we have seen an increase in the participation of Latinx students and families. Our information session has been so effective that we have had community partners, such as Latino Network, partner with us to provide Spanish Sessions specifically for their programs.*

## SECTION 4: REPRESENTATION: Faculty, Administration, and Staff

**FAST FACT:** In 2017-18, there were over 700,000 faculty teaching at all institutions of higher education. Latinos represented 5% of full-time faculty. At Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), Latinos represented 17% of full-time faculty.

Increasingly, Latino students are advocating for more faculty, administrators, and staff that represent them and their experiences. This section provides an opportunity to share your institution's efforts for representing Latinos in faculty, administration, and staff.

### Representation \*

Please provide data on the representation of faculty, administrators, and staff at your institution. If the answer to any cell is zero, please enter zero.

Faculty, Administration, and Staff Representation	2019-20	2020-21	% change 2020 to 2021
<b>Faculty-Full-Time<sup>1</sup></b>			
All faculty full-time	943	913	-3.2%
Hispanic faculty full-time	67	62	-7.5%
% Hispanic	7.1%	6.8%	-4.4%
<b>Faculty Part-Time<sup>2</sup></b>			
All faculty part-time	811	789	-2.7%
Hispanic faculty part-time	44	44	0.0%
% Hispanic	5.4%	5.6%	2.8%
<b>Faculty Tenure<sup>3</sup></b>			
All Faculty	447	456	2.0%
Hispanic Faculty	29	30	3.4%
% Hispanic	6.5%	6.6%	1.4%
<b>Administration<sup>4</sup></b>			
All administrators	281	284	1.1%
Hispanic administrators	17	19	11.8%
% Hispanic	6.0%	6.7%	10.6%
<b>Staff<sup>5</sup></b>			
All staff	1194	1149	-3.8%
Hispanic staff	102	102	0.0%
% Hispanic	8.5%	8.9%	3.9%

1. Instructional faculty, research faculty and administrative faculty (including department chairs) with FTE of 0.5 or higher

2. *Instructional faculty, research faculty, and administrative faculty (including department chairs) with FTE less than 0.5*
3. *Faculty with full tenure*
4. *Executive Administration, Upper-Level Management and Managers*
5. *All other staff including academic professionals (does not include temporary staff)*

*Source: PSU OIRP Employee Database (Fall 2021 Census)*

### **Representation Strategy**

**Describe your institution's strategy for addressing the representation of Latino faculty, administration, and staff (aligned with your data provided) to intentionally SERVE Latino students. How does this compare with the strategy you implement with all faculty? (400 word maximum)**

*Recently, Portland State University has launched an initiative to support new minoritized faculty, including connecting new faculty with tenured BIPOC faculty, providing insights on obtaining grants, managing workload, time, and emotional labor, and mitigating burnout. All new BIPOC faculty received a book about navigating the tenure process. Meetings that have occurred include Meetings with administrators, obtaining grants, and meetings with tenured BIPOC faculty.*

*New faculty have also had the opportunity to connect with university administrators to provide a candid lens on their challenges and imagine new avenues to support their success.*

*Additionally, our university has advanced initiatives to improve the onboarding experience of BIPOC faculty by automatically nominating them to the region's Say Hey signature event, a networking opportunity for BIPOC professionals in Portland to meet other people of color across other industries throughout the Portland metropolitan region. This initiative was awarded by the Coalition of Urban Serving University's Racial Justice and Equity Scholars Program, recognizing the efforts of PSU to ensure the thriving of minoritized staff and faculty and seeding the program with a fund of \$20,000.*

*Provost's Reimagine Grants (2020-Present). Reimagine PSU is an intentional effort to provide spaces to create transformational possibilities at a larger scale. Reimagine PSU allows us to craft the university of the future while meeting our current needs for a sustainable budget and forms a critical component of OAA's Closing the Gap strategy for addressing our budget challenges. Some of the challenges the Provost wanted faculty to address include*

- *Accommodating the changing circumstances of our student's lives, including increasing needs for support with financial aid, housing, mental health services, and academic skills preparation*
- *Meeting PSU's responsibility to communities and workplaces that are increasingly attuned to issues of racial equity and justice and expecting university graduates to be educated about and able to effect changes relating to them*
- *Responding to student demands for increased flexibility in the ways they choose to learn, including more options for connecting to instructors and student services*

[\(Source\)](#)

*Global Diversity and Inclusion. Global Diversity & Inclusion is developing diversity education offerings addressing various needs and experience levels. Below is a list of education and learning opportunities:*

