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Building a Strong Transfer Culture: How Faculty Can Act as Transfer Agents for Latinx Students

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The Transfer Mission at ELAC
Why Use Minoritized?
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Refers to the objective outcome, experienced by “minority” racial-ethnic groups, of the exclusionary practices of more dominant groups resulting from historical and contemporary racism (Gillborn, 2005)

The use of the expression “minoritized” in preference to “minority” reflects the ongoing social experience of marginalization, even when groups subject to racial-ethnic discrimination achieve a numerical majority in the population
REFLECT:
Reflect on the following questions and jot down your answers on an index card

1. What was your educational trajectory? (Did you go to a community college or directly to a four-year institution? What schools did you go to? How long did it take you to earn a degree? What do you remember being challenging? What advice would you have for students, etc.)

2. Think about an influential figure that played a role in your educational or professional trajectory. Why was this person influential?

SHARE:
1. Find a partner (someone who you do not speak with frequently)
2. Take turns sharing your stories
AGENDA

• Welcome and Warm Up
• Current Transfer Climate – Quantitative and Qualitative Data
• Institutional Agents & Latinx Students Success at Community Colleges
• Building a Culture of Faculty Transfer Agents
• Acknowledgements and Evaluation
GOALS

• Define what it means to be an “Institutional Agent” and “Transfer Agent”
• Be able to answer the questions:
  • How do I already act as an institutional agent or transfer agent for Latinx students in the classroom?
  • What are additional ways I can embed transfer in my course to support Latinx transfer?
  • In what ways can the Academic Senate support a culture that encourages Faculty Transfer Agents?
Current Transfer Climate at ELAC: Quantitative & Qualitative Data
ELAC CREDIT STUDENT POPULATION BY ETHNICITY/RACE, FALL 2012 (N = 26,235) vs FALL 2016 (N = 26,924)

**FALL 2012**
- 76.6% White
- 16.4% Hispanic/Latino
- 2.1% Black/African American
- 3.0% Asian/Pacific Islander
- 1.9% Other*

**FALL 2016**
- 80.0% White
- 13.6% Hispanic/Latino
- 2.2% Black/African American
- 2.4% Asian/Pacific Islander
- 1.9% Other*

*Other includes Native American/Alaskan Native, Two or More Races, and Unreported ethnicity/race groups
ELAC SIX-YEAR TRANSFER COHORT RATES

ELAC’S Latinx population experiences lower transfer rates than the California Community College rates (2008-2009, the Latinx California CC transfer rate was 29.2)
FOCUS GROUPS 2017

TRANSFER CULTURE

STUDENTS

FACULTY

STAFF
FOCUS GROUPS

• Goals of the focus groups:
  • Understand how transfer works at ELAC
  • Gain a better understanding of ELAC’s transfer assets
  • Identify areas in which transfer can be improved
  • Learn more about ELAC’s unique transfer culture from the voices of the students, faculty, and staff
FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

STUDENTS:
1. ELAC offers many resources/programs for transfer, but there is a student desire for more availability.

2. ELAC has many faculty and staff that go "above and beyond" to help students transfer but when asked if all faculty are supportive of their desires and efforts to transfer, the students answered “No.”

FACULTY
1. Faculty members believe that the key to Latino/a transfer is advising.

2. Faculty members agreed that while there are faculty that work to improve the transfer of Latinx students, there is little incentive to do so and no recognition.

3. Faculty members expressed a desire to mentor prospective Latinx transfer students.
To realize the goal of truly being the “gateway to the baccalaureate for Latinx students” – requires broad sweeping faculty involvement in transfer

What does this look like and how can we make it happen?
Faculty Institutional Agents
OVERVIEW

- First Year Experience
- Student Success Centers
- EOPS
- Early Warning Systems
- Learning Communities
- Etc.

...are very important

But Alone Cannot Eliminate Low Rates of Retention and Completion
INSTITUTIONAL AGENTS

• Individuals who occupy high status positions within their institution and who know how to access high value resources, navigate complex systems and make effective action, have the potential to be institutional agents.

• They possess human, social, and cultural capital.

• It is only when these individuals use their capital to transmit high value resources—opportunities, privileges and services—to underserved minoritized students that they become institutional agents.
• They (students) don’t have much education background and they don’t know what college is like
• They think college is an extension of high school
• They don’t realize how much work they need to put in
Minoritized students have been deprived access to the social networks that can help them develop the

- Knowledge
- Practices
- Attitudes, and
- Aspirations

Associated with the “ideal” student
Minoritized Student Comments Regarding Transfer

“[My biggest fear is] not knowing what to ask...”

“I talked to my professors…I just didn’t ask them the right questions concerning transfer”

“Professors should keep you on your toes, tell us, ‘if you want to transfer to UCLA, you guys check out the fair that will be going on.’”

“I think that also made a difference in my realization that you can bridge from a community college to a four—year college or university....he [the instructor] brought the realization that it can be done.”
"Non-traditional students will likely find it difficult to navigate the world of college by themselves. They will be unlikely to take advantage of tutoring centers, faculty office hours, or the library, because they will be working off campus, will feel uncomfortable asking questions, and/or will not want to be viewed as stupid or lazy. Consequently, it is critical that validating agents actively reach out to students to offer assistance, encouragement, and support, as opposed to expecting students to ask questions first (Rendón-Linares & Muñoz, 2011, p. 17)
Institutional Agent

Direct Support
- Resource Agent
  - provides personal and positional resources to students
- Knowledge Agent
  - knows “the system”
  - accesses or provides knowledge pertinent to navigating the system
- Advisor
  - helps students gather information
  - assesses problems and possible solutions in a collaborative manner
  - promotes & guides effective decision making
- Advocate
  - promotes and protects the interests of “their” students
- Networking Coach
  - teaches students how to network with key institutional agents
  - models appropriate networking behavior
  - develops relationships with important and influential people

