Defining Student Success:
The Starting Point to Institutional Planning

"Student success" can be defined in many ways, depending on the type of institution, its nature and mission, its student population, and the needs of its students. Each institution's definition of student success should be at the center of their strategic planning process and should guide every effort or intervention.
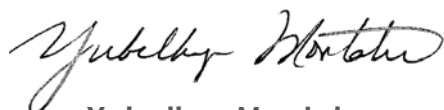
Message from HETS Executive Director

This is our first edition of the Together Magazine after having had our 2007-2010 Strategic Plan approved by the Board of Directors. This publication takes a key role in this plan, since it is a main resource for sharing best practices, learning from other institutions, and finding out ways of creatively embarking in the road to student success. Like the current issue, future editions will look specifically at practices and issues regarding HETS's three core areas: Technology Resources, Student Support, and Faculty Development.

Every semester, TOGETHER will bring a close look at relevant topics in each of these areas. Not only this, it is mean to be your source to publish stories, lessons, best practices, issues, and special articles that cover innovative ways of solving common challenges. If you want to be a part of this effort, do not hesitate to send us your material. Let your colleagues within and beyond your institution learn more about your outstanding work.

We hope this issue further helps you in your endeavors toward student success.

Sincerely,

Yubelkys Montalvo

Yubelkys Montalvo
HETS Executive Director

From the Editor's Desk

The current issue takes advantage of the demonstrated interest of member institutions in student retention as success, particularly after a series of roundtable discussions on the topic conducted all through 2007.

The Fall 2007 edition of Together takes this interest further, as it discusses potential ways of achieving student success and celebrates the achievements of Hispanic Serving Institutions through the implementation of innovative Title V Projects. Discussing student success issues in HSIs would make no sense without looking at how this important program has taken institutions to a next level. Enjoy!

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Defining Student Success: The Starting Point to Institutional Planning

These days, the main topic being discussed by higher education institutions, particularly HSIs, is student success. While, on one hand, it is especially relevant that institutions center their strategies on their students, it is also particularly important to recognize that "student success" can be defined in many ways, depending on the type of institution, its nature and mission, its student population, and the needs of its students. Each institution's definition of student success should be at the center of their strategic planning process and should guide every effort or intervention. For this to happen, an inter-departmental target population and problem analysis process should take place, with an external facilitator supporting the matching and definition stage. It is also a good idea to look at existing literature and, of outmost importance, to consider how other HSIs

have defined the "student success" concept. In a set of interviews conducted by Excelencia in Education to presidents of participating institutions of the Latino Student Success Project in 2006, the organization was able to create an array of profiles based on the responses received and, moreover, create a general picture of the leaders' definition of student success. According to Excelencia (2006), student success is generally defined by these Higher Education leaders as "graduation and retention rates". Although these two represent indicators of student success, rather than a specific definition, these are mostly the terms used to refer to student success when addressing the issue. Some of the definitions also include "improved GPA", "student engagement", and "achievement of students' educational goals". These definitions generally help institutions establish a set of indicators to measure student success. Other definitions presented by interviewed leaders are more complete, less specific, and probably reflect the philosophy of the institution. One of the participating presidents mentioned that, to his institution, student success meant "helping students achieve what they wanted to achieve when they thought of enrolling in your institution".

Student retention can be defined as persistence, a result of factors at student

entrance, student involvement in college, and student integration (USA Funds, 2003). Others, such as Borough of Manhattan Community College, have set a complete definition for student success that guides their interventions. For the purposes of their CUNY Campaign for Success, student success refers to "graduation, transfer, and satisfactory completion of coursework, depending on student goals". Bronx Community College's Campaign for Success defines it as "improved performance, progress, and attainment, achieved through increased engagement and capacity".

While many usually define student success as retention and graduation rates, these are actually factors that measure institutional assessment. Other indicators in this area include satisfaction levels, placement rates, alumni giving, and student-loan default rates. Given its close relationship to retention, student success can also be related to the several factors that are directly considered part of the multifactorial scenario for student retention. In order for these factors to be better addressed, it is recommended that institutions conduct institutional and student assessments, and evaluate closely both institutional and student interventions (USA Funds, 2003). A student assessment gives a picture of the variables at the time of entrance: academic history, demographic data, test scores, and motivation, and how the student integrates to college once admitted.

