

HIGHER EDUCATION AND LATINO PARENTS:  
AN EXPLORATION OF KNOWLEDGE GAPS

by

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## ABSTRACT

There has been extensive research on the positive impact family involvement has on student outcomes in education. Despite this positive correlation, many Latino parents are not involved in their children's educational journey. This is particularly true as they transition from high school to college. The lack of involvement is due to various reasons, including language barriers, work and family obligations, and the lack of knowledge of educational systems. This phenomenological study explores knowledge gaps Latino parents may have regarding the college process from beginning to end in the Greater Houston region. The study describes lived experiences of Latino parents with children who have attended or are attending college. It also shares how college administrators in the area are engaging Latino parents at their college. A bilingual guide was created about the college process through information gathered in interviews conducted with both parents and college administrators. This guide will serve as a resource for parents, colleges, and others who engage with Latino families.

**KEY WORDS:** Latinos, Parent Involvement, Knowledge Gaps, College Process

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Carlos and Martha, and my husband, Gabriel, for their unconditional love and support during this journey.

I am truly thankful to my parents for their sacrifices. By bringing my brothers and me to this country at an early age, they were able to provide a brighter future for us all. It is truly because of them that I am here today. Thank you, Mom and Dad, for working so hard and being such amazing role models. You instilled the love of education from a very young age, which has transformed my life. Mom and Dad, you have been my biggest driver on this journey.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO LATINOS AND THE UNIQUE OBSTACLES THEY FACE

### INTRODUCTION

The Hispanic American population surpassed 60 million in 2019. In fact, between 2010 and 2019, the population increased from 16% to 18%, becoming one of the youngest ethnic groups in the United States (Noe-Bustamante et al., 2020). It is estimated that by 2050, Latinos will make up 30% of the American population (Camacho Liu, 2011). This increase has brought about record numbers of Latinos to college. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, Latino enrollment rose from 3.17 million in 2016 to 3.27 million in 2017 (Quintana, 2020). This shows the largest percentage increase of any racial group during this period (Quintana, 2020). In fact, in 2019, Latino students set a new high of 3.8 million students enrolled at a postsecondary institution (Mora, 2022). However, Ibarra (2021) states that enrollment has declined despite this increasing trajectory for Hispanic students. In 2021 it decreased by 13.7%.

Understanding the importance of family involvement in the Latino community is key to continue improving retention and graduation rates among Latino students. However, many Latino parents are not involved in their children's educational journey despite the vast amount of research that shows its positive benefits. The lack of involvement can be due to many factors. They can include a lack of knowledge of educational systems, language barriers, and family and work obligations. This chapter will provide a high-level overview of the unique obstacles faced by Latinos and further delve into understanding the lack of parental involvement by many Latino parents.

## OBSTACLES IN RETENTION AND COMPLETION RATES

Despite more Hispanics attending college, retention and completion rates among these students have not significantly improved. In 2012, “only 35.7% of Hispanic students and 27.5% of black students graduated from a two-year institution within six years” (Smith, 2019, para. 4). Unfortunately, Latino persistence and retention rates are steadily declining compared to their Asian, Caucasian, and African American counterparts. According to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (2021), Latino students had “a 3.2 pp [percentage points] drop in their persistence rate while White, Asian, and Black students’ rates all declined by less than half of that” (p. 3).

Lackluster persistence and completion rates in this demographic can be attributed to equity gaps among different ethnic groups. *Excelencia* in Education found that 24% of Latino adults (25 and over) in the United States hold an associate degree or higher (*Excelencia* in Education, 2020). While this represents a significant increase from the previous decade, an estimated 46% of White adults hold a college degree (*Excelencia* in Education, 2020). This is nearly double the attainment of Latinos. Hispanics make up approximately 50% of first-year college dropouts (Hood, 2010), and various factors can contribute to this group’s lower retention and completion rates.

## IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENTAL CLASSES

A large percentage of Hispanic students are ill-prepared for college and identified for remedial courses designed to prepare students for college-level curricula. It is estimated that “almost five million of these students are enrolled in one remedial course that often does not offer credits toward a degree” (Rao, 2004, p. 10). According to the Community College Research Center (2016), from 2013 to 2014, public two-year colleges reported 75% of Hispanics enrolled

in remedial courses compared to 78% of Black students and 64% of White students. Other studies show that only 1 in 10 students who take at least one developmental class will graduate as they get discouraged and decide to drop out (Jones, 2015). This discouragement can come from some students spending years in remedial courses. Hanford (2016) explains that these classes can also contribute to an increased financial load that can directly impact Hispanic families. Moreover, students enrolled in remedial math classes “fail to even enroll in the college-level gateway course within two academic years” (Jones, 2015, p. 26).

#### MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

Other academic issues can also discourage Hispanic students from continuing their education. For example, many students come from less rigorous high schools, which can leave them ill-equipped for college-level coursework. These students are more likely to enroll in underfunded schools with large class sizes that can impact the quality of education. This disparity in the quality of education can make it increasingly difficult for these students to enroll in advanced coursework opportunities early on. A report published by The Education Trust (2020) found these missed opportunities along the educational spectrum.

- *Elementary school:* Latino students represent 28% of elementary school enrollment but only 18% of students in gifted and talented programs.
- *Middle school:* Both Latino and Black students are not adequately enrolled in 8th-grade algebra. In particular, Latinos are 25% of the eighth-grade population, and only 18% enroll in college-level algebra courses.
- *High school:* Latino and Black students have low enrollment in Advanced Placement (AP) classes. Latinos represent approximately 25% of the high school population, and only 21% are enrolled in AP courses.

## KNOWLEDGE DEFICITS IN EDUCATION

Schneider et al. (2006) discuss how Hispanics' "initial disadvantages often stem from parents' immigrant and socioeconomic status and their lack of knowledge about the U.S. education system" (p. 179). To complicate this matter, many foreign-born parents come from countries where access to education continues to be a struggle. Garcia da Rosa et al. (2015) state that although access to secondary education has expanded in the last decade, Latin American countries "still face high dropout and repetition rates which, in turn, slow down the rate at which young students complete this cycle" (p. 9).

### *Lack of Literacy*

Latinos' disadvantage can be augmented by a lack of literacy in ages 3-5 due to many Hispanic parents failing to read to their children (Schneider et al., 2006). Despite evidence showing their benefits, Schneider et al. (2006) found that Hispanic children are less likely to enroll in preschool programs. A large body of research has found that children who attend preschool are more likely to have persistent gains on tests and increased grade promotion (Ansari et al., 2017; Ansari & Winsler, 2016; Barnett & Camilli, 2002). Currie and Thomas (1996) add that early schooling can help Hispanic children learn English and help reinforce the importance of education.

### *Spanish in the Home*

Parents who speak only Spanish in the home can have a detrimental influence. Students whose parents speak only Spanish may begin elementary school behind their peers in language proficiency. It was also found that "Hispanic children whose parents do not speak English at home were the least likely to have passing reading proficiency scores across all tasks" (Schneider

et al., 2006, p. 188). For example, Mexican Americans achieve the lowest educational attainment rates (Schneider et al., 2006).

#### ABSENCE OF FAMILY INVOLVEMENT AND ITS CAUSES

Latino students can struggle to graduate from higher education institutions due to many factors. One factor is the absence of parental involvement in their child's educational process. Harris and Goodall (2007) described parental involvement as multifaceted in nature and characterized by various behaviors and parenting practices. Regarding education, these behaviors include helping their children with homework assignments, offering words of encouragement / moral support, valuing education, attending meetings, and having a physical presence at school. Young et al. (2013) explained how parental involvement can boost a child's perceived level of competence and autonomy as well as a sense of security. Parental involvement has been associated with increased academic achievement (Mandara, 2006; Toldson, 2008). Rumberger (1995) found that parental involvement is key to student success as students with involved parents receive higher test scores and are more likely to graduate.

This claim is substantiated by Brooks' (2019) research from the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education. This research found that the most accurate predictor of student achievement while in school is the extent of familial involvement in their education (Brooks, 2019). Creating a home environment that encourages learning, establishes routine, and communicates reasonable expectations toward academic achievement is needed to increase success throughout education, including college.

Many Latino parents are absent from their children's educational journey. This is particularly true as their children progress through to college. The National Research Center on



Hispanic Children and Families conducted research and found obstacles negatively impacting Latino parent involvement (Wildsmith et al., 2018). The findings include the following:

- A large percentage of low-income parents have jobs that present challenges in raising children. These challenges include low monthly earnings, irregular or nonstandard work schedules, and limited access to benefits. The lack of benefits can consist of an absence of employer-sponsored health insurance and can put stress on parents when unforeseen health issues arise. Irregular work schedules due to parents with multiple jobs. With one in five Latino fathers working more than 40 hours, time spent with children is greatly reduced and limits the establishment of family routines. This is important as spending time together as a family has been linked to positive outcomes for children (Fiese & Schwartz, 2008).
- Parental psychosocial well-being and family dynamics also come into play when parents face stressful work conditions, dangerous jobs, and dynamic work schedules. These compounding factors can coalesce into stressful home environments, which can lead to children receiving lower grades than their peers.

#### LANGUAGE BARRIERS

Language barriers can prevent parents from engaging in their children's education. English is the primary language spoken in U.S. higher education institutions, and the majority of information is only available in this language. Many colleges have done a poor job of creating bilingual resource websites. Additionally, parental engagement is not a priority, and only certain colleges in the nation have workshops, events, and other activities centered around this engagement.

## LACK OF FORMAL EDUCATION

A large percentage of Latino parents lack formal education. According to data from the U.S. Census in 2015, of Hispanics between the ages of 35 to 44, only 36.3% held a bachelor's degree or higher, and only 13.8% acquired an advanced degree (Ryan & Bauman, 2016). Hispanics between 45 and 64 had lower degree attainments; 32% had a bachelor's or higher, and 12.1% held advanced degrees (Ryan & Bauman, 2016). In 2020, only 270 Hispanics (of any race) earned a doctorate (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020b). Because of this low formal education attainment, these parents can have difficulty understanding the organizational systems that exist in the United States. As a result, many parents are disconnected from their children's education.

## EXPERIENCES OF THE AUTHOR OF THIS STUDY

Self-reflection on the researcher's part is vital. This is an integral part of the validation process in a qualitative study. Self-reflection requires the examination of values, beliefs, and personal assumptions on the part of the researcher. Ortlipp (2008) adds that self-reflection or "reflexivity" enhances the rigor and transparency of the research.

This study has a special meaning for the researcher. The researcher is a first-generation student brought to the United States by immigrant parents when she was very young. Her father was only able to complete the second grade and dropped out of school to work and help his family. The researcher's mother completed only elementary school due to the need to help with the household and take care of siblings. As a result, both parents lacked an understanding of the educational system in their home country, let alone the complexities of the one in the U.S.

The researcher's parents both believed in the power of education and wanted a better future for their children. They were not very involved in her educational journey due to their lack of understanding of the process, nor did the researcher know how to involve them.

Unfortunately, the researcher's story is familiar to many Latino children whose parents wanted to participate in the process but lacked understanding. The researcher believes in the power of sharing their stories through this phenomenological study. For this reason, she developed a bilingual guide in the hope that she can, in some way, help these parents and others better understand the collegiate process.

## **STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Familial involvement plays a significant role in a student's educational journey. Studies have shown that family involvement increases graduation rates in high school and expands students' horizons toward college enrollment (Covarrubias et al., 2020). Moreover, students whose parents hold higher expectations for their children achieve higher grades and scores on standardized tests and persist longer in school than those whose parents have relatively low expectations (Yamamoto & Holloway, 2010). Latino parents are often very interested in their children's education but lack knowledge about the college process and available options for their students. This is primarily due to a lack of higher educational attainment in their background, leading to absent familiarity with educational systems. Furthermore, many parents are apprehensive about their involvement because they do not understand English. These compounding factors influence academic outcomes for their children. In Hispanic cultures, families are the most important influence in a child's life, both today and throughout history (Salinas, 2013). Because of this, it is imperative colleges understand how to better support Latino parents in understanding systems of higher education. This will encourage Latino parents to become more involved and supportive in their children's educational journey.

## **GOALS OF THIS STUDY**

This research study has two primary goals. The primary goals of this study are:

1. Share the stories of Latino parents through a phenomenological study.
2. Identify knowledge gaps parents may have about college and develop tools that can serve as guidance.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research questions will guide the study toward achieving its intended purpose. Three questions were selected to guide the study toward achieving the intended goals:

1. In what ways are community colleges currently helping Latino parents understand the college experience from entry to completion?
  - a. What are community colleges currently doing to engage Latino parents in the college process?
  - b. What tools/initiatives have been successful?
2. What prevents Latino parents from becoming involved in their children's college journey?
3. What tools/knowledge/information can help Latino parents better understand the college experience and processes?

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study utilized a phenomenological approach, as it seeks to find common meaning from various individuals through lived experiences of a phenomenon. The research explores Latino parents' level of understanding of the collegiate process from entry to completion and what colleges are currently implementing to engage them. A bilingual guide was created to help

more Latino parents understand college through information gathered by conducting a set of interviews.

The participants in this study met the following criteria:

*Selection Criteria for Parents – Stage 1*

1. Latino/Hispanic origin
2. Have children who are attending or have attended college
3. Live in Houston or surrounding areas

*Selection Criteria for College Administrators – Stage 2*

1. College administrators involved in college admissions/recruitment
2. Works in a community college located in Houston and surrounding areas

## **LIMITATIONS/DELIMITATIONS**

This study is confined to interviewing six Latino parents and two college administrators. This represents a very small percentage of the Latino parent population in the greater Houston area. Additionally, the study is limited by the experiences of parents living in the greater Houston, Texas, area and not in other cities or states in the nation. Therefore, it is impossible to identify all the knowledge gaps other parents may have about the collegiate process. Additionally, the researcher is unaware of all initiatives in other colleges to engage Latino parents.

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

*Hispanic or Latino:* A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020a).

*Hispanic* and *Latino* will be used interchangeably in this study.

*Familia*: Usually goes beyond the nuclear family. The Hispanic “family unit” includes not only parents and children but also extended family (Clutter & Nieto, 2000).

*Immigrant*: A foreign-born individual living in the United States.

*Community colleges*: As defined by the Department of Homeland Security (2012), a community college is a two-year institution that provides affordable education and can be a pathway to a four-year institution. *Community colleges* and *colleges* will be used interchangeably in this study.

## **CONCLUSION**

Research has continued to show that familial involvement is key to student success in education. Moreover, it is clear that a large percentage of Latino parents are not involved in their children’s educational journey due to a variety of factors. These can include language barriers, the need to work multiple jobs, and knowledge deficits in the collegiate process. These can have a long-term impact on the success their children can have in higher education. This study seeks to understand the knowledge gaps using a qualitative approach. The interviews allowed the researcher to create a bilingual guide describing various topics related to college. This product aims to help parents better understand college by narrowing deficits in knowledge and encouraging increased parental involvement. The goal is for more colleges to find ways to engage these parents and make them feel like they are part of the process.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### **INTRODUCTION: SITUATING THE STUDY**

Parental involvement plays a significant role in the educational outcomes of children. Despite this, many Latino parents are not involved. Decreased involvement can be attributed to many factors. Schneider (2006) shows that the confluence of limited English proficiency, low educational attainment, immigration status, and other economic factors have hindered many Latino parents from engaging in their children's education. Years of research have shown when parents are involved in their children's education, they earn higher grades/scores on tests, attend school more regularly, and complete more homework (Funkhouser et al., 1997, para. 1). In addition, their research shows children have more positive attitudes/ behaviors, graduate from high school at higher rates, and are more likely to enroll in higher education than students with less parental involvement.

This chapter will provide an overview of research showing the effect of parental involvement on a child's educational attainment. First, it will discuss the importance of family in Hispanic/Latino culture and its importance in influencing decisions made by Latino children. It will also encompass a general overview of the importance parental involvement can have in education. It will then explain Latino parents' expectations for their children and explore how a lack of knowledge about the value of education, bias and discrimination, and language barriers can impede their involvement. The chapter concludes by addressing parental expectations and

their impacts on student success and discusses outreach methods community colleges can employ to help these parents.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY IN THE HISPANIC/LATINO CULTURE**

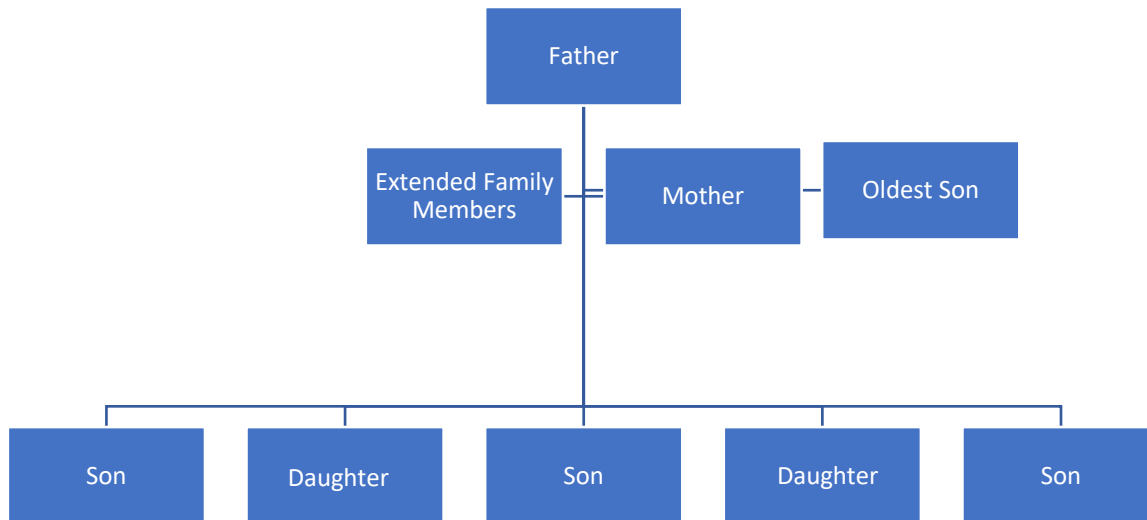
Latinos place a strong emphasis on their families. Latino families are tightly knit and regarded as the most important social unit in Hispanic culture. Salinas (2013) states that family, or “la Familia,” is considered paramount and is the most important factor influencing the lives of Hispanics both today and throughout history. La Familia includes not only immediate family but also grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, and close friends. Figure 1 depicts the traditional Hispanic family structure and the hierarchy of familial relationships. According to Nicoletti (2010), relationships in Hispanic culture are predicated by a definite authority structure of gender, age, and role. This authority structure is as follows:

- Father over family
- Men over women
- Elder over younger.

Haynes and Zacarian (2010), Leeder (2004), and Zambrana (1995) have found Hispanics to be collectivist, meaning family always comes first above the individual. Carteret (2011) explains that la Familia is viewed as a major source of one’s identity and protection against the hardships of life in a collectivist society. Moreover, Carteret states family members should first approve any decisions an individual will make. Nicoletti (2010) adds that Latino children see themselves as a representation of their family to outside contacts. Therefore, they are careful not to dishonor their family in any way. Trust outside of the family is difficult to garner, and an outsider must first start by building relationships within the family as a whole.



**Figure 1. Traditional Hispanic Family Structure by Nicoletti (2010)**



### **THE IMPORTANCE OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION**

Starting in the 1960s, there was a federal push toward considering families' critical impact on a child's success. Since then, considerable research has shown parental involvement at an early age greatly impacts a child's academic achievement. Epstein's (1989) research shows that differences in a child's motivation and learning are partly influenced by the degree to which school and home environments overlap. She created a model of educational socialization (TARGET Structures) where she identifies six interrelated home environment structures that correlate to academic achievement. These six structures include the following.

1. *Tasks*: Children are involved in a variety of activities at home.
2. *Authority Structure*: The degree to which children participate in family decision-making and their responsibilities.
3. *Reward Structure*: The ways parents recognize children's advances in learning.

4. *Grouping Structure*: The ways parents influence children's interaction with family members and others.
5. *Evaluation Structure*: The ways in which parents evaluate performance.
6. *Time Structure*: The ways in which parents manage schoolwork and other enrichment activities for their children.

Ziegler (1987), Eagle (1989), and Henderson and Berla (1994) found that parental involvement is a positive influence on a child's academic achievement. Similarly, Funkhouser et al. (1997) correlated parental involvement with higher test scores and grades. They also found that direct parental involvement leads to improved attitudes/behavior in school, reduced dropout rates, and correlates with a higher percentage of students attending college.

Pomerantz et al. (2007) found that early parental involvement with elementary and secondary schools plays a critical role in students' academics. Recent research by Caspe et al. (2007) and Kreider et al. (2007) shows when parents are nurturing and supportive of their children's educational journey, they experience growth in self-esteem, grade point averages, cognition, and social competence. Furthermore, parental involvement not only provides a positive impact on the student but also on the parent. Niehaus and Adelson (2014) found when parents are involved, they develop a better understanding and knowledge of the different policies at their children's schools. This increased knowledge can facilitate the students' progress in their education.

Research shows parents have increased involvement during elementary school. Spera (2005) states that even though parents become less engaged during middle and high school, setting high expectations and ensuring their children's homework is completed is vital to their success. Research by Kreider and Suizzo (2009) found parental involvement in middle and high

school increases the possibility of children attending a postsecondary institution. Overall, abundant research illustrates the positive impact parental involvement can have on student success.

## **LATINO PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND THE CHALLENGES FACED**

Research by Olive (2010) shows a high percentage of Latinos lack participation in the educational system throughout all levels. This is partly due to a variety of factors. These include parents' limited knowledge about higher education, limited resources, and lack of motivation towards their children to attend postsecondary education. Auerbach (2004) found that, unlike the Latino community, college-educated parents from higher socioeconomic status were more actively involved in the educational pathways of their children from grade school and on. This can be due to many Latino parents lacking any formal education, limiting their potential to offer supportive services to their children. Additionally, Hobbs (2000) explains volunteering/participating in outside activities is seen as activities only carried out by the wealthy in many Latin American countries.

