

# CULTIVAMOS EXCELENCIA

Year 1 Grant Summary | UC Santa Cruz | Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) Grant | U.S. Department of Education

## Grant Overview

**Grant Type:** Title V, Part A\*

**Grant Cycle:** Oct. 2022 - Sept. 2027

**Grant Year 1:** Oct. 2022 - Sept. 2023

**Grant Funding Amount:** \$3,000,000

\* Title V, Part A Funding: Assist HSIs in expanding educational opportunities for and improving the attainment of Latino students. Grants also enable HSIs to expand and enhance their academic offerings, program quality, and institutional stability.

## Key Partners

- San Jose City College
- Cabrillo College
- Hartnell College
- Migration, Identity, and Education Lab
- Undergraduate Admissions
- Teaching and Learning Center
- Slug Orientation
- Educational Opportunity Programs (EOP)
- Services for Transfer & Re-entry Students (STARS)

## Grant Components

### Community College Partnership Program ✨

This initiative aims to build early relationships with students through mentorship and programming that will serve them prior to transfer, during their admission, and through their transition to UCSC.

CCPP consists of three components:

1. General counseling for prospective and admitted transfer students
2. The Transfer Scholars Pathways (TSP)
3. The Summer Transition Program (STP)

### Transfer Scholars Pathways (Pre-Transfer)

This is a year-long program serving local community college students through information workshops, events, and one-on-one mentorship from a current UCSC transfer student to receive direct guidance on goal setting, path exploration, and navigating the UC application process.

23 SJCC, Cabrillo, and Hartnell students interested in applying to UCSC have been served thus far

The Cultivamos Excelencia project will build a **transfer receptive culture** for Latinx and low-income community college students to **thrive in their transfer pathways** to the University of California, Santa Cruz, and beyond, opening opportunities to graduate studies.

UCSC, a national leader as a Hispanic-Serving Research Institution, seeks to create systemic change that will improve and streamline transfer pathways and the lives of our local community college students to address issues of inequities of transfer, graduation, and advancing to graduate studies rates.

### Institutional gaps addressed by the grant:

1. Transfer pipeline and enrollment of more Latinx transfers from the California Community College system.
2. Low retention and graduation rates of Latinx transfer students.
3. Lack of an intentional and integrated plan for Latinx transfer student success that bridges from community college to post-graduation.

### Grant goals to increase:

1. Latinx students' transfer rates by 10%
2. Latinx transfer students with intentions for graduate study by 3%
3. Latinx transfer students' sense of belonging by 5%
4. Latinx transfer students' graduation rates by 5%



### What students want from their experience with TSP:

I want to learn about... “[The] Transfer process and what do admin look for or want in my application. I loved Thomas’ input of him looking to my academics but also wanting to know me as a person. Much less stressful to know it’s ok to not be the perfect student.”

“While... here I would like to be able to participate in research especially as an undocumented student. I want... to do what any normal American college student experiences.”

## Summer Transition Program (Admitted Transfer Students)

This is a four-month commitment consisting of four events and one-on-one mentorship with a current UCSC student to receive direct guidance on acclimating to the quarter system and assistance with financial planning, navigating the campus, balancing family responsibilities, and making intentional connections with resources and opportunities.

Both TSP and STP provide a balance of intentional mentorship, counseling, and programming.

## Transfer Coherence

This initiative will guide academic departments in taking action to streamline transfer pathways by welcoming students and connecting them to research opportunities.

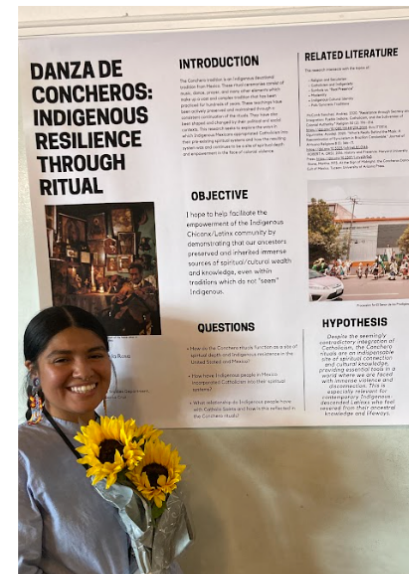
This year the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) has made a strong commitment to supporting Cultivamos Excelencia initiatives. With the firm TLC partnership, we are close to completing the development of the transfer awareness workshops to be delivered to faculty and departmental advising units in 2023-2024.

Additionally, cross-institutional transfer summits will begin in 2025.

## What students said were the most important things they learned through STP:

- “That transfer students, parent students, and older students are capable of doing all of this”
- “Asking and seeking help from others and taking advantage of campus resources”
- “How to deal with the confusion”

18 UCSC transfer students were served throughout Summer 2023



## Undergraduate Research and Graduate Pathways

The Research Scholars Program launched a pilot in Spring 2023 to expose transfer students to graduate pathways via research internships, mentoring, and assistance in navigating the graduate school application process.

In its first year of implementation the program provided students with up to \$2,000 in research internship compensation and 2 workshops on graduate school pathways and navigating research mentorship relationships.

20 UCSC transfer students were served throughout Spring 2023

## What students found valuable about their Spring research engagements:

“I think this program is great as a transfer student. It has been really hard getting university research internships but CE scholars was the bridge that enabled my success. Thank you!”

“Both the research and the mentorship experience during the spring quarter were incredible. “



**Contact Information: Vивиanna Alvarez, they, them pronouns**  
Cultivamos Excelencia Program Director | vilalvar@ucsc.edu  
hsi.ucsc.edu | 11.07.23