Summary of Student Success Common Definitions

- Completing a degree
- Improved GPA
- Effective integration with the school

community
- Retention rates
- Graduation rate/completion
- Helping students meet their individual goals (language skills, change of career, job skills, or an academic degree)
- Distribution of grades in courses
- Persistence
- Transfer rates

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Institutional Strategies to Achieve Student Success

Student success and retention strategies need to respond to the realities and nature of both students and institutions. Moreover, interventions need to reflect the particularities of the student population at each institution. Student success and retention strategies based on the traditional student are inappropriate at HSIs, especially when 69% of students are enrolled part-time and have many obligations besides school (Laden, 2004). To respond to this reality Laden (2004) recommends "on-demand" services such as mentoring, tutoring, and counseling, supported by technology, as a suitable way of responding to these needs.

Interventions at both institutional and student levels can and should be designed in order to deal with issues related to student success and retention. Institutional and student interventions are the set of strategies that implemented together have the potential to increase student retention and completion. Institutional interventions focus on planning and staff related activities: creation of retention committees, establishment of student success goals, student tracking, staff training, and faculty development, among others. Student interventions refer to activities directly related with students: advising, freshmen orientation, tutoring, individual success plans, mentoring, and financial guidance.

To John Jay College of Criminal Justice (CUNY), it is not possible to increase retention rates if students are not engaged and equipped to survive, academically and socially. This is especially true, according to the College, during key transition points in the undergraduate career lives of their students, such as the case of the point of entrance, the sophomore year, which can be challenged by a disengaging mixture of increasing expectations and intensified academic standards, and the transition from lower division to upper division status.

The Successful Transitions initiative incorporated into JJC's 2007-08 Coordinated Undergraduate Education Proposal focuses on three particularly acute groups: students with skill deficits, transfer students, and international students. Strategies include peer counseling, summer skills programs, experiential learning seminars, peer advisement, planning resources, freshman orientation, and

sophomore re-orientation. This is all further strengthened by faculty development, learning communities, and technology enhancement efforts. HSIs experiences with student success interventions, many of which are implemented with Title V funding as a key player, have produced a series of advice and recommendations that can be of great support to other institutions. These are the experiences that should be continuously disseminated and shared among them in order to strengthen institutional capacity to achieve student success. Some of these lessons include the following:

- Engage your staff, improve instruction, collaborate with others, and create support groups
- Identify and address particular learning needs of students
- Create supportive and competitive learning environments
- Have bilingual and culturally sensitive staff and faculty
- Provide mentoring opportunities
- Design interventions to improve basic skills, such as supplemental instruction opportunities
- Take advantage of learning communities programs
- Establish academic advising and assessment centers
- Enhance faculty's understanding of the students' realities
- Provide opportunities to prepare faculty to deal with student success strategies
- Create special training options for faculty members who interact with at-risk students
- Integrate technology wisely to student success interventions
- Create opportunities for growth outside the classroom and close to the real world
- Implement early-alert systems for at-risk students
- Get all departments to develop retention plans and strategies
- Establish institution-wide retention committees that include leaders with decision-making power
- Shift counseling and tutoring from the student services side to the academic affairs area
- Encourage faculty involvement in advising, counseling, and tutoring, as well as in retention committees
- Centralize the retention function as an institutional area in its own
- Profile and assist students according to their academic needs
- Ensure student success in developmental and gateway courses from an individual goals perspective

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Best Practices in the Student Success-Student Retention Scenario

While Title V has given many institutions the chance to improve their capabilities and have outstanding results in their respective educational communities, some institutions have set standards through exemplary strategies and notable results. According to Laden (2004), the most impact has resulted from projects that align student support services with academic programs to provide supportive environments for students who struggle with their competing priorities in life. Supplemental instruction activities, for instance, are continuously mentioned as some of the most successful approaches in dealing with student success and retention. Interestingly, the most frequently emphasized problem among students in Hispanic Serving Institutions is precisely lack of basic skills. At the same time, dealing with basic skills is usually recognized as the path to follow if student success is to be achieved. Among other effective projects pointed out as best practices are those that focus on academic and career planning, curricular innovation, and customized programming.

