INCREASING LATINX FACULTY IN THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. Introduction

Despite an increasing Latinx enrollment rate in the California Community Colleges (CCCs), there are far too few Latinx students who complete their educational goals (earning an associate degree, a certificate, or transferring to a four-year university) within six years. This policy brief provides an intervention recommendation to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, encouraging the increase of Latinx faculty and administrators in the CCCs for Latinx student success.

II. California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) is the entity that oversees the success of the community college system. The CCCCO may benefit from the information in this policy brief to support the goals in their *Vision for Success*, ensuring that students of all backgrounds succeed in their goals.

III. Background

Minority groups are subject to systemic and institutional inequities. Often, minority and low-income groups are segregated within cities, which results in many Latinx students attending low-performing schools and being less prepared for college. Once in college, Latinx students also take longer to reach their educational goals as they are more likely to work full-time.

IV. Need for Intervention

Low Latinx student success is not only an equity issue, it also has unintended consequences that may lead to economic failure. The Latinx population is the fastest growing in California. It is essential that Latinx students are educated to meet the estimated demand for professional workers in the near future.

V. Increasing Latinx Faculty and Administrators

Latinx faculty and administrators are likely to provide support to Latinx students and advocate for resources on their behalf. There is statistical evidence of a positive relationship; a 0.64% increase in Latinx student completion for every 1% increase in Latinx full-time faculty in a CCC.

VI. Benefits of Increasing Diversity

Increasing diversity among institution staff provides benefits at the individual and institutional levels. Students develop greater cultural awareness and diverse perspectives, while institutions develop a change in their culture and adopt a commitment to diversity and inclusion.

VII. Challenges of Increasing Diversity

The diversification of institutions is challenging due to a bias, or preference, for whiteness that allows people of color to be overlooked. In addition, the strategies for increasing diversity have been strongly opposed, as shown by the approval of Proposition 209 (1996) and the failure of Proposition 16 (2020). There is also a challenge to maintain diversity. Diversity work often falls on people of color, and without support, these staff members will leave their positions.

VIII. Policy Suggestions

Policy suggestions to increase Latinx faculty and administrators in the CCCs are (1) implementing a soft affirmative action (SAA) to increase the accessibility of positions to candidates of color; (2) implementing expansive outreach and hiring practices with a diverse hiring committee; and (3) providing support and professional growth opportunities to promote retention of minority staff.

IX. Conclusion

All three suggestions are important; however, SAA would be the most beneficial to prioritize as it is the best achieves political and institutional acceptability. SAA is widely accepted for its merit-based approach to hiring candidates. When additional resources are available, expansive outreach, hiring, and retention practices can be implemented to further allow the success of Latinx students.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

Although Latinx students have been historically challenged in accessing higher education, the enrollments of Latinx students in California higher education institutions have increased over the recent decades. Much of these enrollments are in the community college system as these colleges are more affordable and provide an array of courses for academic and technical career paths. Despite Latinx student (ages 18-24) enrollment in community colleges being close to parity to their population representation in California, 47% and 45% respectively (Gordon, 2018), Latinx students remain greatly underrepresented in completion rates from these colleges.

The System's Chancellor Office defines completion (or success) in the California Community Colleges (CCCs) as earning an associate degree, earning a certificate, or transferring to a four-year university within six years for those choosing this as their goal in the first semester of attendance. Of Latinx students in the CCCs, only 42% achieve this success, 12 percentage points lower than the completion rate of white students (Gordon, 2018). There is a pressing need to close the achievement gap. In 2016, 52% of white Californians (ages 25-64) have an associate or bachelor's degree while only 18% of Latinx Californians had these same degrees. Latinx students who are unable to achieve their goals in community colleges become limited in pursuing future opportunities for social and economic mobility, career advancement, innovation, and entrepreneurship. And, important to note, they often become burdened with an education-based debt without the education credential to show for it. Beyond just these personal effects, the Latinx population is the fastest-growing demographic group in California and is thus vital to the productivity of the State's workforce. For these reasons, a pressing public policy concern is finding ways for California's growing number of Latinx students to complete their goals so that there may be a skilled workforce that allows California to continue to thrive economically.

This policy brief provides the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office with an intervention recommendation to consider for increasing Latinx student success – increasing the inclusion of Latinx faculty and administrators in the CCCs. Latinx staff can promote student success by providing mentorship and advocacy for these students. This policy brief provides the following: relevance of the Chancellor's Office (Section 2: California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office); Latinx students in higher education (Section 3:

Background); the consequences of low Latinx student success (Section 4: Need for Intervention); statistical evidence of a positive relationship between Latinx staff and student success (Section 5: Increasing Latinx Faculty and Administrators); the benefits diversity offers to individuals and institutions (Section 6: Benefits on Increasing Diversity); the challenges in promoting diversity (Section 7: Challenges of Increasing Diversity); three policy suggestions—soft affirmative action, expansive outreach and hiring practices, and retention practices (Section 8: Policy Suggestions); and a final recommendation for the Chancellor's office to prioritize the implementation of soft affirmative action to increase Latinx student success (Section 9: Conclusion).

II. CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) is an entity that oversees the success of the California Community College (CCC) system. The CCCCO develops and implements policies in the CCCs on behalf of its Board of Governors. The Chancellor's Office has nine divisions, each headed by Vice Chancellors, to manage different policies and work towards the CCC's *Vision for Success*, including eliminating the achievement gap and ensuring that students of all backgrounds may succeed in their goal (CCCCO, 2020). Some divisions focus specifically on supporting student success such as the Institutional Effectiveness Division, a division that oversees the Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative and ensures that the CCCs effectively serve its students; the Educational Services and Support Division, which oversees curricula and instructional support resources for student access, equity, and success; and the division for Workforce and Economic Development, which focuses on delivering technical career education and workforce training. In addition, the Internal Operations division oversees administrative efforts and support of faculty and other staff (CCCCO, n.d.).