Latino communities have been disproportionately impacted by the lack of parental access to educational resources compared to parents of affluent middle-class communities. For example, White parents have the financial means to support homeschooling and/or tutors for their children. Research by Cohen et al. (1982) and Wasik and Slavin (1993) have found tutoring improves students' academic achievement. Access to financial resources has been cited in the literature as a determining factor influencing collegiate persistence and graduation rates in Hispanics (Banks & Dohy, 2019; Hernandez & Lopez, 2004; Nora, 1990). This disparity is shown by Kochhar's (2019) research showing the 2013 median income for Hispanic workers in the United States as approximately \$26,400. This figure increased to only \$30,000 in 2017. In contrast, the White

median household income was \$68,145, as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2017 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). Covarrubias et al. (2020) share that most Latino parents have lower-paying jobs than other ethnic groups.

Auerbach's (2004) research details how Latino parents who lack comprehensive educational experience have inadequate social networks and resources in Spanish that may help guide their children in these communities. He adds that cultural capital, which includes the knowledge, practices, and behaviors accumulated from being involved in particular cultural settings, is fundamental in impacting and promoting desired ideas and practices. In this regard, parents play critical roles in shaping and influencing their children's self-perception. According to Behnke et al. (2004), the social learning theory supports observational learning, whereby people develop behaviors and traits through observation. Therefore, Latino youth are more likely to make decisions and be influenced by their parents' beliefs and perceptions about higher education. If their parents show little interest towards college education and are not involved in the educational process, children will observe and pursue the same path. Parents are also seen as social agents shaping and impacting their children's lives. Covarrubias et al. (2020) found that young Latinos are likely to interpret and make sense of their daily life based on the experiences and involvement they have with their parents.

Research has shown another obstacle Latino parents face is their lack of participation in school-related activities. Covarrubias et al. (2020) found that many Latino parents lack essential supportive behaviors, which can include attending parent-teacher conferences. They also rarely volunteer in school activities due to a large percentage working multiple jobs to support their families. A study conducted by Wildsmith et al. (2018) found many low-income parents hold multiple positions. One in five Latino fathers works more than 40 hours, reducing their

autonomy to attend school events, such as parent conferences and student programs. Covarrubias et al. found this creates an adverse environment for supporting students' higher education endeavors.

## **LATINOS IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

Latinos are part of the largest minority group in America. According to the Pew Research Institute, in 2019, Hispanics attained a record 60.6 million people in the United States (Noe-Bustamante et al., 2020). As a result, more Latino children are attending college than ever before, but many Latinos continue to struggle with accessing essential services like education. According to Araque et al. (2017), Latinos in the United States are often depicted in popular culture with low college enrollment and high dropout rates. Unfortunately, this representation is also found in the research. Community data by Noe-Bustamante (2020) shows approximately 26% of Hispanics ages 25 and older held a bachelor's degree or better in 2018. This percentage is lower than other groups, including Caucasians, who report 46% completion rates. The U.S. Census Bureau (2020b) reported in 2020 that a mere 270 Hispanics (of any race) obtained a doctoral degree.

Another contributing factor demonstrating unequal access to college education is the cost of admission. This community is disproportionately impacted by this rising cost and reductions in grant-based aid. According to data presented by the Postsecondary National Policy Institute (2020), Latino students received the lowest average federal assistance of \$10,256. In comparison, Asians received the highest assistance at \$13,016. Complicating the matter is many students do not complete their requests for financial aid. Hanson (2021) reports that in an academic year, more than two billion dollars in federal student grants go unclaimed by students. Auerbach (2004) also states that a lack of institutional support has affected the Latino community. This

includes inadequate guidance counselors/advisors, which increases the burden of college planning and adversely affects Latino students and their families.

### **LATINO PARENTS LACK OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE VALUE OF EDUCATION**

Many first-generation immigrants lack an understanding of the American educational system, and Latino parents are no exception. Auerbach (2004) found that the absence of essential information in Spanish and support for Latino parents facilitates uncertainty in higher education. Schneider et al. (2006) found this lack of knowledge among parents from disadvantaged communities, including Latinos, has created the perception of higher education being too expensive. This perception has likely discouraged parents from encouraging their children to enroll in these institutions. Instead, many Latino parents encourage their children to work and care for the family.

In addition, research done by Covarrubias et al. (2020) found that programs offered at higher education institutions do not reach Latino families in culturally meaningful ways. This can negatively impact the effectiveness of educational promotion strategies. Furthermore, this lack of knowledge creates a disconnect between the concept of the American Dream and the value education can offer in reaching this goal.

### **THE DISCONNECT BETWEEN THE AMERICAN DREAM AND THE VALUE OF EDUCATION**

The American Dream is one that many Latinos hold. Latino parents want a better future for their children. This is particularly true for those whose native countries have systemic problems with poverty, government abuse, corruption, and crime. Immerwahr (2000) states that a large percentage of minority communities are focused on achieving the American dream, but there appears to be a disconnect on ways to accomplish this goal. According to Hill and Torres

(2010), the American dream is perceived as the promise individuals can achieve prosperity through courage, hard work, and determination. Because of this, many Latino immigrants believe any form of employment in the U.S. can help them achieve this dream. Statistics, however, show this not to be the case.

Research data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (Torpey, 2021) shows individuals with higher levels of education report higher salaries and lower unemployment rates than those with lower educational attainment. For example, someone with an associate degree can make approximately \$938 weekly, while those with only a high school diploma make roughly \$781 (Torpey, 2021). This disparity highlights why youth from disadvantaged communities need access to quality education to help achieve their dreams of social, health, and financial prosperity. Behnke et al. (2004) add quality education is critical in ensuring access to better opportunities so disadvantaged youth can have equity of employment post-graduation. Latino families should hold strong beliefs that higher education can offer upward mobility in American society.

Unfortunately, many parents in Latino communities do not know the benefits their children may have through accessing and completing higher education. Despite this, many Latino families consider their situation in America to be much more favorable than that of their home countries. Compared to their native countries, American employment offers much better wages than what they are accustomed to. According to Statista (2021), the average monthly net salary for Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Colombia, and Nicaragua is as follows:

- Mexico: \$457 (U.S. dollars)
- Honduras: \$469 (U.S. dollars)
- Guatemala: \$570 (U.S. dollars)

- El Salvador \$375 (U.S. dollars)
- Colombia: \$310 (U.S. dollars)
- Nicaragua: \$297 (U.S. dollars)

These amounts are much lower than the average income of \$5,488 per month in the United States, as reported by World Data (2015). Therefore, Latinos can feel a false sense of security due to their increased newfound income. Despite this belief, these new wages are not enough to keep them away from lower socioeconomic status. This comfort can make it difficult to compete with other Americans with higher levels of education (Hill & Torres, 2010).

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015), in 2014, approximately 27.3% of Hispanics worked in construction, followed by agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting.

Hispanics had the lowest share of employment in professional and business services (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). Moreover, Tinkler (2002) states Latinos make up an astounding two-thirds of the country's lowest-income population. Therefore, Latino parents must impart the importance of higher education to their children to gain financial stability.

## **BIAS AND DISCRIMINATION FACED BY LATINOS**

Societal challenges can make imparting the message of the importance of higher education difficult in Latino communities. Ortiz and Telles (2012) state that minority communities face bias and discrimination personally and in the classroom. Research by Schneider et al. (2006) found stereotyping in how Hispanic students were taught due to low expectations. This led to disengagement and was further compounded by the inability of teachers to form strong attachments with their students.

A Pew Research Center survey conducted by Krogstad and Lopez (2016) found approximately 52% of Hispanics in the U.S. experienced discrimination or unfair treatment due



to their race and/or ethnicity. This survey was conducted between February 29 and May 8, 2016, and included 3,796 participants. Furthermore, a survey conducted on behalf of the National Public Radio, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health found that Latinos without college degrees experienced discrimination. These included slurs, offensive comments, and/or harassment and threats. The survey also revealed three in ten Latinos reported discrimination in the workplace and when attempting to rent or buy a house. These incidents can make it challenging for parents to trust entities such as higher education institutions. Without trust, parents can have a negative outlook on educational institutions.

Hill and Torres (2010) further add that a parents' negative outlook on educational institutions may cause low expectations for their children. This significantly impacts students from disadvantaged communities. This is particularly evident in Latinos, where high percentages of students enroll in developmental courses upon college entry. According to the Center for the Analysis of Postsecondary Readiness (n.d.), community colleges report that 75% of Hispanic students enroll in these remedial classes.

Aside from these detrimental factors, Latino parents are likely to not fully understand the cultural protocols between themselves and the school administration. Yamamoto and Holloway (2010) found parents can feel like a third party when their efforts to seek information are thwarted. Furthermore, Latino parents can feel rejected by schools, further exacerbating low expectations for their children. Fine's (2014) research found that low-income Latino families view the educational system as nonresponsive and impersonal to their concerns.

## **THE IMPACT OF LANGUAGE BARRIERS**

According to Walker et al. (2011), educational gaps between Latino students and other minorities can be attributed to many compounding factors. One of the most important is

language barriers. Many first-generation parents are unfamiliar with English, which is commonly used in educational institutions. The majority of Latinos originate from Latin American countries, including Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, and others, where English is not widely spoken. These Spanish-speaking parents will struggle to engage in processes they do not fully understand and may feel like outsiders.

Latino parents can feel intimidated or threatened by the professional language used in academia. LaRocque et al. (2011) emphasize language used across different education levels may appear academic, scientific, and even impersonal. LeFevre and Shaw (2012) add these perceived complexities can cause parents to withdraw from fully participating in their children's educational process due to a lack of understanding. This can often be perceived as a lack of willingness to participate or care. LaRocque et al. found higher learning institutions can institute approaches and strategies to help improve communication with Latinos. For example, schools can ensure that essential communications, such as newsletters and videos, are properly translated to match the parent's primary language. This will ensure Latino parents are able to understand the subject matter and become more vested in their children's college education.

Becerra (2010) believes legislators also play a role in advocating for effective policies and actions to break down these language barriers. They can determine the appropriate steps needed to ensure parents from minority communities, including Latinos, are fully involved in the higher education process. This can be accomplished by implementing or expanding current programs that have been effective in outreach and engagement in Latino communities. Becerra highlights that the College Assistance Migrant Program, Engaging Latino Communities for Education, and the Hispanic Mother-Daughter Program are successful programs used in the past and which legislators should advocate for. For example, the College Assistance Migrant Program

assists farmworkers and their children enroll in their first year of undergraduate studies by helping with funds.

LaRocque et al. (2011) indicate this can be made possible by promoting diversity and integrating Spanish into essential processes. These fundamental changes can lead to increased support for Latino children and encourage parental motivation toward the pursuit of higher education. For example, multilingual processes can be implemented in colleges and universities where language barriers are widespread through the provision of materials in Spanish. While parents from different communities are more involved in their children's educational process, there are group differences. Fan et al. (2011) found that Latino parents are less likely to engage in topics addressing education-related issues affecting their children due to language barriers and the lack of understanding of educational systems in the United States.

Furthermore, challenges in communication can make it difficult for Latino parents to discuss education-related topics with their children, reducing parental participation in their schools. According to research by Fan et al. (2011), when Latino parents feel excluded from the educational process, they can start lacking motivation leading to lowered expectations and harming the learners' academic performance. This suggests parental language barriers can ultimately affect their children.

Some Latino children solely speak Spanish at home, which can hinder success in school. Collier's (1989) research found the highest scores on college entrance exams were obtained by students whose primary language development was uninterrupted by learning a second language. Garcia and Jensen (2009) found that Latino children enter American school systems with a large variance in development and language use. LeFevre and Shaw (2012) add that these barriers can challenge Latino students to advance to higher education. The culmination of these barriers can

negatively impact many Latinos, placing them behind their peers and making it difficult to grasp concepts in school.

## **CONFLICTING EXPECTATIONS FOR LATINO CHILDREN**

Research shows a divide in expectations for children based on how knowledgeable parents are about the educational process. For example, Latino parents hold high expectations for male children. They expect them to become financially successful and support the family. Auerbach (2004) states Latinos hold the family unit in the highest regard, and males are expected to care for it. This external pressure can cause difficulty for male Latino children to pursue higher education and cause them to drop out and seek employment. While this may seem counterintuitive, the immediate need to support the family ultimately overrides the longer-term aspirations higher education may bring in the future. This is further substantiated by the Pew Research Center, which conducted a survey where they randomly selected a nationally representative sample of Hispanics between the ages of 16 to 25 (Lopez, 2009). The survey found that nearly 74% of 16 to 25-year-old Latino respondents had to cut short their education after high school in order to support their families. Nuñez et al. (1998) found this issue to be highest among Latino children whose parents did not attend college. The Pew Research Center also noted that 66% of Hispanics employed or entering the military post-high school cited the need to financially support their families as the primary cause for not enrolling in college (Krogstad & López, 2016). In contrast, only 39% of White students reported this cause.

Culture is another facet that plays a key role in expectations. In Hispanic culture, men and women are often seen holding different roles. The Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare reports that Hispanic males are considered the head of households and, for the most part, the breadwinners. In contrast, Hispanic females are seen as caretakers and homemakers and,

along with children, hold more submissive roles. In this family unit, the breadwinner has significant power over other family members.

It is important to note that female family members play a unique role in supporting Latino males' educational pursuits and are often viewed as educational advocates (Auerbach, 2004; Delgado-Gaitan, 1994; Durand, 2011; Farmer-Hinton, 2008; Kiyama, 2010; Villenas & Moreno, 2001). A multi-institutional qualitative study conducted by Sáenz et al. (2018) found that Latino males reported female family members as being an important factor in their educational success. Participants attributed a large part of their success to their mothers. The study also found that Latino males viewed sisters as an inspiration for persistence in college.

## **COLLEGE OUTREACH EFFORTS FOR LATINO PARENTS**

Despite these challenges, the number of Latinos enrolling in higher education is steadily increasing. This can possibly be attributable to the rising Hispanic population in the U.S. Because of this, it is important to ensure colleges make necessary changes to reduce dropout rates among this demographic. Clark et al. (2013) explain that educational systems should cease disproportionately affecting the poor and minority communities, including Latinos. One way colleges can increase support for Latinos is through the increase of bilingual advisors. This would be a step in meeting the informational needs of Latino students. Holcomb-McCoy (2010) believes school advisors can help Latino parents realize their needed involvement in the educational process to positively impact their children's academic aspirations. Bilingual advisors can also be a medium by which language barriers between parents and other stakeholders can be overcome. Once parents are informed and aware of their importance in their children's academics, they will likely engage more often.

Research by Martinez and Ulanoff (2013) on minority groups suggests colleges organize workshops to ensure Latino parents become familiar with educational processes to address information gaps. More importantly, many Latino parents are unaware of how college systems work in the United States and frequently may not know how they function in their home countries. Therefore, hosting workshops would help them play the critical role of primary stakeholders in their children's education. Additionally, it is essential to recognize language differences between minority communities, including Latinos. Colleges can implement bilingual systems to help communicate in various languages, including Spanish. This is instrumental, as it would make parents feel more welcomed and appreciated. Thus, helping them play a fundamental role in supporting their children throughout their academic lives. Boden (2011) explains that a lack of financial support and academic readiness may challenge Latino parents and children by hindering access to quality education. Colleges can help Latino families with the process of applying for financial aid, which can reduce economic pressures among parents. In turn, this will support students and help reduce dropout rates.

### **CURRENT PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT STUDENTS AND FAMILIES UNDERSTAND THE ACADEMIC SYSTEM**

Auerbach (2004) shares that the implementation of the Futures & Families program across the nation is an effective approach used to narrow information gaps and promote access to information. This effort will increase the enrollment of Latino students in higher education. The program provides needed support in ensuring basic student needs are met and facilitates intensive and structured coaching. It also helps parents acquire the skills necessary to help their children pursue the future they want by giving an overview of college. This is achieved through meetings, surveys, interviews, and counselors ready to engage with parents.

Another example highlighted by Chrispeels and Rivero (2001) is the nonprofit Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE). PIQE consists of an eight-session training program where Latino parents learn about the educational system, how to interact with teachers, and how to help their children with schoolwork. Additionally, PIQE offers a variety of other family engagement and STEM workshops for families. The program has become a national organization and benefited 2.1 million low-income families, communities of color, English learners, and immigrant families. Each year the organization serves more than 18,000 families.

The Hispanic Federation (HF) is another nonprofit membership organization that supports Hispanic families in many areas, including education. In 2021, this organization provided training and information to 15,000 parents and students in college readiness preparation (Hispanic Federation, n.d.). Specifically, this organization has an initiative called Pathways to Academic Excellence, where Latino parents attend a series of seminars. These seminars help enable parents to actively support their children from early childhood to college prep activities. The “Pathways College Prep” explains to parents the importance of college education, its advantages, and the college admissions timeline. Additionally, the Hispanic Federation hosts a Hispanic Education Summit that brings together various constituents to discuss actions needed to advance Latino educational attainment.

## **CONCLUSION**

Existing literature on this topic provides foundational sources identifying challenges Latino parents face that impact their children. Family is the most important social unit in Hispanic culture, and as a result, children are heavily influenced by it. Research has shown that many Latino parents are not involved in their children’s education even though they may be willing to participate in the process. Language barriers, working multiple jobs, and a lack of

understanding of the educational system are some factors preventing Latino parents from becoming more involved. Resources must be readily available to impact their children's retention rates and possible degree completion. Readily available resources must be more available to this demographic to remedy these shortcomings.



## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the research methodology used in this qualitative study. It will explore knowledge gaps Latino parents may have regarding the college process from beginning to end in the Greater Houston region area. The researcher used a phenomenological approach and interviewed both Latino parents and college administrators. This approach allowed for a deeper understanding of what Latino parents know about college and what community colleges are doing to engage them. It enabled the researcher to create a guide about colleges for Latino parents. This chapter will focus on reviewing the following elements of the study:

- The Rationale for Research Approach
- Strategy of Inquiry
- Ethical Considerations
- Participant Selection
- Data Collection Methods/Procedures
- Thematic Analysis of Interviews
- Validation Strategies
- Limitations and Delimitations

### THE RATIONALE FOR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

Qualitative research has been described as a “process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting” (Ahmad et al., 2019,

p. 2828). This type of research focuses on answering the “why” instead of the “what.”

Researchers who use qualitative approaches are interested in learning about the participants’ experiences, attitudes, behaviors, and motivations. Creswell and Poth (2016) add that this type of research is appropriate when a problem or issue needs further exploration. Therefore, because of these defining features, the researcher decided to use a qualitative approach in pursuing her research.

The use of this approach allows for a better understanding of what Latino parents know about college and sheds light on what resources may be useful in closing knowledge gaps. This type of study gives a unique opportunity to construct an understanding of the informant’s perspective. Furthermore, it allows for a better understanding of how college administrators are currently doing to engage Latino parents. This information was gathered through the experiences of Latino parents and college administrators in a casual interview format. The researcher divided the study into stage one for Latino parents and stage two for college administrators. Upon interview completion, information was analyzed to identify and understand Latino parents’ knowledge gaps. A tool was created in an effort to close these gaps and provide Latino parents with a better understanding of the collegiate process.

### **THE STRATEGY OF INQUIRY: PHENOMENOLOGICAL STRATEGY**

Researchers can select from various strategies of inquiry when conducting a qualitative study. These include case study, grounded theory, ethnography, historical, and phenomenology. Phenomenology was the most appropriate qualitative method for this study. This strategy seeks to find common meaning from individuals’ lived experiences of a phenomenon. It focuses on describing “what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon” (Creswell & Poth, 2016, p. 75). The study aims to explore the level of understanding Latino parents have

about the collegiate process from beginning to end and what colleges are currently doing to engage them. Defining features of this approach aligns with the goals of the study. The defining characteristics of this approach, as shared by Creswell and Poth (2016), include the following:

- Emphasis on the phenomenon to be explored
- A discussion of the basic ideas involved in conducting the phenomenology
- The researcher bracketing himself/herself out of the study by sharing personal experiences related to the phenomenon
- Interviewing as part of the data collection
- Incorporating a descriptive passage of the essence of the individuals' experiences.

Using the phenomenological approach allowed the researcher to discover the “why” and “how” of Latino parents’ and administrators’ experiences. Creswell and Poth (2016) believe this approach is suitable for a heterogeneous group of 3-4 to 10-15 individuals. Moreover, this approach allowed the researcher to identify personal experiences with the phenomenon and bracket herself out. Bracketing has been defined as the “well-known identification and temporary setting aside of the researcher’s assumptions” (Fischer, 2009, p. 583). Bracketing is critical because it allows the study to focus on the experiences of the participants. The researcher identified her experiences as a first-generation student whose parents lacked understanding of the collegiate process and was the source of intrigue in conducting this type of research.

The study’s framework was based on the guiding principle of identifying Latino parents’ knowledge gaps about college. The study’s research questions provided the framework for the interviews:

- In what ways are community colleges currently helping Latino parents understand the collegiate process from entry to completion?
  - ✓ What are community colleges currently doing to engage Latino parents in the college process?

- ✓ What tools/initiatives have been successful?
- What holds Latino parents back from becoming involved in their children’s college journey?
- What tools/knowledge/information can help Latino parents further understand college?

The research questions helped formulate interview questions. These were used to collect participants’ thoughts and experiences about understanding the collegiate process, or lack thereof. The interviews were conducted as open-ended conversations and based on the following central questions translated into Spanish for parents:

1. Describe your experiences with your children who are attending or have attended college.
2. Was your child(ren) successful in completing college?
3. Please share what you know about college from entry to completion.
4. What type of activities (if any) have you been involved in within your children’s college?
5. If you have not been involved in any activities, what keeps you from being involved?
6. What information/resources would be useful in better understanding the collegiate process?