A Title V funded project that shows an innovative way of focusing on students' individual needs is LifeMap, from the Valencia Community College in Orlando. LifeMap is a planning-guide approach that helps students identify the steps needed to complete their degree requirements and attain career goals (Laden, 2004). This project links faculty, staff, academic programs, and technology in a chain of support services and guidance since the very first moment of admission to their graduation, and even beyond. It includes a student action plan to effectively use resources at each stage, a student guide with step-by-step instructions on how to progress toward academic goals, and a master plan to help institutions focus on student success. Its Student Success course has shown to be a very successful strategy. In 2004, this course helped increase completion and re-enrollment rates by up to 20% (Laden, 2004).

Other programs, such as the Retention Program at Cañada College in California, targets not only retention rates and student skills but also address transfer success. This project integrated curricular transformation, development, new teaching and learning strategies, online career assessment, and enhancement of student´s technological and other basic skills as a way to help students prepare for entrance to a four-year institution after degree completion. As part of this initiative, the institution implemented a Freshman Experience Learning Communities program to integrate English and Math courses with counseling and studying. To supplement this program, they acquired PLATO and academic.com software and coordinated the participation of faculty in the development of course modules in reading and writing to further strengthen basic skills. Faculty development in curricular transformation and design of research

Furthermore, they created an inter-institutional team of technology and information systems that was trained in different areas of information technology and network assessment and had the chance to share best practices and lessons learned to help enhance each other's capacity to deal with these issues and further advance each other's opportunities. In the end, each institution was able to implement intrusion detection systems, increase IT security awareness, and provide their educational communities with training opportunities.

assignments was also included as part of the project.

Commenting on successful practices would not be complete if it does not include details on how institutions can effectively address student success through collaborative efforts, especially if these integrate technology and infrastructure development. In 2001, California State University (CSU) Los Angeles, California Polytechnic State University Pomona, CSU San Bernandino, Mount San Antonio College, and Oxnard College received a Title V cooperative award to join their information technology resources to improve access to information systems and find together solutions to several common technology-related issues. Among other, these institutions were facing issues with network security, low campus awareness about technology, and lack of qualified human resources. This joint effort, overall, helped staff from all five institutions involved benefit from each other's expertise while performing network assessments, participating in training sessions, developing internship programs, establishing network policies, and developing curricula.

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The Impact of Title V in Student Success Initiatives at HSIs

In order to be able to compete in the market and the global economy, Hispanic Serving Institutions need to come up with creative solutions to enhance their technological capacity. But enhancing this goes beyond being able to acquire the necessary infrastructure. It requires the ability to use this technology infrastructure to its maximum potential and integrating it effectively to strategies toward institutional goals. For almost 10 years now, the US Department of Education's Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program (Title V) has made this opportunity possible for many HSIs in the United States, including Puerto Rico. Title V has particularly been a significant influence in HSIs ability to address the needs of at-risk student populations, the uniqueness of non-traditional students, the challenges faced by faculty, and the overall student retention goals.

Title V seeks to help Higher Education institutions expand their capacity to serve Hispanic and low-income students by providing funds to strengthen academic quality, institutional stability, management, and fiscal capabilities of institutions serving these populations (US Department of Education, 2007). Projects funded by Title V range from activities directed towards faculty development, improvement of academic programs, and curriculum development to academic tutoring, counseling programs, and student support services. The grant also includes funding for laboratory equipment for teaching, endowment funds, renovation of instructional facilities, or joint use of facilities. However, the most frequent areas of investment are student services, curriculum development, and information technology infrastructure development (Laden, 2004).

