



MAY 3, 2020

HSI WORKING GROUP REPORT

WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY

Respectively submitted by:

Francisco Díaz (+), Student Development
David Fuentes (+), Elementary Education
Wilnell Martinez, Junior, Media Production & Psychology
Kimberly Peña, Junior, Sports Management
Daisy Rodriguez (+), Counseling, Health and Wellness
Maribel Rodriguez, Campus Activities, Service and Leadership
Elena Sabogal (+), Women and Gender Studies
Johanna Torres, Student Enrollment Services
María Villar, Anthropology

(+) *Latinx Focus Group Facilitators*



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Executive Summary

In August 2019, President Helldobler charged the HSI Working Group to assess the needs and obstacles faced by Hispanic or Latinx students at WP and provide recommendations that might help us move from a Hispanic *enrolling* institution to a Hispanic *Serving* Institution and effectively promote the success of Latinx students. This Executive Summary presents a synopsis of the HSI Working Group key findings, which are extensively documented in the full report.

The HSI working group followed a three-pronged approach to data collection and analysis. It conducted a series of focus groups and an open forum to explore the perceptions and experiences of Latinx students; examined statistical trends documented by WP institutional offices; explored initiatives implemented by other Hispanic Serving Institutions to identify benchmarks and successful programs. These data sources informed discussions and helped outline final recommendations. While acknowledging that 'Hispanic' is the term of choice for official records, this report also uses the term 'Latinx,' which is the preferred self-designation of WP's community.

Quantitative Findings: The Hispanic Community at William Paterson

Quantitative data provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and the Financial Aid indicate that:

1. *Hispanic students are becoming WP's demographic majority*

Enrollment data indicates that, consistent with national trends, Hispanic students are on the way to becoming the demographic majority at WP. In Fall 2015, 27.4% of our undergraduate student body reported Hispanic heritage; in Fall 2019, this number was 32.7%. Most likely, Hispanic students will constitute the majority of the WP student body in the near future.

2. *Hispanic students face more economic hardships than non-Hispanic students*

FAFSA applications submitted by 'Hispanic' or 'Latino' students in Fall 2019 suggest that Hispanic students have lower academic capital than non-Hispanic applicants and are more often first-generation college students. They also have lower average family income and receive a smaller number of scholarships. **Actually Hispanic students who identify receive 20.7% of all scholarships awarded by the Foundation, second only to white students. Additionally, 24.2% of our awardees do not provide a response to this moniker so we suspect it might be higher. Where did you get this information?**

3. *Hispanic students are retained less than non-Hispanic students*

Re-enrollment rates among full-time first year (FTFY) Hispanic students are generally lower than re-enrollment rates among non-Hispanic students during the first three years in college. The re-enrollment rate of Hispanic FTFY students has hovered between 65 and 75 percent since 2015, for an average of 71%. Only one out of four FTFY Hispanic students admitted in 2012 were still at WPUNJ for their (presumed) senior year.

4. *Hispanic students graduate in smaller proportions than non-Hispanic students*

Although the percentage of Hispanic students within graduating cohorts grew steadily between 2015 (24%) and 2019 (32%), it never surpassed the percentage of Whites. In 2019, nearly one third (33%) of the White and one fifth (22%) of the Hispanic student body graduated. The percentage of White male graduates (45%) was higher than the percentage of Hispanic male graduates (39%) and African American male graduates (35%).

5. *Hispanic faculty is underrepresented at WP by HSI standards*

Despite growth in Hispanic undergraduate enrollments at WP, the percentage of Hispanic full-time faculty has barely changed during the last five years. Since 2015, about 7.2% of the full-time faculty body has identified as Latinx. This stands in stark contrast to the average percentage of Hispanic faculty at HSIs in the U.S., which was nearly 21% in 2018.

Qualitative Findings: The Latinx College Experience

Latinx students participating in our focus group discussions and open forum suggest that:

1. *An active and engaged Latinx community positively impacts Latinx students*

Students reported that early and culturally meaningful interactions with staff, faculty, and peers helped their transition to college, motivated them to perform academically, and moved them to continue enrolling at WP. Identifying and accessing Latinx staff on campus, however, was not always easy for students.

2. *Lack of knowledge and visibility adversely affects the Latinx student experience*

Students expressed a desire to grow in learning, understanding, and appreciation of their Latinx identities. Many yearned for higher visibility of culturally meaningful symbols, as well as services and events targeting Latinx students.

3. *Financial insecurities hamper the retention and college experience of Latinx students*

Students acknowledged slowing down their degree completion by reducing credits or taking time off from school in order to work and afford their education. Many were unfamiliar with financial options, scholarships, and on campus job opportunities. While families motivated them to continue in college, responsibilities at home and financial insecurities made progress difficult.

4. *Lack of access to bilingual support services negatively impacts Latinx students*

Students stressed that their performance was positively influenced by access to Latinx peers, tutors, and teaching staff, but could not identify adequate Spanish speaking academic support. Few knew Spanish-speaking faculty members in or outside of their majors, and few could use parents as resources for academic support.

5. *Family needs and ethnic backgrounds weigh heavily on the Latinx student experience*

Students felt the stress of negotiating complex realities on campus: being first generation college students; having monolingual parents; experiencing family separations; sharing household responsibilities; facing poverty, crime, discrimination, and racial profiling.

Latinx students participating in the focus groups and open forum recommend that we:

1. *Foster meaningful interactions between Latinx faculty, staff, and peers on campus*

Students would like instructors to be more personally invested in and engaged in Latinx education. They would like to have more opportunities to develop personal relationships with faculty, alumni, and mentors, and support systems (like cohorts) nurturing a greater sense of belonging.

2. *Provide greater access to bilingual personnel and resources*

Students would like the university to offer more bilingual resources, including weekend admission and orientation programs, web pages, online/onsite contacts. They would like to see the centralization of bilingual services; promotion of Spanish-speaking staff to serve as financial aid advisors/liaisons/scholarship experts; institutionalization of financial literacy workshops for students and families planning for a college education.

3. *Recognize the presence of the Latinx community on campus*

Students would like to see the university develop a specific and intentional branding strategy to promote WP's HSI designation and teach the public about it. They would like us to develop culturally proficient social media, as well as marketing and communication strategies that focus on Latinx students and families.

4. *Promote understanding of and respect for the Latinx community*

Students would like the university to be aware of disparities on campus. They would like us to train Campus Police to better understand and interact with Latinx students; to discuss living conditions in residence halls; to address perceived inequities in affordability and quality of life for students of color.

5. *Foster intercultural unity*

Students would like the university to promote intercultural unity, to encourage reciprocal understanding among students, and to foster dialogue between communities of color.

HSI Working Group Recommendations

Quantitative and qualitative findings, prior research studies, and our group discussions suggest that Latinx students' needs may be addressed successfully by:

i. *Creating a Latinx Center that gives visibility, coalesces, and serves Latinx students*

A center will signal the presence of a vibrant, on campus, Latinx community. It will

serve as a safe space for peer, faculty and staff interactions; provide cultural resources and broad support services; foster intergroup dialogue. The Latinx Center, staffed by a Latinx professional, would not only demonstrate commitment, but symbolize pride in being a Hispanic Serving Institution. I will support the Latinx Center, we will need to identify space and it will report through the Center for Diversity and Inclusion. And like the Black Cultural Center we will be staffing these with graduate students out of the Higher Education Leadership program. Also, let's always be mindful that race based hiring is illegal and we should refrain from those types of recommendations in public documents.

- ii. ***Recruiting and training bilingual personnel, including administration and faculty***
Our students yearn for contact with mentors who share their language, outlooks, and values. Bilingual skills will be essential not only to reach first-generation students unfamiliar with our system, but to communicate with parents who have limited English proficiency. We foresee the need for recruitment and training in the areas of admission, peer mentorship, administrative and faculty services, financial, and marketing services. (Details provided in full report). **Approved.** While again race based hiring is illegal we can make this a skill set within job descriptions to advance this recommendation. I will be asking the Chief Diversity Officer to work on this in the coming month to identify areas where this service is needed and to develop a plan moving forward.
- iii. ***Engaging, supporting, and raising awareness of the Latinx student community***
Our students yearn for deeper knowledge and recognition of their Latinx roots, and for appreciation of the many positive contributions the Latinx community has made to the United States. We foresee the need for Latinx academic resources and curriculum, academic support, enrichment and awareness programs, mentoring services, wellness and assistance programs. (Details provided in full report).
- iv. ***Reducing disparities in services, seeking accountability, and achieving equity***
Our students feel invisible on campus and perceive (explicit and implicit) inequities. As a Hispanic Serving Institution, we must address the students' perceptions of differential advantages and seek accountability. At WP, students highlight five areas of major concern: police profiling, upkeep of residential halls, food services, safe spaces, and general symbolic recognition. We foresee the need for Latinx diversity training; dedicated spaces in residence halls; Latinx food options; visible (symbolic) displays, including Latinx branding. (Details provided in full report).
- v. ***Benchmarking for improvement***
On the quantitative front, *Excelencia in Education* proposes that we demonstrate *continuous improvement* on six core performance indicators, namely: (a) overall enrollment; (b) retention; (c) in/out student transfers; (d) financial support (through Pell grants, institutional aid, employment, work study); (e) degree completion; and (f) representation in staff, faculty, and administration.

On the qualitative front, we propose developing and continuously improving 'soft' indicators of Latinx success, such as: (a) enhancement of academic self-concept; (b)

development of self- identity and sense of belonging; (c) acquisition of leadership skills; (d) engagement in civic-oriented activities; (e) connectedness to peers, faculty and staff. Student surveys, focus groups, and informal interactions with students will be required to assess soft indicators and help us enhance our policies, programs, and services.

Introduction

In August 2019, President Richard Helldobler, engaged the HSI Working Group, a committee comprised by faculty, administrators, staff, and students. The Task Force Charge (August 22, 2019) outlined three outcomes:

1. To provide recommendations based on the assessment of needs and obstacles of Latinx students to determine roadblocks to student success as defined by retention and graduation.
2. To provide quantifiable benchmarks that the University should consider when measuring its success when moving from a Hispanic Enrolling Institution to a Hispanic Serving Institution.
3. To provide a list of possible programs or initiatives that the University should consider that would create better success strategies.

This report will discuss the major concerns that guided our group, the strategies used to gather data, and the outcomes of our research process, which extended from Fall 2019 to Spring 2020. The report has five sections:

1. Becoming Latinx Mindful (Guiding Concerns of HSI Working Group)
2. Latinx Community at WP (Statistical Measures and Trends)
3. Latinx Student Experience (Focus-Group and Open Forum Findings)
4. Recommendations (Initiatives and Benchmarks)
5. Conclusion (Reflections, Limitations of the Project, Research Needs)

In order to understand the challenges faced by Latinx students at WPUNJ, our task force followed a three-pronged approach to collecting data. First, we conducted a series of focus groups and an open forum on campus to explore the perceptions and experiences of Latinx students. Second, we enlisted the assistance and examined the reports produced by the offices of Institutional Effectiveness and Financial Aid to examine our demographic trends. Finally, we located and studied the initiatives implemented by Hispanic Serving Institutions to identify benchmarks and programs that work. These data sources informed us during discussions and helped us outline the recommendations made.

The HSI Working Group believes that improving Latinx student success at WP is not only achievable, it is imperative. The success of Latinx students is integral to our mission. As we focus on strategies and changes needed to promote the outcomes for Latinx students across all majors, we also prepare the entire university to be more successful.