The following questions were created to collect college administrators’ thoughts and experiences regarding their efforts to involve Latino parents:

1. What is your college currently doing to engage Latino parents?
  - If someone answers, “nothing,” Why is your college not engaging with Latino parents?
2. Have these initiatives/tools been successful?
3. Are any of the initiatives/tools you mentioned bilingual?
4. What is the impact of parent engagement on student retention and success?

5. In your opinion, what barriers keep Latino parents from engaging? Any advice on how to overcome them?
6. What type of tools might be useful for Latino parents to understand college better?

## **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

It was imperative to address ethical concerns throughout the research process. Creswell and Poth (2016) state researchers must be conscious of multiple ethical considerations in various stages of the study. The first ethical concern addressed was attaining Institutional Research Board (IRB) approval from Ferris State University to conduct the study (IRB Approval Letter in Appendix A). The purpose of IRB review is to “assure, both in advance and by periodic review, that appropriate steps are taken to protect the rights and welfare of humans participating as subjects in the research” (Creswell & Poth, 2016, p. 54). During this review, the IRB reviewed the research protocol and supporting documents to protect research participants. Before conducting the study, receiving informed consent and gaining participant approval were also key. During the informed consent process, the researcher described to each participant the potential risks and benefits from participation and measures taken to minimize risks and maximize benefits. Additionally, seeking permission to use materials from participants, determining what language to use for communication, and ensuring all materials were translated accurately into Spanish were equally important.

The purpose of the study was disclosed to participants at the onset of the interview process. Participants were assured their information would be kept confidential. During the data collection process, the researcher ensured the research was respected. All data and materials were stored securely in password-protected cloud storage and accessed using a password-protected laptop. This laptop was secured in a safe location where the researcher was the only

one with access. When the data were analyzed, the researcher respected participant privacy and remained neutral. When reporting findings, the researcher avoided disclosing any harmful or sensitive information. Reports were shared with participants to ensure they were aware of what had been written.

## **DATA COLLECTION METHODS/PROCEDURES**

### **PARTICIPANT SELECTION**

The researcher employed a criterion sampling strategy to determine interview participants in both stage 1 (Latino parents) and stage 2 (college administrators). Creswell and Poth (2016) described this type of strategy as one that “seeks cases that meet some criterion” (p. 158). Consequently, this strategy allowed the researcher to select participants who met the following established criteria:

#### *Selection Criteria for Parents – Stage 1*

- Latino/Hispanic origin
- Have children who are attending or have attended college
- Live in Houston or surrounding areas

#### *Selection Criteria for College Administrators – Stage 2*

- College administrators involved in college admissions/recruitment
- Works in a community college located in Houston and surrounding areas

#### *Stage 1 – Latino Parents*

The research design included reaching out to BakerRipley, a non-profit institution, to partner with in the research. BakerRipley is the largest charitable organization in Texas and hosts a network of over 70 service sites that help more than half a million people each year. This

nonprofit institution aims to bring resources, education, and connection by working with the community. This organization works with Latino parents and other disadvantaged groups to ensure that struggling residents “gain access to the resources or education they need to move forward” (BakerRipley, 2020, p. 5). Therefore, the researcher reached out to this institution to become a partner and help with the recruitment of Latino parents.

To start the process of acquiring BakerRipley as a partner, the researcher had an initial conversation with the Community Developer to discuss the research and its goals. After the initial conversation, the researcher submitted a research form where she provided a description of her study. After BakerRipley’s Research and Evaluation team reviewed this form, she received approval, and a letter of support was submitted with the IRB application.

Upon approval of the IRB application, other forms were completed. The researcher asked BakerRipley to circulate an invitation and flyer where the contact information was provided. Interested participants reached out to the researcher. Once they agreed to participate, invitations were extended via email and phone calls to six individuals. The email included expectations and procedures for the study and a scheduling request for an interview date and time. The email also included informed consent documentation that requested consent to record interviews digitally. After at least four of the six individuals agreed to participate, no more invitations were extended. A mutually agreed upon time and location for each interview was scheduled, and the informed consent process was completed. Some of the participants did not know or feel comfortable speaking English. Therefore, documents were provided to them in Spanish. Data were collected through a series of open-ended interviews using an interview-guided questionnaire.

### *Stage 2 – College Administrators*

The research design included recruiting potential college administrator participants via phone and/or email. The researcher collected the college administrators' contact information from publicly available colleges' websites. Upon agreement to participate, invitations were extended through email. Phone calls were made to three participants to join the study. In the same fashion as the emails sent to parents, the email included expectations and procedures for the study as well as a scheduling request for the interview date and time. The email also included the informed consent document requesting consent to record the interviews digitally. If at least two of the three individuals agreed, no more invitations were extended. A mutually agreed-upon time and location for the interview were scheduled, and the informed consent process was completed. Data was collected through a series of open-ended interviews using an interview guide questionnaire (see Appendices B and C).

### INTERVIEW PROCESS

Before asking interview questions, the researcher reviewed the informed consent form and answered any questions from participants. The researcher also reiterated the confidentiality agreement and expectations for the interview. Verbal consent was taken for recording, and participants were assured their information, including names, would be kept confidential. The following paragraphs detail more information on the interview process for stage 1 (Latino parents) and stage 2 (college administrators).

### *Stage 1 – Latino Parents*

Open-ended interviews were conducted by both Zoom and telephone, depending on participant preference. These interviews were digitally recorded to facilitate transcription using the researcher's cellphone or Zoom. The researcher asked participants to share their experiences



and insights by responding to a series of open-ended interview questions. Open-ended questions were used because they have been shown to elucidate critical feedback (Riiskjær et al., 2012). All participants were asked identical open-ended questions to establish credibility and trustworthiness in the study.

Parents were asked questions about their experiences with their children who are attending or have attended college, their involvement in their children's educational journey, and what information and resources would help them better understand the collegiate process. The researcher asked follow-up questions during the interviews for further elaboration and clarification. Interviews were digitally recorded for accuracy and were transcribed/translated as they were in Spanish. After transcription, the researcher allowed the participants to review for accuracy. Additionally, the researcher reviewed the full transcripts and clarified the participants' responses. As a way to express appreciation and gratitude for their time, the researcher sent a handwritten thank you card and a \$20 gift card to all the participants in their preferred language.

### *Stage 2 – College Administrators*

Open-ended interviews were conducted via Zoom or telephone, depending on the college administrators' preference. The interviews were digitally recorded to allow for easier transcription. The researcher asked participants to share their experiences and insights by responding to a series of open-ended questions. All participants were asked identical open-ended questions to establish credibility and trustworthiness in the study.

College administrators were asked questions about what their colleges are currently doing to engage Latino parents, how successful these initiatives have been, and the challenges surrounding Latino parent involvement. During the interviews, the researcher asked follow-up questions to the participants for further elaboration and clarification. Interviews were digitally

recorded for accuracy, and the researcher transcribed them. After transcription, the researcher shared them with participants and gave them opportunities to review them for accuracy. The literature review and the researcher's own personal and professional experience informed the architecture of the interview questions. Additionally, the researcher reviewed the full transcripts and clarified the participants' responses. The researcher sent all the participants a handwritten thank you card to express appreciation and gratitude for their time.

#### INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The researcher created an interview protocol for stage 1 (Latino parents) and stage 2 (college administrators). This protocol included the following elements based on best practices from Creswell and Poth (2016):

1. Ensure there is an ID for each participant
2. Allow plenty of space in between questions to write down responses and any other information
3. Memorize all questions and maintain eye contact with the participant, pause to allow the participant enough time to answer the questions thoroughly, and provide appropriate transitions to the next question
4. Include closing comments and thank each participant, and explain the next step

#### THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

This research study has three primary goals. The first is to share the stories of Latino parents. The second is to identify and better understand knowledge gaps they may have about college. The third and final goal is to understand what colleges currently do to encourage parental involvement. The interviews allowed the researcher to gain new insights into knowledge gaps and the barriers preventing Latino parents from becoming involved. By reviewing transcriptions, listening to recordings, and analyzing participants' experiences, valuable insights

were gathered to be used and support Latino parents. Common themes concerning knowledge gaps emerged from the analysis. These emergent themes are presented in Chapter Four. Additionally, Chapter Four will include quotes from participants as a way to share their stories.

## **VALIDATION STRATEGIES**

Validation of the study was of utmost importance. The researcher followed the validation strategies provided by Creswell and Poth (2016) below. These strategies are from the (1) Researcher's Lens, (2) Participant's Lens, and (3) Reader's or Reviewer's Lens. It allowed multiple approaches for the review of documents and providing feedback. This ensured the essence of the interviews was captured.

### *Researcher's Lens:*

- Corroborating evidence through triangulation
- Discovering negative case analysis or disconfirming evidence
- Clarifying researcher bias or engaging in reflexivity
  - ✓ Reflexivity generally refers to the examination of one's own beliefs, judgments, and practices during the research process and how these may have influenced the research
  - ✓ Important to examine how the researcher's experiences with her parents influenced the research

### *Participant's Lens:*

- Member checking or seeking participant feedback
  - ✓ Getting feedback from parents:
    - important to consider the language as the parents' primary language is Spanish
- Having prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the field
- Collaborating with participants

*Reader's or Reviewer's Lens:*

- Enabling external audits
- Generating a detailed, thick description
- Having a peer review or debriefing of the data research process

## **LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS**

The study was successful, but limitations arose. First, the research study was confined to interviewing six Latino parents and two college administrators. This represents a very small percentage of the Latino parent population in the Houston area. According to U.S. Census Bureau (n.d.) data, the estimated population of Houston as of July 1, 2021, was 2,228,250. Additionally, Hispanics/Latinos represent 45% of the total population. The study was limited in that it only focused on the experiences of parents living in the Greater Houston area. Furthermore, only two colleges were selected and asked about efforts to engage Latino parents and the barriers they faced. Therefore, it is impossible to identify all knowledge gaps parents may have about college and initiatives employed to increase Latino parent involvement. It is also important to take into consideration the level of education of these parents. Some parents may have more formal education than others. Because of this, the knowledge gaps identified will not apply to all Latino parents. Moreover, each state can have many colleges with differing levels of parental engagement. As a result, this study identifies only a limited number of knowledge gaps.

## **CONCLUSION**

Chapter Three provided an overview of all aspects of the research design and procedures included in the study. It also provided a general paradigm of the research and a discussion of the limitations and delimitations of the study. The findings supported by this study will help

community college leaders and other stakeholders find solutions toward increasing understanding of the collegiate process in this demographic. As has been clearly shown, parental involvement is crucial to student success. Chapter Four will provide a deeper dive into the results of this research study.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes the six interviews with Latino parents with children attending or who have attended college. It also provides a summary of interviews with two college administrators who oversee admissions and/or recruitment. These interviews identified knowledge gaps and barriers preventing Latino parents from becoming involved in their children's higher education endeavors. Following the interviews, a thematic analysis was conducted.

### SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS – PARENTS

#### INTERVIEW 1: PARENT 1

Parent 1 did not attend college and was only able to complete elementary school in her home country. When asked about her thoughts and opinions regarding the importance of higher education, she stated that education is very important, and she believes it is needed to have a better future. Parent 1 stated she has three children, and one is currently in college. She shared that her daughter is doing well in school and will graduate soon, even though the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed graduation.

When asked if her daughter shared educational goals with her during high school and now in college, Parent 1 stated that yes, sometimes. Parent 1 admitted that she only listens because she knows nothing about college but always tells her to study and get a good career.

When asked about what type of support she provides her daughter while attending college, she explained both she and her husband provide a roof and food, allowing her daughter the flexibility of not needing a job for income. Additionally, Parent 1 offers her emotional support and is always there to care for her daughter.

Parent 1 stated she does not know much about college but knows that the government provides grants and scholarships to help students continue their education. However, she was unable to provide further input to this question. She also shared she has not participated in any education-related activities at the college level. However, she mentioned that her daughter sometimes goes to meetings, and she has attended a few but only listens because she does not understand English.

Parent 1 stated she would like to learn English because she is unable to understand many things. Additionally, she feels there are insufficient Spanish resources to explain the collegiate process. Having bilingual information available would vastly help her and other parents with language barriers.

#### INTERVIEW 1: PARENT 2

Parent 2 shared that she attended a technical program in her native country to become an administrative assistant. She believes it is important to study and not drop out of school. She has believed in the importance of education ever since she was a little girl. Though she wishes she could have continued her career, she was unable due to coming from a low-income family. She shared that her primary focus was to provide for her family when she came to this country. Additionally, the language barrier stopped Parent 2 from seeking to continue her education. Parent 2 has a daughter who attended high school with access to an early college program. Her

daughter participated in it and graduated with both a high school diploma and an associate degree.

When asked about her experiences during the time her daughter attended college, she stated she was not involved because she does not speak English and, because of this, could not help very much. Parent 2 shared she wished she could have helped her daughter more. She saw how much her daughter studied and that sometimes her daughter had difficulty with school but was still able to graduate with an Associate degree successfully. Her daughter is now attending university and finishing her first semester.

Parent 2 shared that her daughter had told her about her academic goals before starting college. Her daughter desires to further her education, and Parent 2 is happy to support her in any way possible. She stated that she had helped her daughter emotionally and financially. Her daughter received a scholarship. However, Parent 2 and her husband supported her by providing a roof, food, clothes, and any other supplies she needed.

Parent 2 stated she does not know much about college except for the little information she has learned from her daughter. One such example is when her daughter applied to FAFSA and received financial support. However, this was the only process Parent 2 was able to share. When asked if she was involved in any activities or events at her daughter's university, Parent 2 quickly stated, "No, no, no, no, no, no."

Parent 2 wishes there were more meetings where higher education institutions could explain what college entails and cover topics such as scholarships. However, she stated there is a problem with her ability to understand English. She shared that there was an opportunity to attend a college fair in high school, but she could not attend because English is very difficult for



her to understand. Parent 2 believes it would be helpful if the information were provided in both English and Spanish.

#### INTERVIEW 1: PARENT 3

Parent 3 shared she was indeed able to attend college in Mexico. She attended a technical high school where she was introduced to nursing. Upon graduation, she attended college and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. She believes higher education is extremely important and stated the following, which has been translated into English.

Well, for me, I mean, it is very important to be prepared more than anything else, right. Nowadays, a person who is educated is worth double. And I think that for me right now, pushing my children to study and graduate is the best inheritance I can give them. Well, it is the best inheritance I can leave my children, their studies. To see them prepared and fulfilled is my dream, right. That, that they become, ah, ah, really get that education and this, and that they succeed.

Parent 3 shared that her daughter is currently in college and in the first semester of the nursing program. She hopes to be a registered nurse one day. She began her studies in a community college instead of a university because obtaining the same certification was much cheaper. Parent 3 shared that her daughter was very discouraged at one point because her DACA application was put on hold. However, Parent 3 has told her daughter to keep working hard as there will be something out there for her.

Parent 3 stated her daughter has been sharing educational goals since high school. She stated her daughter is currently enrolled in three online classes as recommended by her advisor due to their difficulty. In Spring 2022, she will begin taking classes in person. Parent 3 supports her daughter financially, which entails paying for the internet for her online classes.

Additionally, she buys her daughter any materials she may need.

Parent 3 shared she does not speak English 100%. When she visited her daughter's college, she just listened to interactions with college personnel because even though she understood what they were saying, it was very hard for her to speak English. She shared that as long as her daughter does what is in her best interest, she will support her decision.

When Parent 3 was asked about what information she knew regarding college, she shared that she knows about FAFSA and scholarships. Specifically, she told me the story of when she took her daughter to drop off paperwork and was not allowed to go in with her due to the COVID-19 pandemic precautions. However, she expressed the following:

The truth is that right now, I am still very lost. This is my first semester with her. My first experience and the truth is that it is very different from Mexico. I am, I feel lost, to be honest.

Parent 3 shared that before her daughter enrolled in the college she currently attends, she took her around to see others. Upon selecting the college, she took her to get an ID, apply for financial aid, and register for courses. Her daughter is contemplating moving to a four-year college where more activities are available. When asked what information or resources would be helpful for her to understand college better, Parent 3 stated some type of parent meeting would be helpful. She shared that when her daughter was in middle school, they would invite parents to visit universities with the students. Now, she says it is different as there are no meetings at the college level, and it would be helpful to understand different processes regarding college.

Parent 3 felt like parents were not taken into consideration anymore as students are older and can make their own decisions. She relies on her daughter to share what it is to go to college. She feels that since many processes are moving online, parents are missing out on many things.

#### INTERVIEW 1: PARENT 4

Parent 4 shared she was unable to attend college due to her family's situation. Parent 4 was raised by a single mother who had to provide for her family. When asked about her thoughts and opinions on the importance of higher education, she stated education is important and her children must take advantage of the opportunities they are given. She shared that because education in her country was expensive, she could not continue her studies beyond middle school. However, she gives the following advice to her children: "I give this advice to my children. That here [in the United States], they are given opportunities that they have to take advantage of them. They have to fight and generate a better future for themselves."

Parent 4 shared that once her son started applying to college, it was done by him as he is 18 years old and an adult. She shared that since that moment, she did not talk to anyone about the processes involving scholarships and enrollment. Parent 4 stated she had to ask her son multiple times if he had already applied and when he would start. She expressed frustrations and stated the following: "Sometimes I wish there was a process where you, as a parent, could get involved, even if they [children] are of legal age."

Parent 4 shared her son plans to complete his basics and transfer to a four-year college. Her son is doing well in school. She shared that although her son was accepted into a four-year college, she was against it because they could not afford tuition. She stated that to save money, it was best to start at a two-year institution and then transfer because he was offered a full scholarship to complete his associate degree.

Parent 4 stated her son did share his educational goals before and during college. When asked about the type of support she provides, she stated they provide financial support to pay for items such as textbooks. Additionally, she makes sure to check in regularly and ask questions. These questions include "how are you doing in school?" and "how are your grades?" Parent 4

also shared that she tells her son the best inheritance she can leave him is to ensure he completes his career.

When asked what Parent 4 knows about college, she shared that she saw her son complete the FAFSA application and apply for the scholarship given to all graduating seniors. She stated that after that, she did not know much about the collegiate process because she feels parents do not have the opportunity to be involved. She mentioned that she has not been involved in any activities while her son has been in college due to the college not hosting events for parents. She shared that college fairs were hosted during high school, and parents were allowed to attend. In fact, Parent 4 attended one when her son was in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

When asked what type of resources or information would be helpful to understand the college process better, she stated that more information in general about the collegiate processes would be helpful. Additionally, she stated workshops would further help because, as a Latino parent, you always want what is best for your children. She would like workshops to provide information on how parents can help before and during college. Ideally, she would want these workshops and information in Spanish, as English is a barrier for her.

#### INTERVIEW 1: PARENT 5

Parent 5 expressed she was unable to attend college. However, she believes education is very valuable and opens many doors for better jobs and a better future. She shared that she is really happy her daughter is attending a two-year college to have a better future. Her daughter hopes to become a registered nurse. However, she shared that because her daughter was not born in the United States, she does not have enough help that she needs. They still do not know whether she will be able to transfer and get her bachelor's degree, as it is very expensive, and they do not have the resources.

Parent 5 stated that her daughter has shared her goals and has always been dedicated and worked hard toward her education. When asked about the type of support she gives her daughter while attending school, she mentioned, “Well, it is very little. Because the truth is we do not have much left. But my daughter works and studies. When she needs to pay her tuition, we provide whatever we can.”

Parent 5 shared that she does not know much about college but what her daughter tells her. Her daughter shared with her that she really likes school and that although there are many opportunities, it is mostly for documented students. When asked if Parent 5 has participated in any activities or processes, she said no because the college does not offer activities for parents. She said that if all of a sudden there were any, they would most likely be in English, and she does not understand the language at all.

Parent 5 would like more information and talks on resources available for undocumented students. Ideally, she would like these resources to be in Spanish. She would also like more information on where parents can ask for help for their children.

#### INTERVIEW 1: PARENT 6

Parent 6 shared that she could only complete middle school back in her home country due to financial constraints. She believes higher education is very important, but individuals often cannot continue their studies because of economic circumstances. She stated education is a weapon for a better future. Parent 6 shared that it has been very exciting to see her daughter attend college and feels very proud. Her youngest daughter has been the only one who has had the opportunity to attend college. Her other three siblings could not attend college due to financial and personal constraints. She finished her associate degree through an early college high school and is now studying to be a registered nurse.

Parent 6 told me she tells her daughter that she will have to support her one day because she is now exhausted from working. She shared that her daughter did not share educational goals with her until recently. Parent 6 stated that her daughter was very concentrated and focused on her classes. When asked about the type of support she provides her daughter, she says she supports her emotionally as well as by being her cheerleader.

Parent 6 did not know much about college. She stated the only thing she knew was that undocumented immigrants get very little help with scholarships. Thus, they need to work extra hard to get a job and find a way to pay for classes. Parent 6 shared that she has not been involved with any college activities. When asked why she responded, “Because I was never invited to participate. Because here [in the U.S.], they are more independent from their parents. Whether they or the school itself, they already feel like they do not need parental involvement as much.”

Parent 6 stated workshops for parents would be extremely helpful in understanding the college process better. She also believes it would be nice for parents and others to know what career options they have available to better themselves. She stated the information would need to be bilingual as English is a barrier to many Latinos. She would like colleges to offer courses in Spanish for parents so more people can attend classes.

## **SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS – COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS**

### **INTERVIEW 1: COLLEGE ADMINISTRATOR 1**

College Administrator 1 shared that the Latino student population is steadily increasing. In fact, approximately 40% of their students are Latino. The college has approximately 70,000 students enrolled. When asked about the challenges Latino students face in her college, she stated that they are various challenges that Latino students and other ethnicities face. These include academic, family, and financial struggles. Many students at her institution are working,

and of those, many are parents. This college also has many first-generation students who are not college ready.