The majority of grantees have used the funds to improve support for students and student success, improve institutional management, increase academic quality levels, enhance faculty effectiveness in the classroom, and improve technological infrastructure (GAO, 2007). Some have even taken advantage of the award to improve their fiscal stability through the establishment of a development office, the creation of an endowment fund, and increasing research dollars. Title V activities have also been said to be main supporters in improving institutional visibility and credibility among

existing and potential donors. According to results of interviews to HSI presidents, Title V allows HSIs to build a reputation and strengthen their programs, as they develop the capacity to compete with other prominent institutions in the nation (Excelencia in Education, 2007).
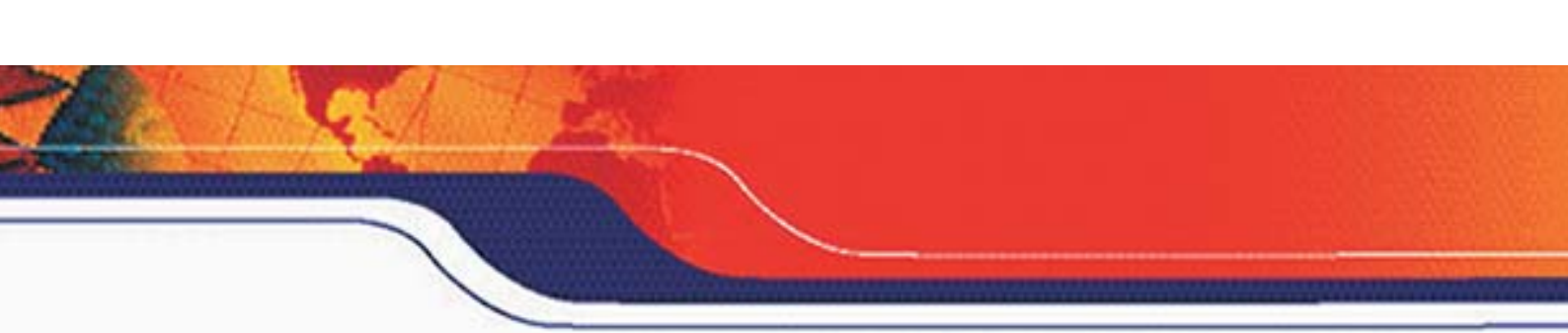
According to Laden (2004), Title V funded HSIs have been an appropriate scenario to develop and implement comprehensive programs and practices that will help other institutions come up with effective solutions to ensure student success. These grants expand educational opportunities and improve the educational attainment of Hispanic students. Institutions like the University of Texas Pan American have been able to improve student persistence and increase student retention significantly. In a term of three years, this institution was able to increase its freshman to sophomore rate to 72.7%, surpassing the national average

(Vasquez, 2006). Through the implementation of a retention-centered curricular innovation and faculty/staff development program, UTPA established a learning framework and learning communities in developmental and core courses that helped increase student motivation and satisfaction, fostering academic success.

Title V has also been a key incentive for institutions to establish collaborative partnerships with other institutions that help them find solutions to common problems and accomplish common goals in a cost-effective way. Funded projects have created a broad network of partnerships and collaborations within and across institutions that, by leveraging institutions' resources and skills, are able to further develop and strengthen their capacity.

The creation of the Title V program in 1998 provided a new source of funding for Hispanic Serving Institutions (Laden, 2004). Since then, the program has grown steadily in funds and participants. Funding appropriation has tripled over the last eight years, from $28M in 1999 to almost $95M in 2007.

Summary of Reported Results from Title V Funded Projects

- Increased completion and re-enrollment rates
- Changes in institutional cultures, from an academic perspective to a student success emphasis
- Creation of intra and inter-institutional synergies
- Development of innovative curricula
- Deployment of IT, security, and network systems
- Staff training and institutional capacity building
- Institutions can facilitate transfers from two-year to four-year institutions
- Institutions become more responsive in identifying and responding to the needs of students at risk
- Articulation of levels of service for students who require guidance in completing their degrees
- Faculty engages more directly with students