- *Culturally Responsive Workshops*
- *Inclusive Hiring Workshops*
- *Overview of Equity and Inclusive Practices*
- *President's Diversity Action Council*
- *Equity Summit*

*Office of Academic Innovation's Inclusive Curriculum and Pedagogy AIM (Academic Innovation Mini-Fund Program). Participants in the Inclusive Curriculum and Pedagogy cohort will develop or revise a course or program offering to create a more inclusive, culturally relevant, and culturally sustaining approach to curriculum and pedagogy.*

**Have you identified where Latino faculty are concentrated at your institution by academic status and discipline?**

Yes

**If yes, what are the top academic status and disciplines where Latino faculty are represented? (100 word maximum)**

- *Art*
- *Chicano/Latino Studies Program*
- *Center for Improvement of Child/Family Services*
- *School of Social Work Instruction (SSW BSW Program, SSW MSW Program, SSW Distance Option MSW Program).*
- *University Studies*
- *World Languages and Literatures*

[Faculty Changes from 2019 - 2020](#)

### **Programs and Practices**

**Describe at least one program/practice that increases the representation of Latino faculty/staff to intentionally SERVE Latino students (aligned to your data provided). For each, include a) a description and how your institution sustains or scales each practice and b) evidence of effectiveness with disaggregated data (i.e., participation, race/ethnicity, impact).**

**Practice 1 – Program Description (150 word maximum)**

*Cluster Hire. The School of Gender, Race, and Nations (SGRN) housed in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences successfully implemented a cluster hire in the fall 2021 to address*

*the growing diversity of the Portland State University student population. SGRN is the home to Black Studies, Indigenous Nations Studies, Chicano/Latino Studies, and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.*

### **Evidence of Effectiveness (150 word maximum)**

*In fall 2021, Portland State University's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) successfully fulfilled a cluster hire around the topic of activism and justice housed in the School of Gender, Race, and Nations within CLAS. This cluster hire led to the appointment of 7 tenure track faculty members and one tenured faculty member/director in Black Studies, Chicano/Latino Studies, Indigenous Nations Studies, and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. As a result of this cluster hire, the School of Gender, Race, and Nations has instituted a lecture series, has collaborated with the campus student centers, and is working toward the approval of a graduate degree in Gender, Race, and Nations.*

### **Practice 2 – Program Description (150 word maximum)**

*Latinx Employee Resource Group (ERG). The University President named Dr. Óscar Fernández as the Latinx Presidential Fellow for spring-fall 2022. Dr. Fernández's role is to jump-start the Latinx ERG. The jump-starting process started in spring 2022, it will formally end in December 2022 (when Dr. Fernández's Fellowship contract ends) and encompasses six actions:*

- 1. Defining how the affinity group interacts with the Institution and the Institutional agenda*
- 2. Supporting a process that defines the key agenda and priorities for the affinity group [for their communities] and how the agenda will translate into goals*
- 3. Refine/clarify the role of affinity groups in cultural events and celebrations*
- 4. Refine the role of the affinity groups in supporting and retaining employees from their community*
- 5. Define the relationship of the affinity group to the executive sponsors*
- 6. Define the responsibilities of the affinity group leadership and the process for electing and developing leaders*

### **Evidence of Effectiveness (150 word maximum)**

*Evidence of effectiveness is not available. Why? Jumpstarting the ERG started spring of 2022. However, Initial ERG meetings suggested that jump-starting the program is important for ERG attendees as long as the ERG is centered on the needs of the Latinx employees.*

*In spring 2022 ERG meetings, the ERG decided that we would have two visions for the group (and two essential actions according to individual interest, need, and bandwidth):*

- Focus on Communal Care. To provide a space for ERG members mostly interested in communal care and culturally-relevant events*

- *Focus on Leadership and Diversity Labor. To create a space for ERG members interested in taking on university-wide leadership, including diversity labor work (e.g., programming diversity events, being leaders on campus, answering questions about inclusive representation in University Media)*

### **Practice 3 – Program Description (150 word maximum)**

*PSU/HSI (Hispanic Serving Institution) Exploratory Committee. The Committee was formed during the fall term of 2020 and comprises Latinx faculty and staff. The Committee's mission is to utilize the Provost's Reimagine PSU grant dollars (about \$23,000) to provide the university guidance and suggestions to thrive as a Hispanic Serving Institution. Additionally, the Exploratory Committee aims to author a recommendations report by the end of fall 2022. The recommendation report will identify the critical needs and aspirations of Latinx faculty, staff, and students as our University seeks the Hispanic-Serving-Institution federal designation. The report's research methodology is quantitative (i.e., two surveys, one for faculty/staff; another for students) and qualitative. To gather qualitative data (i.e., testimonials), Committee members are organizing three fundamental interactions:*