When asked about what her college is currently doing to engage Latino parents and the types of initiatives they are employing, she shared several. She stated that some are geared toward Latino students and others toward Latino parents. For example, the “Parent Academy” initiative is geared toward engaging parents of dual credit students. Many parents are not aware of what dual credit is. When this program was implemented, they realized that the parents themselves were ready to go back to school. They then started signing them up so they could obtain some type of certificate. College Administrator 1 also mentioned the Puente Program provides services and support to Latinos and other students. She also mentioned the partnerships they have with some universities for students who want to graduate with a bachelor’s degree.

College Administrator 1 added that when school starts, they invite parents to come to the campus. They consider this an orientation program for students and parents alike. They also hold a financial aid night where students and families receive information and assistance to apply for financial aid and scholarships. They also invite all high school graduates in their district and their parents to celebrate their high school graduation success. When asked about the impact parental engagement has on student retention and success, she stated the following:

My opinion is [that] whenever we see parents more engaged, the, that it’s easier streamlined process for students. Sometimes you know they get information and bits and pieces. But when there is a parent engagement or two people listening, and especially if they have a parent that has a prior credential, they have a lot of support from them. For first-generation [students], we provide support. We just have to make sure that they come. So, yeah, we do see higher retention.

College Administrator 1 shared she has worked with the Hispanic community and has seen how students need their parents’ support. She shared parents must understand the commitment students need to make. If not, students will not take education seriously. She has

seen the expectation of many students that just turned eighteen are ready to go out and start making money, but that it is hard for them to find a balance between work and school. If parents are engaged, they better understand how much more time is needed to dedicate to school.

College Administrator 1 sees communication as the largest barrier keeping Latino parents from engaging. She believes that much of the information does not reach everyone and that only a handful of Latino parents are informed about opportunities and resources available. Therefore, College Administrator 1 believes in using as many communication channels as possible to get the message out. She shared that during a summer conference, she was able to get 400 participants registered by using a variety of channels to communicate information and not solely relying on one. She also understands the language barrier is prevalent. Therefore, she believes having Spanish speakers available on campus is important so parents can understand what is happening.

When asked what type of tools might be useful for Latino parents to understand college better, she shared that it is all about communication and using the right channels to disseminate information and resources. For example, using Facebook, targeted bilingual marketing campaigns, and churches are a few tools used to provide outreach. College Administrator 1 concluded by sharing how one of their programs brought 230 parents in attendance to learn more about short credentials for themselves.

#### INTERVIEW 1: COLLEGE ADMINISTRATOR 2

College Administrator 2 shared that his institution serves approximately 45,000 students annually, and about 60-65% are Latino students. His institution has worked hard to ensure they are creating interventions and processes from a holistic support perspective to increase retention rates. When asked about the challenges his institution sees Latino students face, he stated that a



major challenge is financial hardships. This is due to many students needing to provide financial support to their households. Another obstacle the students at his institution face is the lack of transportation to and from their institution, which is located in a large city.

College Administrator 2 shared his college has multiple initiatives to engage Latino parents. They took a step back to look at their onboarding process and identified gaps. From this data, they identified language barriers and ensured all their marketing material was bilingual. This extended to parent nights and webinars where they provided Spanish resources. In fact, many of their webinars are in multiple languages. These workshops inform parents and students about admissions and financial aid processes. College Administrator 2 stated that it is very important for his institution to employ bilingual staff who can communicate and engage with these parents. He also noted that starting in Spring 2022, orientations will be in both English and Spanish.

College Administrator 2 mentioned these initiatives have been successful and that he measures success differently from his colleagues. His goal is to create a space where there are plenty of opportunities for everyone to attend. He uses a variety of venues to disseminate information to parents and get them involved. Some forms include digital advertising, print mail, radio advertising, and engaging with local Spanish news stations.

When asked what keeps Latino parents from engaging, he noted there is a lack of information, and parents have a fear of the unknown. The college journey can be complex, and many parents lack an understanding of the different aspects. Therefore, it is important to break down the processes for them. College Administrator 2 mentioned the following would be useful in helping Latino parents better understand college:

We have to start the college conversation really early and the college-going culture for our students at a really young age. So that's why we have been very intentional in having

K-8 initiatives where we start that conversation, and we begin sending information to parents for those students that are in elementary and middle school.

College Administrator 2 concluded that starting an engagement with parents as early as possible is very key.

## **ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS**

### **LATINO PARENTS**

The interview participants each provided valuable insights by sharing their experiences with their children attending college or that have attended in the past. In analyzing these interviews as a group, six common themes were identified and outlined below. Table 1 provides quotes from the Latino parents related to each of the themes.

- Theme 1: Little Understanding of Higher Education
- Theme 2: Language Barriers Present
- Theme 3: Desire for Tools and Bilingual Information
- Theme 4: Preconceived Perceptions About Higher Education
- Theme 5: Emotional and Financial Support Provided by Parents
- Theme 6: Lack of Parental Participation in College

**Table 1. Latino Parents' Quotations by Theme**

	THEME 1: INFORMATION KNOWN ABOUT COLLEGE	THEME 2: BARRIERS PREVENTING PARENT INVOLVEMENT	THEME 3: TOOLS/INFORMATION NEEDED	THEME 4: OPINIONS/PERCEPTIONS ABOUT HIGHER EDUCATION	THEME 5: SUPPORT PROVIDED BY PARENTS	THEME 6: PARENT PARTICIPATION IN COLLEGE
Parent 1	I know that they get government grants, that's what.... Also scholarships because things, also they do that, what they, what they do to help, to be able to study.	English because I don't know.	For me to be able to understand more of what they tell them, what they do.	Oh, I feel that education is very important, because it's something you need a lot.	My husband, he pays the bills, the house, all that. Well I think that's why it helps them because they don't, they don't work because they study.	Ahh No. My daughter goes sometimes, she has, what is called... She goes sometimes goes something like meetings and so on. And sometimes I go with her. Just to listen, but I don't understand them anyway.
Parent 2	About the University well I don't know much, except what I have learned, a little bit with my daughter. That is, for example, how she apply with the, that was FAFSA.	English is very difficult for me.	I would like that, that there were, that there were meetings where they could explain this, like, well, all that about the, about the, about the, about the scholarships and everything.	The thoughts, well that it's much better to study and stay in school.	I am supporting her, emotionally and financially.	No, no, no, no, no no.
Parent 3	...the FAFSA scholarship, the financial aid.	So, the truth is that right now I am still very lost. This is my first semester with her. My first experience and the truth is that, it is very different from Mexico. I am, I feel lost, to be honest.	...meeting at the college.	Well, for me, I mean, it is very important to be prepared more than anything else, right. Nowadays, a person who is educated is worth two. And I think that for me right now, pushing my children to study and get out of school is the best inheritance I can give them.	So, my support is, I tell her, by giving her what she needs and listening to her right.	In, when we went to, to the, for example to take the ID, to apply for financial aid, to do the registration to take the subjects, I have participated with her. That's when I went in.

THEME 1: INFORMATION KNOWN ABOUT COLLEGE	THEME 2: BARRIERS PREVENTING PARENT INVOLVEMENT	THEME 3: TOOLS/INFORMATION NEEDED	THEME 4: OPINIONS/PERCEPTIONS ABOUT HIGHER EDUCATION	THEME 5: SUPPORT PROVIDED BY PARENTS	THEME 6: PARENT PARTICIPATION IN COLLEGE
Parent 4 The transaction of the, of the FAFSA that he, he, he made the application. And the second was the process of the, the process of the scholarship. But really from there, it's more I don't know much about the process.	English is a barrier to me.	I think the, the type would be a little more information. Eh provide some workshops.	I have given this advice to my children. That here, they are given opportunities, that they have to take advantage of them. And not. That would be the reason why they have to fight and for themselves to generate a better future.	Look we give him the support that, that, if he needs something of, financially.	Not at the college at moment, no, no, no, no.
Parent 5 Well, there are many opportunities, but unfortunately, it's only for, for those who have documents here.	And the truth is that I don't really understand English at all.	Well, I would like for there to be more help for undocumented kids. And that all the talks and information were in Spanish so that we could understand them.	Well, my opinion is that it is very valuable and also today they open doors for you, a better job, a better future.	Well, it's very little. Because the truth is that we don't have much left. But my daughter studies and works, but if she suddenly needs to pay her tuition, then we provide it.	No
Parent 6 The only thing I know about college is that, for example, when they are immigrants, they do not help them very much, with, to have scholarships. Because they don't have social security to go on.	The very important barrier which is English.	More information. They should hold public assemblies, so that we can be more informed.	...higher education is very important. It's just that many times because of the, the economic situation, we cannot support the people to continue studying.	Emotional and to tell her "Here I am. I can't support you financially because I don't have the means" but emotionally and motivating her to keep going.	No. Because I was never invited to participate.

### *Theme 1: Little Understanding of Higher Education*

Many participants did not know much information about college and its different processes. In fact, the only processes they had some information about were regarding financial aid. Within the financial aid process, they mentioned government grants, FAFSA, and scholarships. Two of the parents mentioned that there are many financial opportunities in the United States. However, they are very limited to those who are undocumented. Unfortunately, the researcher could not gather much information on what parents know about college due to their limited knowledge and understanding.

### *Theme 2: Language Barriers Present*

The number one barrier participants faced was the language barrier. Five out of the six parents had very little understanding of the English language, and it was very difficult for them to understand conversations. These five parents openly discussed how this barrier prevented them from becoming involved in their children's education. They expressed wanting more information available to them in Spanish to actually understand what was going on with their children attending college. One of the parents expressed the college process as different from her home country. These differences made her feel lost and hampered her involvement with her children's academics.

### *Theme 3: Desire for Tools and Bilingual Information*

All participants agreed that more information about the college process is needed in Spanish. Five of the six participants expressed a desire to attend some sort of meeting/workshop where they could learn more about what college entails. Parents felt that since their children are older when they reach college, they [parents] are not taken into consideration and must rely on information provided by their children. One of the parents noted that she wishes more

information was available and that these resources could be available to undocumented students wishing to stay in college.

#### *Theme 4: Preconceived Perceptions About Higher Education*

All parents agreed that higher education is important and valuable without any hesitation. Participants expressed they encouraged their children to further their education as they did not have the same opportunities due to financial constraints and family obligations. Participants see education as something needed to better one's future as it provides better job opportunities and can open doors. Two parents stated the best inheritance they could leave their children was for them to be educated.

#### *Theme 5: Emotional and Financial Support Provided by Parents*

Participants highlighted two types of support they provided their children while they are/were in college. The support included financial and emotional. Five of the six participants stated that they support their children financially. Financial support entailed small differences for each participant. For example, some parents provide support by buying books and supplies, while others help their children pay for tuition. One of the participants stated they provided their children with food and shelter, which allowed them to focus solely on their studies. Three participants stated they support their children emotionally by listening and offering encouragement to keep pushing towards their goals.

#### *Theme 6: Lack of Parental Participation in College*

It was evident from the participants' responses that they do not participate in their children's collegiate process. Four of the six participants lacked any participation at all. Some shared they had never been invited to participate in any activities or events. One parent

commented that her daughter sometimes goes to a meeting (she could not explain what it was) and that she [the parent] attends but does not understand what people are saying. Only one participant stated she went with her daughter to get her ID and register for classes. Though most of the parents lacked participation in any college activities, they expressed the desire to do so if they could understand what was occurring.

#### COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS

The interview participants provided valuable insights into what their colleges have done and are doing to engage Latino parents. In analyzing these interviews as a group, three common themes were discussed and are outlined below. Table 2 provides quotes on each of these themes by the college administrators.

- Theme 1: Persistent Barriers Faced by Latino Students in College
- Theme 2: The Importance of College Engagement with Latino Parents
- Theme 3: Common Barriers Preventing Latino Parents from Engaging

#### *Theme 1: Persistent Barriers Faced by Latino Students in College*

Both college administrators reflected on the many barriers Latino face in pursuing their education. They agreed that Latinos face obstacles ranging from personal, academic, family, financial, and access to transportation. Participants highlighted how many of their students are breadwinners for their families, and financial obligations fall on their shoulders. This can frequently steer them away from pursuing higher education. One participant shared how many students face the challenge of not being college-ready. The other administrator emphasized how transportation is an issue for students and their inability to get to campus.

**Table 2. College Administrators' Quotations by Theme**

	THEME 1: LATINO STUDENTS FACE TROUBLING BARRIERS IN COLLEGE	THEME 2: THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLEGE ENGAGEMENT WITH LATINO PARENTS	THEME 3: BARRIERS PREVENTING LATINO PARENTS FROM ENGAGEMENT
College Administrator 1	So, ah, but yeah major issues are just in general, it could be financial personal family, and academic.	So, when parents are engaged, they understand better than what is the scope of their education, where they're headed. There are financial supports available but we must give them some time and help them finish their degrees. So that I think that, you know, kind of, increase a lot of chances and students being supportive by their parents.	In my opinion, I would call communication as the biggest barrier. I think that the message doesn't get to the, to everyone. And they don't know what's going on.
College Administrator 2	I think a lot of our Latinx identifying students are a financial support within their household, that it's difficult for them to leave that financial, um, I guess, source of income and, and sort of steer away and choose higher education as their primary source of, of time. And I think that, that is one of the, the number one reason for their challenges. The other one that we saw where, where a lack of transportation to and from, to and from our institution.	Anything that, that we do out there in terms of parent nights and webinars are bilingual, right. And, and that they, they were able to, to, to, to make sure that the information gets to the parents as well. So that, that really is being very intentional with doing an inventory of how can we, from an outreach perspective, increase our awareness to our parents.	I think the number one barrier for parents, Latino parents, I would say, in engaging, is the lack of information, and the fear of the unknown.

*Theme 2: The Importance of College Engagement with Latino Parents*

All participants agreed on the importance of colleges engaging Latino parents. Both administrators highlighted various initiatives they established to connect and involve Latino



parents along the way. They agreed on the importance of communication being provided in both English and Spanish and that they have bilingual staff ready to take on this challenge. One participant highlighted how his college analyzed its outreach process to identify gaps and make further improvements. The other administrator shared that when parents are engaged and understand the scope of education, it increases support for students and will help towards the completion of degrees.

### *Theme 3: Common Barriers Preventing Latino Parents from Engaging*

Despite efforts to engage Latino parents, both participants reflected on the many barriers that can cause difficulty with this outreach. One of the participants stated the biggest barrier is communication, as messages do not reach everyone. The participant added that language is a primary barrier that keeps Latino parents from engaging. The other participant highlighted their biggest barrier was the lack of information and fear of the unknown about the collegiate process. Consequently, more must be done on how this information is presented to parents.

## **CONCLUSION**

All participants provided insightful information about what prevents Latino parents from becoming involved. The parent participants highlighted the need for more information about the collegiate process. They suggested the need for workshops as a way to engage them in this process. These parents also shared their struggles with English and their need for information to be in Spanish. Similarly, college administrators highlighted communication, the lack of information, and language as barriers that they have witnessed preventing parental involvement. Clearly, more resources are needed for parents willing to engage and learn more about college to better support their children.

## CHAPTER FIVE: BILINGUAL GUIDE

### INTRODUCTION

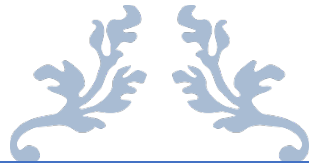
The analysis of the data collected outlined the need for additional bilingual resources for Latino parents to be more involved in their children's educational journey. Through a set of interviews, Latino parents expressed their willingness to learn and be more involved if there was more information and resources. Similarly, college administrators agreed that bilingual information would assist more Latino parents in being involved. As a result, a bilingual guide was created. This guide aims to provide a general overview of college to help Latino parents and others navigate their children's education journey.

This guide covers a variety of topics, such as understanding the value of higher education and diving deeper into topics such as paying for college and the college resources available to students. This guide can be customized and used by higher education institutions and nonprofits to help their parents better understand higher education processes and opportunities. This chapter will present the English version of the guide, although the final version will include a Spanish translation (see Appendix D). It is broken down into 17 sections and includes the following:

- I. Purpose of this Guide
- II. Why College?
- III. Becoming Involved
- IV. High School Preparation
- V. Choices

- VI. Programs Offered in Higher Education
- VII. Factors to Consider
- VIII. Learning Environment
- IX. Paying for College
- X. FAFSA
- XI. College Expenses
- XII. Application Process
- XIII. Student Schedules
- XIV. College Resources
- XV. Parent vs. Student Responsibilities
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**THE GUIDE**



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## A PARENT'S GUIDE TO COLLEGE

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A guide designed to help you learn more about the higher education system and process.

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## **Purpose of This Guide**

Understanding the higher education system and college processes can be a very difficult and stressful ordeal. Frequently, as parents, it can be hard to know everything that goes on when your son/daughter applies for college. It can also be difficult to know how early they should start thinking about higher education. Even more, it is hard to know what questions to ask in order to get help. In hopes of making this process easier to understand, this guide has been created as a general overview to help navigate your child's higher education journey.

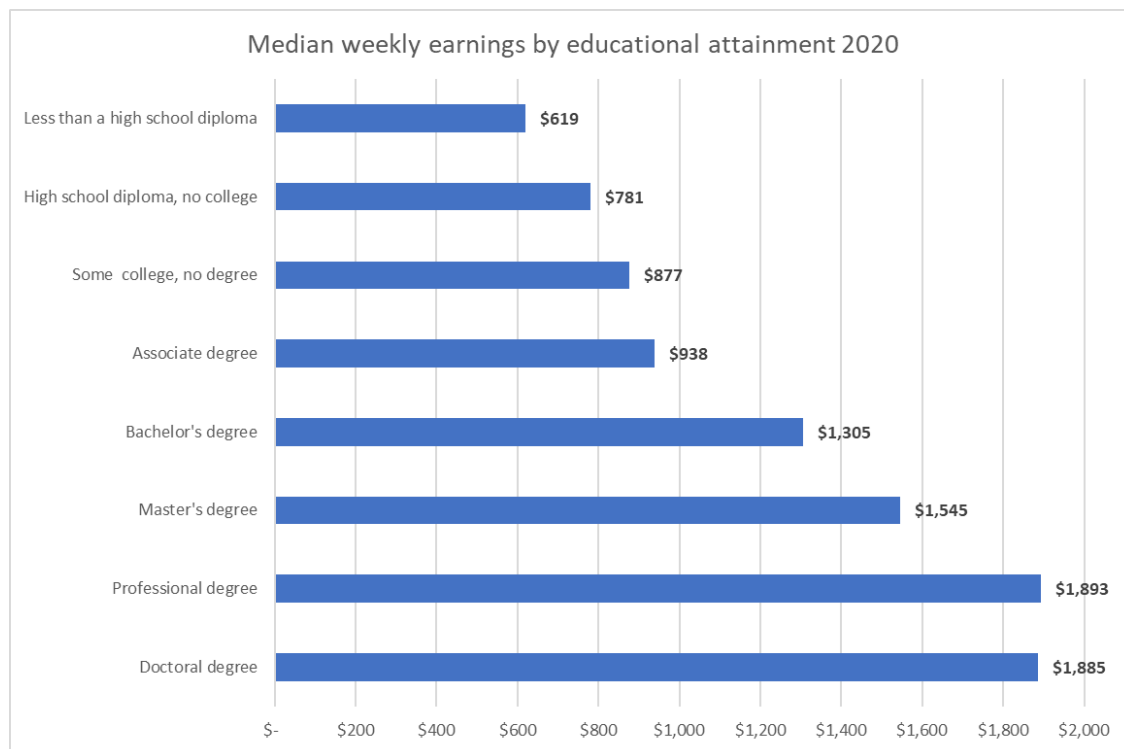
## Why College?

Attending college offers students many advantages and countless opportunities, including:

- a wide range of job opportunities through
  - offering a variety of degrees and certificates;
  - having programs that fit students' interests.
- increased financial stability by
  - earning more money on average over a lifetime than high school graduates;
  - having the potential to own a house earlier in life;
  - having better access to health care

**Table 1**

*Median Weekly Earnings by Educational Attainment 2020*



Note: Torpey, E. (2021, June). *Education pays 2020: Career outlook: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*. <https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2021/data-on-display/education-pays.htm>

## Becoming Involved

One of the most important things to remember is that it is never too early for your student to start thinking about college and possible career options. Thinking about college before high school can be beneficial to your student. As a parent, you can be involved in various ways. These include:

- asking your student what interests them;
- attending college fairs and financial aid events to learn more about available opportunities;
- going on campus visits with your student to community colleges and universities;
- talking about costs associated with college;
- completing your yearly taxes, as your student will need this information to fill out their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); and
- becoming familiar with websites for schools your student is interested in attending.





## High School Preparation

College may seem like it is far away, but it is never too early to start planning. If your student is in high school or will be soon, it is time to start thinking and preparing for post-secondary education. Below are some recommendations to help your student start thinking about college.

- Encourage your student to know their high school guidance counselor;
  - High school guidance counselors are a great resource to help with career and college readiness.
  - Many online resources, such as [My Next Move](#), can help your student start thinking about what career to pursue.
- Encourage your student to research the classes they can take in high school to help prepare them for college;
  - High schools offer [Advancement Placement \(AP\) courses](#), [dual enrollment](#), and [honors classes](#) that can give your students college credit and put them ahead. These classes are more rigorous but can help your student prepare for college!
- Encourage your student to become involved in extracurricular activities that interest them. These can include sports, community service, student government, employment, arts, hobbies, and educational clubs;
  - Extracurricular activities can help your student be more “well-rounded” on college applications and aid in obtaining scholarships.
  - These types of activities provide students with opportunities to learn outside of the traditional classroom setting and interact with many individuals. Studies have shown students who participate in these activities perform better academically.
  - Participating in extracurricular activities can help your student build teamwork and communication skills needed in college and the workforce.
  - Please keep a record of activities they are involved in.
- Encourage your student to plan for college entrance exams, such as the [SAT](#) or [ACT](#); and
  - Research with your student entrance exam requirements for colleges/universities of their interest.
- Research the colleges and universities your student is interested in attending to learn more about the college admission process, financial aid, and scholarships. This information can be found on school websites.