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Addressing Student Success through Title V: Review of Prominent Funded Projects
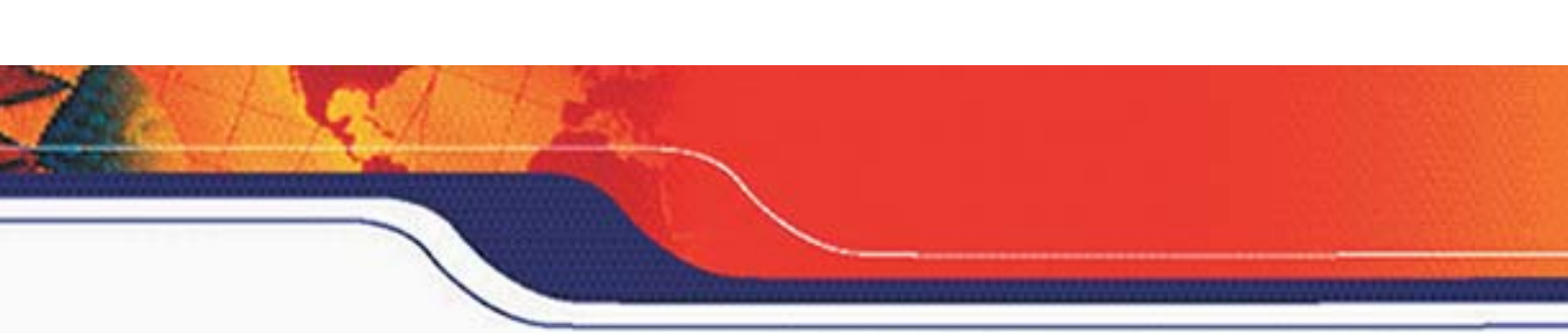
Title V awards for the last two years and the current year include have been granted to several HETS member institution in both the individual and cooperative categories. This is an opportunity for some of the most advanced institutions to keep producing innovative lessons learned for other institutions in development and for institution in development to gain the stability and capacity needed to deal with the challenges posed by the new generation of students and the new global economy. It is important to highlight these projects as a way of portraying the needs, challenges, strengths, and options explored by these institutions. This is of further importance to institutions that have the opportunity to network in a more regular basis, such as HETS member institutions, which get to learn and share experiences to enhance each other's strategies and widen opportunities for the more than 500,000 Hispanic students enrolled in these institutions. This article highlights the most prominent Title V funded projects in recent years at HETS member institutions.

Outstanding projects in implementation after being awarded a Title V grant in 2005 are the Miami Dade College's Viva el Exito Student Success Initiative (VESSI) and University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus's "Enhancement of the Teaching-Learning Process through Integration of Technology and information Literacy" program, in collaboration with the Carolina Campus. VESSI is an initiative of MDC's Homestead Campus that provides retention programming to students, including first-year experience programming for incoming developmental students. Among its major functions is to assist first-time college students and non-traditional students in achieving academic and social success. Support services for enrolled students include tutoring, counseling, career direction, mentoring, and the characteristic VESSI Student Success Series, a conglomerate of workshops in "college etiquette", time management, reading, Math, writing, learning styles, research skills, study skills, stress management, and presentation skills, among others.

The Medical Sciences Campus of the University of Puerto Rico was awarded in 2005 with one of the largest amounts granted for the development of individual institutional projects at the time. Overall, this project focuses on technology as the main means to improve

academic persistence and success, as it provides support services, enhances the teaching-learning process, strengthens faculty skills, increases access to information, and improves institutional capacity. By making Web resources and services and technology infrastructure available, participating institutions expect to increase student achievement in gatekeeper courses, improve persistence rates in the Natural Sciences Department, achieve proficiency in the use of library resources, and enhance faculty and student skills in the use of technology. MCS-UPR Carolina Title V program focuses on four core components to achieve these objectives: the Student Resource and Assistance Center, the Faculty Technology Resource Center, the Enhancement of Library Resources and Services component, and the Improvement of the Technological and Telecommunications Infrastructure. This last component involves the remodeling of 35 classrooms into electronic/smart classrooms, an online technology help desk, installation of necessary technology equipment, and improvement of the institutional wireless infrastructure.

Projects awarded in 2006, although still in the process of implementation, exemplify the direction these institutions are taking towards solving their main issues with student retention and completion. For instance, Lehman College was awarded with a Title V grant to support their "Improving Student Transition to the Upper Division Project", aimed at improving student success in gateway coursed, and, thus, improve student persistence and graduation. This project has three primary goals: to improve passing grades in targeted gateway courses; improve persistence rates of freshmen into their fifth

semester and transfer students into their second year; and improve graduation rates for freshmen and transfer students. Based on their best practices, the College will develop a manual of advisement protocols, provide in-service training, and use state-of-the-art equipment to implement best practices in laboratory pedagogy (DOE, Title V 2006 Awards Abstracts).