Becoming Latinx Mindful: Guiding Concerns of HSI Working Group

What does it mean to be a successful Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) at WPUNJ?

In the fall of 2014, when 25% of our student body self-identified as Latinx, William Paterson University received the designation of a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). Over the past five years, we have struggled to understand precisely what 'Hispanic Serving' means and how this new designation impacts our vision, mission and University structures. More importantly, we have yearned to understand how to move beyond simply being a Hispanic *enrolling* institution to becoming a Hispanic *serving* one (Garcia, 2019). Our goal is to work as a networked improvement community (Bryk, 2013), to become Latinx Mindful, and increase the retention and success of *All* students, particularly those who are most vulnerable. In order to address the challenges faced at WP, it behooves us to be cognizant of the shifting demographics of our student body, our State, and Nation, as well as to develop a response grounded in theory, empirical evidence, and best practices.

Demographic shifts in the US pose educational demands

The demographic shift in WP's student population is consistent with national trends observed among Latinx populations entering post-secondary education (Espinosa, 2019). Between 1996 and 2016, the number of Latinx students who enrolled as undergraduate students in U.S. colleges and universities doubled from 10 percent to just under 20 percent, nationwide. By 2025, they will make up 20 percent of the entire U.S. college student body, and this trend is expected to continue through and beyond 2025. These demographic shifts remind us that our student population is changing and that these changes are not going away any time soon. At WP, in New Jersey, and in the nation, higher numbers of Latinx students are entering the P-16 educational pipeline.

We need a robust primary, secondary, and higher education system to serve the growing needs of Latinx populations. In the United States at present, one in four K-12 students, and one in three children ages zero to five are Latinx (Excelencia in Education, 2019). The largest growth in high school graduation rates is exhibited by Latinx students. Latinx families believe in the role of schooling as a means to promote individual and inter-generational success and attain social mobility. In a not so distant future, Latinx groups will be the largest minority and possibly the overall majority of all primary and secondary students. As the Latinx pre-college population continues to grow, their demands on our educational system and universities like ours will also increase.

Despite these national trends, Latinx college success rates continue lagging behind other ethnic groups (Frankenburg, et al., 2019). Currently, only 23% of Latinx Americans possess college degrees, in contrast to 47% of white adults and 32% of African American adults (Contreras, 2019). WP closely mirrors this trend, as only one fifth (21.6%) of the Latinx student body graduated after four years of college in 2016 (Factbook Table 4.10). Therefore, we must face the current reality-- unless universities change their practices to meet the needs of Latinx populations, they are destined to increase the achievement gaps experienced by this vulnerable population, which also happens to be the largest growing population of students entering higher education.

New Jersey's K-12 schools pose an equity challenge

New Jersey houses some of the highest performing school districts in the U.S. What sets us apart from other top performing states, is that we are also home to some of the nation's lowest performing school districts. The proximity of both high and low performing school districts and the role that zip codes play in relation to access to high performing school districts, makes NJ unique as a state and among states consistently ranking in the top five.

The classification system used by our Department of Education (NJDOE) to identify the districts that have the most significant needs reveals the inequities confronted at a state level. School districts like Wayne Public Schools, have a relatively low number of students receiving free and reduced lunch, and a relatively high number of students meeting annual state testing benchmarks (designated as A, B and C schools). School districts like the Paterson Public Schools, on the other hand, have high numbers of students receiving free and reduced lunch and low numbers of students meeting yearly benchmark standards (designated F, and G schools). Many in the WP student body, and Latinx student population, come from lower performing districts with academic and economic needs. Thus, in addition to the demographic shifts we experience, we are also experiencing a shift in educating an increasing number of students who come from New Jersey's highest educational needs K-12 districts.

There is growing awareness of the factors that contribute to Latinx success in U.S. four-year colleges (Crisp et al. 2015). Variables such as socioeconomic background, academic self-confidence, pre-college academic experience, perceptions of campus climate, and college experiences are known to impact Latinx student success. WP must pay attention to these factors, while also assessing retention and graduation outcomes to better understand the Latinx student experience and address their specific needs.

The Latinx Community at WP: Analysis of Quantitative Findings

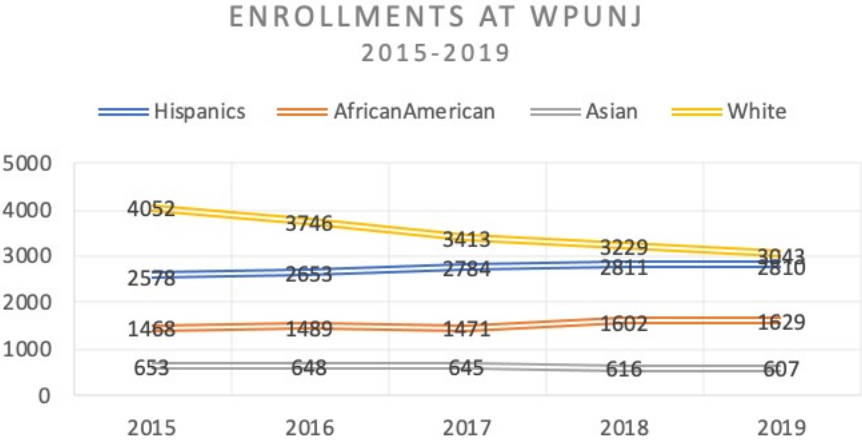
What do enrollment trends and performance indicators tell us about our Latinx community?

Macro-level data provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and the Financial Aid Office helps us gain a better understanding of Latinx students and the challenges we face. We thank the personnel in these offices for their support and will now outline major findings concerning our Hispanic student body. Although the term 'Latinx' is preferred by the WP's community, we use the term Hispanic in this section to be consistent with University records. Additional analysis of Hispanic indicators (based on their data) can be found in Appendix B.

Hispanic students are becoming WP's demographic majority

Enrollment data indicates that, consistent with national trends, Hispanic students are on the way to becoming the demographic majority at WP (Graph 1). In Fall 2015, 27.4% of our undergraduate student body reported Hispanic heritage; in Fall 2019, this number was 32.7%. As the enrollment of Hispanic students increased during this period, the enrollment of white students declined by 25%. Thus, by fall 2019, the percent of enrolled Hispanic students at WP

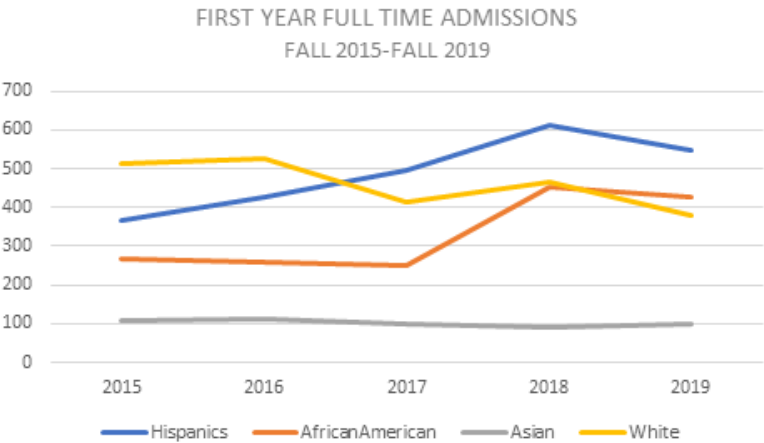
(32.7%) was very close to the percent of white students (35.4%). Most likely, as the chart below suggests, Hispanic students will constitute the majority of the WP student body in the near future.



Graph 1
(Source: Factbook Table 2.4)

The number of transfer students entering WP has declined since 2015 for all races and ethnicities (Factbook Table 1.1). Still, these declines have been higher for White (-32%) and African American (-43%) students than for Hispanic students (-25%). During the last five years, almost two thirds (62%) of the transfers have been female students.

The number of Hispanic full-time first year (FTFY) students admitted to WP has steadily risen since 2015 (Graph 2). Between 2015 and 2019, this number increased by nearly half (48.9%). The percentage of EOF admissions and the percentage of non-traditional admissions declined slightly (-3.5%, -1.1%) during this period. By contrast to the increase in Hispanic FTFY students, the admission of white FTFY students declined by 26% between 2015 and 2019. In Fall 2019, Hispanic females were the largest gender-based contingent of full-time freshmen entering the university (20.14%).

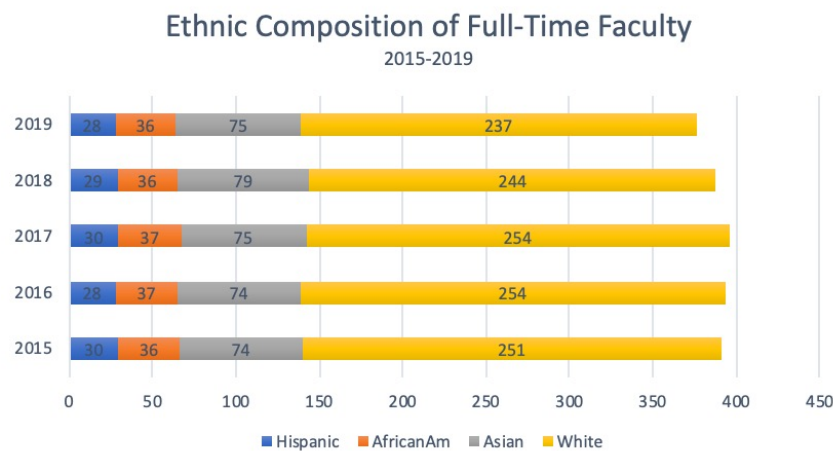


Graph 2

(Source: Factbook Table 1.5)

Although research tells us of the important role played by Hispanic faculty in providing role models and support for Hispanic students, their overall presence in higher education is minimal. Nationwide, Hispanic represent only four percent of faculty at colleges (Ponjuan, 2011). Such marginal representation stands in stark contrast to the percentage of Hispanic faculty at Hispanic Serving Institutions, which was nearly 21 % in 2018 (Smith-Barrow, 2018).

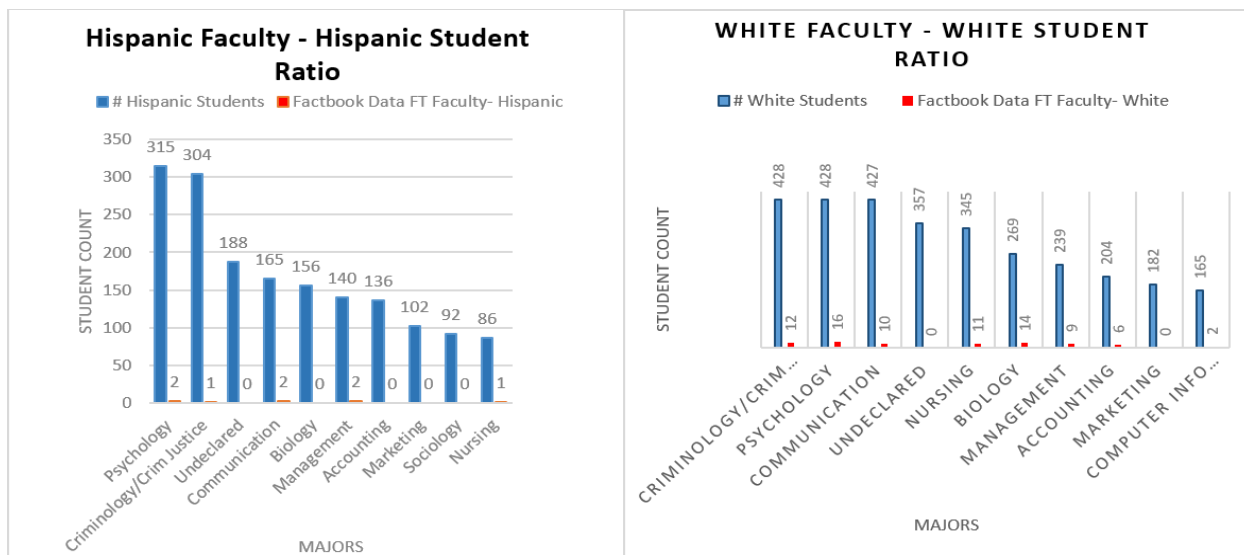
At WP, the Hispanic undergraduate enrollments have been growing (up to 32.7%- Fall 2019), but the proportion of Hispanic full-time faculty has barely changed during the last five years (Graph 3). Since 2015, about 7.2% of the full-time faculty body has identified as Hispanic. As the overall full-time faculty declined (-5%), these losses have been primarily absorbed by the White (- 6%) and Hispanic full-time faculty bodies (-7%).