Integrative Support
- Integrative Agent
  - coordinates students’ integration and participation in networks and professional venues (professional associations, department, school, etc.)
- Cultural Guide
  - guides students through new social situations in a particular cultural sphere
  - teaches students to identify and interact with key people in cultural sphere

System Linkage & Networking Support
- Recruiter
  - actively recruits students into program, department, etc.
- Bridging Agent
  - introduces students to institutional agents
  - has a strong social network
  - knows what key players do
- Program Developer
  - develops program that embeds students in a system of agents, resources, and opportunities
- System Developer
  - coordinates students’ integration and participation in networks and professional venues (professional associations, department, school, etc.)
- Institutional Broker
  - negotiates introductions and agreements between two or more parties
  - knows what resources are available and who controls or possesses them
- Coordinator
  - assesses student’s needs
  - identifies resources to address need
  - provides or accesses institutional resources on behalf of students
  - ensures students utilizes resources
- Lobbyist
  - lobbies for organizational resources to be directed toward recruiting and supporting
- Political Advocate
  - joins political action group that advocates for social policies and institutional resources that would benefit targeted groups of students

Political Advocate joins political action group that advocates for social policies and institutional targeted groups toward recruiting and resources to be directed lobbies for organizational provides or accesses • address need identifies resources to • assesses student’s needs • coordinator • helps students gather • networking behavior • promotes & guides effective • promotes and protects the • students • teaches students how to network with key institutional agents • models appropriate networking behavior • develops relationships with important and influential people • coordinates students’ integration and participation in networks and professional venues (professional associations, department, school, etc.) • helps students gather information • assesses problems and possible solutions in a collaborative manner • promotes & guides effective decision making • teaches students to identify and interact with key people in cultural sphere • guides students through new social situations in a particular cultural sphere • joins policy action group that advocates for social policies and institutional resources that would benefit targeted groups of students • assesses student’s needs • identifies resources to address need • provides or accesses institutional resources on behalf of students

Recruiter • actively recruits students into program, department, etc. • introduces students to institutional agents • has a strong social network • knows what key players do

Bridging Agent • introduces students to institutional agents • has a strong social network • knows what key players do

Institutional Broker • negotiates introductions and agreements between two or more parties • knows what resources are available and who controls or possesses them

Coordinator • assesses student’s needs • identifies resources to address need • provides or accesses institutional resources on behalf of students • ensures students utilizes resources
INSTITUTIONAL AGENT CHECKLIST & POSTER ACTIVITY 10 minutes

1) Check the boxes that you most often occupy and circle those that you would like to occupy.

2) Then, answer and discuss the three prompts on the first page with a partner.

3) Then, add a red dot sticker to the poster under the roles you currently represent and a blue dot sticker for roles that you would like to occupy more.
GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What types did you gravitate towards?

- For the types you identified you would like to do more of, what prevents you from doing so? What could support you in fulfilling these types?

- What do we notice when looking at the posters around the room?
Transfer Agents – authority figures that in helping students navigate complicated academic requirements and application procedures, validate students’ educational aspirations and dispel fears of not belonging.

Pak, Bensimon, Malcolm, Marquez & Park, 2006; Gabbard, Singleton, Macias, Bensimon, & Dowd, 2006

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TRANSFER CULTURE

A college climate where transfer is encouraged and given priority.

• “Transfer is an expectation” and is manifested not only in colleges structures and policies but is present visually on campus and woven into the language, values, assumptions and way of life of the college (Dowd, Bensimon, Gabbard, Singleton, Macias, Dee, Melguizo, Cheslock & Giles, 2006)
Transfer Culture Continuum

Low Transfer Culture

- Little to no faculty involvement in the transfer process

Advanced Transfer Culture

On campuses with advanced transfer cultures, faculty...

- Regard transfer and assisting students to transfer as part of their responsibility
- Understand the transfer process
- Learn extensively about transfer and their role in transfer at faculty orientation
- Discuss transfer in their classes with students and shape assignments around going to the university

Shaw, 2001; Wassmer, Moore & Shulock, 2004; Pak, Bensimon, Malcolm, Marquez & Park, 2006; Tatum, Hayward, Monzon, 2006; Kisker, 2007; Dowd & Bensimon, 2009; Carrasco-Nungaray & Vallejo Peña 2012
Faculty characteristics that support the transfer of Latinx students

- Takes personal responsibility for student success
- Sets high expectations for their students (i.e., the expectation of going to the four-year institution)
- Develops personal relationships with students
- Shares personal education stories with students
- Provides resources and connects students to networks

Faculty Transfer Agent Assessment ACTIVITY
1. What are ways that you embed transfer in your classroom?

2. What are examples of what a faculty transfer agent could do in your department (discipline or academic field) to embed transfer in their courses or curriculum?
Making IAs Less “Episodic”

1. What can the Academic Senate do to support/encourage the development of more faculty transfer agents? What opportunities are there?

2. What are strategies you can invoke to disseminate what you have discussed/learned today?

3. What challenges do you anticipate?
WHAT THINGS CAN YOU DO NOW?

• Start with the transfer agent inventory. Implement those things.

• Brainstorm with colleagues in your discipline about ways that you can embed transfer in your curriculum. What would that look like?

• Ask yourself- what ways can I have an impact? How can I further support my Latinx students to transfer? How can I be the change agent that one of my student’s remembers once their time at ELAC is done?

• How can I make students feel that they belong and that transfer is achievable?
Acknowledgements & Evaluation