

CULTIVAMOS EXCELENCIA

Year 5 Grant Summary | UC Santa Cruz | Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) Grant | U.S. Department of Education

Grant Overview:

Grant Type: Title V, Part A*

Grant Active Dates: October 2015 – September 2020

Grant Year 5: October 2019 – September 2020

Grant Funding Amount: \$3,248,296

Focus Areas: Research Writing course, Transfer & Retention Counseling, Graduate Student Mentoring, Financial Literacy, Undergraduate Research Opportunities, SJCC/UCSC Faculty Professional Development.

Grant Components:

- **Transfer and Retention Rates through Advising and mentorship:** Develop professional development for SJCC advisors and mentors in UC curriculum and the transfer pipeline in order to provide case management-based academic guidance through the transferring process.
- **Family Engagement:** The incorporation of family in the academic journey of the student is crucial for culture, language, and identity preservation. Strengthening the student-family bond through community events such as Family Day, students and family learn how to navigate the transfer pipeline.
- **Undergraduate Research Opportunities:** Introducing SJCC students to undergraduate research at a research institution with a focus on serving low-income Latinx students.
- **Academic Confidence:** SJCC students are introduced to UC classes through Cross Enrollment Units thus dispelling the “I’m not UC material” myth.

Abstract

The principal goal of the Cultivamos Excelencia Project was to motivate and retain Latinx and other historically underserved students to complete a degree at a research university. By working together, San Jose City College (SJCC) and University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC) used a combination of tutoring, mentoring, research skills instruction, transfer advising and, perhaps most important, participation in undergraduate research experiences to encourage self-efficacy, skill development and motivation to complete their bachelor degrees with highly honed set of analytical and writing skills. By developing and delivering research methods courses for transfer credit, and summer undergraduate research experiences that would give students university credit for community college tuition, the project would give students, who might not think they can succeed at a research university, a head start at that university. The total amount awarded was \$3.25 million over a five-year period.

Goals

Deepening Academic Confidence

Undergraduate Research Opportunities

Family Engagement

Increasing Transfer & Retention Rates

Activities

Cross Enrollment

English 1A & 1C UCSC Graduate Mentors

Family Day/ Dia de la Familia

Pre and Post Transfer Advising

* 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.

GRANT COMPONENTS

Student Enrollment

Student-level impact in Cultivamos Excelencia can be seen in the 100% increase in transfers from SJCC, from nine in Fall 2015 (55% Latinx) to a yearly average of 18 from 2016-2020. The impact of increased transitional support for newly admitted students resulted in retention during the critical time of submitting their Statement of Intent to Register (SIR) to enrolling in their first quarter in Fall from 63% in Fall 2014 to 88% in Fall 2020. While admission and enrollment rates have increased throughout the grant, future initiatives should focus on understanding why admitted students are not choosing UC Santa Cruz.

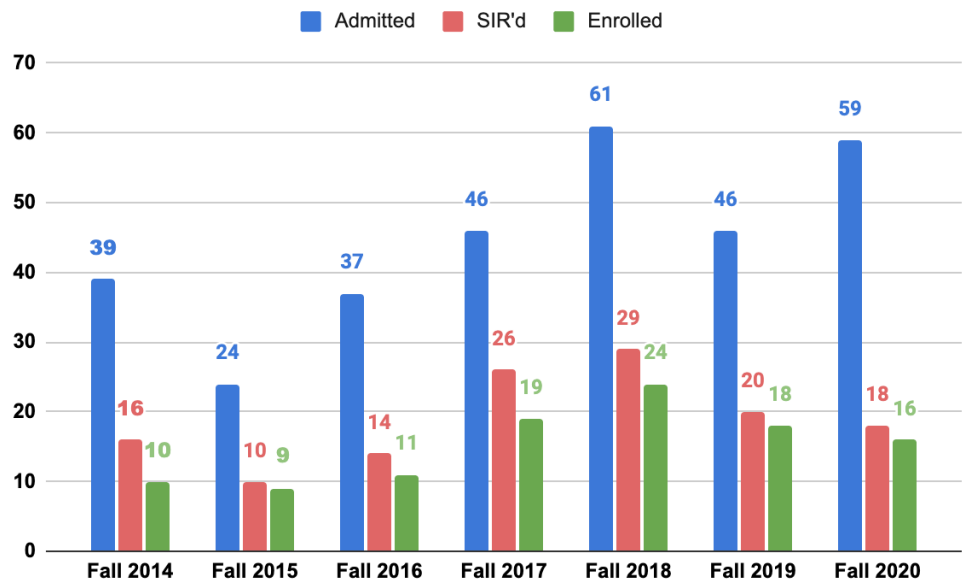


Figure 1. The SJCC-UCSC transfer rate progression and demographic shift since Cultivamos Excelencia intervention in Fall 2015.

Family Day/ Dia de la Familia

Attendees served: 600*

Promotes the incorporation of family in the student's academic journey as a tool to **preserve cultural values and include families in the transfer process.**

The goals of the program are:

- Increase transfer knowledge.
- Increase understanding of financial resources at the university.
- Meaningful engagement of bilingual, immigrant, first-generation and intergenerational family units through conversations in panels and advising sessions.

Cross-Campus Counseling & Mentoring

Students served: 235*

The Cultivamos Excelencia Counselor provides holistic transfer advising to SJCC and UC Santa Cruz UCSC. Serving as a bridge, and the counselor spends time each week at both campuses. Peer mentors who have successfully transferred, also return to the SJCC Transfer Center to provide guidance to prospective transfers.

The Summer Transition Program provides summer workshops about how to successfully transfer to UCSC at a critical moment when many students lack financial information, desperately need housing support, and need assistance in navigating the complex transition from community college to a four-year university.

Cross - Enrollment Classes

Students served: 70*

Provides early exposure to undergraduate research, navigating the UC quarter system and academic expectations (course rigor). The cross enrollment course fosters **SJCC students' academic confidence**, preparation with research and increases students' interest to transfer to a UC.



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*Denotes cumulative numbers from years 1-5 of the grant