*Disclaimer:* Depending on your state and school requirements, your student may be required to take either the ACT or SAT or both.

## Choices

There are many options available for your student to consider when attending college. There are both private and public institutions, and students also have the option to choose between two-year and four-year institutions. Institution size, types of programs, tuition costs, and on-campus opportunities will vary depending on the school selected. More than ever, students have choices on what they wish to pursue!

### **Two-year institutions:**

Many two-year institutions are community colleges or vocational/training schools. Two-year colleges offer general education and/or specific training for a trade or career. Two-year colleges also allow students to take credits that can be transferred to four-year institutions. Students who enroll in two-year colleges typically earn associate degrees or certificates upon completion.

### **Four-year institutions:**

Four-year institutions offer general education requirements and typically do not delve into specific career disciplines until the last two years. Upon completing most four-year programs, students will have earned a bachelor's degree in their chosen discipline. They may choose to continue and pursue a graduate degree.



## Programs Offered in Higher Education

There are many programs offered in higher education, including certificates and degrees in numerous fields. Certificate programs are generally shorter and less costly, while degree programs are longer and more expensive.

- **Certificates:** Certificate programs are relatively short-term, take approximately three to nine months to complete, and are offered primarily in community colleges or trade schools. They are typically low-cost and designed for students to acquire specialized education and training in fields requiring specific skills. These can include but are not limited to:
  - Business
  - Health Care
  - Technology
  - Education
  - Culinary/Hospitality
  - Welding
  - Plumbing
  - Electrician
  
- **Degree:** A degree program is longer-term and can typically take two to four years to complete depending on the degree pursued and the number of classes taken per semester. Community colleges and trade schools usually offer associate degrees, while universities offer bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs. Degree programs provide students with knowledge in their major along with general education studies.
  - **Associate degrees:** Require at least two years of education beyond high school, depending on the number of credits required for the selected degree program. Associate degree programs can prepare students for a variety of occupations such as nursing, heating and cooling technicians, preschool teachers, cosmetologists, and automotive technicians. Students may also complete an associate degree and transfer to a four-year college or university.
  
  - **Bachelor's degrees:** Require at least four years of study beyond high school, depending on the number of credits required for the selected degree program. Various bachelor's degree programs are available to students and prepare them for occupations such as engineers, registered nurses, teachers, accountants, business analysts, and software developers.

### *Graduate Degrees*

These degrees are advanced academic degrees requiring students to have previously earned a bachelor's degree. They are specialized degrees that encompass professional fields such as engineering, medicine, and law.

- **Master's Degree:** This is a graduate degree that usually takes two to three years to complete. This degree is typically earned after completing a bachelor's program (however, some schools offer the opportunity to complete both simultaneously).
- **Doctoral Degree:** This degree is also referred to as a terminal degree which is the highest level of education that a student can complete in their field of study. The amount of time to complete depends on the program. Doctoral programs require intensive academic study and research. Different programs have different requirements, and some may require their students to complete a master's degree first.



## Factors to Consider

Selecting a school is not an easy choice and multiple factors should be considered. Table 2 compares two-year and four-year institutions to give your student a better comparison of key differences.

**Table 2**

*Factors to Consider: Two-year vs. Four-year Institutions*

Two-year Institutions	Four-year Institutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lower tuition</li><li>• Smaller class sizes</li><li>• Closer to home</li><li>• Students can live at home (few two-year colleges have dorms)</li><li>• Open admission (all may attend)</li><li>• Offer short-term certificate programs</li><li>• Associate degrees</li><li>• Option of transferring to a four-year institution</li><li>• Shorter time to complete</li><li>• More flexibility with class offerings</li><li>• Students can enter the workforce sooner</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Higher tuition</li><li>• Larger class sizes</li><li>• May be farther from home</li><li>• Student may need to live on campus (increases expenses)</li><li>• More selective admissions process</li><li>• Typically offer more activities/clubs</li><li>• Bachelor degrees</li><li>• Offer graduate/professional school</li><li>• Longer time to complete</li><li>• Will take students longer to enter the workforce</li></ul>

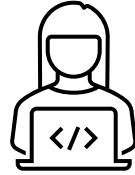
## Learning Environment

Every student's schedule and method of learning are different. Colleges offer a variety of instructional methods for students to learn. Some of the most common ways to learn are:

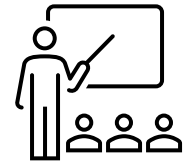
- **Online/Distance:** All class interactions are fully digital.



- **Hybrid:** Classes have both a physical classroom (or laboratory) and an online component.



- **In-person (face-to-face):** All class interactions are fully in person.



## Paying for College

College tuition can be expensive and can increase every year. The average tuition and fees for one academic year at a public four-year institution is \$9,400 compared to \$3,800 at a public two-year institution. The good news is there are many resources available to help your child succeed. There are four main resources that can help pay for college.

- **Government Financial Assistance:** The U.S. Department of Education offers a variety of federal grants to students. Many of these grants are awarded based on financial need, and students do not have to repay back these grants. To apply, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA form). The major grants are listed below, according to the Federal Student Aid website.
  - [Federal Pell Grants](#): Federal Pell Grants are awarded to students based on financial need and can be used towards tuition and fees, room and board, books, and other supplies needed.
  - [Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants \(FSEOG\)](#): This opportunity provides a limited number of undergraduate students with a grant based on the significance of their financial needs.
  - [Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grants](#): These grants are available to students under the age of 24 whose parent(s) or guardian(s) were part of the U.S. armed forces and died as a result of performing military service after 9/11 in Iraq or Afghanistan.
  - [Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education \(TEACH\) Grants](#): These grants are for students who plan to become teachers at the elementary or secondary level. The grant requires the student to serve a minimum of four years as a full-time teacher for low-income populations. If the requirements are not met, the grant will become a loan, and the student must repay it in full.
- **Scholarships:** Colleges offer many scholarship opportunities. Scholarships are a type of funding a student does not have to repay. This money can be received based on factors of financial need, academic merit, talent, and/or for a particular area of study. Additionally, many private organizations and non-profits offer scholarships to help pay for college. Students must apply for scholarships.

**Table 3***Hispanic Scholarship Opportunities Available for Students*

<b>Hispanic Scholarship Opportunities</b>	<b>Link</b>
<b>Adelante Fund</b>	<a href="https://www.adelantefund.org/scholarships/">https://www.adelantefund.org/scholarships/</a>
<b>Ciencia Scholars</b>	<a href="http://www.alliancescholars.org/scholarships.html">http://www.alliancescholars.org/scholarships.html</a>
<b>ACS (American Chemical Society) Scholars Program</b>	<a href="http://www.acs.org/content/acs/en/funding-and-awards/scholarships/acsscholars.html">http://www.acs.org/content/acs/en/funding-and-awards/scholarships/acsscholars.html</a>
<b>AMS (American Meteorological Society)</b>	<a href="https://www.ametsoc.org/ams/index.cfm/information-for/students/ams-scholarships-and-fellowships/">https://www.ametsoc.org/ams/index.cfm/information-for/students/ams-scholarships-and-fellowships/</a>
<b>Chicana/Latina Foundation</b>	<a href="https://chicanalatina.org/programs/scholarships/">https://chicanalatina.org/programs/scholarships/</a>
<b>Hispanic Association of Colleges &amp; Universities (HACU)</b>	<a href="http://www.hacu.net/hacu/Scholarships.asp">http://www.hacu.net/hacu/Scholarships.asp</a>
<b>Hispanic Scholarship Fund (HSF)</b>	<a href="https://www.hsf.net/scholarship">https://www.hsf.net/scholarship</a>
<b>League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)</b>	<a href="http://lulac.org/programs/education/scholarships/">http://lulac.org/programs/education/scholarships/</a>
<b>Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund</b>	<a href="https://www.maldef.org/resources/scholarship-resources/">https://www.maldef.org/resources/scholarship-resources/</a>
<b>Ronald McDonald House/HACER</b>	<a href="https://www.mcdonalds.com/us/en-us/community/hacer.html">https://www.mcdonalds.com/us/en-us/community/hacer.html</a>
<b>TELACU Education Foundation</b>	<a href="http://telacu.com/telacu-education-foundation/college-success-program/toyotatelacu-scholarship/">http://telacu.com/telacu-education-foundation/college-success-program/toyotatelacu-scholarship/</a>

**Table 4***Scholarship Resources Available for Undocumented Students*

<b>Scholarship Resources for Undocumented Students</b>	<b>Link</b>
<b>Immigrants Rising</b>	<a href="https://immigrantsrising.org/resource/list-of-scholarships-and-fellowships/">https://immigrantsrising.org/resource/list-of-scholarships-and-fellowships/</a>
<b>My Undocumented Life</b>	<a href="https://mydocumentedlife.org/category/college-scholarships/">https://mydocumentedlife.org/category/college-scholarships/</a>



- **Loans:** When students acquire a loan, they borrow money to pay for college. Students are expected to repay this loan as well as the interest accrued. The U.S. Department of Education offers the four loans listed below.
  - Direct Subsidized Loans: These loans are for eligible undergraduate students with financial need to help them cover educational expenses. These loans do not accrue any interest until students leave school.
  - Direct Unsubsidized Loans: These loans are for eligible undergraduate, graduate, and professional students and are *not* based on financial need. They accrue interest from the time of disbursement.
  - Direct Plus Loans: These loans can be used by graduate or professional students and parents of dependent undergraduate students to help pay for educational expenses.
  - Direct Consolidation Loans: These loans allow students to combine all their loans into one with a fixed interest rate.
  
- **Work-Study Jobs:** Work-study jobs allow students to earn money to help pay for school by working part-time at their institution. Work-study jobs have the following benefits:
  - mostly located on campus;
  - offer flexible hours around the student's class schedule;
  - allow paychecks from work-study awards not to affect financial aid eligibility; and
  - offer valuable experience for future careers.



## FAFSA

The [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#), also known as FAFSA, is a form students fill out to receive financial assistance from the federal government to help pay for college. Additionally, filling out the form is important because states and colleges may also use this information to award their own scholarships, grants, and loans. The links below will provide you with more guidance on how to fill out this form. Colleges also have financial aid nights to help with this process.

Undocumented students, including Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), are not eligible for federal student aid. However, they may be eligible for state or college financial aid, in addition to private scholarships. For example, in Texas, undocumented students may be eligible to apply to the Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA). To learn more about the [TASFA](#), click here.

Important Note:

- It is important for the parent(s) to file their taxes so that students can fill out this form.

**Link in English to FAFSA:** <https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out#signing-and-submitting-the-fafsa-form>



## College Expenses

College expenses can vary based on the college/university. Costs vary widely depending on the state and whether your student is attending a school in-state or out-of-state. For example, students who are in-state residents pay lower tuition because they live and pay taxes in the same state their institution is located. The best way to find an estimate of the cost is by visiting the college's admissions page. The U.S. Department of Education also has a Net Price Calculator Center that can help you with an estimated net price of attending college. Table 5 shows a breakdown of average tuition and fees for two-year and four-year institutions for one academic year. (This number does not include other educational expenses such as books and supplies.) The academic year consists of a fall semester and a spring semester (some institutions use the term "winter semester" instead of "spring semester").

### Factors to consider in the cost of attendance:

- Tuition and Fees
- Books and Supplies
- Transportation
- Room and Board (if applicable)
- Personal Expenses

### Resources:

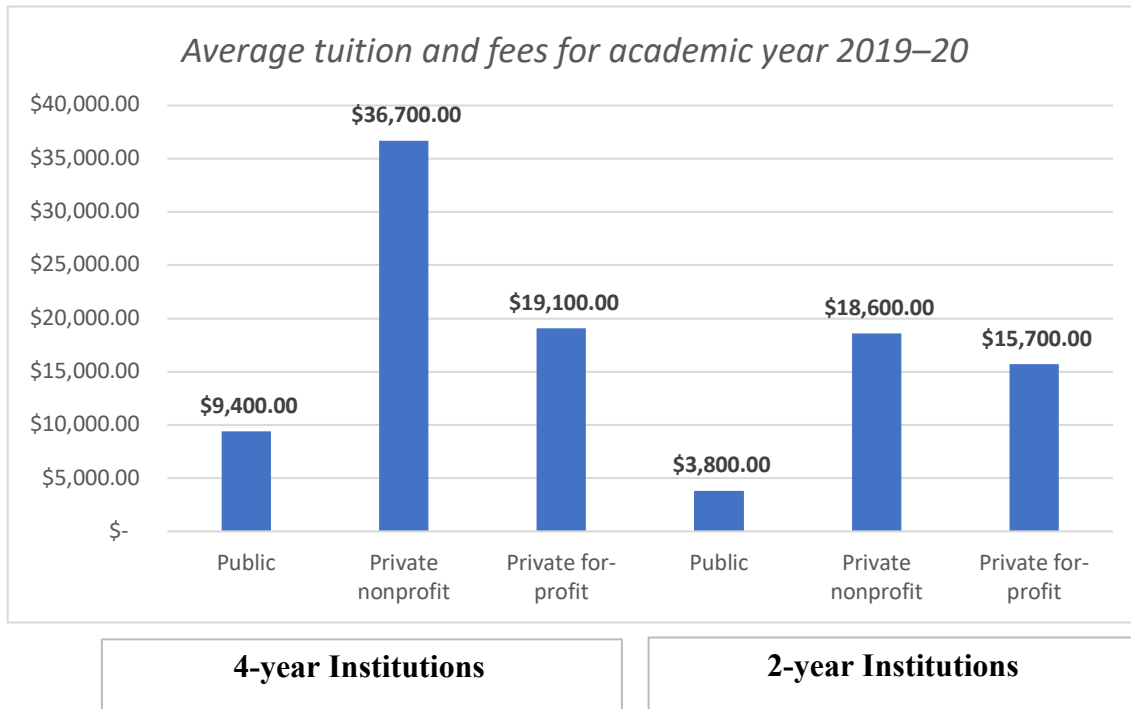
- U.S. Department of Education has a Net Price Calculator Center: <https://collegecost.ed.gov/net-price>



Table 5 below provides the average tuition and fees for four-year and two-year institutions.

**Table 5**

*Average Tuition and Fees Costs of Colleges and Universities*

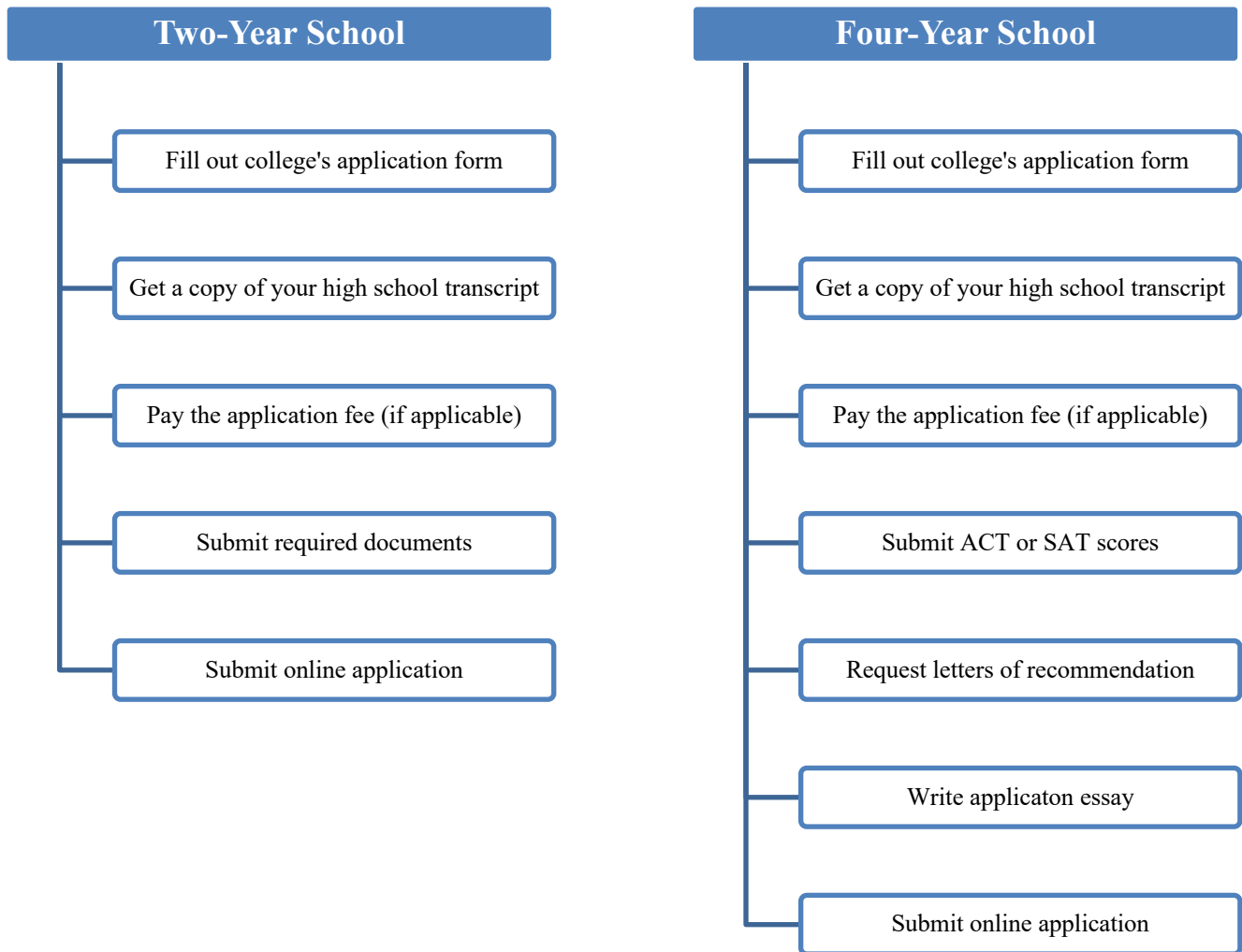


**Note:** National Center for Education Statistics. (2021). Price of Attending an Undergraduate. *Condition of Education*. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. Retrieved January 21, 2022, from <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cua>.

## Application Process

The application process and requirements vary by the type of school your student selects. For example, in some states, such as Texas, students are required to fill out a common application for all public colleges and universities, while private institutions each have their own application.

**Note:** A majority of two-year colleges require students to take a placement test to see what college classes they can take. Additionally, students may have other requirements to fulfill. For example, in Texas, students need to submit a copy of their meningitis vaccination record and sign up for new student orientation.



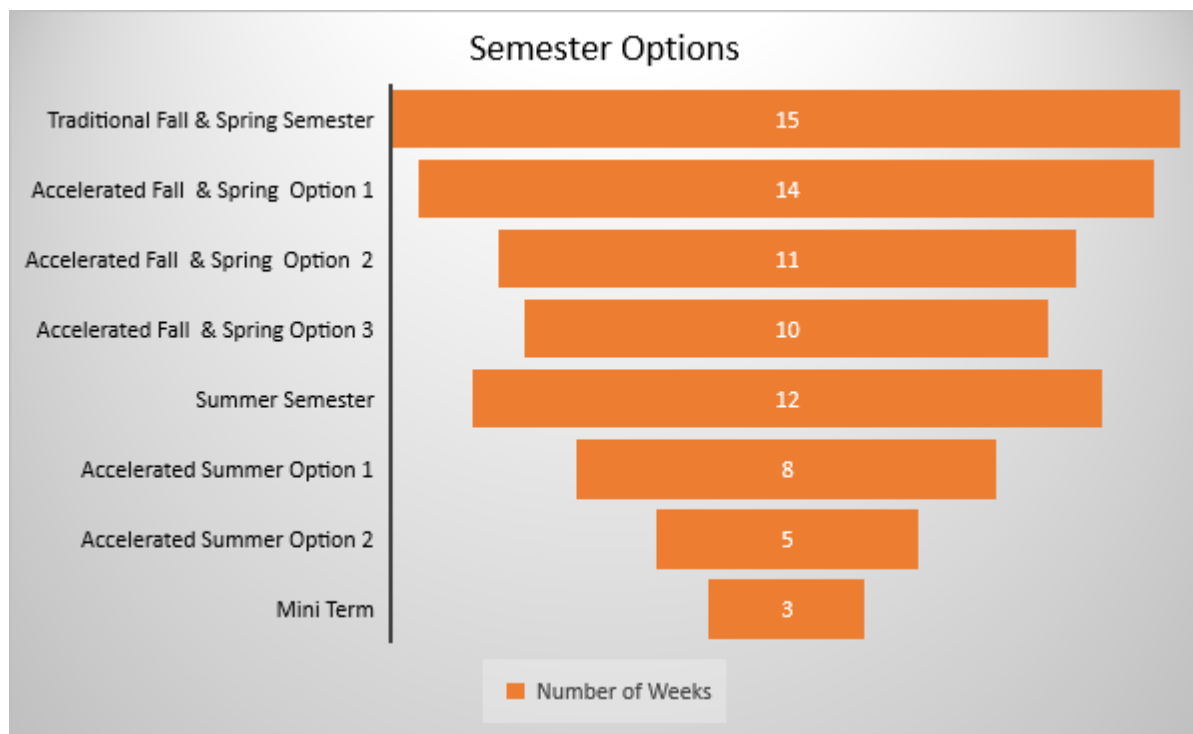
## Student Schedules

Most colleges and universities offer three semesters during each academic year, including fall, spring, and summer. The fall and spring semesters are typically 15 weeks long, while summer can last up to 12 weeks. Additionally, a number of schools are now offering accelerated courses that can last fewer weeks during each semester. These accelerated courses can allow students to finish their degrees much faster. However, these courses are faster-paced and assignments have shorter deadlines.