The Lehman College Title V Program is based on a student development model that helps students gain a sophisticated understanding of the relationship between their college experiences and their professional goals. As part of this program, Lehman has implemented the Student Experience Survey and the Student Retention and Development System. Through both activities, Lehman assesses students' perceptions on their development, skills, progress, and integration on campus, and results are used to identify students with a need for support and refer them to appropriate services and identify ways to further expand their opportunities. This way, services offices and advisors can reach out to students timely and intervene in a more effective way.

As part of their 2006 Title V Cooperative Arrangement grant, CUNY's John Jay College and Queensborough Community College are working together on a project to develop the capacity to address their cross-institutional needs in retention and graduation of Hispanic students, particularly through Science and English skills. The "Developmental Work in Science" activity incorporates curricular changes and web-based enhancements, mentoring, and advisement to freshman science courses. It also fosters the articulation of

QCC transfers to JCC and provides a capstone undergraduate research experience. The "Academic Support for Non-Native English Speakers" intends to increase Proficiency Exam scores of Hispanic non-native English speakers and their performance in writing intensive disciplines. This is achieved through an online system of tutoring services, instructional and advisement modules, and tutor and faculty training initiatives focused on language and cultural characteristics of students involved.

In Puerto Rico, Universidad Metropolitana in Bayamon, part of the Ana G. Mendez University System, is developing a First Year College and Enhancement Upper Division program with improved support services. This program addresses under-preparedness of entering students and remediation needs of upper and lower division students. At the same time, this program intends to eliminate deficiencies in academic management infrastructure and academic and student support services. Given its importance to achieve student success, this program seeks to enhance faculty and staff

development initiatives to foster academic preparedness, retention, and graduation of low income students. Overall, the program is expected to improve the institution's teaching, assessment, and student support effectiveness.

Most of these projects focus on developmental skills as a means towards retention and success. Others, such as the University of Puerto Rico Carolina Campus's Title V project for 2006, add the development of technology systems to enhance faculty skills and make information resources available to the educational community. The program creatively proposes the use of technologies like e-Portfolio and weblogs to assess the teaching-learning process at course and program levels, and the development of a Digital Library as a means to open access to more resources. On the other hand, the San German campus of the Inter American University of Puerto Rico was awarded a Title V Cooperative Arrangement grant to build campus retention through a mentoring and advisement program, a campus learning community, and equipment to strengthen instruction and student support services. Of outmost importance, the program focuses on faculty involvement as a key to retention and the use of technology to strengthen academic programs and services processes. One of the most outstanding activities related to technology in this program is the creation of Smart Classrooms.

Among Title V's 2007 Program Awards are Miami Dade College's Hialeah Campus, Universidad Metropolitana (Ana G Mendez University System), and Bayamon Central University (UCB) in Bayamon, Puerto Rico. This project will consist in the revitalization of the General Education

get the necessary accreditations and endorsements from professional organizations in both areas. This will, at the same time, improve career options for their students.

program, and the enhancement of two essential programs for this institution: Social Work and Nursing. UCB will redesign General Education courses through competency-based and technology enabled curricula to promote student success and persistence. Through the proposal, faculty will also receive training in learner-centered and technology-enabled strategies, will get involved in the revision of the curricula, and evaluate pilot courses during the summer to test and adapt strategies to the needs of students. Through the enrichment of the Social Work and Nursing programs, the institution is expected to get the necessary accreditations and endorsements from professional organizations in both areas. This will, at the same time, improve career options for their students.