Graph 3

(Source: Factbook Table 5.6)

In addition, the ratio of Hispanic full-time faculty to Hispanic students in the majors that attract most Hispanic students is very low when compared to that of White students. At WP, ten majors attract 60% of Hispanic students. In 2019, we employed 8 full-time faculty members for 1,684 Hispanic students enrolled in these majors. By contrast, we employed 80 White full-time faculty members for 3,044 White students enrolled in their top 10 majors. This means that the student faculty ratio for the top 10 majors enrolling White students is 2.62%, while this ratio is 0.465% for Hispanic students.



Graph 4
(Source: Factbook Table 5.6)

Therefore, significant recruitment and retention efforts will be needed to increase the number of WP Hispanic faculty to support our growing Hispanic student population.

Hispanic students face more economic hardships than non-Hispanic students

In Fall 2019, the students who selected the 'Hispanic' or 'Latino' category in their FAFSA applications to WP differed slightly from the non-Hispanic applicants demographically. Both groups were close in terms of average age (22 yrs. Old); the percentage of female applicants was slightly higher among Hispanic students (59%) than non-Hispanic students (54%). About one of seven Hispanic undergraduate students reported being Black (13%), while more than a third (36%) reported being White. The proportion of students reporting white race was 57% among non-Hispanics.

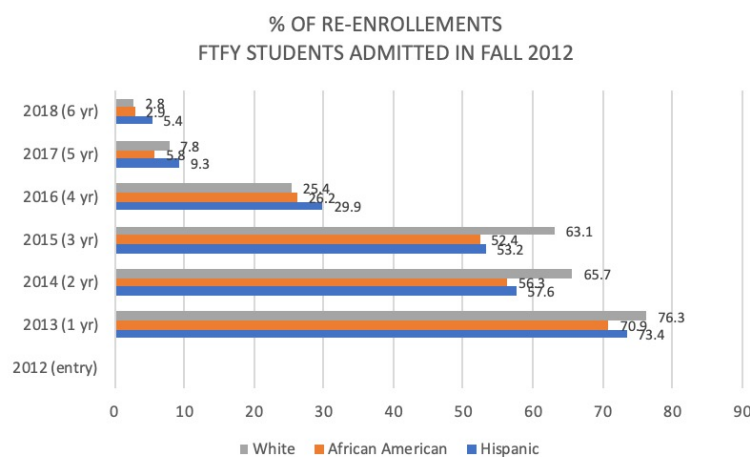
According data provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (based on FAFSA applications), the students who selected the 'Hispanic' or 'Latino' category in Fall 2019 had lower academic capital than non-Hispanic applicants. More Hispanics (39.5%) reported being first-generation college students than non-Hispanics (26.5%). Although the high-school GPA was nearly identical for both groups (3.1), the mean CSAT grade was higher among non-Hispanic (1018) than Hispanic (988) students. The greatest number of Hispanic students who enroll at William Paterson come from the following districts: Paterson, Clifton, Passaic, Haledon, and Newark. Unfortunately, they are among some of the lower performing districts in New Jersey.

Financial Aid records suggest the families of non-Hispanic students are better off economically than Hispanic families. Although both groups reported a similar family size (3), the income of non-Hispanic families was about \$21,000 larger in 2018 and 2019. Hispanic families reported an average income of \$49,105, while non-Hispanic families reported \$70,340 during these two years. Despite this income gap, the percentage of Hispanic students with

loans or debts was slightly higher among non-Hispanic (72%) than Hispanic (68%) students. The average debt was also higher among non-Hispanic (\$7,223) than Hispanic (\$6,674) students. Finally, the percentage of students who got scholarships was slightly higher among non-Hispanic (32%) than Hispanic students (27%).

Hispanic students are retained less than non-Hispanic students

The re-enrollment rate of Hispanic FTFY students has hovered between 65 and 75 percent since 2015, for an average of 71% (Graph 5). Since 2012, these rates have been fluctuating periodically, reaching their lowest point in the Fall of 2017. Although the pattern of Hispanic re-enrollment resembles the pattern of non-Hispanic students, Hispanic re-enrollment rates have been generally lower during the first three years. They have also been slightly higher than those of African American FTFY students.



Graph 5
(Source: Factbook Table 4.10)

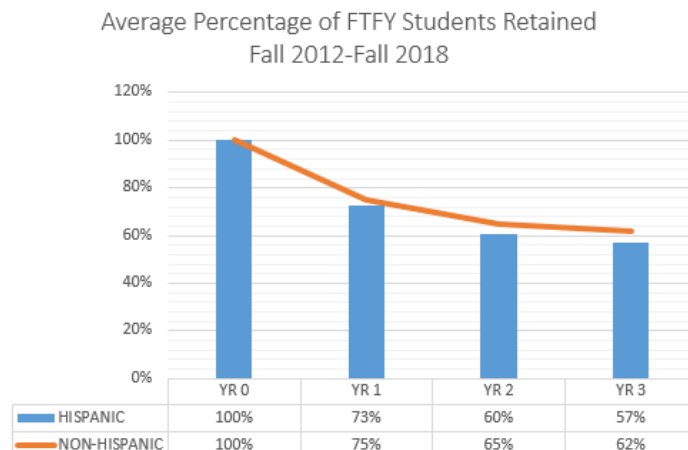
Re-enrollment data suggest that the sharpest declines in enrollment occur after the first and third year of college for all groups (Table 1). Between 2012 and 2018, on average, about 30% of the FTFY Hispanic students admitted had left by the second year; and 73% had left by the fourth year. This means that only one out of four FTFY Hispanic students (admitted in 2012) were still at WPUNJ for their (presumed) senior year. A similar pattern is observed for White and African American FTFY students.

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS RE-ENROLLED
FTFY HISPANIC STUDENTS ADMITTED FROM 2012 TO 2018

	After 1 yr.	After 2 yrs.	After 3 yrs.	After 4 yrs.	After 5 yrs.	After 6 yrs.
2012	73.4	57.6	53.2	29.9	9.3	5.4
2013	72.3	62.7	57.5	28.5	7.3	3.8
2014	70.8	58.8	56.2	22.9	8.6	
2015	76.5	63.6	58.6	25.4		
2016	76	62.4	58.2			
2017	65.6	54.8				
2018	64.7					
AVG RE-ENR	71%	60%	57%	27%	8%	5%

Table 1
(Source: Factbook Table 4.10)

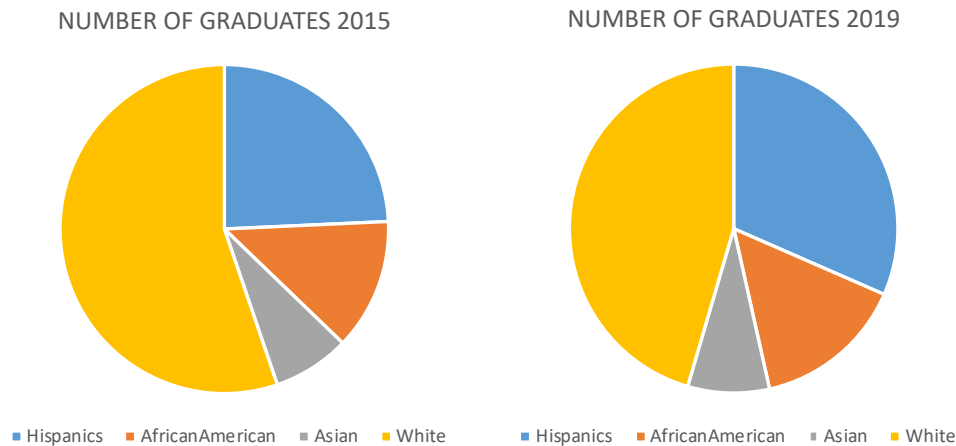
The average retention rate in the first three years of college has been slightly lower for Hispanic than for non-Hispanic students since 2012 but follows very close trends for both groups (Graph 6). By the third year of college, we retain between one-half and two-thirds of the students admitted on a year, regardless of ethnic background. Still, given differences in retention rates during the first three years, the proportion of Hispanic students within the whole student body declines as students make progress in college.



Graph 6
(Source: Factbook Table 4.10)

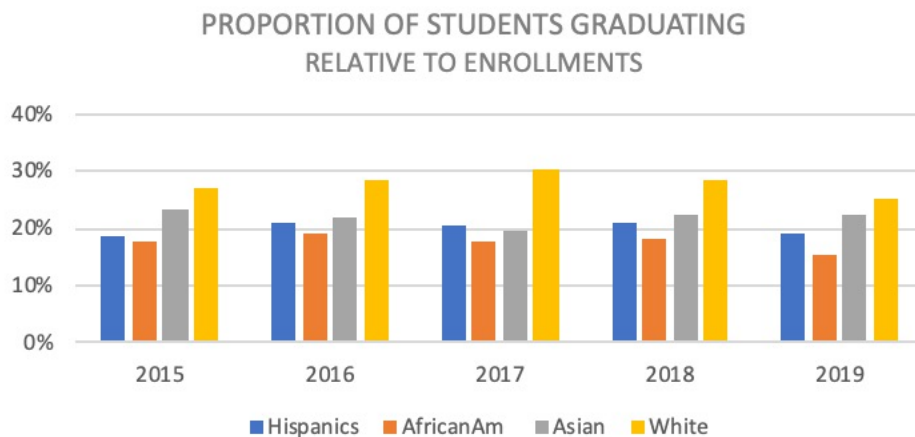
Hispanic students graduate in smaller proportions than non-Hispanic students

The number of Hispanic graduates has risen steadily at WP since 2015 (Graph 7). In 2015 there were 483 Hispanic graduates, 530 in 2019. While the cohorts of Hispanic graduates have expanded, the cohorts of non-Hispanic graduates have shrunk in size (by 30% among Whites, 11% among African Americans, 2% among Asians).



Graph 7
(Source: Factbook Table 4.6)

Hispanic students graduate in a smaller proportion than white students at WP (Graph 8). Between 2015 and 2019, on average, and relative to Hispanic enrollments, Hispanics (21%) graduated in larger proportion than African American students (18%), but in lower proportion than Asians (23%) and Whites (29%). Although the percentage of Hispanic students within graduating cohorts grew steadily between 2015 (24%) and 2019 (32%), it never surpassed the percentage of Whites. Between 2015 and 2019, about 20% of the Hispanic student body and 28% of the White student body graduated annually. In 2019, nearly one third (33%) of the White and one fifth (22%) of the Hispanic student body graduated.