Students should choose the term option best suited to their learning style. In addition, they should consider which one aligns with their schedules better. Table 6 shows semester options with the number of weeks. Please note that the number of weeks might be slightly different for every college and university.

**Table 6**

### *Semester Options*



**Note:** The number of weeks may vary per institution.

## **Part-Time vs. Full-Time Student Hours**

Students have the option of attending college part-time or full-time. The difference between part-time and full-time student enrollment is the number of credit hours taken during a semester. Part-time students generally enroll in six to eleven credit hours (roughly 2-3 classes), while full-time students enroll in at least 12 credit hours (around four classes). Your student should choose the best option for their situation and think about the time they can commit and their budget. Additionally, they should keep in mind the requirements of their financial aid and scholarships, as both can require students to take a minimum number of credit hours.



## College Resources

Higher education institutions have a variety of campus resources designed to help students succeed. Support your student by encouraging them to discover and take advantage of these fantastic free services. Some of the most common resources are highlighted below and vary depending on your student's school.

### Common Campus Resources

- **Library:** Offers a quiet place for students to study. Additionally, students can access a variety of online research databases and have access to all sorts of books. Librarians can guide students when they have research projects or need resources to complete a class assignment.
- **Career Center:** Offers a variety of services to help students prepare to obtain a job. This includes resume preparation tips, interview coaching, mock interviews, networking opportunities, and many others.
- **Mental Health Services:** Depending on the school, this may include online mental health screenings, telehealth services, and in-person support from licensed professional counselors.
- **Writing Centers:** Center where students can obtain feedback from a writing coach for written assignments at any point in the writing process. The writing center is a great resource to help your student improve their writing skills.
- **Tutoring Center:** Tutoring is available to students struggling in their classes or who simply want additional assistance. This service is provided for a variety of subjects, including math, science, and others.
- **Accessibility Services:** These services are for students with learning disabilities or other types of challenges, including physical. Students can meet with a counselor to determine if special accommodations are needed to help them succeed, such as extra time for exams, specialized technologies, note-taking assistance, and interpreting for the deaf and hard of hearing, among others. This office can have different names depending on the institution. It can include Access Center/Disability Services Office, Accessibility Services and Resources Office, Office of Disability Services, Office of Student Disability Services/ADA, and Disability Resource Center.



- **Computer Labs:** These computers are available to students who need them to work on schoolwork. The computers available *may* have specialized software needed for certain classes.
- **Food Markets/Pantries:** A place where eligible students can obtain free groceries. The type of food received depends on each food market/pantry. The process for receiving this service varies depending on the school.
- **Fitness Center/Recreation Centers:** Allow students to do many forms of exercise and recreational sports.

In addition to all these resources available to students, they have the option to get involved by being part of a student organization. Colleges have many groups students can join, ranging from professional to cultural and many others. Being involved with these groups allows your student to expand their network and build a larger support system.

### **And Don't Forget... Career Path and Planning Resources**

Colleges and universities have an office to help students decide on a degree program and formulate a plan to keep on track towards that goal. This office is predominantly called the Educational Planning, Counseling, and Completion office. Other names for this office are the Counseling Department, Counseling Center, Student Success Center, or Advising Department. Students should have periodic check-ins with their educational planners (counselors or advisors) to ensure they take all the necessary classes required for their program of study. This office also offers services such as career advising and mental health/personal counseling for **FREE**.



## Parent vs. Student Responsibilities

The diagram below provides an overview of responsibilities for both parents and students before and during college.



## **You Are Not Alone!**

You and your student are not alone in this process. There are many resources available. Providing emotional support to your student during this journey will make a huge difference. College coursework is difficult and time-consuming. Your student will encounter many challenges along the way, but please help them stay focused on their goals and remind them that they can do it!

It is important to engage with your student. Check in periodically and ask questions such as the following:

- How are your classes going?
- Are you finding your classes interesting?
- Have you visited any offices at your school?
- Have you met with a counselor or advisor?
- Have you become involved with any clubs?
- Is there anything I can help you with?

And please don't forget to tell them how proud you are of them!



## Glossary

**ACT:** A standardized test used by schools to determine whether a student is eligible for admission to their higher education institution. This test is usually taken during the spring of the junior year of high school and/or fall of the senior year of high school. To learn more, follow this link: <https://www.act.org/>.

**Advancement Placement (AP) Course:** These are courses that eligible students can take while in high school that have the potential of earning them college credits. Many AP classes are offered, such as science, English, math, and history. To learn more: <https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/?affiliateId=ap|home&bannerId=heroa|aps-hp>.

**Dual Enrollment:** Dual enrollment programs are partnerships between school districts and higher education institutions that allow students to enroll in college classes while in high school and earn transferable college credit. In some instances, students take dual-enrollment courses on a college campus, while others may take classes online. They can also be taught by instructors who offer college-level courses at a high school or community center. The cost of these classes depends on whether the participating college or high school covers them.

**Financial Need:** The difference between the cost of college and the ability of students and their parents to pay for school.

**Grade Point Average:** A number that reflects a student's academic achievement at school. It is calculated at the end of each semester.

**Honors Classes:** High school classes that are more academically challenging than regular classes. Taking honors classes can help with scholarships and entrance to target universities/colleges. Students must be eligible to enroll in these classes.

**SAT:** The Scholastic Aptitude Test or SAT is a standardized test used to determine whether a student is eligible for admission to their higher education institution of choice. Like the ACT, this test is taken during the spring of the junior year of high school and/or the fall of the senior year of high school. To learn more, please click here: <https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/sat>.

**Syllabus:** A document distributed in each class at the beginning of the semester provides an overview of the topics that will be covered and a calendar of assignments.

**Transcript:** A document that provides an overview of a student's academic record, including classes taken, credit hours earned, grades, and grade point average (GPA).

## **Tips to Customize this Guide**

One of the hopes for this guide is for colleges to customize it with their college information. Below are tips on where you can insert information relevant to your college to make the guide more useful for the community you serve.

### **I. Purpose of this Guide**

- Personalize the message

### **II. Why College?**

- Add additional statistics such as the student and alumni impact on your community

### **III. Becoming Involved**

- Edit the list as needed

### **IV. High School Preparation**

- Edit the list as needed

### **V. Choices**

- Focus on talking about the benefits of attending your institution (two-year institutions)
- Add a breakdown of your tuition and fees costs

### **VI. Programs Offered in Higher Education**

- Provide a list of the programs offered at your institution, including both certificates and degrees

### **VII. Factors to Consider**

- Edit the list as needed

### **VIII. Learning Environment**

- Expand on the instructional methods of learning at your institution

### **IX. Paying for College**

- Include links and contact information for Financial Aid Office and Scholarship Office
- Include resources for undocumented students as applicable

**X. FAFSA**

- Include your college FAFSA Deadlines and links to your college's webpage
- Include resources for undocumented students as applicable

**XI. College Expenses**

- Include the breakdown of attending college

**XII. Application Process**

- Describe the application process at your institution

**XIII. Student Schedules**

- Edit the information as needed

**XIV. College Resources**

- Edit the list to reflect the resources at your institution and add links

**XIV. College Resources**

- Edit the list to reflect the resources at your institution and add links

**XV. Parent vs. Student Responsibilities**

- Edit the information as needed

**XVI. You Are Not Alone!**

- Personalize the message

**XVII. Glossary**

- Add more terms as needed

*Note:* Talk about how parents can engage at your college—for example, guided tours, special events, or workshops.

## **CONCLUSION**

The need for more available information and resources in Spanish and English led to the creation a bilingual guide. The goal of this guide is to serve as a tool that parents can use to learn more about college and finds ways to be more involved in their children's education journey. The guide provides a high-level overview of various topics that parents will find useful, such as high school preparation, college expenses, and the application process. This guide is also customizable and can be used by colleges, universities, and nonprofits to educate more parents about the higher education processes. Ultimately, the researcher hopes that this guide will help more parents learn about college and encourage them to find ways to be involved.

## CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

### INTRODUCTION

This research study had two main focuses. The first was understanding gaps in Latino parents' knowledge of higher education. The second was determining what colleges are doing to engage these parents. The focus of this research stems from the fact many Latino parents are interested in their children's educational journey but can lack the knowledge to understand processes and become involved. This can be due to many Latino parents lacking a college degree and being unfamiliar with the U.S. educational system. They also often struggle with the English language, among other barriers. As a result, the study's goals were to (1) share the stories of Latino parents through a phenomenological study, and (2) identify Latino parents' higher education knowledge gaps to develop tools that can serve as guidance.

By implementing a phenomenological approach, the researcher interviewed a group of six Latino parents and two college administrators to gain deeper insights. These participants live in the greater Houston area. The analysis of these interviews highlighted the need for bilingual information. Thus, the researcher gathered a variety of information and created a bilingual guide about college. This resource will be useful for parents, colleges, and other nonprofits who can use it as a template. This chapter will provide a discussion of the limitations and delimitations of the study, future recommendations on the subject, and the researcher's reflection and conclusion.



## **APPROACHES FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

One of the goals of the study is for higher education institutions and non-profits to use this guide as a resource for their parents and community. The vision for this bilingual guide is for organizations to see its benefit and be open to customizing and using it on their websites. Because the guide is customizable, it will be easier for colleges and nonprofits to translate it into other languages that reflect the unique communities they serve. However, the researcher will need to gain buy-in and show the potential benefits this guide can offer.

To promote its use, the researcher will reach out to colleges and nonprofits in the greater Houston region. First, she will start by reaching out to a few, two to three organizations, and ask for a meeting. During this time, the researcher will share the research conducted, its findings, and the product developed as a result of the interviews. The researcher will ask if they would consider using this as a resource and give them time to discuss it with other leaders in the organization as well as answer any questions.

The researcher will await feedback on the usefulness of the guide from previously implemented institutions before reaching out to others. Feedback will allow the researcher to establish more credibility with other organizations.

## **LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS**

The research study had many factors that prevented its generalizability. Carminati (2018) describes generalizability as the degree to which the research findings are true for most people at that time. First, the size of the study was relatively small as it represented only six parents and two college administrators in the Houston area, where the Latino population is one of the largest in the nation. Because the study only focused on Houston, there is a possibility that the findings would be different if conducted in other states or regions of the country. Secondly, it is

impossible to know what knowledge gaps most Latino parents have, as each parent is unique and has different knowledge based on their involvement and level of education. With this in mind, it is very difficult to know how colleges nationwide engage with the Latino parent population. Some colleges may engage with parents more than others. Lastly, despite interviews providing rich information on useful topics, the guide may not cover all the information parents may need.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The research highlighted some of the knowledge gaps Latino parents have about college and the need for more bilingual information and engagement from colleges. The interviews were conducted in the greater Houston area and, as a result of the analysis, brought the creation of a bilingual template guide. However, there are several recommendations for future work that will bring more awareness to this timely topic.

- Additional awareness of the importance of Latino parent involvement is needed. Future studies should focus on sharing the stories of other Latino parents in other parts of the country.
- Future research should analyze Latino engagement initiatives and their impact on student success metrics.
- Future work should focus on understanding what independent school districts, colleges, and universities do to engage Latino parents and create partnerships for continued engagement in college.
- Future work should focus on other ethnic groups, such as African Americans and Asians, and explore the involvement of those parents in their children's educational journey.

## **REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSION**

As mentioned in the opening chapter, this study has special meaning to the researcher. She has experience being a first-generation student whose parents had only elementary schooling and lacked the knowledge to provide support during her higher education journey. As a result, her hope with this study is to bring more awareness of the importance of engaging Latino parents in their children's educational journey after high school. Even though every Latino parent will have different stories, and the study cannot be generalized, it brought to life important points that need to be further addressed by higher education institutions and others. This study suggests parents want to be more involved but often lack the knowledge of how to become involved and best support their children. Another compounding factor is the lack of readily available bilingual information to help guide them.

Moreover, as demographics change, colleges and universities around the country need to understand the role Latino parents play in their children's lives. Frey (2018) shares that by 2045, Caucasians will become a minority in America at 49.7%, and Hispanics, Blacks, and Asians together will represent roughly 50.3% of the population. Therefore, leaders must find ways to support their students and find a way to engage their parents. Parental involvement and support are paramount in making a difference in a student's educational journey.

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APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL LETTER

# FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

## INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

1010 Campus Drive FLITE 410 Big Rapids, MI 49307

[www.ferris.edu/irb](http://www.ferris.edu/irb)

Date: October 7, 2021

To: Susan DeCamillis, EdD and Yessenia Torres

From: David R. White, Ph.D, IRB Chair

Re: IRB Application *IRB-FY21-22-27 Exploring the Knowledge Gaps Latino Parents have about College*

The Ferris State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application for using human subjects in the study, *Exploring the Knowledge Gaps Latino Parents have about College (IRB-FY21-22-27)* and Approved this project under Federal Regulations Expedited Review Approved 6. Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes.

Your protocol has been assigned project number IRB-FY21-22-27. Approval mandates that you follow all University policy and procedures, in addition to applicable governmental regulations. Approval applies only to the activities described in the protocol submission; should revisions need to be made, all materials must be approved by the IRB prior to initiation. In addition, the IRB must be made aware of any serious and unexpected and/or unanticipated adverse events as well as complaints and non-compliance issues.

This project has been granted a waiver of consent documentation; signatures of participants need not be collected. Although not documented, informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and participant rights, with the assurance of participant understanding. Informed consent must be provided, even when documentation is waived, and continue throughout the study.

As mandated by Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 46 (45 CFR 46) the IRB requires submission of annual status reports during the life of the research project and a Final Report Form upon study completion. Thank you for your compliance with these guidelines and best wishes for a successful research endeavor.

Regards,



David R. White, Ph.D, IRB Chair

Ferris State University Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR LATINO PARENTS –  
STAGE 1

## Interview Protocol for Stage 1 – Latino Parents

**Date:**

**Start Time:**

**End Time:**

**Place (Include city and state):**

**I.D. of Interviewee:**

**Name of Interviewer:**

Thank you for participating in the interview aspect of my study.

**Description of the Study:** The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore knowledge gaps Latino parents have about college from entry to completion in the Greater Houston area and understand what colleges are currently doing to engage parents.

Our interview today will last approximately 45 minutes, during which I will be asking a series of open-ended questions.

I have shared the informed consent waiver with you, indicating that I will be recording this interview unless you tell me otherwise. I want to make sure that this still applies? If yes: Great, thank you. Please let me know if, at any point, you want me to stop recording. If no: Thank you, I will only take notes of our interview conversation.

Before we begin the interview, do you have any questions?

Please feel free to stop me at any time and ask me any questions.

We will now proceed to the interview questions and will begin recording now.

**Questions to ask:**

- Did you attend college? If so, what level did you complete?
- What are your thoughts about the importance of higher education, and where did these perceptions come from?
- Describe your experiences with your children who are attending or have attended college. Please also let me know whether your child(ren) is/are attending or attended a two-year or four-year institution.
- Were you child(ren) successful in completing their higher education goals?
- Did your children share their educational goals prior to and during college?
- What type of support did you provide your chil(ren) while attending college?
- Please share what you know about college from entry to completion.
- What type of processes or activities (if any) have you been involved in within your children's college?
- If you have not been involved in any activities, what keeps you from being involved?



- What information/resources would be useful in better understanding the collegiate process?

Thank you so much for taking the time to participate in this interview. Your feedback is extremely valuable. All of the information you have provided will be kept confidential. I will be in contact with any next steps if needed. Again, thank you, and do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions.

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR COLLEGE  
ADMINISTRATORS – STAGE 2

## Interview Protocol for Stage 2 – College Administrators

**End Time:**

**Place (Include city and state):**

**I.D. of Interviewee:**

**Name of Interviewer:**

Thank you for participating in the interview aspect of my study.

**Description of the Study:** The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore knowledge gaps Latino parents have about college from entry to completion in the Greater Houston area and understand what colleges are currently doing to engage parents.

Our interview today will last approximately 45 minutes, during which I will be asking a series of open-ended questions.

I have shared the informed consent waiver with you, indicating that I will be recording this interview unless you tell me otherwise. I want to make sure that this still applies? If yes: Great, thank you. Please let me know if, at any point, you want me to stop recording. If no: Thank you, I will only take notes of our interview conversation.

Before we begin the interview, do you have any questions?

Please feel free to stop me at any time and ask me any questions.

We will now proceed to the interview questions and I will begin recording now.

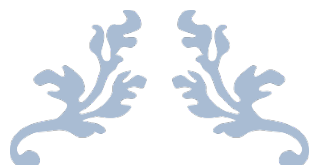
**Questions to ask:**

- Can you give me some background information on the approximate number of Latino students enrolled, their retention and completion rates at your institution?
- What challenge(s), if any, does your institution see Latino students facing?
- What is your college currently doing to engage Latino parents?
  - If someone answers, “nothing,” Why is your college not engaging with Latino parents?
- Have these initiatives/tools been successful? How do you measure their success?
- Are any of the initiatives/tools you mentioned bilingual?
- What is the impact of parent engagement on student retention and success?

- In your opinion, what barriers keep Latino parents from engaging? Any advice on how to overcome them?
- What type of tools might be useful for Latino parents to understand college better?

Thank you so much for taking the time to participate in this interview. Your feedback is extremely valuable. All of the information you have provided will be kept confidential. I will be in contact with any next steps if needed. Again, thank you, and do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions.

## APPENDIX D: SPANISH GUIDE



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# UNA GUÍA PARA PADRES SOBRE LA UNIVERSIDAD

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Una guía diseñada para ayudarlo a aprender más sobre el sistema y el proceso de educación superior.

## Tabla de contenidos

- I. [Propósito de esta Guía](#)
- II. [¿Por qué la universidad?](#)
- III. [Involucrarse](#)
- IV. [Preparación para la escuela secundaria](#)
- V. [Opciones](#)
- VI. [Programas ofrecidos en la educación superior](#)
- VII. [Factores a considerar](#)
- VIII. [Entorno de aprendizaje](#)
- IX. [Pagar la universidad](#)
- X. [FAFSA](#)
- XI. [Gastos universitarios](#)
- XII. [Proceso de solicitud](#)
- XIII. [Horarios de los estudiantes](#)
- XIV. [Recursos universitarios](#)
- XV. [Responsabilidades de padres vs. estudiantes](#)
- XVI. [¡No estás solo!](#)
- XVII. [Glosario](#)



## **Propósito de esta Guía**

Comprender el sistema de educación superior y los procesos universitarios puede ser algo muy difícil y estresante. Con frecuencia, como padres, puede ser difícil saber todo lo que sucede cuando su hijo/hija aplica para la universidad. También puede ser difícil saber qué tan temprano deben comenzar a pensar en la educación superior. Aún más, es difícil saber qué preguntas hacer para obtener ayuda. Con la esperanza de que este proceso sea más fácil de entender, esta guía se ha creado para ayudar a navegar el viaje de educación superior de su hijo/hija.



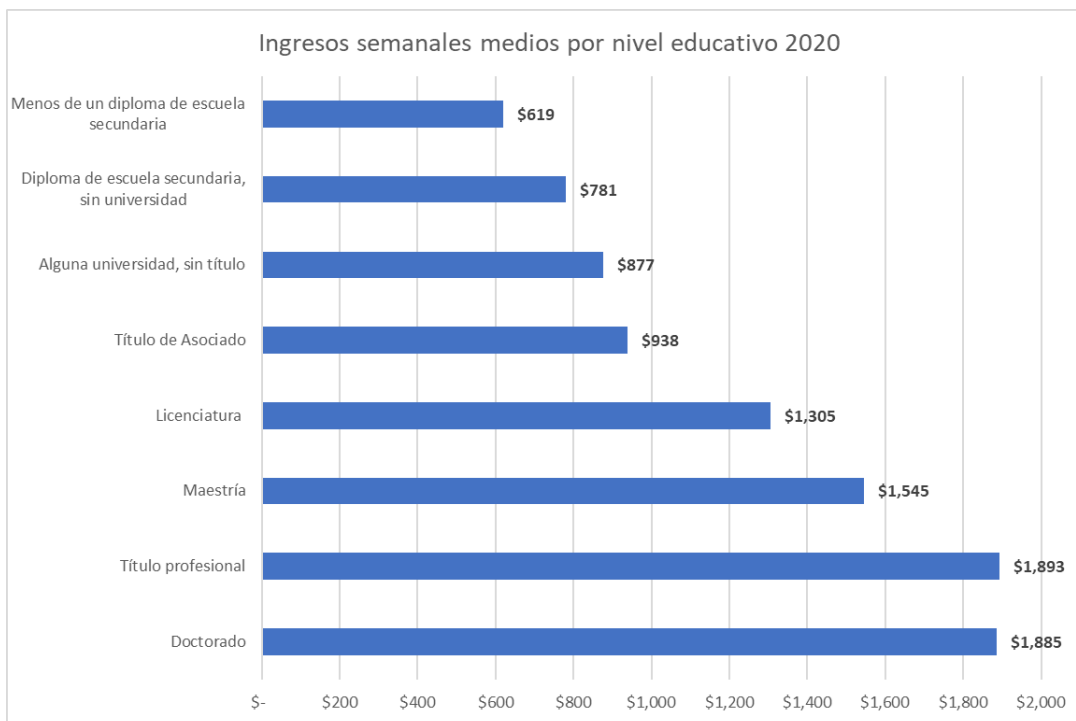
## ¿Por qué la universidad?