The CCCCO has implemented a *Vision for Success,* a framework to make the Chancellor's Office and the colleges student ready. The CCCCO *Vision for Success* report demonstrates acknowledges that an educational gap persists among Latinx and African American students and demonstrates a commitment to racial equity. The transfer rates for Latinx and African American students are 31% and 35% respectively, compared to 44% for white students (Figure 1) (Foundation for California Community Colleges, n.d.; PPIC, 2019). It is in the interest of the CCCCO to consider the intervention strategy recommended to achieve the goals for racial equity stated in their vision.

Figure 1

TRANSFER RATES ARE LOW
AMONG HISTORICALLY UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS
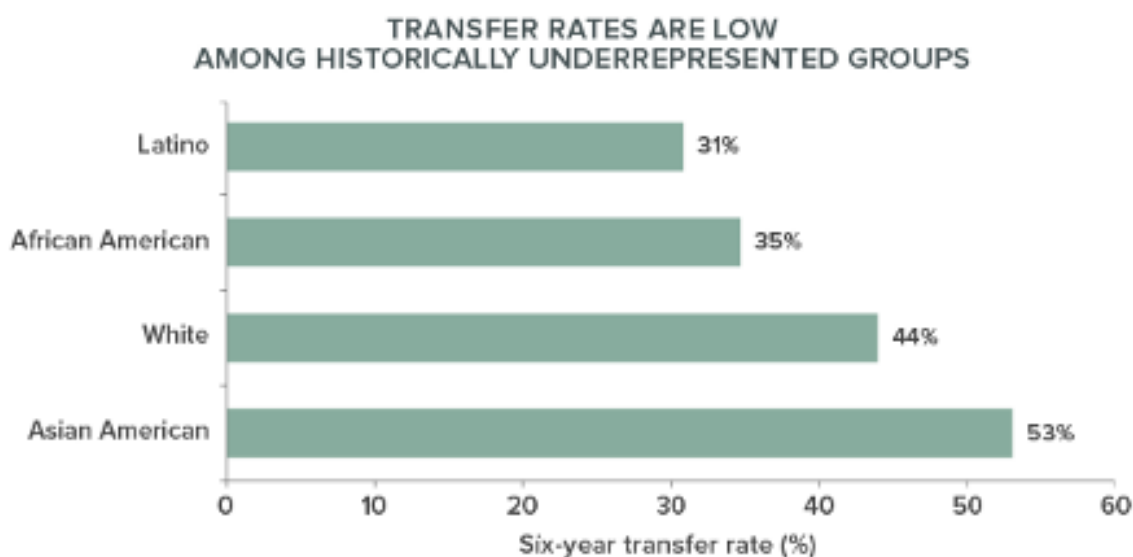
Note: PPIC. (2019, February 27). Serving California's Diverse College Students.

III. BACKGROUND

Latinos largely pursue community colleges because they are more accessible. In addition to being more affordable than four-year institutions, their abundance and open-door policies allow for educational opportunities that are closer to Latinx communities. Approximately 60% of Latinx students in four-year institutions begin their education at a community college (Martinez & Fernández, 2004; Contreras, 2019). Latinx community college students are found to have higher educational aspirations than their white peers, with 50 to 87 percent of Latinx students desiring to transfer to a four-year

institution and earn a bachelor's degree (Martinez & Fernández, 2004). Ayala (2012) suggests that the educational achievement gap would be wider without high aspirations, which are largely motivated by family.

Community colleges can be highly effective in allowing greater social and economic opportunities. In addition to providing an entry for obtaining advanced degrees, they are the primary system that prepares Californians for skilled jobs through technical career education and workforce training. These institutions are highly important to the success of Latinx communities, however, there are institutional and systemic issues that provide a challenge for Latinx success in higher education. The following summarizes the historical struggle for Latinx access to higher education and institutional and systemic challenge for being successful in educational attainment.

Latinx Access to Higher Education

In the midst of the Civil Rights movement, the Higher Education Act of 1965 was passed to increase access to higher education to all citizens, however, it mainly addressed concerns of the African American population (MacDonald et. al., 2007). In response to the lack of support, Latinx students and staff garnered support to create their own Hispanic institutions and programs. By the 1980s, the U.S. Latinx population had grown substantially, but higher education attainment was diminishing. The low enrollment was attributed to changes in financial aid policies implemented by the Reagan Administration that favored student loans over the provision of grants. The costs of higher education decreased access to educational opportunities for minority students and perpetuated a culture of poverty (MacDonald et. al., 2007; Ayala, 2012).

In 1992, the status of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) was federally established and granted to colleges and universities with a significant amount of first-generation and low-income Hispanic students (MacDonald et. al., 2007). Within the CCC system, 103 of the 114 community colleges are HSIs (Contreras, 2019). Despite the HSI designation, Latinx student success continues to be low relative to Whites and Asian-Americans. Latinx students in 2-year and 4-year HSIs are found to have lower graduation rates in STEM majors compared to their peers (Contreras & Contreras, 2015). A theory for low Latinx student success in HSIs suggests that the federal grants that are designated for the support of Hispanic students in these institutions are actually used on improvements for the whole institution rather than on programs that improve Hispanic and Latinx student success (Contreras & Contreras, 2015).