Graph 8
(Source: Factbook Table 4.6)

More female students graduate than male students in all groups, including Hispanics. Between 2015 and 2019, the percentage of Hispanic female graduates hovered between 59% and 64; the percentage of Hispanic male graduates hovered between 36% and 41%. Among

Hispanic female students, this percentage was slightly lower than the percentage for African American female graduates (65%), and slightly higher than for White female graduates (55%). Among Hispanic male students, things were slightly different. The percentage of White male graduates (45%), was higher than the percentage of Hispanic male graduates (39%) and African American male graduates (35%).

As the previous discussion suggests, while we continue to enroll more and more Hispanic students each year, the achievement gap between Hispanic and non-Hispanic students at WP persists. Hispanic students are enrolling in larger numbers; experiencing larger economic disadvantages; coming less prepared (academically) to college; facing more difficulties for retention and graduation. Hispanic students on campus, males in particular, are at risk of being left behind by our university system. The university must revisit how and why these trends persist, with an eye towards increasing the retention and graduation rates of our increasingly diverse student body. It is imperative that we ask ourselves, how can we better support and guarantee the success of Hispanic students.

The Latinx Student Experience: An Analysis of Qualitative Findings

What do Latinx students say about the WP college experience and what are their needs?

A major component of our work was engaging students in focus group discussions. In October, November and December 2019 we conducted five focus group sessions and one open forum; thirty-nine students participated in the focus groups and twelve attended the forum. A detailed description of our methods can be found in Appendix C.

Following the suggestions of Garcia (2019), we asked students about their perceptions, interactions and experiences at WP. We collected demographic data (anonymously) Appendix E, analyzed their answers, and grouped them in terms of three emergent themes: 'Lived Experiences', 'Perceived Challenges,' and 'Suggestions for Change.'

Lived Experiences

Despite obvious individual differences, our Latinx students' experiences on campus coalesced around a group of themes:

An active and engaged Latinx community positively impacts the Latinx student experience

85% of students reported that their *student experience* at WP was significantly and positively shaped by having early and culturally meaningful socialization with staff/faculty and students that also identify as Latinx.

- When students reported having access to Spanish speaking employees, they identified positive impacts in their transition to college, motivation to academically perform, and decision to continue enrollment at WP. Students reported that these same Latinx staff have continued to serve as mentors, gatekeepers, advocates throughout their education.

- However, of the students who identified having positively engaged with Latinx staff/faculty, almost 70% stated that they had challenges in identifying and accessing Latinx staff generally on campus.
- When referring to their peer experiences, 95% students identified positive impacts on their sense of belonging, self-esteem, academic performance made through socializing with Latinx peers through cohorts within student organizations such as Greek organizations, EOF, SGA, and Peer Health Advocates that have been culturally affirming. Students who did not report having meaningful relationships with Latinx peers specifically reported average satisfaction with peer experiences at WP.
- A common challenge that students identified in several different focus groups within the Latinx experience is that their “voices” are not always heard and needs not always addressed or supported by their faculty, staff and administration. For example, multiple students in different focus groups sessions identified a perception that the opening of the Black Cultural Center symbolized the university’s advocacy and validation for one cultural group of students over the visible presence of the larger Latinx student population.

Perceived disparities in representation adversely affect the Latinx student experience

Latinx students identify a lack of visibility of culturally meaningful symbols, services and events that consistently reflect their identity on our campus. Students identified a developmental need to grow in their learning, understanding and appreciation of their Latinx identities. The students repeatedly articulated what Malcolm-Piqueux and Bensimon (2015) suggest that the Hispanic-serving designation should be reflected in overt ways on campus, online and beyond. Therefore, as an HSI, they hold WP responsible for providing this education in visibly open and accessible mediums.

- Students consistently identified disparities in the lack of cultural representation of Latinx cultural symbols on campus. Students consistently identified a need for access to Latinx food items in the dining hall and food court.
- Students want to see recognition of Latinx contributions in the arts and science displayed around campus, i.e. artistic installations, décor, displays of flags for example.
- Students want to see and learn about the contributions of Latinx people. They also want to see this information included in the learning curriculum more frequently in general education courses.
- Students identified wanting to have a cultural wing in the residence hall dedicated to Spanish language/culture immersive living/learning. They would also encourage any student of any background to live there.
- Although many students recognized and participated in Latinx history month celebrations, there is a strong call for this type of programming to continue throughout

the year, offered through a coordinated effort of multiple departments and student groups. Positive examples highlighted were Café Con Leche.

Financial insecurities hamper the retention of Latinx students and their college experience

The retention of Latinx students at WP is most often negatively impacted by financial insecurities. Across all focus groups, students consistently reported having to slow down their degree completion by reducing credits or taking time off from school to work so they can afford their education. Students who were able to find campus jobs, however, did not report having to stop/slow their education. Students want to have greater proficiency in understanding options for financing their education, opportunities to work on campus, and scholarships.

- Students' motivation to continue enrolled in college is overwhelmingly (90%) influenced by family expectations. Most students interviewed were first generation college students of immigrant parents.
- Students frequently shared the conflict created between family expectations to finish college, but not having enough familial resources (finances, caregivers, English speakers, transportation etc.) to lessen their responsibilities at home. The tension produced by having to perform in both roles, is a challenge frequently cited by students as a significant reason for leaving school.
- Students also identified that having relationships on campus with peers or staff that personally invested in them served as a mitigating factor to the stressors identified above.
- Several students commented on key support systems that positively influenced their sense of belonging at WP such as EOF, Greek Life, Change Builders, and offices such as Campus Activities, CHWC, and Student Enrollment Services.
- Student workers shared a sense of feeling safe among the Latinx staff in those units who seemed to care, personally support them and let them be who they are "not feeling ashamed at speaking Spanish if we want to."

Lack of access to bilingual support services impacts the Latinx students

Students' believed that their performance was positively influenced by access to Latinx peers, tutors, and teaching staff, but found it hard to identify adequate Spanish speaking academic support. The identified need for more Spanish speaking academic supports was noted regardless of the English proficiency of the student.

- In four out of five focus groups, students identified having difficulty understanding teaching methods when they interacted with English monolingual tutors.
- Less than 10% of students noted having awareness of a Latino identifying faculty member either in or outside of their major that was Spanish speaking.

- Students that identified as being native Spanish speakers (learning English later in school) also reported wanting to spend more time with tutors, professors, and other academic supports to work on their academics.
- Less than 10% of the students interviewed reported being able to use their parents as resources for supporting their academic performance. The rest of the students interviewed reported only having parents that are Spanish monolinguals.

Family (linguistic, political, economic) needs heavily weigh on Latinx student experience

The narratives of respondents in relation to challenges faced while attending college at WP was consistently (80% of respondents) characterized by having to negotiate the realities of having monolingual parents, being first generation college students, and having exposure to parental separations, poverty, crime, and discrimination (racial profiling).

- Nearly every participant commented on affordability issues and the financial stress that attending college created for them. They spoke of needing more scholarship dollars, supporting siblings in single parent households, and needing help to provide parents with financial aid literacy training. The majority of students interviewed are working in order to support their education and support the household income.
- Trauma, psychosocial stressors, and the need to care for families at home as well as carry school responsibilities are present. The burden and responsibility are significant for the majority of students interviewed, who reported feeling pulled in many directions. The support and need for mental health resources and bilingual case workers to provide advocacy services, human service, legal referrals, and translation services for family members was expressed.
- Students also expressed a consistent experience of a lack of cultural unity within other minority cultures on campus. Students are feeling challenged by a perceived fracturing in the communication within communities of color on campus and not knowing how to address it. Multiple students across focus groups identified being openly challenged about their ethnic backgrounds, whether “you are black enough” to attend programming or use the Black Cultural Center. Many Afro Latinos expressed feeling segregated from other Afro groups at events on campus although they believe they share many similar issues. Students expressed a desire to have more intercultural unity and dialogue on campus.

Perceived Challenges

When Latinx students were asked about their needs, they seemed to focus on two kinds of problems: institutional barriers and visibility hurdles

Latinx students perceive multiple and varied institutional barriers

- Students shared how they wanted their teaching staff to be more personally invested in and engaged in their education. They want to have opportunities to personally develop

relationships with their faculty outside of class through mentoring, programming, internships, etc.

- Students want their families to have more personally meaningful engagement with the university by having access to Spanish speaking resources that can promote their continued enrollment at WP, i.e. have weekend orientation programs, Spanish language web links on our pages, identify cultural liaisons to reach out to.
- Students identified having significant barriers to participating in opportunities during usual programming times due to work and personal responsibilities off campus.
- Students consistently reported that they do not have time to read most university emails and want the university to find other innovative methods to promote important information to them.
- Students who identified as commuters reported not having too much time to spend on campus and needing a “one stop shop” or live person to speak to after hours.
- They want majors to promote internships earlier in their education. This is especially meaningful for students that need to plan to continue working while doing internships.
- Nearly half of our students commented negatively on the residence hall experience, particularly for students of color. For example, multiple male students reported experiences being profiled by our police when “too many brown people assemble outside of buildings.” Students identified that the differential pricing for the residence halls is “classist” because poorer students only are able to afford the older more “poorly maintained run down” buildings. Many students cited that they observe that people of color live in the same buildings similar to public housing “projects.” Students want to have a lottery to live in the newer buildings, since it eliminates disparities in class.
- As noted above, students want opportunities to make money on campus to support their education and personal expenses.
- Students want to have an improved sense of intercultural unity and dialogue with other Communities of Color.

Latinx students perceive a low level of engagement in the Latinx community

- Except for a few named Latino faculty members, students have typically formal and disengaged interpersonal relationships with their professors. Students who have had access to “white” appearing teaching faculty, felt the most disengaged in these relationships, i.e., “When I try to speak to my white professors it is clear they don’t understand the pressures I face.”
- Students named several visible Latinx professional staff that have been pivotal in the mentoring/engagement of students in their education at WP.

- Students gave highly positive feedback about the interpersonal skills, communication skills, and visibility of the Latinx staff working in food services. About 90% of respondents emphasized these positive relationships.
- Students consistently expressed the need for more opportunities to access Latinx mentors.