- 1. One-on-ones with Latinx students;*
- 2. One-on-ones with Latinx leaders among faculty and staff; and*
- 3. Focus groups with Latinx-focused PSU student clubs.*

### **Evidence of Effectiveness (150 word maximum)**

*The Committee is poised to complete its recommendation report by the end of the fall 2022. Actions:*

- 1. Secured \$23,000 from the Provost to do the work (provide gifts to students for completing surveys and attending focus groups, provide seed money for art and activism projects on campus, fall term 2023, and pay co-authors.*
- 2. Dr. Gina Garcia, Becoming Hispanic Serving Institutions (2019), spring campus lecture/Q&A*
- 3. Created a podcast episode with Dr. Garcia summarizing the Committee's work*
- 4. Administered two surveys (one for faculty and staff; another just for undergraduate and graduate students)*
- 5. Held one student focus group*

*This Committee has created a space for us to take care of ourselves as we imagine—and demand— a more inclusive PSU for our Latinx students.*

## SECTION 5: COMPLETION

**FAST FACT:** Nationally, in 2017-18, the graduation rate for Latino students was 33% at two-year institutions and 51% at four-year institutions. Additionally, the six-year completion rate for Latino students in the Fall 2014 cohort was 36% for those who started at two-year institutions and 59% for those who started at four-year institutions.

Completion data includes undergraduate first major awards/degrees earned by Latinos at the bachelor, associate, and certificate levels. This section provides an opportunity to share your institution's efforts in Latino students' college completion.

### Degree Completion \*

Please provide either two years of completion (including bachelor's, associate, and/or certificate) on the Completion Data table, or two years of student completion rates (calculated through the National Student Clearinghouse) on the Completion Rates table. If the answer to any cell is zero, please enter zero.

Completion Data*	2019-20	2020-21	% change 2020 to 2021
<b>Certificate</b>			
All students	751	732	2.6%
Hispanic students	98	96	2.1%
<b>Associate's</b>			
All students			
Hispanic students			
<b>Bachelor's</b>			
All students	4429	4409	0.5%
Hispanic students	619	617	0.3%

Source: 2019-20 & 2020-21 IPEDS Completion Data Reports

\* Completions include the number of credentials awarded at the undergraduate level in a specific academic year. In IPEDS, completion data include undergraduate first major awards/degrees conferred by CIP (Classification of Instructional Programs) code 99 (total) and Grand Total and Hispanic Total race/ethnicity variables. In IPEDS, awards include certificates of less than one academic year, certificates of at least one but less than two academic years, associate degrees, and bachelor's degrees.

### Completion Strategy

Describe your institutional strategy for intentionally **SERVING** Latino students to support completion (aligned with your data provided). (400 word maximum)



*Equitable student success is one of the President's three top priorities of Racial justice, Equitable student success and pivoting community engagement to advance the city. This is guided by two campus-wide frameworks and strategic plans:*

- *Students First Initiative*
- *Time to Act Racial Justice and Equity Action Plan*

*Embedded in each of these strategic frameworks are demonstrated, evidence-based commitments and action steps to address graduation and retention gaps. To further understand the extent of graduation and retention disparities, the Global Diversity and Inclusion division partnered with the Office of Institutional Research and Planning to launch PSU's first equity scorecard in 2021. Students First is grounded in equity and leverages disaggregated data across metrics and student survey responses to identify disparate outcomes and experiences.*

*Other initiatives to address graduation and retention disparities:*

- *Improving the academic success of minoritized students by increasing exposure to culturally- centered high impact practices, including undergraduate research, pre-internships, co-ops and internships, writing-intensive courses, study abroad, living-learning communities, and senior capstones*
- *Increasing the retention of minoritized students with the lowest persistence rates including Native students, black students, and BIPOC men by launching intersectional BIPOC programming and design expanded programming for communities with the lowest retention rates.*
- *Summer Bridge Program: free two-course, residential program that targets students who have a cumulative high school GPA of 2.99 or lower. Services include peer mentoring, campus activities, first-year opportunities, and free on-campus housing for four weeks.*
- *The Finish Mile and Return to PSU initiative hones in on our re-engagement and retention efforts to bring back students of color who have stopped out since the pandemic.*
- *the creation of several task forces and leadership councils under the Students First framework,*
- *the strategic investment in expanding retention support services for minoritized students.*