Latinx Students and Community Colleges

Much of the structures that challenge Latinx access to higher education are a result of systemic racism, including geographic barriers remaining from historic redlining and racial/socioeconomic segregation in housing ownership and renting which have forced Black and Brown people into neighborhoods with low achieving schools. High schools in these areas have less funding and fewer opportunities for upper-level math and science courses and Advance Placement courses (Ayala, 2012; Contreras, 2019). As a result, 75% of Latinx students entering college need to take remedial math and English courses, of which 27% successfully complete these math courses and 44% complete English courses (Contreras, 2019). These remedial courses prolong the time spent in college and prevent students from taking courses relating to their intended major, which may cause students to lose interest in college (Contreras & Contreras, 2015). Low success rates are also a result of economic factors. Latinx students enrolling in college are likely to take out loans and work more than 20 hours a week. Students that work greater than 20 hours a week may be unable to adequately study or take courses during the day, further causing students to take longer to complete their goal (Contreras & Contreras, 2015). Lastly, Latinx students lack guidance in pursuing their educational goals, especially those who are first-generation students. Latinx students can face difficulty in understanding the requirements for transferring to four-year institutions when parents did not attend college (Martinez & Fernández, 2004).

IV. NEED FOR INTERVENTION

Low completion rates among Latinx community college students present equity and efficiency concerns for the entire State of California. If not addressed by public agencies, such as the CCCCO, low socio-economic statuses will be perpetuated among the Latinx community and Latinx communities will be ill-prepared for a labor market demanding skilled workers.

Equity Issues

Without support or resources, Latinx and low-income students are more likely to persist in a cycle of poverty. The lack of financial

support is one of the biggest factors in low student success. Students who take classes part-time, likely to accommodate a work schedule, often take longer to complete their educational goals because the college structure is designed to better support full-time students. Full-time students are more likely to take courses in the day, allowing them to readily access instructors, student services, and other supportive services (Contreras & Contreras, 2015). Full-time students move through the college system more efficiently, are better able to increase their human capital, and are more likely to have opportunities for social mobility (Ayala, 2012).

Latinx students are more likely to lack a support network, particularly when seeking support from leaders of their same background. There are far fewer Latinx faculty than students at the CCCs; Latinx students make up 45% of the California community college populations, while Latinx persons are 15% of tenured faculty and 7% to 19% of other CCC leadership (Figure 2) (The Campaign for College Opportunity, 2018). Student activists have called for an increase in racial diversity among faculty and instructors to allow greater racial literacy among white faculty as white-oriented institutions reproduce ideas of whiteness in the curriculum and in the culture (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017).

Figure 2
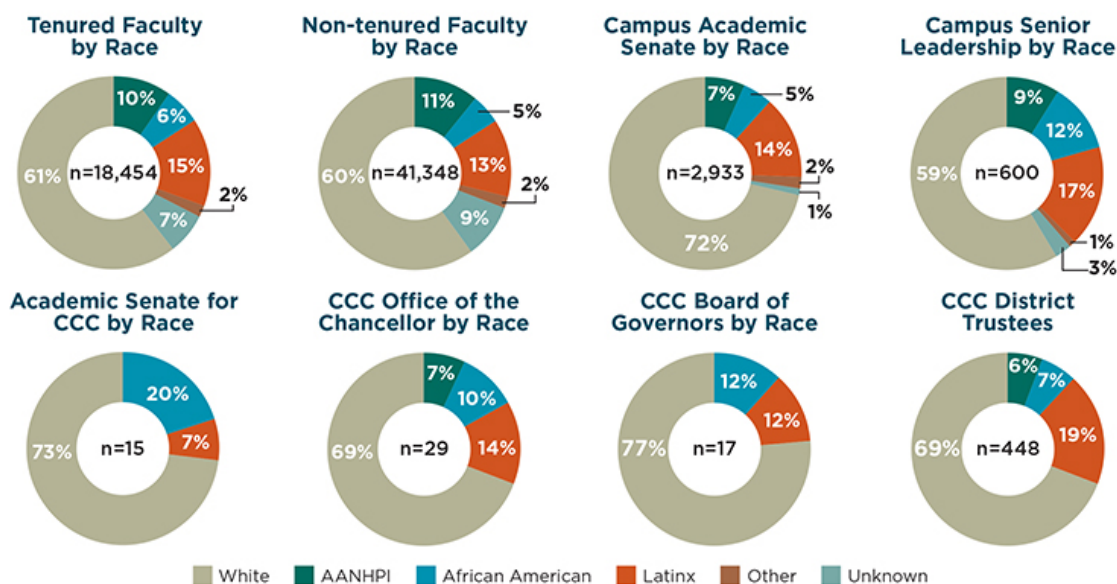
Note: The Campaign for College Opportunity. (2018, March). Left Out: How Exclusion in California's Colleges and Universities Hurts Our Values, Our Students, and Our Economy

Market Failure

The low completion rates for Latinx students among California Community Colleges not only negatively impacts the students themselves, it also generates what economists refer to as negative externalities that affect the State of California. It is estimated that at least 40% of jobs in California will require a bachelor's degree by 2030 and, with an aging population, there may be a shortage of these workers (Contreras, 2019). The failure to keep up with the demand for skilled workers could curtail economic growth, limit economic mobility, and increase inequality. Also, economists have shown that a worker is more productive if they work alongside another person with higher education. More productive Latinx workers and those who work with them, raise taxable wages for all, generating greater tax revenue for the state and less of a need for social service and police expenditures.

Interventions to aid Latinx students to achieve their educational goals can help meet the demands for educated workers. The CCCs have great potential to develop an educated workforce with Latinx students. As the Latinx population in California continues to grow, the CCCs must focus on measures to increase Latinx student success.