Suggestions for Change

When Latinx students were asked **what a successful HSI institution** would encompass, they offered a long list of services:

- Having additional Spanish language proficient faculty, staff and administrators that are visible and actively engaged with students on campus. Perhaps a ratio can be researched and proposed. *Approved, I will ask the Chief Diversity Officer to meet with the group to come up with a plan and benchmarks by which we will determine success. We should seek to be a leader in New Jersey.*
- Provide visible symbols of the presence of Latinx community on campus such as in providing Latin food options at the dining halls, public installations to promote awareness, expansion of the curriculum, year-round programming for Latinx. *Approved with exceptions. Providing Latin food options in the dining halls as long as they are financially viable is certainly doable, public installations to promote awareness is certainly doable, curriculum expansion must be enrollment driven or fiscally viable in some way, (keeping majors or minors without sufficient enrollment is not a viable option), year-round programming is certainly doable.*
- To develop a specific and intentional branding strategy to promote WP's HSI designation and teach the public about what that means. Examples can be signage to welcome to the campus daily. HSI logo should be on the webpage, i.e. HACU. Offer branded items in the bookstore "gear" in Spanish language. *We can certainly work to promote this better within our website. Although I will tell you students do not come to institutions because they are HIS's, they come because their community feels welcomed and comfortable.*
- Increased engagement of family members by Spanish speaking staff. Increase open houses and orientations in Spanish, website services, offer "concierge" type service with 24-hour live support for Spanish speakers. *Again this is enrollment driven, we cannot produce programming when there is not a demand marked through attendance. However, I will ask the VP for Enrollment Management to increase Spanish programming moving forward and we will report back on attendance. We do not offer 24-live support for anyone, I do not think it is viable at this point in time.*

- Increased access to Spanish speaking mentors and tutors to promote academic achievement. *Why isn't this happening in terms of mentorship? Isn't the community stepping forward? I need to know more here.*
- More alumni programs to help students prepare for what's next. Latinx alumni speakers should be recruited. *I will ask the new Executive Director of Alumni Relations to work on this for us.*
- Provide expert facilitators that teach intercultural dialogue and community building to establish safe environments among the diverse communities of color at WP. *I will need to know more here.*
- Support systems that provide students with natural supports and sense of belonging (such as cohorts) must continue and expand. *We have done this in the first year program, and our retention rate of Latinx students have increased 10% in one year. That is a huge jump and beats all national norms. I am not sure how you expand it after the first year given that students move into different majors and cohorting becomes more complex but I am open to ideas.*
- Culturally proficient social media and marketing. Email is not consistently used by students. Communication is needed to target Latino students. This is very difficult to do by segmenting populations.
- Training for Campus Police to understand how to communicate and interact with Latinx students. *We have done this.*
- Open and regular dialogue about the living conditions in the residence hall to address inequities in affordability and quality of life for Students of Color. *Our residence halls are predominantly students of color. There are regular meetings with residence life staff etc. Pricing will always be structured based on space, amenities etc. However, we do not deny anyone the right to live in a residence hall, provided they have the appropriate class rank (freshman, sophomore etc)*
- Faculty/Staff need to be visibly engaged at programming events and after hours outside the classroom with students. *Agreed, but this must be faculty driven.*
- The centralization and promotion of Spanish speaking staff who can serve as financial aid advisors/liaisons/scholarship experts to promote financial literacy for Latinx students and families planning for a college education. They need to be available on campus, but most importantly able to participate in Admission related activities off site and part of any online resources (chats, resource searches, etc.) *Agreed, but not centralized. I will ask the Chief Diversity Officer to work on this for us.*
- Access to health and mental health services that provide centralized/available location and times for commuters. *This is already in place I believe.*

Recommendations: Initiatives and Benchmarks

What must WP do to become a Latinx Mindful Community?

After multiple discussions and examining and triangulating data from diverse sources - student focus groups, the offices of Institutional Effectiveness and Financial Aid, HSI Institutions (Appendix F) and *Excelencia in Education*, what can we do to move from a Hispanic enrolling institution to a Hispanic serving institution?

While statistical data can help us see how Hispanic and non-Hispanic students differ in (enrollment, retention, graduation) trends, these measures tell us very little about their specific wants or forces that shape their experience. The voices of Latinx students are critical to understanding what is lacking and what services will benefit most, and in our focus groups their voices were loud and clear: our students want an active and visible Latinx community on campus that can strengthen their sense of identity and language; facilitate information; foster peer, faculty, and staff interactions; support academic, career, financial, mental health pressures; make them and their families feel more welcome by acknowledging their cultural capital as well as their needs, valuing their on campus presence, and addressing the disparities with other groups.

Obviously, the needs of Latinx students are complex and extensive, but the HSI Working Group firmly believes they can be addressed successfully through a series of initiatives:

1. *Creating a Latinx Center that gives visibility, coalesces, and serves Latinx students*

A center will signal the presence of a vibrant, on campus, Latinx community. It will serve as a safe space for peer, faculty, staff interactions; provide cultural resources and broad support services; foster intergroup dialogue. The Latinx Center could act as umbrella organization in the university, responsible for coordinating a vast network of bilingual support services, promoting the interests of Latinx students, and fomenting outreach to families and local Hispanic communities.

The Latinx Center, staffed by a Latinx professional, would not only demonstrate commitment but symbolize pride in being a Hispanic Serving Institution. This center could serve for branding purposes, given enrollment trends at WP. It could serve to pool Latinx resources; coordinate campus and outreach activities; provide bilingual services; organize training sessions and Latinx programs; contribute to raising awareness of the Latinx community.

- i. . I will support the Latinx Center, we will need to identify space and it will report through the Center for Diversity and Inclusion. And like the Black Cultural Center we will be staffing these with graduate students out of the Higher Education Leadership program. Also, let's always be mindful that race-based hiring is illegal and we should refrain from those types of recommendations in public documents. Much of what you envision is being led by the Director of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion and resources etc are on the webpage of the Black Cultural Center. We can certainly do the same for a Latinx Center.

2. *Recruiting and training bilingual personnel, including administration and faculty*

Our students yearn for contact with mentors who share their language, outlooks, and values. Bilingual skills will be essential not only to reach first-generation students unfamiliar with our system, but to communicate with parents who have limited English proficiency. We foresee the need for recruitment and training in multiple areas:

- Admissions: Bilingual counselors and student ambassadors will be needed to support University efforts to attract and enroll Latinx students; visit high schools; host networking events in Latinx feeder districts; inform student families; support a myriad of programs (e.g. Open Houses, Orientations, Accepted Student Days, among others).

Bilingual counselors will also be needed to advise enrolled Latinx students on a continuing basis; connect them to (academic, financial, mental health) support services; assist them in preparing job applications, identifying internship opportunities, connecting to alumni and professional mentors.

- Peer mentorship services: Bilingual students will be needed as ambassadors to recruit Latinx students and to conduct campus tours (as complete and comprehensive as those offered to non-Hispanic students); tutors to provide academic support; contacts facilitating information, connections, resources, and promoting engagement in activities or clubs.

Bilingual peers will play a crucial role in peer-to-peer socialization, and act as role models for students. They will motivate FTFY students to improve their language skills by suggesting the possibility of employment on on-campus jobs (which, as focus groups suggested, benefit greatly to Latinx students). *I will ask that we identify students who have strong academic credentials and are eligible for Federal Financial Aid to serve in these roles. The University does not have funds at this time to support it but we can use federal dollars.*

- Administrative and faculty services: As data from the Institutional Effectiveness Office suggest, Latinx faculty and management are underrepresented at WP. While Latinx students are nearly one third (32.7%) of the student body, a much smaller percentage of the full-time faculty (7.2%) and management (7.4%) are Latinx. Latinx students yearn for contacts with Latinx mentors in teaching and leadership positions. *While again, race based hiring is illegal we can seek to do a better job here. I will ask the Chief Diversity Officer to work on a plan and benchmarks for me to review and approve.*

Bilingual administrators and faculty will be essential to support students' development and offer professional role models. In focus groups discussions, students shared they most often encounter Latinx staff in food services and facilities. While these employees offer a valuable support system, they do not expand students' career horizons or suggest what is achievable. There needs to be a proactive effort to improve the ratio between Latinx students and Latinx faculty and management. *Again, I just have to say, race based hiring is illegal. I will also point out that faculty control the top three candidates we bring to campus for interviews they have a role here too.*

- Financial, and marketing services: Additional bilingual staff and resources will be needed to provide students and families with vital information. Presentations delivered at campus events and during critical points of the enrollment process can effectively engage families and strengthen communication links. These contacts can be used to provide not only academic and financial information, but also navigational skills with regards to residence life, student activities, and other transitional issues students and families may face upon entering WP.

WP experience suggests that Latinx students require additional support, not only when completing the FAFSA, but also when seeking other forms of financial assistance. A Scholarship Specialist will be needed to assist Latinx students in the process of investigating funding opportunities, identifying sources, preparing essays, and applying for outside scholarships. **No. Actually Hispanic students who identify receive 20.7% of all scholarships awarded by the Foundation, second only to white students. Additionally, 24.2% of our awardees do not provide a response to this moniker so we suspect it might be higher.**

While Student Enrollment Services has implemented a Financial Literacy component in the WP102 sections, we need additional financial literacy workshops for our Latinx community. A robust financial literacy program in Spanish, such as Cash Course, should be implemented to help develop the financial skill set of parents and students before entering college, and to strengthen the financial knowledge of neighboring communities. **No, we do not have the resources to offer a bi-lingual curriculum. However, we should seek to provide staff to are bilingual to address students concerns and questions.**

Marketing should employ a bilingual administrator to produce promotional material and further develop the online webpages for Latinx students, their families and community (“Páginas en Español”). Detailed (step by step) procedures must be provided in areas such as enrollment, finance, and support services among others, given that many parents have limited-English fluency and many first-generation students lack familiarity with the university system. **We have been working on this over time. Hiring freezes makes this problematic at this point in time.**

3. *Engaging, supporting, and raising awareness of the Latinx student community*

Our students yearn for deeper knowledge and recognition of their Latinx roots, and for appreciation of the many positive contributions the Latinx community has made to the United States. We foresee the need for:

- Latinx academic resources and curriculum: Literature about Latinx heritage and experience should be disseminated on campus among all students, staff, and faculty, and incorporated in the University Core Curriculum. **This has to be faculty driven and sustained through enrollment.**

The University should provide learning specialists, bilingual classes and teaching assistants, and bilingual peer tutors trained to support the particular needs of Latinx

students. Ideally, we should mirror the dynamics present in high schools, where students are placed in cohorts based on language competencies and teacher assistants support them based on the language needs.

- Latinx support and engagement activities: The Latinx community must feel an integral part of WP and, as consequence, be continuously engaged through campus activities. Since our goal is to broaden awareness of the Latinx community, we should host events that go beyond the annual (October) Latinx Celebration, and institute programs such as:
 - *Latinx Speaker Series* that brings to campus alumni, business and community leaders, and scholars from all disciplines and industries. This program could engage *all* WP students and thus gain Latinx visibility and exposure. *If it can be supported through grant dollars or donations.*
 - *Café Con Leche Weekly Gatherings* that foster fellowship and support among Latinx students, faculty, and staff and encourages peer-to-peer dialogue. During the last two years, this program has served to disseminate campus information, discuss critical topics in the Latinx community, highlight leadership and civic engagement opportunities, and provide insights on careers and academic development.
 - *Latinx ConeXiones Mentoring* that promotes peer-to-peer dialogue and college socialization. This program could be done in collaboration with the Center for Diversity and Inclusion to pair up trained Latinx Student Ambassadors/Mentors in their junior and senior year with first and second-year students, and transfer students. This type of program has been increasingly successful at HSI institutions as noted by Moschetti, et al (2018) as students reported that participating with their peers was essential to their success and persistence. *Approved.*
 - *Coalition for Immigration Justice* that provides information and guidance to undocumented students and their families, many of which are Latinx. This faculty group which has raised awareness of the challenges needs the recognition and support to further their work. *I am not sure how you define support or recognition so this one is hard to address.*
- Latinx wellness and assistance program: Latinx students face numerous pressures resulting from economic hardships, family expectations, caretaking obligations, monolingual skills, legal status, academic preparation that impact their academic persistence and retention at WP. Students should be able to connect more with one another, have a safe space to express themselves, and learn strategies to cope with day to day barriers they commonly face. As suggested in Amaury and Crisp (2012), interventions to promote coping, self-efficacy and self-esteem currently exist, but are not emphasized enough in the academic persistence literature. WP must make such interventions to promote the overall health, psychological well-being, and sense of social belonging of the Latinx community. The Vice President for Student Development will *refer this to the Health and Wellness Center.*