*These efforts were awarded a \$900,000 grant, allowing PSU to specifically target and invite underrepresented students to come back to school, finish their degrees, and receive a direct financial award to be able to do so.*

*Areas of promise include our university's decision to redirect strategic investment dollars to support the retention and success of students who participate in our Multicultural Retention Services Program, a culturally relevant, and socially just, holistic retention program that matches students with peers and adult coordinators who support their persistence by assisting them with navigating the hidden curriculum. Students also get tuition support, helping to ensure that financial affordability is prioritized.*

**Are Latino students completing at the same rate as other students at**

**your institution?**

Yes

**If no, how is your institution addressing this gap? (100 word maximum)**

N/A

**Representation**

**Identify at least one academic major where Latinos are underrepresented at your institution. Describe your institution's strategy to intentionally SERVE Latino students by increasing their representation. (400 word maximum)**

*The average rate of Hispanic students overall (UG) is about 20%.*

*Computer Science (11% out of 873 students)  
 Envir Sci & Research (11% out of 249 students)  
 Applied Linguistics (13% out of 102 students)  
 History (13% out of 185 students)  
 Economics (13% out of 185 students)  
 Music & Theater (13% out of 347 students)*

*Each of these departments has a larger number of Hispanic students than the overall average of 20%.*

*Social Work (27% of 376 students)  
 Marketing (28% of 589 students)  
 Architecture (29% of 241 students)  
 World Languages & Literatures (31% of 200 students)  
 Criminology & Criminal Justice (33% of 493 students)  
 Child & Family Studies (33% of 20012 students)*

*Promising Practices:*

- *MESA program (Mathematics, Engineering, and Science Achievement)*
- *ATMOS program supports diverse and underrepresented undergraduate business students of color,*
- *LSAMP (Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Program, EXITO,*

**Programs and Practices**

**Describe at least one program/practice intentionally SERVING Latino students to support completion (aligned to your data provided). For each, include a) a description and how your institution sustains or scales each practice, and b) evidence of effectiveness with disaggregated data (i.e., participation, race/ethnicity, impact, class).**

**Practice 1 – Program Description (150 word maximum)**

*The GANAS Scholars Program is a year-long support program designed to help students*

*transition to PSU from high school and community college. The program was developed with a Latinx cultural lens and caters to first-generation, low-income students. Students enrolled in this program become active members of the campus community and will acquire skills and tools that will lead to continuing success beyond the first year at PSU.*

*This program accepts close to 40-45 new students every year and provides financial assistance for the first year. The program provides holistic advising to students while supporting them through peer mentoring, programming, and developmental workshops. Students learn to navigate the university while developing a sense of community and building a support network. Students explore themes such as cultural identity, the importance of community, and learning strategies, such as study skills, time management, financial literacy, and effective communication.*

**Evidence of Effectiveness (150 word maximum)**

*That GANAS program has had a consistently high retention rate illustrating its impact for Latinx Students. The average year 1 to year 2 retention rate for students in the program was 88% between 2010-2021. The average 6-year graduation rate during that same period averaged 66%. The 2020-2021 cohort featured a year 1 to year 2 retention rate of 94%.*

## SECTION 6: LEADERSHIP

**FAST FACT:** The institutions in *Excelencia's* P4LSS network enroll and graduate 1 in 5 Latinos in the U.S.

Leadership is defined in many ways. For the Seal, leadership is defined institutionally. Institutional leadership for SERVING Latino and other post-traditional students integrates multiple components (e.g. mission and strategy, data and practice, human resource practices, communications, and institutional culture) of an institution.

### MISSION AND STRATEGY

***Mission and strategy*** refer to aspects of the institution's mission and strategy that are articulated and implemented to intentionally include Latino students' success.