V. INCREASING LATINX FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS

It is likely that the incorporation of more Latinx faculty and staff may be beneficial to the completion rates of Latinx students for many reasons, most notably, the idea that Latinx students may see these staff members as role models. Having the same race-ethnicity faculty and administrators as students on a college campus may allow Latinx students to more easily find support or a sense of belonging that allows them to complete their programs. More than two-thirds of faculty, senior administrators, and board members within the University of California (UC), California State Universities (CSU), and California Community College (CCC) institutions are white, while more than two-thirds of the students within the California higher education institutions are of minority backgrounds (Campaign for College

Opportunity, 2018). Regular exposure to Latinx people in positions of leadership can motivate students to strive for the same success. In addition, Latinx faculty and administrators understand the struggles of Latinx students as they were once in the same position and may advocate for the resources and programs that provide greater support for Latinx students. Though limited, some quantitative analyses have indicated that an increase of Latinx leadership on campus may allow for the success of Latinx students on campuses, providing statistical evidence for increase hiring of Latinx faculty and administrators.

Statistical Evidence of Positive Latinx Faculty/Administrator and Student Success Relationship

Of the limited quantitative research, one study by Farlie, Hoffman, & Oreopulos (2014) investigates how underrepresented minority students benefit from taking courses with underrepresented minority instructors in a community college. In this study, benefits consisted of the passing of the course, obtaining a B or higher in that course, and not dropping the course. The study looks at long-term outcomes (retention, obtaining an associate degree, and transference to a four-year institution) from panel data of a single California Community College (Fairlie et. al., 2014). The regression analyses demonstrated that both minority and nonminority students performed between when taking courses taught by same-race instructors; white students were 3.8 percent less likely to drop courses with white instructors, while African American students were 4.6 percent less likely to drop classes with African American instructors. Fairlie et. al. (2014) determines that there is a 20 to 50 percent reduction in the achievement gap when minority student takes minority-taught classes. Minority students may be more successful in courses taught by instructors of their same race/ethnicity because their instructor provides motivation, however, robust findings indicate that there may be implicit bias or "in-group favoritism," a more positive response to someone of the same race/ethnicity because of shared values and culture. As the study controlled for course fixed effects, results show that the tendency for white students to do worse in classes taught by African Americans, or other minority instructors, is not due to the quality of the instructor. This study offers evidence of how minority instructors improve student success in some capacities; increasing the number of minority instructors by one standard deviation may increase retention rates for minority students by 2.5 percent and increase the earning of an associate or vocational degree by 1.5 percent.

To evaluate the influence Latinx administrators and faculty had on the completion rates of economically disadvantaged Latinx students, I performed a regression analysis on these interactions in the California

Community Colleges (Appendix A). This study uses data from the CCCCO Management Information Systems Data Mart. This data contains information on students, courses, student services, outcomes, and faculty and staff for 112 community colleges for five consecutive years (540 observations). Using this data, I performed the appropriate panel-data regression analysis that uses the six-year success rate of a cohort of low-SES Latinx students as its dependent variable and proxies for student characteristics, institutional choices, and the size of the college as the control values necessary to tease out the independent influence of the percentage administrators or faculty at the college who identify as Latinx. I find that the percentage of full-time or part-time faculty that identify as Latinx exerts an influence on the success of Latinx students of low socioeconomic status. For every one percent increase in Latinx full-time faculty, there is an estimated 0.64% increase in economically disadvantaged Latinx completion rates; and for every one percent increase in Latinx part-time faculty, there is an estimated 0.27% decrease in economically disadvantaged Latinx completion rates. Griffin (n.d.) notes institutions may increase diversity to their part-time and non-tenure-track positions to increase the visibility of minority faculty to students do not sustain benefits of diversity as these positions are subject to high turn-over and may further create inequities within positions.

These results support policies for unbiased hiring practices to ensure that hiring units do not overlook qualified Latinx candidates for full-time faculty positions. In this regression, Latinx administrators were not significant towards economically disadvantaged Latinx student completion rates. Further research into the interaction effects between Latinx administrators and other explanatory variables is needed to better understand if Latinx administrators are significant, and the extend of the impact they may have.

VI. BENEFITS OF INCREASING DIVERSITY

In addition to the quantitative evidence supporting a positive relationship between increasing Latinx leadership and increasing Latinx student success, there is also qualitative evidence that suggests the same. The following qualitative analysis presented demonstrates benefits at the individual level, such as greater cultural awareness and

open-mindedness, and at the institutional level, such as a commitment to ongoing diversity and inclusion practices.

Individual Benefits

Benefits to individuals include benefits for students who may not identify as Latinx. These individuals are influenced by the ideas, conversations, and interactions with students of minority backgrounds, allowing them to have a diverse perspective. Greater diversity allows one's perspectives to be challenged and allows for greater critical thinking and motivation to learn. As more minority groups enter institutions, it changes the dominant perspective of the institution, often resulting in more open-mindedness, greater racial understanding, and cultural awareness and appreciation.

Faculty members of color serve as role models, mentors, and a support system that motivates students of the same background to succeed (Fuiji, 2014; Rodriguez, 2015). Those who may benefit the most from more Latinx administrators and faculty are Latinx students. Latinx students that feel isolated at their college due to being one of few Latinx students and can find support with faculty mentors. Mentors offer support for a variety of situations, including education, family, culture, and professional opportunity; and students with mentors reported feeling supported psychologically and emotionally, with their goals and career path, and in their course (Salinas, Riley, Camacho & Floyd, 2020). A qualitative study on faculty as STEM mentors finds that African American mentors have a different relationship with students of their same race than with other students; in one instance a professor reported that they are better able to help African American students find where they belong in the college because they have experienced the same pain and struggle of that identity crisis (Schwartz, 2011). The results of the study indicated success for the participating African American students who had mentors; three of the four transferred to four-year universities with prestigious STEM programs, and all four students continued their education in graduate programs. Faculty-student mentorship programs allow an opportunity to create a positive student experience and increase completion rates (De Luca & Escoto, 2012). Unfortunately, the lack of Latinx faculty limits the ability for formal mentorship programs to be created (Salinas et. al., 2020).