Asistir a la universidad ofrece a los estudiantes muchas ventajas e innumerables oportunidades, que incluyen:

- una amplia gama de oportunidades de trabajo a través de
  - ofrecer una variedad de títulos y certificados;
  - tener programas que se ajusten a los intereses de los estudiantes.
- aumento de la estabilidad financiera por
  - ganar más dinero en promedio durante toda la vida que los graduados de la escuela secundaria;
  - tener el potencial de poseer una casa más temprano en la vida;
  - tener un mejor acceso a la atención de la salud

**Tabla 1**

*Ingresos semanales medios por nivel educativo 2020*



*Nota:* Torpey, E. (2021, junio). *La educación paga 2020: Perspectivas de carrera: Oficina de Estadísticas Laborales de los Estados Unidos.* <https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2021/data-on-display/education-pays.htm>

## Involucrarse

Una de las cosas más importantes que debe recordar es que nunca es demasiado pronto para que su estudiante comience a pensar en la universidad y las posibles opciones de carrera. Pensar en la universidad antes de la escuela secundaria puede ser beneficioso para su estudiante. Como padre, usted puede participar de varias maneras. Estos incluyen:

- preguntarle a su estudiante qué le interesa;
- asistir a ferias universitarias y eventos de ayuda financiera para obtener más información sobre las oportunidades disponibles;
- ir a visitas al campus con su estudiante a colegios comunitarios y universidades;
- hablar sobre los costos asociados con la universidad;
- completar sus impuestos anuales, ya que su estudiante necesitará esta información para completar su Solicitud Gratuita de Ayuda Federal para Estudiantes (FAFSA); y
- familiarizarse con los sitios web de las escuelas a las que su estudiante está interesado en asistir.



## Preparación para la escuela secundaria

La universidad puede parecer que está lejos, pero nunca es demasiado pronto para comenzar a planificar. Si su estudiante está en la escuela secundaria o lo estará pronto, es hora de comenzar a pensar y prepararse para la educación postsecundaria. A continuación se presentan algunas recomendaciones para ayudar a su estudiante a comenzar a pensar en la universidad.

- anime a su estudiante a conocer a su consejero de orientación de la escuela secundaria;
  - Los consejeros de orientación de la escuela secundaria son un gran recurso para ayudar con la preparación profesional y universitaria.
  - Muchos recursos en línea, como [My Next Move](#), pueden ayudar a su estudiante a comenzar a pensar en qué carrera seguir.
- anime a su estudiante a investigar las clases que pueden tomar en la escuela secundaria para ayudarlos a prepararse para la universidad;
  - Las escuelas [secundarias ofrecen cursos de Colocación de Avance \(AP\)](#), [inscripción dual](#) (dual enrollment) y [clases de honores](#) (honor classes) que pueden dar a sus estudiantes crédito universitario y ponerlos por delante. ¡Estas clases son más rigurosas, pero pueden ayudar a su estudiante a prepararse para la universidad!
- anime a su estudiante a involucrarse en actividades extracurriculares que le interesen. Estos pueden incluir deportes, servicio comunitario, gobierno estudiantil, empleo, artes, pasatiempos y clubes educativos;
  - Las actividades extracurriculares pueden ayudar a su estudiante a ser más "completo" en las solicitudes universitarias y ayudar a obtener becas.
  - Este tipo de actividades brindan a los estudiantes oportunidades para aprender fuera del entorno tradicional del aula e interactuar con muchas personas. Los estudios de investigación han demostrado que los estudiantes que participan en estas actividades se desempeñan mejor académicamente.
  - Participar en actividades extracurriculares puede ayudar a su estudiante a desarrollar el trabajo en equipo y las habilidades de comunicación necesarias en la universidad y la fuerza laboral.
  - Por favor, mantenga un registro de las actividades en las que están involucrados.
- anime a su estudiante a planificar los exámenes de ingreso a la universidad, como el [SAT](#) o [ACT](#); y
  - Investigue con su estudiante los requisitos del examen de ingreso para los colegios/universidades de su interés.
- investigue los colegios y universidades a los que su estudiante está interesado en asistir para obtener más información sobre el proceso de admisión a la universidad, la ayuda financiera y las becas. Esta información se puede encontrar en los sitios web de las escuelas.

*Descargo de responsabilidad:* Dependiendo de los requisitos de su estado y escuela, es posible que se requiera que su estudiante tome el ACT o el SAT o ambos.

## Opciones

Hay muchas opciones disponibles que su estudiante puede considerar al asistir a la universidad. Hay instituciones privadas y públicas, y los estudiantes también tienen la opción de elegir entre instituciones de dos y cuatro años. El tamaño de la institución, los tipos de programas, los costos de matrícula y las oportunidades en el campus variarán según la escuela seleccionada. ¡Más que nunca, los estudiantes tienen opciones sobre lo que desean seguir!

### **Instituciones de dos años:**

Muchas instituciones de dos años son colegios comunitarios o escuelas vocacionales/de capacitación. Las instituciones de dos años ofrecen educación general y/o capacitación específica para un oficio o carrera. Las instituciones de dos años también permiten a los estudiantes tomar créditos que se pueden transferir a instituciones de cuatro años. Los estudiantes que se inscriben en universidad e instituciones de dos años generalmente obtienen títulos o certificados de asociado al finalizar.

### **Instituciones de cuatro años:**

Las instituciones de cuatro años ofrecen requisitos de educación general y, por lo general, no profundizan en disciplinas profesionales específicas hasta los últimos dos años. Al completar la mayoría de los programas de cuatro años, los estudiantes habrán obtenido una licenciatura en la disciplina elegida. Pueden optar por continuar y obtener un título de posgrado.



## Programas ofrecidos en la educación superior

Hay muchos programas ofrecidos en la educación superior, incluyendo certificados y títulos en numerosos campos. Los programas de certificados son generalmente más cortos y menos costosos, mientras que los títulos universitarios son más largos y más caros.

- **Certificados:** Los programas de certificación son relativamente a corto plazo, tardan aproximadamente de tres a nueve meses en completarse y se ofrecen principalmente en colegios comunitarios o escuelas de comercio. Por lo general, son de bajo costo y están diseñados para que los estudiantes adquieran educación y capacitación especializadas en campos que requieren habilidades específicas. Estos pueden incluir, pero no se limitan a:
  - Negocio
  - Atención médica
  - Tecnología
  - Educación
  - Culinaria/Hospitalidad
  - Soldadura
  - Plomería
  - Electricista
  
- **Título universitario:** Un título universitario es a más largo plazo y generalmente puede tomar de dos a cuatro años para completar, dependiendo del título perseguido y el número de clases tomadas por semestre. Los colegios comunitarios y las escuelas de comercio generalmente ofrecen títulos de asociado, mientras que las universidades ofrecen programas de licenciatura, maestría y doctorado. Los programas de grado proporcionan a los estudiantes conocimientos en su especialidad junto con estudios de educación general.
  - **Títulos de asociado:** Requieren al menos dos años de educación más allá de la escuela secundaria, dependiendo de la cantidad de créditos requeridos para el programa de grado seleccionado. Los programas de grado asociado pueden preparar a los estudiantes para una variedad de ocupaciones, como técnicos de enfermería, calefacción y refrigeración, maestros de preescolar, cosmetólogos y técnicos automotrices. Los estudiantes también pueden completar un título de asociado y transferirse a un colegio o universidad de cuatro años.
  - **Licenciatura:** Requiere al menos cuatro años de estudio más allá de la escuela secundaria, dependiendo de la cantidad de créditos requeridos para el programa de grado seleccionado. Varios programas de licenciatura están disponibles para los estudiantes y los preparan para ocupaciones como ingenieros, enfermeras registradas, maestros, contadores, analistas de negocios y desarrolladores de software.

### *Títulos de Posgrado*

Estos títulos son títulos académicos avanzados que requieren que los estudiantes hayan obtenido previamente una licenciatura. Son títulos especializados que abarcan campos profesionales como la ingeniería, la medicina y el derecho.

- **Maestría:** Este es un título de posgrado que generalmente toma de dos a tres años en completarse. Este grado generalmente se obtiene después de completar un programa de licenciatura (sin embargo, algunas escuelas ofrecen la oportunidad de completar ambos simultáneamente).
- **Doctorado:** Este grado también se conoce como un grado terminal, que es el nivel más alto de educación que un estudiante puede completar en su campo de estudio. La cantidad de tiempo para completar depende del programa. Los programas de doctorado requieren un estudio académico intensivo y de investigación. Los diferentes programas tienen diferentes requisitos, y algunos pueden requerir que sus estudiantes completen primero una maestría.



## Factores a considerar

Seleccionar una escuela no es una opción fácil y se deben considerar múltiples factores. La Tabla 2 compara las instituciones de dos y cuatro años para darle a su estudiante una mejor comparación de las diferencias clave.

**Tabla 2**

*Factores para considerar: Dos años vs. cuatro años*

<b>Instituciones de dos años</b>	<b>Instituciones de cuatro años</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Matrícula más baja</li><li>• Clases más pequeñas</li><li>• Mas cerca de casa</li><li>• Los estudiantes pueden vivir en casa (pocas instituciones de dos años tienen dormitorios)</li><li>• Admisión abierta (todos pueden asistir)</li><li>• Ofrecen programas de certificación a corto plazo</li><li>• Carreras técnica (Associate degrees)</li><li>• Opción de transferir a una institución de cuatro años</li><li>• Menos tiempo para completar</li><li>• Más flexibilidad con las ofertas de clases</li><li>• Los estudiantes pueden incorporarse antes al mercado laboral</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Matrícula más alta</li><li>• Clases más grandes</li><li>• Puede estar más lejos de casa</li><li>• El estudiante puede necesitar vivir en el campus (aumenta los gastos)</li><li>• Proceso de admisión más selectivo</li><li>• Por lo general, ofrecen más actividades/clubes</li><li>• Licenciaturas (Bachelor degrees)</li><li>• Oferta escuela de posgrado/profesional</li><li>• Más tiempo para completar</li><li>• Los estudiantes tardarán más en incorporarse al mercado laboral</li></ul>

## Entorno de aprendizaje

El horario y el método de aprendizaje de cada estudiante son diferentes. Las universidades ofrecen una variedad de métodos de instrucción para que los estudiantes aprendan. Algunas de las formas más comunes de aprender son:

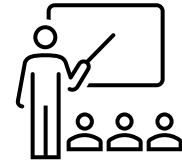
- **En línea/distancia:** Todas las interacciones de clase son completamente digitales.



- **Híbrido:** Las clases tienen un aula física (o laboratorio) y un componente en línea.



- **En persona (cara a cara):** Todas las interacciones de clase son completamente en persona.





## Pagar la universidad

La matrícula universitaria puede ser costosa y puede aumentar cada año. La matrícula y las tarifas promedio para un año académico en una institución pública de cuatro años es de \$9,400 en comparación con \$3,800 en una institución pública de dos años. La buena noticia es que hay muchos recursos disponibles para ayudar a su hijo a tener éxito. Hay cuatro recursos principales que pueden ayudar a pagar la universidad.

- **Asistencia financiera del gobierno (Government financial assistance):** El Departamento de Educación de los Estados Unidos ofrece una variedad de asistencia financiera federal a los estudiantes. Mucha de esta ayuda se otorga en función de la necesidad financiera, y los estudiantes no tienen que devolver esta asistencia financiera. Para aplicar, los estudiantes deben completar la Solicitud Gratuita de Ayuda Federal para Estudiantes (formulario FAFSA). La ayuda principal se describe a continuación.
  - [Becas Federales Pell](#): Las Becas Federales Pell se otorgan a los estudiantes en función de la necesidad financiera y se pueden usar para la matrícula y las tarifas, alojamiento y comida, libros y otros suministros necesarios.
  - [Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants \(FSEOG\)](#): Esta oportunidad proporciona a un número limitado de estudiantes de pregrado una beca estudiantil basada en la necesidad financiera.
  - [Becas de servicio para Irak y Afganistán](#): Estas becas están disponibles para estudiantes menores de 24 años cuyos padres o tutores formaban parte de las fuerzas armadas de los Estados Unidos y murieron como resultado de realizar el servicio militar después del 9/11 en Irak o Afganistán.
  - [Becas de Asistencia para la Educación Docente para la Educación Universitaria y Superior \(TEACH\)](#): Estas becas son para estudiantes que planean convertirse en maestros en el nivel primario o secundario. La beca requiere que el estudiante sirva un mínimo de cuatro años como maestro de tiempo completo para poblaciones de bajos ingresos. Si no se cumplen los requisitos, la beca se convertirá en un préstamo, y el estudiante debe pagarlo en su totalidad.
- **Becas (Scholarships):** Las universidades ofrecen muchas oportunidades de becas. Las becas son un tipo de financiamiento que un estudiante no tiene que pagar. Este dinero se puede recibir en función de factores de necesidad financiera, mérito académico, talento y/o para un área de estudio en particular. Además, muchas organizaciones privadas y organizaciones sin fines de lucro ofrecen becas para ayudar a pagar la universidad. Los estudiantes deben solicitar becas.

**Tabla 3**

*Oportunidades de becas hispanas disponibles para estudiantes*

Oportunidades de becas hispanas	Enlace
<b>Adelante Fund</b>	<a href="https://www.adelantefund.org/scholarships/">https://www.adelantefund.org/scholarships/</a>
<b>Becarios de Ciencia</b>	<a href="http://www.alliancescholars.org/scholarships.html">http://www.alliancescholars.org/scholarships.html</a>
<b>Programa de Becarios de la ACS (American Chemical Society)</b>	<a href="http://www.acs.org/content/acs/en/funding-and-awards/scholarships/acsscholars.html">http://www.acs.org/content/acs/en/funding-and-awards/scholarships/acsscholars.html</a>
<b>AMS (Sociedad Meteorológica Americana)</b>	<a href="https://www.ametsoc.org/ams/index.cfm/information-for/students/ams-scholarships-and-fellowships/">https://www.ametsoc.org/ams/index.cfm/information-for/students/ams-scholarships-and-fellowships/</a>
<b>Fundación Chicana/Latina</b>	<a href="https://chicanalatina.org/programs/scholarships/">https://chicanalatina.org/programs/scholarships/</a>
<b>Asociación Hispana de Colegios y Universidades (HACU)</b>	<a href="http://www.hacu.net/hacu/Scholarships.asp">http://www.hacu.net/hacu/Scholarships.asp</a>
<b>Fondo de Becas Hispanas (HSF)</b>	<a href="https://www.hsf.net/scholarship">https://www.hsf.net/scholarship</a>
<b>Liga de Ciudadanos Latinoamericanos Unidos (LULAC)</b>	<a href="http://lulac.org/programs/education/scholarships/">http://lulac.org/programs/education/scholarships/</a>
<b>Fondo Mexicano Americano de Defensa Legal y Educación</b>	<a href="https://www.maldef.org/resources/scholarship-resources/">https://www.maldef.org/resources/scholarship-resources/</a>
<b>Ronald McDonald House/HACER</b>	<a href="https://www.mcdonalds.com/us/en-us/community/hacer.html">https://www.mcdonalds.com/us/en-us/community/hacer.html</a>
<b>Fundación Educativa TELACU</b>	<a href="http://telacu.com/telacu-education-foundation/college-success-program/toyotatelacu-scholarship/">http://telacu.com/telacu-education-foundation/college-success-program/toyotatelacu-scholarship/</a>

**Tabla 4**

*Recursos de becas disponibles para estudiantes indocumentados*

Recursos de becas para estudiantes indocumentados	Enlace
<b>Los inmigrantes en ascenso</b>	<a href="https://immigrantsrising.org/resource/list-of-scholarships-and-fellowships/">https://immigrantsrising.org/resource/list-of-scholarships-and-fellowships/</a>
<b>Mi vida indocumentada</b>	<a href="https://mydocumentedlife.org/category/college-scholarships/">https://mydocumentedlife.org/category/college-scholarships/</a>

- **Préstamos (Loans):** Cuando los estudiantes adquieren un préstamo, piden dinero prestado para pagar la universidad. Se espera que los estudiantes paguen este préstamo, así como los intereses acumulados. El Departamento de Educación de los Estados Unidos ofrece los cuatro préstamos que se enumeran a continuación.
  - [Préstamos subsidiados directos](#): Estos préstamos son para estudiantes de pregrado elegibles con necesidad financiera para ayudarlos a cubrir los gastos educativos. Estos préstamos no acumulan ningún interés hasta que los estudiantes dejan la escuela.
  - [Préstamos directos sin subsidio](#): Estos préstamos son para estudiantes elegibles de pregrado, posgrado y profesionales y *no se basan* en la necesidad financiera. Acumulan intereses desde el momento del desembolso.
  - [Préstamos Direct Plus](#): Estos préstamos pueden ser utilizados por estudiantes graduados o profesionales y padres de estudiantes de pregrado dependientes para ayudar a pagar los gastos educativos.
  - [Préstamos de consolidación directa](#): Estos préstamos permiten a los estudiantes combinar todos sus préstamos en uno con una tasa de interés fija.
- **Trabajos de trabajo y estudio (Work-Study Jobs):** Los trabajos de trabajo y estudio permiten a los estudiantes ganar dinero para ayudar a pagar la escuela trabajando a tiempo parcial en su institución. Los trabajos de trabajo y estudio tienen los siguientes beneficios:
  - en su mayoría ubicado en el campus;
  - ofrecen horarios flexibles en torno al horario de clases del estudiante;
  - permiten que los cheques de este empleo no afecten la elegibilidad de la ayuda financiera; y
  - ofrecen una valiosa experiencia para futuras carreras.



## FAFSA

La [Solicitud Gratuita de Ayuda Federal para Estudiantes](#), también conocida como FAFSA, es un formulario que los estudiantes completan para recibir asistencia financiera del gobierno federal para ayudar a pagar la universidad. Además, completar el formulario es importante porque los estados y las universidades también pueden usar esta información para otorgar sus propias becas, préstamos, y otras ayudas financieras. Los enlaces a continuación le proporcionarán más información sobre cómo completar este formulario. Las universidades también tienen noches de ayuda financiera para ayudar con este proceso.

Los estudiantes indocumentados, incluida la Acción Diferida para los Llegados en la Infancia (DACA), no son elegibles para recibir ayuda federal para estudiantes. Sin embargo, pueden ser elegibles para ayuda financiera estatal o universitaria, además de becas privadas. Por ejemplo, en Texas, los estudiantes indocumentados pueden ser elegibles para solicitar la Solicitud de Ayuda Financiera Estatal de Texas (TASFA). Para obtener más información sobre el [TASFA](#), haga clic aquí.

Nota importante:

- Es importante que los padres presenten sus impuestos para que los estudiantes puedan completar este formulario.

**Enlace en español a FAFSA:** <https://studentaid.gov/es/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out>



## Gastos universitarios

Los gastos universitarios pueden variar según el colegio/ universidad. Los costos varían ampliamente dependiendo del estado y si su estudiante asiste a una escuela dentro o fuera del estado. Por ejemplo, los estudiantes que son residentes en el estado pagan una matrícula más baja porque viven y pagan impuestos en el mismo estado en el que se encuentra su institución. La mejor manera de encontrar una estimación del costo es visitando la página de admisiones de la universidad. El Departamento de Educación de los Estados Unidos también tiene un Centro de Calculadora de Precios Netos que puede ayudarlo con un estimado de cuanto cuesta asistir a la universidad. La Tabla 5 muestra un desglose de la matrícula y las tarifas promedio para las instituciones de dos y cuatro años para un año académico. (Este número no incluye otros gastos educativos como libros y artículos escolares). El año académico consiste en un semestre de otoño y un semestre de primavera (algunas instituciones usan el término "semestre de invierno" en lugar de "semestre de primavera").

### Factores a considerar en el costo de asistencia

- Matrícula y tarifas
- Libros y artículos escolares
- Transporte
- Alojamiento y comida (si corresponde)
- Gastos Personales

### Recursos:

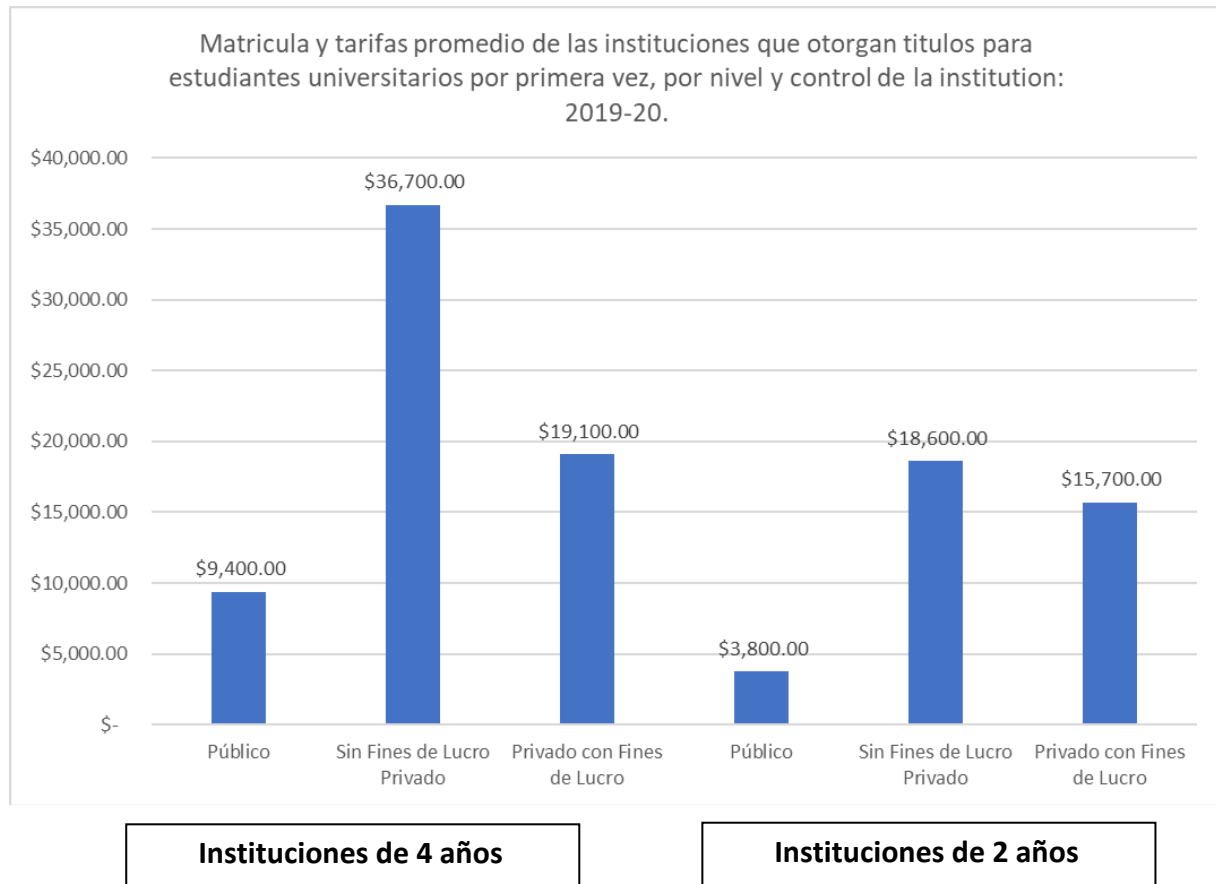
- El Departamento de Educación de los Estados Unidos tiene un Centro de Calculadora de Precios Netos: <https://collegecost.ed.gov/net-price>



La Tabla 5 infra se presenta la matrícula y las tasas medias de las instituciones de cuatro y dos años.