The University should provide bilingual mental and medical health services, as well as case worker(s), to address the array of needs which hinder student success among Latinx students. These needs, which often persist through college and limit their access to resources, include the ability to navigate social and welfare services, securing healthcare, finding safe and affordable housing, procuring legal referrals and translation services, among others. These services should be provided free or at very low cost, be culturally informed, and accessible for both campus and online students. They should be focused on outreach and involve strategically partnered interventions to mitigate utilization factors associated with cultural stigma and shame in the Latinx community. **This is not possible.**

4. Reducing disparities in services, seeking accountability, and achieving equity

Our students feel invisible on campus and perceive (explicit and implicit) inequities. A Hispanic Serving Institution must address the students' perceptions of differential advantage and seek accountability. At WP, students highlight five areas of major concern: police profiling, upkeep of residential halls, food services, safe spaces, and general symbolic recognition. In order to reduce real and imagined inequalities and negative racialized experiences (Garcia 2019) the HSI Working Group recommends these initiatives:

- Latinx diversity training: Existing developmental programs managed by Human Resources for staff, faculty, and administrative personnel, should be expanded to address the needs of Latinx students, and the intersectionality of the Latinx community on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, creed, gender, and sexual orientation. **Yes**

WP should use "institutional agents," as defined by Malcom-Piqueux and Bensimon (2015), and higher education Latinx experts, in and outside the faculty/staff, to make these efforts successful. We must offer periodic workshops to employee sectors that Latinx students perceive as stigmatizing or alienating, such as campus police, residence life, and academic support. **Yes**

- Latinx food services: Food establishments should be more cognizant of Latinx food preferences and provide regular food options in the Wayne Hall Dining and at the kiosks in the Food Court. Local Latinx restaurants should also be solicited to sign on to the Pioneer Express program. **Yes, but must be financially sustainable.**
- Latinx residence areas: Latinx students want facilities associated with them (like residential halls) to be well maintained, and not suggest they are less deserving than others. They also want designated floors or wings of a residence hall to help facilitate social interactions among Latinx peers and foster social immersion for those seeking to embrace their ethnic identity and heritage. Common kitchen areas and lounge could also serve as safe spaces to augment their language skills and experience. **We can certainly provide affinity group housing floors. I reject the notion that our Latinx students are intentionally placed into halls that are "less than" other non-Latinx spaces. While I can appreciate the common kitchen areas and lounges, we will not be renovating residence halls soon. Should we do so or build new we can implement this into the design.**

- Latinx (symbolic) displays: Needless to say, Latinx students want to see more and feel proud of their culture. This means that symbolic displays of their contributions and achievements as well as cultural artifacts on campus will be taken as signs of strength and appreciation and make their presence more visible. This will be directed by the Center for Diversity and Inclusion.
- Latinx marketing: Language is one of the most emblematic markers of culture thus, Latinx students and families should see Spanish language being used in a Hispanic Serving Institution. Apart from the symbolic value, this will be a conduit of information and raise awareness of an important part of the student population. This effort should extend to promotional material, on campus signs and ads, online resources, social media postings, and the branding of WP products sold on campus. **No I do not believe the Hispanic Serving means becoming a bilingual campus. It does mean providing space and places where students can get questions answered in Spanish if needed.**

5. *Benchmarking for improvement*

Our analysis of Latinx students at WP clearly suggested that we must consider both quantitative and qualitative factors to define the benchmarks that will guide our institutional effort.

On the quantitative front, the document *Excelencia in Education* (2019) provides us with an excellent reference framework. It proposes that we focus on Latinx students and demonstrate *continuous improvement* on six core performance indicators, namely: (a) overall enrollment; (b) retention; (c) in/out student transfers^{**}; (d) financial support (through Pell grants, institutional aid, employment, work study); (e) degree completion; and (f) representation in staff, faculty, and administration.

^{**} Since, according to Frye & Lopez (2012), about 25% of Latinx students entering higher education enroll at two-year institutions and that number keeps rising, we recommend that WP analyze these data to determine benchmarks for these students.

Excelencia in Education also tells us that to achieve the desired results for Latinx students, we must intentionally implement and advance evidence-based programs and policies in the six areas listed above.

On the qualitative front, the work of Garcia (2019) provides us with a good reference framework. Soft indicators of Latinx success should include nonacademic outcomes, such as (a) development of academic self-concept; (b) understanding of leadership and racial identities; (c) civic engagement; (c) sense of belonging; (e) level of connectedness to peers, faculty and staff. Naturally, these benchmarks would not be ascertained by analyzing numbers. Instead, they will require regular interactions with students and recurrent focus groups that would help us develop, modify, and enhance our policies, programs, and services.

It is imperative that, as suggested by Bensimon and Malcolm-Piqueux (2015), all data on outcomes be disaggregated regularly by race and ethnicity, so we can monitor student progress, engage in performance benchmarking, and set specific equity goals with regards to Latinx students.

Conclusion: Reflections, Limitations, and Future Research

Where do we go from here?

As in most projects of this magnitude, in the process of studying WP Latinx students, a few concerns could not be addressed, and new research questions emerged. Some of these issues will require additional exchanges with students; others will call for more data mining and statistical measures. All of the them, however, merit attention if we wish to better support Latinx students and help them succeed in college.

Our working group believes that four areas, in particular, demand more data and exploratory work: (a) characteristics of school districts attended by Latinx students prior to entering WP; (b) majors that attract Latinx students, progress made within these majors relative to other students, and GPA comparative analyses; (c) college experience of Latinx alumni and strategies used to avert common Latinx students' crises; (d) impact of undocumented status on students' college experience and success. Although we outline these concerns briefly, Appendix A expands on the research needs.

To guarantee Latinx student success, the notion of tracking data is not enough. We must find answers to the lingering questions above, take measures to improve outcomes, and act, based on those answers, to continuously improve. We must be intentional; think of how and what we do with data to improve student performance and assess on a regular basis improvement. We must be able to tap into the valuable resources we have on campus and use the voices of highly successful Latinx students and mentors. These Latinx students offer a lens into the kind of experiences that we desire to replicate for *all* WP students.

As our report suggests, Latinx students are vital to our university and future. They increasingly support our enrollments and are on the way of becoming our demographic majority. They also face more economic hardships and have lower retention and graduation than non-Hispanic (White) students. Despite such numeric strength, Latinx students feel invisible on campus. They yearn for more knowledge of their heritage, more bilingual services and outreach for themselves and their families, more recognition and appreciation from the larger campus community. Latinx students are our hope for the future, and not only them, but the university will lose if we continue ignoring their needs and do not address their problems.

If WP wishes to continue attracting Latinx students and fostering their success, we must continue informing ourselves about the challenges they face. We must also be willing to engage in constructive dialogue and commit to improving their performance outcomes, revising benchmarks, and designing programs and policies that work. Above all, we must move beyond lip service to become more Latinx Mindful and make WP the best Hispanic Serving Institution of New Jersey.

Appendices

Appendix A: Research Needs

- Majors that attract Latinx students and progress within those majors

Which units/ majors/ departments/ classes attract our Latinx population? Are there any major differences that occur as they progress through those majors or classes? How are they comparing to other students with those courses with high D, F, W rates? Do they enter particular majors and are less likely to complete them in comparison to others? What are the impacts of gatekeeper courses on Latinx students in comparison to others?

- Academic performance of school districts from which Latinx students come

From where (which towns and school districts) does our Latinx population come? If we triangulate findings with NJDOE data, can identify engagement patterns sooner and address them?

- Experience of successful WP Latinx alumni

Since we have so many highly successful Latinx students, and graduates, can their experience shed light on effective persistence strategies at WP? What strategies or suggestions do they have for systemic change, given their experience as Latinx learners at WP?

- Financial stress crisis management

Could students who share needs curtail their credit load or step out for some terms to address financial stress.? Will Latinx students need to use these strategies more frequently than other groups on campus?

- GPA comparative analysis

Can we do like other institutions that conduct GPA gap analysis? Could we compare how the students from each group differ and formulate strategies to address differences?

- Impact of undocumented status

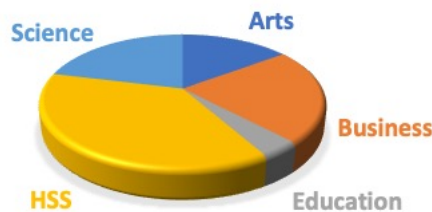
With the growth of the Latinx student body, immigration issues grow in salience. Could we have increased awareness of the needs of undocumented students to support? How to better understand and grapple with these dynamics, as they become increasingly important to our shifting student population?

Appendix B: Comparative Data – Campus Fact Book & Other Resources

Financial Aid applications (FAFSA) submitted in 2018 and 2019 offers glimpses of engagement in appeals. The number of appeals made by Hispanic students after financial aid was denied, increased by 17.32% between 2018 and 2019. This (appeal) number also increased among non-Hispanic students during this period, but at a lower rate (12.87%). Although the percentage of appeals approved was about the same (40%) for both groups, appeals were denied at a slightly higher rate among No-Hispanic students (12.5%) than among Hispanic students (9.5%).

The Hispanic students that graduate from WP pursue a variety of first majors (Factbook, Table 4.6) Between 2015 and 2019, about one in three Hispanic graduates (37%) earned degrees in the Humanities and Social Sciences, and about one in five earned degrees in Science (21%) and Business (23%). The least attractive majors were in the College of Arts and Communication (15%) and Education (4%). In Fall 2019, their preferences mirrored somewhat the preferences of the larger student body (2019 Factbook, Table 2.11). The percent of Hispanic students graduating with Science degrees in 2019 (24%) was close to the percent of Hispanic undergraduates declaring Science majors (26%) on that year.

HISPANIC GRADUATES BY 1ST MAJOR
FALL 2015-2019 (AVERAGE)



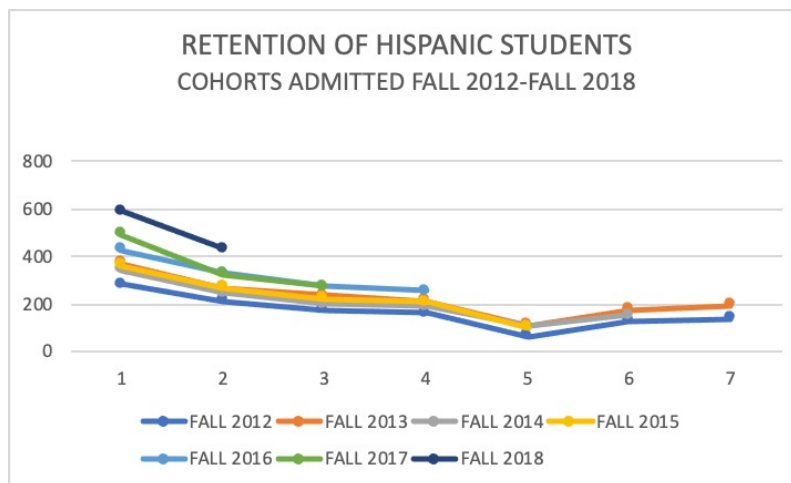
1k. Student Majors

Hispanic/Latinx		
Major	N	%
Psychology - BA	315	11.20
Criminology & Crim Justice - BA	304	10.81
Undeclared - UND	188	6.68
Communication - BA	165	5.87
Biology - BS	156	5.55
Management - BS	140	4.98
Accounting - BS	136	4.83
Marketing - BS	102	3.63
Sociology - BA	92	3.27
Nursing - BS	86	3.06

Non-Hispanic/Latinx		
Major	N	%
Criminology & Crim Justice - BA	428	7.39
Psychology - BA	428	7.39
Communication - BA	427	7.37
Undeclared - UND	357	6.16
Nursing - BS	345	5.96
Biology - BS	269	4.64
Management - BS	239	4.13
Accounting - BS	204	3.52
Marketing - BS	182	3.14
Computer Info Technology - BS	165	2.85

The size of FTFY entry cohorts declines each year for all groups as students fail to re-enroll at WPUNJ. The re-enrollment rate of Hispanic FTFY students admitted in Fall 2012, however, was consistently lower than the re-enrollment rate of FTFY White students during their first three years (Factbook, Table 42). It was also slightly higher than the re-enrollment rate of FTFY African American students. Fluctuations in the re-enrollment rates of Hispanic and White FTFY students followed similar patterns by and large – only in the fall of 2013 and 2015, Hispanic and White re-enrollment trends diverged, rising for Hispanics and falling for non-Hispanics (2015), or vice versa (2013).