Institutional Benefits

Institutional benefits are ways in which diversity enhances the effectiveness of an organization or institution. It is important that an institution gains the ability to recognize that students of color have different experiences than white people, and that a "color-blind"

approach does not eliminate racism, instead, it dismisses a group identity and their experiences (Wolfe & Dilworth, 2015). In addition, institutions should recognize that their institutional system may perpetuate racist practices and challenges to people of color. A more diverse population allows institutions to more easily recognize the contributions made by diverse academic departments and address racism in institutions (Wolfe & Dilworth, 2015; De Luca & Escoto, 2012).

Cross-racial interactions have been shown to refine student problem-solving, critical thinking, and writing skills, and allow a culture that values diversity (Valentine, Prentice, Torres, & Arellano, 2012). In addition to the general benefits of learning, growth, and development, institutions with more faculty and administrators from minority groups demonstrate a commitment to diversity and a greater understanding of how to make changes to benefit an increasingly diverse student population. It is not enough for institutions to hire more staff of color to simulate diversity; for effective change, institutions must acknowledge racism on their campuses, survey their staff and students on their experience, develop a diversity plan, and celebrate cultural events (Wolfe & Dilworth, 2015). Student populations in colleges and universities are becoming more diverse and students should be able to feel empowered at their institution to be successful. Latinx students are better served in institutions when Latinx faculty are able to share experiences on migration, prejudice, and culture (De Luca & Escoto, 2012). In addition, a diverse administrative staff allows better implementation of inclusive policies and for institutions to sincerely adopt diversity as a value. To increase the likelihood of success by minority students, it is important that hiring practices be inclusive and promote diverse experiences.

VII. CHALLENGES OF INCREASING DIVERITY

Although most people agree with the idea of diversifying faculty and administrators in higher education institutions, there is great disagreement about the process of promoting diversity. Diversity and inclusion do not only involve the hiring of more diverse faculty but also require the culture of the institution to change. Also, diversity is subjective between regions as one area may define diversity more liberally than other areas (Valentine et. al., 2012). This may lead to

resistance in promoting diversity as some areas may not see it as necessary. Due to controversial perceptions of diversity, there is much resistance to implementing diversity and inclusion practices. Resistance to change is often fueled by personal biases. In addition, when practices are implemented, it becomes it is a challenge for all staff members to participate as the burden of implementation often falls on minority staff.

Biases

In many cases, institutions are ineffective in implementing policies to increase diversity because of unaddressed biases favoring whiteness. Diversity is viewed as a stand-alone policy that simply requires the addition of more people of minority backgrounds. White peers must also be involved in the effort to promote diversity, but white staff members are often reluctant to be involved in implementing diversity policies when an opportunity occurs (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). Biases for white faculty members create a tendency to focus on white candidates when conducting outreach for positions and add to the perception that there is a lack of qualified diverse candidates (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017. Decision-making driven by bias has been explained with behavioral economics and social psychology. People often rely on system 1 thinking, allowing decisions to be made automatically, and people may be unaware that their unconscious decisions may be subject to biases (O'Meara, Culpepper, & Templeton, 2020), This differs from system 2 thinking where decisions are made based on reason. Studies suggest that bias in the hiring process has slowed and prevented the hiring of minority faculty, even when diversity has been increasing in the college student population (O'Meara et. al., 2020).

Biases for whiteness are internalized by people of color, causing minorities to perceive themselves and other people of color negatively – that their abilities and dreams are less valuable than the abilities and dreams of white people (Wolfe & Dilworth, 2015). Faculty of color at predominately white institutions report feeling isolated, discriminated against, and producing work less valuable than others (Zambrana, Ray, Espino, Castro, Douthirt Cohen, & Eliaso, 2015; Salinas et. al., 2020). These feelings of invisibility may lead to faculty members leaving positions in search of a more inclusive environment. In addition, faculty may report feeling unsupported, having little potential for growth, and lacking mentorship, which may motivate them to look for other employment opportunities where they may be able to advance their careers. (Schwartz, 2011; Zambrana et. al, 2015; White, 2016). In addition to academic support and career guidance, Faculty underestimate the emotional support that is needed for underrepresented populations to be successful (Schwartz, 2011).

Resistance to Affirmative Action

Affirmative action involves the implementation of policies and practices that increase minority group representation in an organization. Affirmative action was developed as a solution in response to the considerable disadvantage minority groups have had in accessing education and employment opportunities. Affirmative action has been strongly opposed in California; voters banned the policy for state institutions in 1996 through Proposition 209. Arguments against affirmative action mention that hiring people of color for the sake of diversity does not allow for the most qualified candidates to be hired and the quality of the Institution becomes compromised (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017; Fiji, 2014). Affirmative action also brings up complaints of reverse racism or the idea that white people will be overlooked for positions. The existence of reverse racism has not been recognized as racism requires a history of discriminatory practices by legal authorities and institutions (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017), and there is little evidence to suggest that any minority candidate has been hired over a white candidate who was better-qualified (Menand, 2020).

Valentine et. al. (2012) find that faculty members avoid discussions on race because they are afraid to respond to criticism of affirmative action and reverse racism without training or guidance, especially for hostile situations. For faculty to be comfortable discussing race with peers and students, they should have access to training, guidance, and mentoring. Generally, affirmative action has been shown to be favorable when there are educational materials provided on the topic, however, mixed perceptions of the policy persist. Highly educated persons are more likely to be against affirmative action as those with greater education are usually of higher social status and may be resistant to allowing those of lower social status into their work environment (Faniko, Lorenzi-Cioldi, Buschini, & Chatard, 2012).