#### Institutional Mission

Share your institutional mission and describe how it addresses SERVING Latino students. (250 word maximum)

#### *PSU Mission*

- *Serve and sustain a vibrant urban region through our creativity, collective knowledge, and expertise.*
- *Dedication to collaborative learning, innovative research, sustainability, and community engagement.*
- *Education of a diverse community of lifelong learners.*
- *Research and teaching have a global impact.*

#### *Values*

- *We promote access, inclusion, and equity as pillars of excellence.*
- *We commit to curiosity, collaboration, stewardship, and sustainability.*
- *We strive for excellence and innovation that solves problems.*
- *We believe everyone should be treated with integrity and respect.*

#### *Position*

- *An anchor institution, providing the region with a highly educated population, substantial economic impact, and distinctive contributions to its culture.*
- *Contributing unique scholarship and research that support quality of life through problem-solving.*
- *Delivering on our access mission, contributing to a highly educated and diverse community.*

*PSU leads the way toward an equitable and sustainable future through academic excellence, urban engagement, and expanding opportunity for all. We pursue excellence through accessibility, innovation, collaboration, engagement, sustainability, and transformation.*

*The President's Strategic Priorities of Student Success, Community Engagement & Racial Equity encompass our institutional ethos that positively impacts all of our*

historically marginalized students and prepares them for a changing workforce. While PSU does not explicitly name the Latiné community, the overall mission clearly prioritizes access, inclusion, and equity as central to the goals of the university.

## **Institutional Strategy**

**Highlight one to three strategies that describe how your institution is intentionally SERVING Latino students (e.g. strategic plans, initiatives, practices).**

### **Strategy 1**

**(250 word maximum)**

*PSU's Latiné Futures Community Convening initiative is a futures-oriented, trans-sector community integration project for metro-area Latiné leaders aimed to develop a vision for collective wealth-building and wellbeing through the exploration of pathways to higher education, climate change, and the changing workforce. In order for our institution to continue to provide educational services and support the ongoing functionality of the institution, this project is a springboard toward COVID-19 reemergence. Our goal is to build a plan for a just and sustainable recovery by drawing on the deep wisdom and excellent work happening in many areas across the community and to seek ways to support and amplify these efforts. Through vision-building exercises, Latiné leaders and community members are coming together to envision a future where the Latiné community thrives through the creation of scenarios based 10-years into the future.*

*The goal of the Latiné Futures Community Convening is to make future thinking accessible to the community by balancing a focus on the here and now (real challenges in our everyday lives) with a long-term view of the future. Designed to elevate Latiné stories, voices, and lived experiences, recommendations and findings gathered during our time together will be compiled into a report and implementation plan. Phase II includes putting the implementation plan into action in partnership with our community leaders.*

*The project received \$25,000 in funding from the Department of Education via Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission. PSU provided \$15,000 in leveraged funds.*

### **Strategy 2**

**(250 word maximum)**

*PSU's partnership with [Latino Network](#) (LN), Portland Oregon's premier Latiné anchor institution, includes direct engagement, intentional outreach, and program integration.*

- *Sponsorship of LN's [Noche Bella Annual Gala](#)
  - *PSU representatives are given the opportunity to attend the gala, a meeting place for Latiné leaders across the region. Sponsorship includes extensive integration in media campaigns leading up to the gala.**
- *Creation of a Latiné Fund to support student scholars
 
  - *LN's Paso a Paso Scholarship will be the main beneficiary of the fund**

- *Fund supports students graduating from LN's Escaleras program who matriculate to PSU*
- *Professional Development opportunities*
  - *Tony DeFalco, LN ED and PSU's Latiné Futures Convening participant (See Institutional Strategy #1) has requested access to the curriculum for LN Directors. (pending fall 2022)*
  - *Oregon's premier highly selective 6-month Latiné leadership cohort, LN's [UNID@S for Oregon](#), is an opportunity to learn about Oregon's Latiné population by visiting different parts of the state. Three PSU staff/faculty have graduated from this program.*
- *Community-based learning*
  - *As part of PSU's general education requirements, the University Studies Summer Senior Capstone course, [Working with Latiné Youth](#), has partnered with LN's Youth Empowerment & Violence Prevention program since 2009. In 2021 & 22, 100% of PSU students enrolled identify at Latiné. This service learning opportunity provides vital mentoring and direct service support for justice-impacted youth.*
- *Bridge programs*
  - *LN scholars are awarded priority points for PSU's Multicultural Retention Student Services programs (GANAS and Diversity Scholarship) in the review process. Additionally, PSU commits to one nomination for each program.*

## **INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE**

***Institutional culture refers to how the institution articulates authentically its intentionality in SERVING Latino students, including how it is cultivated and supported.***

**Describe how your institution ensures Latino representation in your leadership that mirrors your Latino student population team (e.g. President's cabinet, Deans, faculty senate, student government association, Trustees). (400 word maximum)**