Retention patterns for FTFY Hispanic students have followed a distinctive trajectory since 2012



Appendix C: Method and Design of Focus Groups

To meet the goals, the following methods were used to collect qualitative data with the Focus Groups:

- A major component of the work was engaging students in five focus groups and one open forum, which were held in October, November and December 2019.
- A group of 39 students (N=39) participated in these groups and an additional 12 in the open forum.
- Demographic data about the students who participated are available in Appendix E along with the form used.
- Two members of the HSI Working group using a formatted script of 10 questions (see Appendix D) facilitated each focus group.
- The questions were developed by the HSI Working group to assess key indicators defining the Latinx student experience, i.e. needs, services, satisfaction with faculty and staff, etc.
- A reduced set of questions was utilized in the open forum format.
- Two note takers were provided for each session.
- The two note takers also served as coders for the data collected.
- Response data from each set of session notes was collected, compared and grouped into themes by the two note takers.

Appendix D: Questions & Quotes from Focus Groups and Open Forum

Introduction and Questions:

In the fall of 2014, William Paterson University became recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), as our student body grew to reflect more than 25 percent of our population identified as Latino and/or Hispanic. While we have been recognized as an HSI, we continue to struggle to understand what success as an HSI means to us, and specifically, what it means for our student body. Our new

president, President Richard Helldobler, has charged our task force with beginning the process of moving WP from simply being 'a Hispanic enrolling institution' to becoming 'a Hispanic Serving Institution,' a university that defines itself based on the success of its students, staff and faculty. In order to begin our transformation, we turn to you, our Latinx student population, to best understand your student experience. Similarly, as we look to inform and recommend changes across campus, we turn to you in hopes of better understanding Latinx student success, and how can WP become a (better) Hispanic Serving Institution?

1. What has been your WP experience as a Latinx student?
2. What are some of the WP support systems that have impacted your experience?
3. What kinds of events, programs and services do you believe would help impact the Latinx experience on campus?
4. What do you think would make WP a successful Hispanic Serving Institution?
5. What makes William Paterson unique?
6. What are some of the challenges that Latinx students face and/or have overcome during their journey at WP?
7. What do you want from your university?
8. Please describe your interactions with faculty and staff.
9. What have been your most memorable moments here at WP?
10. What made you want to stay at WP?

Notes from the Focus Groups:

The following is a summary with headings related to the questions and we merged similar topics under the headings.

Latinx experiences:

This area of questioning provoked diverse responses as many felt the following:

- a. "Our Latinx voices are not heard...people pick and choose what they want from us. I don't feel heard." An example shared was that a Latinx Center was desired since 2014 and nothing has happened.
- b. Undocumented students in the Latinx community expressed feeling very alone and faculty and staff seem inaccessible to their needs. Some appreciated hearing of the taskforce and referrals were made.
- c. Several commented how "Latino professors need to be more accessible to us." – "some are great, but unknown to many of us." The students expressed a sincere desire to meet and interact with more of the Latinx faculty who are on campus.
- d. "Why did we not open a Latino Cultural Center sooner?... Why only a Black Cultural Center.... it seemed like it was discriminatory... if we have over 30% Latino how did we not open a Latino Cultural Center?"
- e. Many expressed having initial struggles, but found support needed to succeed with some Latinx faculty and staff among others.

Others expressed the following:

- a. "I have had a good experience, Latinx Heritage Celebration events and Café Con Leche have been great opportunities to connect with fellow Latinos and helped me feel comfortable." Some expressed that through Café Con Leche they finally realized there are more Latinx staff they never knew were here.
- b. Many expressed meeting great friends, faculty and staff not just Latinx that have made their time here wonderful.

- c. Despite some concerns that may have arisen, many stated that staff, faculty and students here at WP “are very friendly and have made my experiences great.”

Support Systems:

1. Every focus group contained at least one EOF student and even from those who were not EOF, they highlighted the program as a “major support system.” Many commented how the staff played a major role in their transition, retention and basically, “if it were not for EOF, I would not be here today.” They spoke of the guidance, “safe space” they had when they visit them in Raubinger Hall and the countless hours they provided them. Beyond the compliments, they spoke of the additional resources, comradery they encounter among their peers in the program, many also referred to them as a “family” who understood them and really focused on their success.
2. Some of the sessions had active students engaged in Greek Life and SGA among other clubs. They expressed how these groups and the brothers, sisters and members really made a difference for them. The recurring theme was how they felt “alone” until they met them. Others shared how it “gave them meaning and a reason to stay.”
3. We learned how some had connected to staff and others because they worked on campus. They had many positive experiences as employees and shared how their supervisors helped them navigate through problems and gave them advice about any challenge they faced.
4. Many spoke of “space spaces” having evolved, but “we need more training and some offices have yet become safe.” They expressed not always being supported, understood or respected in some offices. Many shared needs for bilingual staff to help them when parents come along. This was a recurring theme. at every focus group session.
5. Other notable offices and staffs beyond EOF that were mentioned often were Campus Activities, the Changebuilders program, Counseling, Health and Wellness particularly the peer health advocates group and staff that support them as well as Student Enrollment Services among others. Common threads shared were their sense of feeling safe among the staff in those units, who seemed to care and support them and let them be “who we are and not ashamed at speaking Spanish if we want to...”

Needs---

- a. Only having OLAS (Organization of Latin American Students) is not enough and “we should have more clubs for Latinos.”
- b. Communication came up regularly at each focus group as an area that needed major improvement to support students regularly and that Latinx students might focus on more specific social media and marketing ways to help them stay connected or be supported. There were a variety of communication related comments and these were the most consistently noted:
 1. Email system “does not work” and “not helpful” to people to learn more about campus,
 2. “CORQ app is limited and does not include all events.”
 3. “Daily Announcement is horrible” and does not help students...text messaging may be better along with focused social media.
- c. Many commented that more Latinx professors are needed as the few simply are not visible.

Events, Services and Programs:

1. Repeatedly, whether they were active on campus or not, most mentioned the desire that the Latinx Celebration should not be the only concentrated time that WP “celebrates our diverse

culture.” Many emphasized the confusion many have that “we are all the same, but we come from many different countries.” This recurring comment arose in each session where they wanted us to host more events in Spanish that showcase the various nationalities throughout the year. One example that came up several times was when we hosted the “Dia de Los Muertos” event that is most notably a Mexican holiday.

2. Programs like Orientation and Open Houses as well as admission tours were mentioned frequently where they felt more bilingual staff were needed to address “our parents who need to hear the information in Spanish.” The students expressed being “exhausted” from trying to translate everything and often not finding the words or expressions needed to make the information clear to their parents. Many students suggested that we host “Spanish” only events like Open House primarily to help parents understand what the school offers and to learn as much as possible to support their decisions. Some noted that parents should know we will be offering bilingual opportunities whenever possible during the invitation process and offer the events at night or Saturdays.
3. Students frequently mentioned needing upper class peers and/or faculty/staff mentors. They expressed the need to connect to others with similar backgrounds “who might understand what I am going through.” The profound desire was verbalized numerous times and one mentioned it succinctly...they wanted students and others “who won’t judge you, but support and welcome you.”

Other suggestions:

- a. Host more Latinx Days ---- specific events to help guide them, clarify resources and provide opportunities to meet Latinx faculty, staff and peers.
- b. Promote programs and services in both languages especially for parents to know what is available. Related comments shared in many sessions were about Parents coming along with their students and no one helping them with tours and sessions in Spanish. Recurring recommendations – more bilingual staff in critical offices where you learn about coming to WP, how to get financial aid and other service units.
- c. Host more cultural awareness programs like “Rep Your Flag” and show the diversity that exists. Celebrating the individual countries of origin was highly desirable to many.
- d. Work to develop more “safe environments” among peers who challenge one’s ethnic background or whether “you are black enough.” Many Afro-Latinos expressed feeling segregated from other afro groups even though they share many similar issues.
- e. More culturally related game nights like “Domino challenges”, etc.
- f. More programming on micro aggressions as many expressed being exposed to many each day on campus in their classroom and among various offices.
- g. Open a “Center” that is more than a room, but one that “has staff and resources to help us achieve” Many expressed how they wanted a “safe space.”
- h. Business majors who must keep traveling back and needed to carve out time to use Library and attend programs on main campus raised limited support, services and programming on Valley Road. They spoke of wanting to be able to reserve spaces at Valley Road for studying and not just the library on main campus.

Successful Hispanic Serving Institution:

1. A recurring theme was the lack of Latinx foods regularly on the menu and well represented on campus. Some suggestions were the need to serve Latin food regularly in the dining hall, possibly an empanada station in the food court and more “Latin themed” nights of events.

Others suggested offering expresso options at the corner coffee spot in food court and other options like true Café con Leche or cortados.

2. More promotions in Spanish on and off campus highlighting our status as an HSI “be bolder and more open about this identity.”
3. Latino culture and diversity should be more “expressed on campus” through a variety of means such as signage to welcome Latinos to the campus. Many of these concerns promoted dialogue that events and activities celebrating Latinx groups should be recurring and consistently throughout the school year.
4. Faculty and staff should wear nametags and share their bilingual status so anyone approaching them “would know who can help them or their families in other native languages besides English.”
5. HSI should be a logo on our web pages and materials – “be proud of the distinction... let it be part of our trademark.” Others shared more overt promotion of nationalities through flags and other permanent displays around campus showing pride for the Latinx community on campus.

Related suggestions:

- a. Latinx ...” branded items” in bookstore, like wristbands, Proud to be Latino shirts.... WP logo on shirts in Spanish
- b. More alumni programs to focus on what comes after graduation and how to deal with the next transitions for Latinx students.
- c. They wanted to see more “Latinx authors infused into the curriculum.”
- d. More events that would be inclusive of parents who might only be comfortable in Spanish. “They need these events in the evenings and on Saturdays.”
- e. Recruit more Latinx students into all majors as many expressed feeling lonely in some majors with few Latinos.

What makes WP Unique?