Proposition 16 (2020)

In 2020, California voters had an opportunity to approve Proposition 16, a proposition to allow California colleges and universities to use affirmative action, a right that was previously banned by voters by Proposition 209 (1996). Despite California being more democratic than in 1996, Proposition 16 failed with a 56.5 percent vote against the proposition (Jaschik, 2020). When the proposition failed, it confirms the idea that the current system works well. Several factors are attributed to the failure of the proposition, most notable little outreach to Latino Voters, and publicized campaigns against affirmative action, such as the recent lawsuits against Harvard

Univesity for using affirmative action in the admission process (Jaschik, 2020).

The failure to pass Proposition 16 demonstrates that California voters may be uninformed on the need to increase diversity and the methods to achieve this. Among voters who were considered to have a good understanding of the proposition, 65 percent were in favor (Jaschik, 2020). The majority of those voting against the proposition believed that hiring practices would favor minority candidates regardless of qualifications (Friedersdorf, 2020). The Proposition 16 failure also reveals that many people may not find this initiative necessary as minorities are accessing universities at greater rates than before; In 2019, the University of California (UC) system reportedly admitted its most diverse class of students with 44% being first-generation and 40% being low-income (Friedersdorf, 2020). The lack of affirmative action policies has actually created more harm to Black and Hispanic students than good. Due to the passing of Proposition 209 in 1996, enrollment of Black and Hispanic students decreased significantly by 1998, also reducing the rate at which these students obtain graduate degrees and high-paying jobs (Carey, 2020). A study looking at students of color in the UC system from 1994 to 2002 found that by the end of the study, students were earning about 5% less than their white counterparts. Carey, 2020).

Cultural Taxation

A great deal of burden is placed on minority faculty to implement diversity policies, often with insufficient resources. Administrators of color lack access to professional networks, mentors, and work in environments resistant to changing their focus on issues of diversity. Faculty of color are also tasked with making diversity education easy for their white coworkers and, when diversity work confronts white privilege, faculty of color must face the backlash of white fragility (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017).

There is pressure for minority groups to address diversity and implement successful diversity programs within institutions and organizations. People of color are more involved in diversity workshops and mentorships because they feel a responsibility to represent their community among the leadership and be role models for future generations of minority students (Rodríguez, Campbell, & Pololi, 2015; Salinas et. al., 2020). The pressure to participate in diversity initiatives is exhausting for people of color, also known as cultural taxation, and has been normalized as a cultural obligation (Salinas et. al., 2020). Faculty of color participate in three times more search committees than their white peers (Fujii, 2014). In one formal mentorship program, faculty of color were more likely to work over 40

hours a week, including about 10-16 hours a week providing mentorship to students in a variety of situations such as conference presentations, networking opportunities, or career counseling (Schwartz, 2011). Faculty were not paid or compensated for their time in the program. The study resulted in a few of these faculty members stating that the satisfaction of mentoring students did not outweigh the emotional, physical, and financial costs to them. As a result, two faculty members left the mentorship program to focus on their own projects (Schwartz, 2011). Cultural taxation is also present as faculty and administrators are challenged by self-criticisms of tokenism; there is a pressure to demonstrate that the institution embraces diversity while they may have feelings of isolation from the dominant group (Wolfe & Dilworth, 2015).

VIII. POLICY SUGGESTIONS

To promote the success of Latinx students, increasing Latinx faculty and administrators is an intervention suggested to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, the agency that oversees the success of all students. To accomplish this and mitigate challenges of biases, resistance to affirmative action, and cultural taxation, three policy suggestions to consider are presented: implementing a soft affirmative action, which increases the accessibility of a position to people of color but still considers the qualifications of each candidate; implementing expansive outreach and hiring practices, such as expanding the candidate pool by reaching out to academic professionals of minority communities and creating a diverse hiring committee; and implementing strategies that promote retention of minority staff, including creating a support system for minority staff where they would be able to get mentorship and professional growth.

(1) Soft Affirmative Action (SAA)

Soft affirmative action (SAA) is a change in hiring practices, such as hiring criteria or position qualifications, to allow a more diverse candidate pool. SAA is more likely to be well received because it works to change desirable qualifications to be inclusive of candidates of color (Doverspike & Arthur, 1995). Soft types of affirmative action, increase accessibility to the position as they value candidates who demonstrate experience working with students of diverse backgrounds and a commitment to facilitate the success of underrepresented groups (Doverspike & Arthur, 1995). In traditional affirmative action or hard affirmative action policies, a minority candidate will be favored

when all candidates are equally qualified (Doverspike & Arthur, 1995; Faniko et. al., 2012). Hard affirmative action also includes strong preferential treatment where a candidate's demographic background is a factor in the hiring decision (Doverspike & Arthur, 1995). Soft forms of affirmative action are more likely to be favored over hard affirmative action because they are merit-upholding policies. This form of affirmative action allows consideration for candidates of equal qualifications and allows interviews to be more comfortable evaluating people based on their qualities rather than only demographics (Faniko et. al., 2012)

SAA can serve as a solution to small pools of diverse candidates. It is often the case that qualified candidates are present, but do not always advance to the next level. SSA may be applied in cases of two equally qualified candidates; when one candidate is of a minority group and the other is white, the person of color can be considered as more qualified because of their life experience and the perspective they add to the workplace (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017)

(2) Expansive Outreach and Hiring Practices

Biases are often present in the hiring efforts of institutions. In attempts to diversity staff, Eastern Michigan University and other colleges in that area changed hiring practices but resulted in the hiring of mostly white and male candidates (Collins & Johnson, 1988). Most potential diverse candidates are not inclined to apply for the university based on advertisements, instead, they are more likely to apply after visiting the campus, meeting faculty, and learning about the institution's commitment to diversity (Collins & Johnson, 1988).

