

CULTIVAMOS EXCELENCIA

Year 2 | 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 2: Oct. 2023 - Sept. 2024

Grant Funding Amount: \$2,999,941

* 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.

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.

Grant goals to increase:

1. Latinx students' transfer rates by 41%
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%

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 four components:

1. Advising for prospective and admitted transfers

As part of CCPP, staff and student leaders are available to provide prospective students and their families with general one-to-one advising and events to support navigating the process of transferring to UCSC. For example, during our Dia de la Familia event, prospective students and their families are able to visit UCSC, attend info sessions, and begin to build connections with other prospective transfer students. Upon admission to the university, students continue to receive support through one-to-one counseling and our Fall Early Move-in Orientation.

2. Transfer Scholars Pathways (Pre-Transfer)

This year the program served 177 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.



What students and families said were the most important things they learned at Dia de la Familia:

"That I am not alone and that there's plenty of opportunity at a UC and it's possible as a first generation low income learning disabled LGBTQIA Latina"

- Transfer Student, 2024

"That it's okay to fail because you will think about it and will keep trying and to fail early instead of failing late or asking questions and don't be shy"

- Family Member, 2024

TSP has served 200* SJCC, Cabrillo, and Hartnell students interested in applying to UCSC

3. Summer Transition Program (Admitted Transfer Students)

Over the course of four months, the program served 87 students via 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.



STP has served 105* UCSC incoming transfer students

"I think that if I wouldn't have done that program, I would have been super lost. I think that I would have maybe still been able to kind of like, you know, like graduate, like make it throughout the quarters. But it would have definitely been extremely more like heavy, like just like a heavier burden to carry..."
- STP participant, 2024

4. Transfer Champions: Staff & Faculty Professional Development

This is a program that works closely with UCSC staff across multiple departments and programs to foster community and collaboration with others invested in reimagining educational structures that have historically sustained racism, and actively working to create racially equity at UC Santa Cruz. As part of the program, UCSC staff gain tangible strategies for centering, serving, and supporting transfer students and create a project to implement in their individual department designed to improve outcomes for community college transfer students of color.

Transfer Coherence

This component partnered with academic departments to review qualitative and quantitative data to take action to increase transfer students success.

Departments served: 13*

Actions that were taken included developing a Transfer First-Year Experience course, launching fall faculty and new transfer student mixers, and completing an articulation analysis across all California Community College and departmental lower division courses.

Undergraduate Research and Graduate Pathways

The Research Scholars Program provides paid research internships and graduate pathways support to transfer students. This year we hired 5 graduate students into program coordination and mentor positions, and placed 12 transfer students into on-campus research internships.

Students received 1-on-1 mentoring from faculty and grad student mentors, assistance in navigating the graduate school application process, and up to \$4,000 in research internship compensation. The program culminated with a research symposium event in which students presented their research projects in front of an audience surrounded by their families and program staff.



32* UCSC transfer students served to date

*Denotes cumulative numbers from years 1-2 of the grant



Contact Information: Charis Herzon
HSI Initiatives Director | charish@ucsc.edu
hsi.ucsc.edu | 11.06.24

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