Through the enrichment of the Social Work and Nursing programs, the institution is expected to
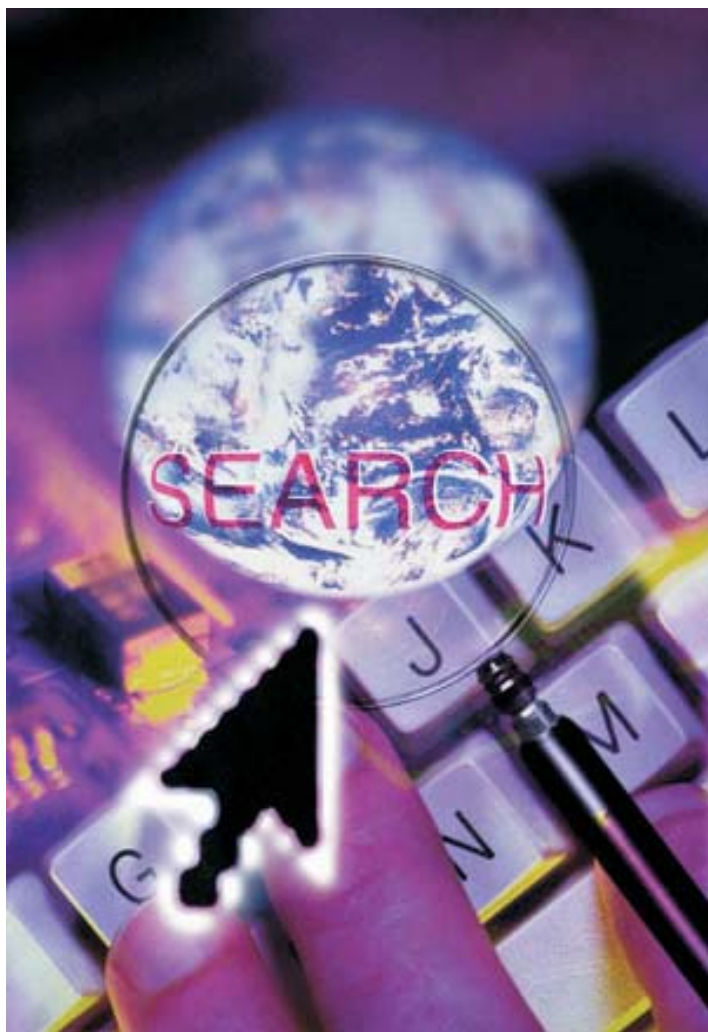
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Innovative Approaches to Student Success

Funding agencies are promoting the development and implementation of innovative projects that go beyond traditional structures and use resources wisely to provide a success approach suitable to the particularities to the institution and the student population. This is certainly the direction taken by the Title V Program and is the recommended focus for all HSIs to be successful in their endeavors.

Innovative approaches are usually highlighted as outstanding projects, since they provide an example of how creative ways of applying theoretical perspective about student success can result in successful efforts with concrete results for both students and institutions. Two of the following reviewed projects, the Title V programs from Miami Dade College, Inter American Campus, and the University of the Sacred Heart, are highlighted by the Department of Education as "Successful Practices in Title V Projects". Other projects such as the La Guardia Community College Title V program have received national awards for their innovative approaches.

Project EXITO (Excelencia Nos Inspira a Todos)

Miami Dade College, Inter American Campus

In 2000, the U.S. Department of Education awarded a five-year Title V grant to the Miami Dade College to implement specific programs and services at the Inter American Campus.

One year after the end of the grant, Project EXITO had demonstrated to be a door of possibilities for students in the Campus, enhancing the skills of more than 1,500 students. Moreover, the program went beyond the skill-building approach and gave student the opportunity to face the real world through community services, benefitting the overall community as well. The complete project comprises five components: Student Services,

Technology, Outreach, Diversity, and Research.

EXITO provided free one-to-one scheduled academic tutoring to more than 1,400 students and study skills workshops to the students that most needed them. It contributed to the technological advancement of the campus by helping faculty and students create and use Web-based student electronic portfolios. Almost 400 students used e-portfolios to document their courses. As part of the project, 12 faculty members incorporated service learning projects into their courses. Of the 540 students enrolled in these courses, 74% chose to do service learning, contributing more than 5,000 hours to community agency partners.

Project EXITO also helped bring the Wachovia Bank/FDIC Money Smart Curriculum to the Campus and 10 modules of the Money Smart curriculum were offered to almost 300 students.

Today, faculty and students at MDC's Inter American Campus recognize and continue to take advantage of Project EXITO's programs and services. To them, EXITO is not a bundle of services provided by a federally funded entity anymore, but a part of the College's institutional branches.