In order to move forward with more inclusive practices, institutions must address the underrepresentation of faculty of color, acknowledge the importance of diversity, and accept the existence of racism. Discussions of racism and white privilege are likely to be uncomfortable for people and may require staff to be properly trained to have these discussions (Fujii, 2014; Valentine et. al., 2012). A common argument for avoiding the integration of more faculty of color is that there are not many qualified candidates, possibly due to the belief that competitive institutions have sought after these candidates and offered them a great amount of money (Griffin, n.d.). These claims are contradicted as it is reported that many candidates of color are not being recruited to available positions. Griffin (n.d.) notes that institutions can fix the pipeline problem, or increase the candidate pool, by offering greater support to minority students – helping them apply to graduate programs, compete for faculty positions, and navigate tenure and proportion opportunities. (Griffin,

n.d.). In addition, these positions have to be made attractive to encourage candidates of color to apply.

Suggestions for inclusive hiring practices include creating search committees at least one-third is comprised of staff members of color, and having positions posted for a minimum of six weeks to allow a greater opportunity for diverse candidates (Fujii, 2014). A committee is critical to implementing diversity practices. One strategy for these search committees is to reach out to doctorial students belonging to minority groups. These students are likely to be qualified for faculty and administrative positions, and interested in doing work that addresses social problems and serves their communities (Griffin, n.d.). Effective recruiting committees also invite a variety of faculty members in various positions to join, have the demographics of the committee reflect the goal of recruitment, and ensure that leaders of the committee are able to facilitate a critical discussion of diversity-related questions with the committee (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017; O'Meara et. al., 2020). Diverse committees can reduce biases at every point of the hiring process: job advertisement, marketing and outreach, evaluating candidates, and making the final decision on candidates (O'Meara et. al., 2020; Griffin, n.d.). In many cases, Black, Latinx, and Native American candidates are overlooked because much of the work they do is not included in a resume. Diverse hiring committees can ensure that candidates are not only committed to diversity but have a critical understanding of race relations demonstrated through published works, research projects, or community involvement (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017).

Light (1994) lists fifteen solutions to common challenges of recruiting candidates of color. The most notable are providing a broad job description, establishing clear criteria for evaluating candidates, using multiple networks to spread the word about the position, having incentives for minority faculty to serve on the committee, and asking challenging questions to candidates. It is also beneficial to allow the hiring committee to have access to the candidate's file before choosing a candidate and to learn from the previous mistakes and failures of the committee. In addition to using these best practices, O'Meara et. al. (2020) encourages institutions to test the implementation of nudges in institutions to mitigate bias, especially bias informed by policies, procedures, and norms that promote systemic racism. Nudges need to be tested and adapted in order to work with the cultures and ideas of the area. For institutions to move away from racist or unequal practices, faculty and administrators of color need to be involved to address structural issues.

(3) Retention Practices

Staff and faculty members often leave positions because they feel no room for growth in their current positions, which prompts them to look for other career opportunities. A positive relationship with staff and an inclusive and supportive culture of an institution has shown higher retention rates of faculty and administrators of minority backgrounds. In many cases, a relationship with the current staff is in the form of mentorship. Effective mentorship includes guidance on the norms and behaviors in the institution, which allows new minority faculty to gain an understanding of how the rules are created maintained, and enforced, making underrepresented staff more equipped to face the challenges (Zambrana et. al., 2015). White (2016) suggests that the training of mentors in leadership may allow for more successful outcomes when providing guidance and career advice to others. Mentorship relationships and professional networks are less accessible to staff of underrepresented groups as there is a small number of underrepresented senior faculty within the institutions. Zambrana et. al. (2015) found that mentorship, including informal mentorship during their schooling, is important to the careers of underrepresented faculty groups. Participants felt that mentorships were possible due to faculty taking an interest in them. Mentors, not necessarily of the same racial or ethnic background, aided newer faculty by offering them a sense of belonging and guidance to advance their professional careers. About half of the participants reported having poor mentorship that impeded their career growth significantly. Poor mentoring made staff members more likely to feel isolated and mistrust others, while positive mentorship experiences made staff more likely to take advantage of their networks (Zambrana, et. al., 2015). Zambana et. al. (2015) identifies four barriers to effective mentorship: benign neglect, feeling unsupported, having multiple mentors, and not having your research agenda understood. Benign neglect often occurred in formal mentorship programs when mentors were assigned to faculty of underrepresented groups. These mentors did not take an interest in the research of their mentees, which frequently focused on race and social justice issues. Effective mentoring occurred when mentors champion the work done by underrepresented faculty members to uplift students and communities suffering from systemic inequities.

IX. CONCLUSION

Despite the increasing amount of Latinx students enrolling in the California Community Colleges (CCCs), there are far too few Latinx students who are complete their educational goals (earning an associate degree, earning a certificate, or transferring to a four-year university within six years), demonstrating low student success among this population. Latinx students can greatly benefit from support from faculty and administrators of their same background as these staff members understand the challenges of Latinx students and are more inclined to provide them with mentorship and advocate for programs for their success. This is especially critical for students attending community colleges, institutions with a significant amount of low-income minority students. To increase Latinx faculty and administrators across community colleges and promote the success of Latinx students, the California Community Colleges Chancellors can support these policy suggestions to allow a wider pool of applicants of minority backgrounds and provide these staff members with the resources they need to remain at these institutions: a soft affirmative action (SAA), expansive outreach and hiring practices, and retention practices.