**Tabla 5**

*Costos promedio de matrícula y tarifas de colegios y universidades*

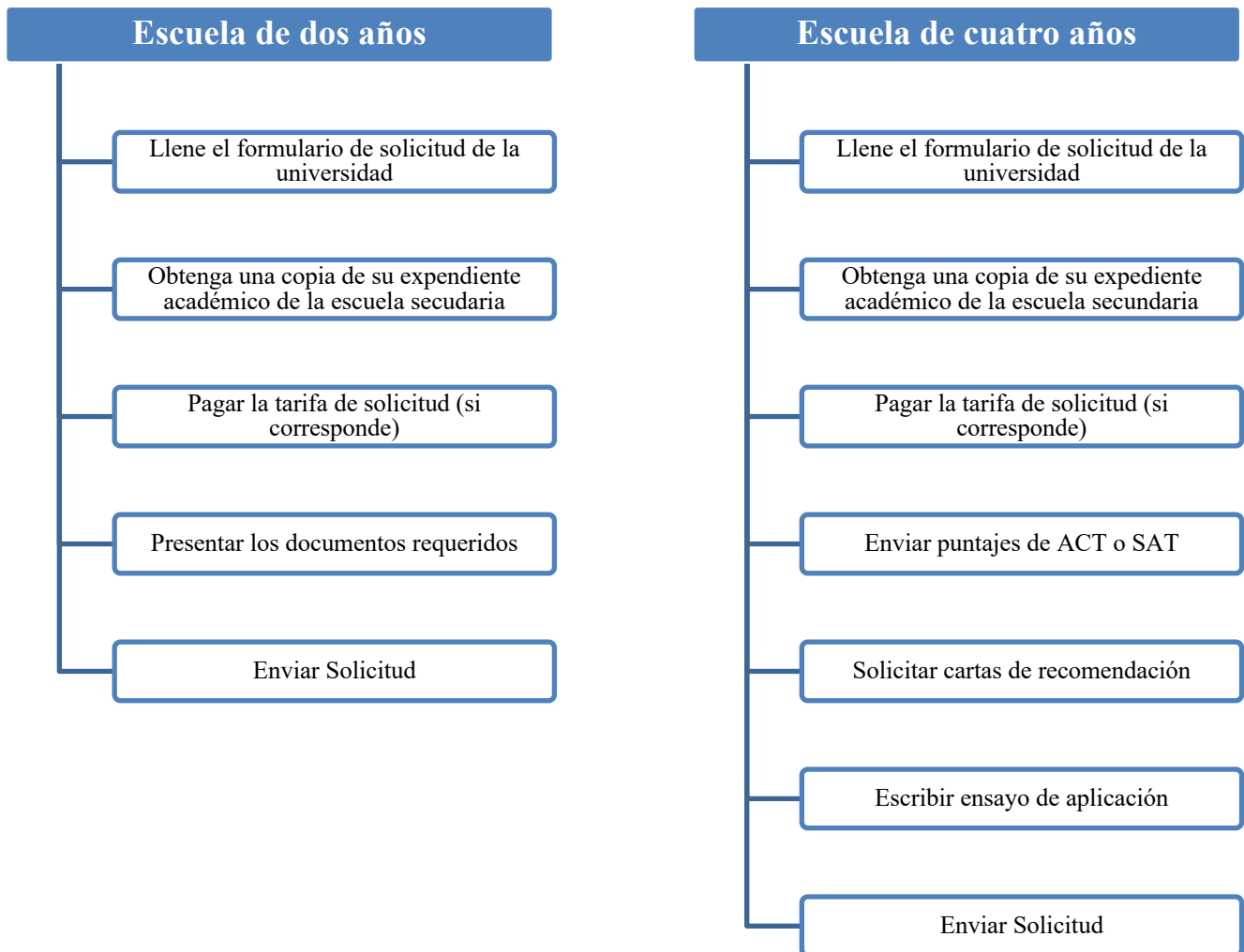


**Nota:** Centro Nacional de Estadísticas de Educación. (2021). Precio de asistir a un pregrado. *Condición de la educación*. Departamento de Educación de los Estados Unidos, Instituto de Ciencias de la Educación. Consultado el 21 de enero de 2022 en <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cua>.

## Proceso de solicitud

El proceso de solicitud y los requisitos varían según el tipo de escuela que seleccione su estudiante. Por ejemplo, en algunos estados, como Texas, los estudiantes deben completar una solicitud común (common application) para todos los colegios y universidades públicas, mientras que las instituciones privadas tienen su propia solicitud.

*Nota:* La mayoría de las universidades de dos años requieren que los estudiantes tomen una prueba de nivel para ver qué clases universitarias pueden tomar. Además, los estudiantes pueden tener otros requisitos que cumplir. Por ejemplo, en Texas, los estudiantes deben presentar una copia de su registro de vacunación contra la meningitis y registrarse para recibir orientación para nuevos estudiantes.



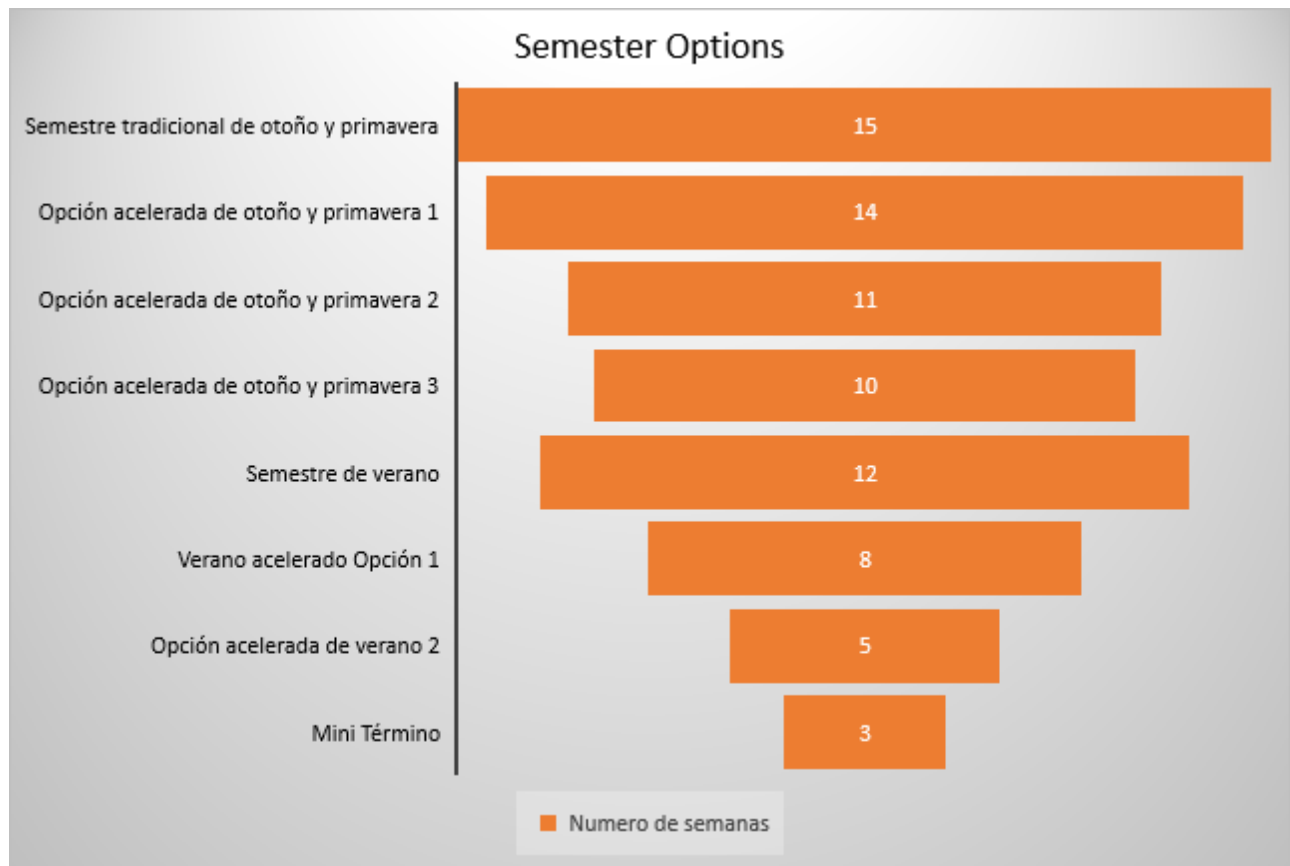
## Horarios de los estudiantes

La mayoría de los colegios y universidades ofrecen tres semestres durante cada año académico, incluyendo otoño, primavera y verano. Los semestres de otoño y primavera suelen durar 15 semanas, mientras que el verano puede durar hasta 12 semanas. Además, varias escuelas ahora ofrecen cursos acelerados que pueden durar menos semanas durante cada semestre. Estos cursos acelerados pueden permitir a los estudiantes terminar sus títulos mucho más rápido. Sin embargo, estos cursos son más rápidos y las tareas tienen plazos más cortos.

Los estudiantes deben elegir la opción de término que mejor se adapte a su estilo de aprendizaje. Además, deben considerar cuál se alinea mejor con sus horarios. La Tabla 4 muestra las opciones semestrales con el número de semanas. Tenga en cuenta que el número de semanas puede ser ligeramente diferente para cada colegio y universidad.

**Tabla 6**

### *Opciones semestrales*



**Nota:** El número de semanas puede variar según la institución.



## **Horas de estudiante a tiempo parcial vs. horas de estudiante a tiempo completo**

Los estudiantes tienen la opción de asistir a la universidad a tiempo parcial o completo. La diferencia entre la inscripción de estudiantes a tiempo parcial y a tiempo completo es la cantidad de horas de crédito tomadas durante un semestre. Los estudiantes a tiempo parcial generalmente se inscriben en seis a once horas de crédito (aproximadamente 2-3 clases), mientras que los estudiantes de tiempo completo se inscriben en al menos 12 horas de crédito (alrededor de cuatro clases). Su estudiante debe elegir la mejor opción para su situación y pensar en el tiempo que puede comprometerse y su presupuesto. Además, deben tener en cuenta los requisitos de su ayuda financiera y becas, ya que ambas pueden requerir que los estudiantes tomen un número mínimo de horas de crédito.



## Recursos universitarios

Las instituciones de educación superior tienen una variedad de recursos del campus diseñados para ayudar a los estudiantes a tener éxito. Apoye a su estudiante alentándolo a descubrir y aprovechar estos fantásticos servicios gratuitos. Algunos de los recursos más comunes se destacan a continuación y varían según la escuela de su estudiante.

### Recursos comunes del campus

- **Biblioteca (Library):** Ofrece un lugar tranquilo para que los estudiantes estudien. Además, los estudiantes pueden acceder a una variedad de bases de datos de investigación en línea y tener acceso a todo tipo de libros. Los bibliotecarios pueden guiar a los estudiantes cuando tienen proyectos de investigación o necesitan recursos para completar una tarea de clase.
- **Centro de carreras (Career Center):** Ofrece una variedad de servicios para ayudar a los estudiantes a prepararse para obtener un trabajo. Esto incluye consejos de preparación de currículum, entrenamiento de entrevistas, entrevistas simuladas, oportunidades de establecer contactos y muchos otros.
- **Servicios de salud mental (Mental Health Services):** Dependiendo de la escuela, esto puede incluir exámenes de salud mental en línea, servicios de telesalud y apoyo en persona de consejeros profesionales con licencia.
- **Centros de escritura (Writing Centers):** Centro donde los estudiantes pueden obtener comentarios de un entrenador de escritura para tareas escritas en cualquier momento del proceso de escritura. El centro de escritura es un gran recurso para ayudar a su estudiante a mejorar sus habilidades de escritura.
- **Centro de tutoría (Tutoring Center):** La tutoría está disponible para los estudiantes que tienen dificultades en sus clases o que simplemente desean asistencia adicional. Este servicio se proporciona para una variedad de materias, incluidas matemáticas, ciencias y otras.
- **Servicios de accesibilidad (Accessibility Services):** Estos servicios son para estudiantes con discapacidades de aprendizaje u otros tipos de desafíos, incluidos los físicos. Los estudiantes pueden reunirse con un consejero para determinar si se necesitan adaptaciones especiales para ayudarlos a tener éxito, como tiempo adicional para exámenes, tecnologías especializadas, asistencia para tomar notas e interpretación para sordos y personas con problemas de audición, entre otros. Esta oficina puede tener diferentes nombres dependiendo de la institución. Puede incluir El Centro de Acceso/Oficina de Servicios para Discapacitados, la Oficina de Servicios y Recursos de Accesibilidad, la Oficina de Servicios para Discapacitados, la Oficina de Servicios para Estudiantes con Discapacidades/ADA y el Centro de Recursos para Discapacitados.

- **Laboratorios de computación (Computer Labs):** Estas computadoras están disponibles para los estudiantes que las necesitan para trabajar en las tareas escolares. Las computadoras disponibles *pueden* tener el software especializado necesario para ciertas clases.
- **Mercados de alimentos/despensas (Food Markets/Pantries):** Un lugar donde los estudiantes elegibles pueden obtener comestibles gratis. El tipo de alimento recibido depende de cada mercado de alimentos/despensa. El proceso para recibir este servicio varía dependiendo de la escuela.
- **Gimnasio/Centros de recreación (Fitness Center/Recreation Centers):** Permita a los estudiantes hacer muchas formas de ejercicio y deportes recreativos.

Además de todos estos recursos disponibles para los estudiantes, tienen la opción de involucrarse siendo parte de una organización estudiantil. Las universidades tienen muchos grupos a los que los estudiantes pueden unirse, que van desde profesionales hasta culturales y muchos otros. Estar involucrado con estos grupos le permite a su estudiante expandir su red y construir un sistema de apoyo más grande.

### **Y no lo olvides... Trayectoria profesional y recursos de planificación**

Los colegios y universidades tienen una oficina para ayudar a los estudiantes a decidir sobre un programa de grado y formular un plan para mantenerse en el camino hacia ese objetivo. Esta oficina se llama predominantemente la oficina de Planificación Educativa, Consejería y Finalización. Otros nombres para esta oficina son el Departamento de Consejería, el Centro de Consejería, el Centro de Éxito Estudiantil o el Departamento de Asesoramiento. Los estudiantes deben tener registros periódicos con sus planificadores educativos (consejeros o asesores) para asegurarse de que toman todas las clases necesarias requeridas para su programa de estudio. Esta oficina también ofrece servicios como asesoramiento profesional y salud mental /asesoramiento personal **GRATIS**.



## Responsabilidades de padres vs. estudiantes

El siguiente diagrama proporciona una visión general de las responsabilidades tanto para los padres como para los estudiantes antes y durante la universidad.



## ¡No estás solo!

Usted y su estudiante no están solos en este proceso. Hay muchos recursos disponibles. Proporcionar apoyo emocional a su estudiante durante este viaje hará una gran diferencia. Los cursos universitarios son difíciles y requieren mucho tiempo. Su estudiante se encontrará con muchos desafíos en el camino, pero por favor ayúdelo a mantenerse enfocado en sus metas y recuérdelo que puede hacerlo.

Es importante comprometerse con su estudiante. Regístrese periódicamente y haga preguntas como las siguientes:

- ¿Cómo van tus clases?
- ¿Te parecen interesantes tus clases?
- ¿Has visitado alguna oficina en su escuela?
- ¿Te has reunido con un consejero o asesor?
- ¿Te has involucrado con algún club?
- ¿Hay algo en lo que pueda ayudarte?

¡Y por favor, no te olvides de decirles lo orgulloso que estás de ellos!



## Glosario

**ACT:** Una prueba estandarizada utilizada por las escuelas para determinar si un estudiante es elegible para la admisión a su institución de educación superior. Esta prueba generalmente se toma durante la primavera del tercer año de la escuela secundaria y/o el otoño del último año de la escuela secundaria. Para obtener más información, siga este enlace: <https://www.act.org/content/act/en/students-and-parents/spanish-language-resources.html>

**Curso de Colocación de Avance (AP):** Estos son cursos que los estudiantes elegibles pueden tomar mientras están en la escuela secundaria que tienen el potencial de obtener créditos universitarios. Se ofrecen muchas clases de AP, como ciencias, inglés, matemáticas e historia. Para obtener más información: <https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/?affiliateId=ap|home&bannerId=heroa|aps-hp>.

**Inscripción dual:** Los programas de inscripción dual son asociaciones entre distritos escolares e instituciones de educación superior que permiten a los estudiantes inscribirse en clases universitarias mientras están en la escuela secundaria y obtener créditos universitarios transferibles. En algunos casos, los estudiantes toman cursos de doble inscripción en un campus universitario, mientras que otros pueden tomar clases en línea. También pueden ser impartidos por instructores que ofrecen cursos de nivel universitario en una escuela secundaria o centro comunitario. El costo de estas clases depende de si la universidad o escuela secundaria participante las cubre.

**Necesidad financiera:** La diferencia entre el costo de la universidad y la capacidad de los estudiantes y sus padres para pagar la escuela.

**Promedio de calificaciones:** Un número que refleja el rendimiento académico de un estudiante en la escuela. Se calcula al final de cada semestre.

**Clases de honores:** Clases de secundaria que son más rigurosas académicamente que las clases regulares. Tomar clases de honores puede ayudar con las becas y la entrada a universidades/colegios. Los estudiantes deben ser elegibles para inscribirse en estas clases.

**SAT:** La Prueba de Aptitud Escolar o SAT es una prueba estandarizada utilizada para determinar si un estudiante es elegible para la admisión a la institución de educación superior de su elección. Al igual que el ACT, esta prueba se toma durante la primavera del tercer año de la escuela secundaria y / o el otoño del último año de la escuela secundaria. Para obtener más información, haga clic aquí: <https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/sat>.

**Plan de estudios:** Un documento distribuido en cada clase al comienzo del semestre proporciona una visión general de los temas que se cubrirán y un calendario de tareas.

**Transcripción:** Un documento que proporciona una visión general del expediente académico de un estudiante, incluidas las clases tomadas, las horas de crédito obtenidas, las calificaciones y el promedio de calificaciones (GPA).

## Consejos para personalizar esta guía

Una de las esperanzas de esta guía es que las universidades la personalicen con su información universitaria. A continuación se presentan consejos sobre dónde puede insertar información relevante para su universidad para que la guía sea más útil para la comunidad a la que sirve.

- I. Propósito de esta Guía**
  - Personalizar el mensaje
- II. ¿Por qué la universidad?**
  - Agregue estadísticas adicionales, como el impacto de los estudiantes y ex alumnos en su comunidad
- III. Involucrarse**
  - Edite la lista según sea necesario
- IV. Preparación para la escuela secundaria**
  - Edite la lista según sea necesario
- V. Opciones**
  - Concéntrese en hablar sobre los beneficios de asistir a su institución (instituciones de dos años)
  - Agregue un desglose de sus costos de matrícula y tarifas
- VI. Programas ofrecidos en la educación superior**
  - Proporcione una lista de los programas ofrecidos en su institución, incluidos los certificados y títulos
- VII. Factores a considerar**
  - Edite la lista según sea necesario
- VIII. Entorno de aprendizaje**
  - Amplíe los métodos de instrucción de aprendizaje en su institución
- IX. Pagar la universidad**
  - Incluya enlaces e información de contacto para la Oficina de Ayuda Financiera y la Oficina de Becas
  - Incluir recursos para estudiantes indocumentados según corresponda
- X. FAFSA**
  - Incluya los plazos de la FAFSA de su universidad y los enlaces a la página web de su universidad
  - Incluir recursos para estudiantes indocumentados según corresponda

- XI. Gastos universitarios**
  - Incluir el desglose de la asistencia a la universidad
- XII. Proceso de solicitud**
  - Describa el proceso de solicitud en su institución
- XIII. Horarios de los estudiantes**
  - Edite la información según sea necesario
- XIV. Recursos universitarios**
  - Edite la lista para reflejar los recursos de su institución y agregue enlaces
- XV. Responsabilidades de padres vs. Estudiantes**
  - Edite la información según sea necesario
- XVI. ¡No estás solo!**
  - Personalizar el mensaje
- XVII. Glosario**
  - Agregue más términos según sea necesario

*Nota:* Hable sobre cómo los padres pueden participar en su universidad, por ejemplo, visitas guiadas, eventos especiales o talleres.