

## Abstract

The **Cultivamos Excelencia** HSI Title V part A Project will build a transfer receptive culture<sup>1</sup> for Hispanic/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. Community college is the most common starting institution for Latinx students beginning their higher education journey. Transfer pathways also offer students a chance to re-engage with higher education if they left due to personal, family, or career needs, which were amplified by the Covid-19 pandemic. UCSC, a national leader as a Hispanic-Serving Research Institution, seeks to create systemic change that will improve and streamline these pathways and the lives of our local community college Latinx, first generation and low-income students and address issues of inequities of transfer, graduation and advancing to graduate studies rates.

During the last year a team of UCSC faculty and staff researchers analyzed data related to transfer students of color outcomes, transfer literature, UCSC transfer student survey data, and transfer student best practices and convened a Transfer Champion workgroup consisting of faculty and staff to process the data results. The Transfer Champion workgroup made 11 recommendations, six of which are addressed via these three primary components with also respond to both competitive preference points:

1. Create a **Community College Partnership Program** that will focus on building relationships early-on with students via mentorship<sup>2</sup> and programing focusing prior to transfer, upon admissions, and through their transition to UCSC that cultivate a sense of belonging and personal relationships with staff and faculty at UCSC. Programs will focus on students in our local community colleges such as Cabrillo, Hartnell, San Jose City College, in programs such as Puente.
2. Deepen our understanding as faculty and staff of our transfer pathways and Latinx transfer students' lived experiences. Departments will take action to streamline transfer pathways to improve **Transfer Coherence** welcoming our transfer students and connecting them to the opportunities available at a research university.
3. Expanding the **graduate pathway** with research and graduate school pathway mentoring, support during the graduate and research internship application process, and connecting transfer students to paid research opportunities.

When taken together Cultivamos Excelencia will increase the number of newly enrolled Latinx transfer students by 10%; Increase the number of degrees awarded to Latinx transfer students by 5%; Increase Latinx transfer student's sense of belonging by 5%; Increase Latinx transfer student's intention to attend graduate school by 3%; Increase our capacity as practitioners to serve our transfer students of color.

**Funds requested:** UC Santa Cruz is requesting \$3 million over five years (10/1/2022-9/30/2027) to support the three Cultivamos Excelencia project components.

**Contact Person:** Principle Investigator (PI) Charis Herzon HSI, Initiatives Director ([charish@ucsc.edu](mailto:charish@ucsc.edu)), (831)-459-2986

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<sup>1</sup> Herrera, A., & Jain, D. (2013). Building a transfer-receptive culture at four-year institutions. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 2013(162), 51-59.

<sup>2</sup> Bettinger, Eric, and Rachel Baker. "The Effects of Student Coaching in College: An Evaluation of a Randomized Experiment in Student Mentoring. NBER Working Paper No. 16881." National Bureau of Economic Research (2011)