1. Some students shared how the branding of Will Power has been great.... “other schools have school spirit brands, but not Will Power...” they felt ours stands out well among other schools in the State.
2. Several spoke of the significant amount of “diversity among the students made us unique” and an appealing place to attend. On a few occasions, students expressed coming from communities that lacked diversity and that it was refreshing to come here and find so many students from different ethnic backgrounds.
3. Several spoke of the “the strong sense of community they felt when they walked on campus” and how that helped develop many friend groups that remain strong and makes WP “a better place than other schools they have visited.”
4. Common Hour makes WP different from other schools, they enjoy the flexible time, events, and more that happen during that time.

5. For some who did not speak Spanish and felt somewhat disconnected to their culture- William Paterson seemed unique to them because it helped them embrace their Latinx roots and feel comfortable with who they are among their peers.
6. Many commented on the accessibility of staff that makes us unique and helps to create a positive environment in those spaces.
7. Many spoke in comparison to other schools and expressed how our diversity and “right size” made us unique and why they came here.

Challenges Latinx students face:

1. Students spoke about some common issues that they faced that were not solely because they were Latino but may be more complex because of their families who did not attend college here or back in their countries of origin. Example shared -- “life itself for a 17 or 18-year-old” presented many adulthood issues that were not easy for them to manage. Many shared “parents need us a lot, so staying close to home and commuting was important to me.” Many also expressed how they serve as translators so often that their experiences were different than many peers.
2. Dealing with family who have not gone through college and balancing family expectations – “they don’t understand why I don’t come home right away...” was also a common theme. Many expressed that being the first to go to college seems to have made this experience harder. Most shared that they were first generation. One in particular summed this up with a common question they are asked by the parents in Spanish...” Why do you spend so much time studying and not with chores that we need done? “
3. How to afford college? – financial stressors were mentioned often by the students. Many explained that if they did not stay in school it was because they need financial support. Many expressed the need for more scholarships, etc. Single parent households came up frequently and how to manage the finances got very complicated. Some had to drop classes to afford coming here and leaving housing were options they often considered. Many expressed that “give up quickly” and “needing more help with financial aid processes” impacted their persistence. It seemed apparent from the many comments shared that their lack of understanding and guidance on these matters at home often stalled them.
4. In most focus groups, they also spoke of bilingual needs especially with tutors who understand that Spanish for many of them was their first language and may need different strategies to help them. Concerns were raised with writing and some expressed frustration with tutors “understanding my needs.” Some also felt that balancing the two languages often produced “times when faculty did not understand and treated me like I was not able to do the work”

Comments/Suggestion:

Consistently, many shared how the search process for scholarships was daunting and complex and students will give up too quickly and face major loan debt trying to pay for school and possibly stay on campus. Some felt that the only way to curtail expenses was to move back home and forego the residential experience because of lack of funds. Therefore, they would like to see more staff dedicated to helping them find scholarships and other aid.

What do you want from your university...?

This question provoked lots of dialogue and sometime the tone changed depending on the item. Some expressed needs while others expressed frustration and disgust.

- a. Promote internship opportunities more frequently and early because waiting until senior year “has not been helpful to me.” Some explained that “advisors early on never spent enough time talking about internships and promoting options” Some described that it depended on their majors as some reported learning about options from their department advisors, but would have liked to learn more about the process and importance earlier.
- b. “I want our cops not to harass us because ‘too many of us’ congregate in a specific area...” They expressed some concern over how “brown people are targeted by cops” who “worry” when they are together in spaces like lounges or outside. They specifically spoke of almost any place on campus “where more than 8 or 10 are together” and having cops and others be suspicious of them. The perception reiterated by several was that they were “targeted” and that there is too much “controlling our behaviors.” Some felt “community policing” might be a better way to address them and possibly they could “hang out more.” They expressed that the treatment from cops is very inconsistent depending on “who is on duty.”
- c. More information about events, programs and services came up often as well as funding opportunities, jobs on campus, possibly a Latino blog or other social media outlets that they might turn to when they wanted to connect with services geared to the Latinx community.
- d. More help for “first generation students” who really do not have family who understand came up often.
- e. Many suggested that we should duplicate the resources and support systems in EOF for all students.
- f. Some expressed concern over the conditions of the residence halls--- “filth and dirt is what many see when they come in to visit.” Some reported that there is “trash around the building” and some buildings look like “crap.” They felt that many of the “upgrades” to the older buildings were simply not acceptable. One said it and many affirmed that “it seems they don’t care about the buildings or us who live in the buildings.” These sentiments were passionately reiterated by current and past residents. The latter citing as the reason why they left housing. Related:

1. Others expressed an impression that now that High Mountain buildings are not mostly honors things have “changed.” It seems like “once the black students or students of color moved in, the maintenance has changed, and the rugs and entries are raggedy”
2. Some reported that the residence hall conditions were “deplorable and not fit for human beings.” The recurring mold was commented on by many while some shared concerns over the AC being broken and that “students get sick over these conditions.”
3. A few mentioned that having one room “decorated by Bed Bath and Beyond is misleading folks....” Many concurred and kept repeating words and expressions that included that the buildings were “neglected,” “not presentable,” etc.
4. Some felt that in some spaces it feels like the “projects” and that is where some of them come from and don’t want to feel like they are back in those urban often low-income dwellings.
5. Others commented on Latinx floors...communities within the resident halls that would help bring students together and encourage positive experiences.

Faculty and staff

It was determined early on that students regardless of position referred to all staff and faculty as equals and did not distinguish them. They saw professors, administrators, clerical, cooks and

cleaners similarly. They knew the roles were different but referred to them with limited distinctions until specific questions or scenarios were presented.

These are some of the highlights:

- a. some professors are “all in” and others seem “not fully committed to their work or us”
- b. I don’t feel “people will listen if I complain about professors”
- c. “We need to see more [faculty and staff] committed to us, Latino and non-Latino.”
- d. Some expressed how the behavior of some faculty is “demeaning and hurtful.”
- e. The faculty need “to connect with us one on one ...learn about what is going on in our lives and have more personal connections.”
- f. Staff should feel free to speak in Spanish and help “make us feel at home without being criticized.”
- g. Staff and faculty should ask more often “how are you doing?” and not treat every interaction as a simple “transaction.”
- h. Some expressed how their peers are their primary sources for help and navigating through because many felt that are not supported by staff and faculty in various offices.
- i. Many students expressed concern about their interactions and “fear that they view me as a negative stereotype.”

Memorable moments

This question elicited an array of comments:

1. “Hanging out with friends and being Greek” was reported by many indicating how the Greek community made their time memorable.
2. Many named other clubs and organizations and their peers who lead them as sources support and shared some examples why those interactions were also memorable.
3. Many reported that the dining hall Latino staff who always “ask how you are doing and make sure we get enough food when they serve us” made them feel supported.
4. Others offered special events on and off campus such as retreats and cultural displays like the Dia de Los Muertos as being both educational and fun.
5. Civic engagement events were mentioned frequently when this question was asked as providing memorable moments and opportunities to engage with peers and the local community off campus, etc.
6. Special programs like Orientation and Residence Life Outdoor movies were also cited as great moments they had on campus.

What made them stay...

Although many expressed personal reasons such as family and friends and wanting “to make them proud” or staying to help their families or “not wanting to let them down.” Others shared that...

- Greek life and getting involved on campus made staying important to them. (SGA, SAPB, PHA, and many other clubs and organizations were named)
- Staff and faculty who helped them and mentored them over time made the difference.
- The investment of money and time was significant, and they simply could not “walk away.”

Some did share how they may not stay and indicated the following reasons why:

- a. Not enough Latino staff that they “felt connected to in many places on campus”
- b. Need for more bilingual tutors to help “many of us where English is a Second Language”

- c. Not being able to “develop a support system”

One very moving story was expressed by a male student whose parents are undocumented: “I stay because I need to for them and many in my community who are counting on me to succeed and help them afterward.” He said, “it does not matter if it takes 5 or 6 years because they need me.”

Appendix E: Demographics of Focus Group participants and form

Five focus groups meetings (39 students) were held as well as one open forum (12 students). The focus groups ran similarly, and the same questions were asked to each. A reduced number of questions with some differences were asked in the open forum.

Relevant characteristics of the 39 students who participated in the five focus groups we conducted:

- ✓ 17 identified as male and 22 as females
- ✓ 11 freshman, 5 sophomores, 7 juniors, 15 seniors and 1 did not respond.
- ✓ 29 students were first generation.
- ✓ 31 students work with 10 working up to 13 hours/ week and 21 working 18 hours or more / week.
- ✓ 20 students were commuters and 19 live in the Residence Halls.
- ✓ 23 students come from bilingual households, 10 from Spanish-speaking only, 5 were English-only and 1 did not respond.
- ✓ 16 students identified as Latinx (although the labels varied), 6 students identified as Black/ African American, 5 students identified as White, 2 as Native American, 1 as Mixed (Native American and Black), 1 as Other (no explanation) and 8 did not answer.
- ✓ Parents' country of origin: the majority were from the Dominican Republic, followed by Puerto Rico and Peru. Other countries included: Cuba, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, México and Colombia.

LATINX STUDENT SURVEY DEMOGRAPHIC FORM

Where did you attend high school? _____
Where did you live before coming to WPU? (City and County) _____
Do you live on campus? YES NO
If yes, which Residence Hall? _____
If no, Current Place of Residence (City and County): _____
Are you a: FRESHMAN - SOPHOMORE- JUNIOR- SENIOR
Major: _____
Minor(s): _____
Age: _____
Gender: Male Female Non-Binary
Country of birth: _____
List all the countries where you have lived: _____
Do any or both of your parents come from Latin American countries? If so, which?
Mom: _____ Dad: _____
Race: Native American - White - Black/ African American - Asian - Other _____
Language Spoken at Home: English - Spanish - Both - Other _____
Do you work? How many hours a week? _____
Are you the first in your family to attend college? _____

Appendix F: Hispanic Serving Institution Comparison Chart

Hispanic Serving Institutions Comparison											
Name of Institution HSI Colleges & Universities	2yr or 4yr	Public vs. Private	Enrollment Percentage	HSI Office/ Initiatives	Heritage Programs	EOF/ TRIO Support	Multicultural/ Latinx Center	HSI Week	Latinx STEM Program	Orient./pre- college Program	Latinx Club
Bergen County College	2yr	Public	52%		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Bloomfield College	4yr	Public	27.8%		✓	✓					✓
Essex County College	2yr	Public	26%		✓	✓	✓				✓
Fairleigh Dickinson University	4yr	Private	37.6%		✓	✓				✓	✓
Felician College	4yr	Private	30%		✓	✓			✓		
Hudson County College	2yr	Public	55%		✓	✓	✓				
Middlesex County College	2yr	Public	34%		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Montclair University	4yr	Public	27.6%	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
New Jersey City University	4yr	Public	40%		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Rutgers-Newark	4yr	Public	22%		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Saint Peter's College	4yr	Public	36.6%		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Union County College	2yr	Public	21%		✓	✓	✓		✓		
William Paterson University	4yr	Public	31%		✓	✓	✓				✓

Data Collection for Comparison

Bergen Community College
www.bergen.edu

Bloomfield College
www.bloomfield.edu

Essex County College
www.essex.edu

Fairleigh Dickinson University
www.fdu.edu

Felician University
www.felician.edu

Hudson County Community College
www.hccc.edu

Middlesex County College
www.middlesexcc.edu

Montclair State University
www.montclair.edu

New Jersey City University
www.njcu.edu

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey,
Newark Campus
www.newark.rutgers.edu

Saint Peter's University
www.saintpeters.edu

Union County College
www.ucc.edu

William Paterson University
www.wpunj.edu

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