*This is an area of opportunity for our university.*

- *There is no Latiné representation on the Presidential Executive Committee Council.*
- *Our highest ranking Latiné leader is Dean Jose Coll oversees our School of Social Work and College of Education.*
- *We are seeking to learn about the ethnic breakdown of the Faculty Senate*
- *Student Government is representative of but we also lack disaggregated/detailed data.*
- *On the Board of Trustees, we anticipate the appointment of a Latina regional government executive level rep. This will bring the number from zero to one out of 14 seats.*

**Does your institution have an inclusive and supportive campus climate that reinforces intentionally SERVING Latino students?**

Yes

**If yes, how do you know your campus climate is intentionally SERVING Latino students? (100 word maximum)**

*[Equity Score Card](#) utilizes an Equity Index method for measuring. An EI equal to or greater than 1.0 indicates the subgroup is experiencing equity. An EI lower than 1 indicates that the subgroup is experiencing inequity. In May 2021, Latiné students scored 1.02 in “Belonging,” 1.00 in “Classroom Experience,” and 1.03 in “PSU does the right thing.”*

*The newly formed BIPOC Student Advisory Council (2022) addresses campus climate by shaping the activities and events to enhance the retention, empowerment, and thriving of minoritized students. Members provide direct feedback to senior leaders and share challenges and barriers.*

## **Additional information about the SSITA provided by Excelencia in Education**

### **How can SSITA help an institution committed to intentionally serving their Latino students?** Completing SSITA can help an institution:

- Assess the institution's readiness to access and aggregate data, identify programs and practices improving Latino student success, and review institutional leadership components with a Latino lens.
- Develop a preliminary profile of their Latino students so that they know who they are serving (and not serving), and can identify opportunities for further attention and investment to meet their goals of student success.
- Engage leaders at multiple institutional levels and facilitate informed discussions on how to be more aware and inclusive of Latino students

### **What are the core components of SSITA?**

For the SSITA, institutions share their preliminary story of intentionally serving Latino students by providing the following:

- **Data:** sharing a snapshot with two years of disaggregated data on enrollment, faculty/staff representation, and completion

- **Practice:** describing institutional strategies and corresponding practices and/or programs in enrollment, faculty/staff representation, and completion that are aligned to institutional data and show impact on Latino student success; and,
- **Leadership:** highlighting institutional commitment and intentionality to SERVE Latino students through mission and strategy as well as institutional culture.

### **How does an institution get started with the SSITA?**

Presidential support and administrative engagement are important to begin the process of SSITA because they advance the institutional priorities and make resources available to encourage and sustain the work required to intentionally serve your Latino students, among serving all students. The SSITA addresses three core areas key to advancing institutional capacity to advance Latino student success: data, practice, and leadership.

#### **There are four steps to getting started with SSITA:**

1. Create a campus team of at least five representatives with reach and expertise that includes leadership in: 1) academic affairs, 2) student affairs, 3) institutional research, and/or, 4) the president/provost's office.
2. Assemble some preliminary information to initiate discussion with the campus team:
  - What do you know about Latino students at your institution and in your community?
  - What are your institutional priorities and how does this fit into the strategic plan?
  - What can you do to improve Latino student success individually and as an institution?
3. Access institutional data on enrollment, faculty/staff, and degree completion disaggregated by race/ethnicity
4. Review and consider the following guiding questions to prepare for completing the SSITA institutional profile with your team.

### **Guiding Questions (optional)**

1. How would you define student success at your institution?
  - How would you describe *Latino* student success?



- What is your institution doing that is having a positive effect on Latino student success? (programs, activities, investments, etc.)
  - What do you think your institution could be doing better to serve Latino students?
2. What data does your institution use to inform institutional practices? Is this data currently disaggregated by ethnicity? For Latinos?
  3. Do you know what percentage of your students are Latino?
  4. Do you know what your graduation rate is for all students? For Latinos?
  5. What are some useful and appropriate indicators of institutional effectiveness in educating students?
  6. Do you what percentage of your faculty is Latino? What role does faculty play, if any, in Latino student success?
  7. If you could only highlight one program/practice at your campus that improves Latino student success, what is it?
  8. How does your campus academically serve Latino students?
  9. Does your campus define itself as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI)? What does it mean to you to be an HSI?
  10. Is there anything in your strategic plan that speaks to intentionally serving Latino students?

**For more information on the Seal of *Excelencia***

If there are questions about the SSITA or to request technical assistance, please contact us at [E-Action@EdExcelencia.org](mailto:E-Action@EdExcelencia.org).