Distance Learning Institute (InED)

University of the Sacred Heart, Puerto Rico

The Distance Learning Institute (InED, for its Spanish acronym) was created with the key role of designing and implementing the Distance Education infrastructure at the University of Sacred Heart. Through this project, the USH was able to develop a laboratory setting in which students could creatively pursue new ideas and collaborate in the project. In this setting, students were able to develop various applications and information resources of great benefit to the institution and assist in the development of the institutionally well-known Moodle's Interactive Instructor Guide.

Before InED, web-based education was not nearly a widespread concept as it is now in the USH. In fact, this model was promoted all over the Island as a way of making Distance Education a full reality for other institutions as well.

Within USH, the model ensured quality control in the creation process of Web-based courses through an institution-wide collaborative effort in which faculty played a key role. This allowed the Institute to produce 117 quality on-line courses in the five-year period of the Title V grant. Also, the Institute produced or sponsored policies, guidelines and manuals throughout the project, taking care in the documentation process.

Also part of this project, the 2002-2005 annual Web E-ducation Congresses in Puerto Rico brought together educators and professionals from the public and private sectors at the postsecondary as well as high school levels to discuss and share their experiences and research in the field. The Congresses also gave faculty the opportunity to publish and present their work through papers that were distributed to participants and posted online. In addition to this initiative, InED fostered other related alliances with partner organizations at local and national levels.

First Year Academy

La Guardia Community College (CUNY),
New York

This year, La Guardia Community College received the Bellwether Award for Exemplary Instructional Programs and Services for their Title V funded project First Year Academy. This innovative academic program helps freshmen enrolled at this institution to make an easy transition to college through a first year experience that connects them to their discipline of choice and introduces them to a dynamic supportive ePortfolio system.

First Year Academy places all freshmen into one of three academies, based on their major. Each academy integrates academic and support services and links key developmental courses with their introductory courses through first-year learning communities. These courses are also connected with pre-college intensive courses, opening sessions, and other skill-building workshops. The program also included a career development course and academic activities linked to the students' majors. Through ePortfolios, students can build a collection of their work, which not only serves as a means for assessment but also helps students reflect upon their own learning process. Last year, First Year Academy enabled more than 6,000 students to construct their ePortfolios. This makes La Guardia one of the largest ePortfolio programs in the nation.

Overall, the program has resulted in improved retention and passes rates in first year courses, and has taken first-year retention to levels higher than the national community college average.

Furthermore, underserved students have had a chance to meet their academic and career goals effectively through this program. At an institutional level, the program has provided a basis for planning and assessment, not only of students' progress and needs but also of institutional efficacy in achieving its goals.

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The reviewed projects portray how a truly philosophical perspective of student success can transform into a successful practice of impact to all constituencies in the educational community. All of them use technology to serve their students and all of them focus on the particular needs of their students and their institutions. This way, these three institutions have been able to strengthen their practices and solidify their capacities. But, in general, one particular feature characterized these recognized innovative practices: they have identified what the needs of their constituencies are and have acted upon them. Besides using effectively the tools that the modern world has given us, it is a matter of knowing how those tools can actually adapt to and serve our particular needs.

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About HETS

Meeting your needs…

- Identify, develop, and implement the right technology approach
- Be part of strategic alliances to acquire services or technologies
- Receive consulting services in Grant Writing
- Get access to funding sources for the acquisition of technologies and technology project development
- Participate in networking and showcasing events
- Get advising and training on uses and advantages of technology and technology effectiveness
- Learn from experts and innovative projects
- Identify training needs of faculty members and staff

The HISPANIC EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY SERVICES, formerly known as the Hispanic Educational Telecommunications System, is the first bilingual consortium dedicated to serving the higher education needs of the fast-growing Hispanic communities.

Starting in 1993 as a group of institutions interested in sharing courses at a distance, the HETS Consortium has evolved from the use of telecommunications into the asynchronous modes of anywhere-anytime learning, and the use of technology to reach greater collaboration among and within educational institutions.

- Partner with other educational institutions and corporations
- Participate in peer learning experiences
- Access online resources
- Focus on the Hispanic learner

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