Ideally, all three of these policy suggestions would be implemented, however, the challenges of implementing these policies may allow for one suggestion to be prioritized over the others. It is likely that the Chancellor's Office values effectiveness, equity, and political or institutional acceptability when adopting a solution. In a brief analysis (Appendix B), each policy suggested is evaluated on how well it fits each of those values or criterions.

First, effectiveness is demonstrated as a significant increase in Latinx student success as a result of policy implementation. When considering the three suggestions, retention practices mat not be able to encourage as much student success because it focuses on supporting the current staff members. In comparison, SAA and more expansive outreach and hiring practices would bring more minority staff members into the institution and make them more visible to minority students.

Secondly, equity refers to how well a policy implementation would allow the representation of minority staff members to equal the representation of minority students in an institution. In comparing all three suggestions, they all promote Latinx staff members in the CCCs. Both SAA and expansive outreach and hiring practices allow greater

consideration of minorities for positions, lessening the diversity gap among staff members. In addition, retention practices are important to ensure that staff members feel valued in their positions and more likely to continue working at the institution.

Lastly, political and institutional acceptability are the most crucial to whether a suggestion can be implemented. Acceptability is characterized by the lack of resistance or encouragement of a policy suggestion. SAA will receive the least resistance as the practice is generally well-received. SAA was developed in response to criticisms of traditional affirmative action; it allows job positions to be inclusive and maintains a merit-based approach to hiring candidates. Expansive outreach and hiring practices and retention practices may be less well-received because of cultural taxation. Much of the work for implementing these policies will fall on minority staff members, and without support, they are likely to become exhausted and later unable to participate in diversity committees or mentorship programs.

In assessing these policy suggestions, it is recommended that SAA be prioritized as it is more likely to achieve efficiency and political and institutional acceptability. Expansive outreach and hiring practices and retention practices may be implemented at a later date when intuitions are able to fully support their minority staff members with resources as allies to ensure they are not culturally taxed. This support requires a chance in the intuitions culture to sincerely adopt diversity and inclusion as their values. As more Latinx faculty and administrators become present in the CCCs, Latinx students will be more well supported, be able to complete their community college goals, and allow California to thrive as part of the skilled workforce.

APPENDIX A

PANEL DATA ANALYSIS

Regression with Driscoll–Kraay standard errors					Number of obs = 459	
Method: Fixed-effects regression					Number of groups = 103	
Group variable (i): CollNum					F(17, 4) = 35.11	
maximum lag: 4					Prob > F = 0.0017	
					within R-squared = 0.1369	
Ln Latinx Economically Disadvantaged Completion Rate	Drisc/Kraay Coefficient	Std Error	t	P–Score	90% Confidence Interval	
% Age 25 to 39	−.008	.0004	−1.86	0.137	−.0017	.0001
% Age 40 or Older	.0007	.0007	0.95	0.397	−.0008	.0021
% Female	.0006	.0014	0.47	0.661	−.0022	.0035
% Asian	.0119***	.0021	5.74	0.005	.0075	.01628
% Latinx	−.0019	.0014	−1.37	0.242	−.0048	.0010
% African American	−.0023	.0016	−1.47	0.215	−.0057	.0010
% Receiving Pell Grant	−.0035**	.0012	−2.92	0.043	−.0061	−.0009
% in Educational Opportunity Program	.0204**	.0065	3.13	0.035	.0065	.0343
% Day Credit Sections	−.0004	.0006	−0.69	0.527	−.0016	.0008
% Evening Credit Sections	−.0047***	.0009	−5.26	0.006	−.0066	−.0028
Average Enrollment Per Credit Section	−.0024*	.0010	−2.47	0.069	−.0045	−.0003
% Full-Time Faculty	.0021**	.0006	3.37	0.028	.0008	.0035
Ln % Latinx Administrators	.0059	.0096	0.62	0.572	−.0145	.0263
% Latinx Full-Time Faculty	.0064***	.0010	6.38	0.003	.0043	.0086
% Latinx Part-Time Faculty	−.0027**	.0008	−3.44	0.026	−.0043	−.0010
% Full-Time Equivalent Students	.0015	.0010	1.50	0.209	−.0006	.0036
Enrollment count	−9.10e−07**	2.61e−07	−3.49	0.025	−1.47e−06	−3.54e−07
_cons	3.6665	.1387	26.44	0.000	3.3709	3.9621
Number of Significant Variables	9					

*Indicates statistical significance with 90 percent confidence
**Indicates statistical significance with 95 percent confidence
***Indicates statistical significance with 99 percent confidence

APPENDIX B

POLICY SUGGESTION ANALYSIS

CRITERIA–ALTERNATIVES MATRIX				
Policy Suggestions	Criterion 1: Effectiveness	Criterion 2: Equity	Criterion 3: Political & Institutional Acceptability	Overall
Soft Affirmative Action (SAA)	+	+	+	+++
Expansive Outreach and Hiring Practices	+	+	–	++–
Retention Practices	–	+	–	–+–

KEY FOR INTERPRETING CRITERIA–RATING SCALE		
Criterion	–	+
Effectiveness	No change, negative change, or little positive change in the Latinx student completion rate in the CCCs	Significant positive change in the Latinx student completion rate in the CCCs
Equity	No change, negative change, or little positive change to allow equal representation Latinx faculty and administrators as Latinx students in the CCCs	Significant positive change to allow equal representation Latinx faculty and administrators as Latinx students in the CCCs
Political & Institutional Acceptability	Significant resistance to implementing the policy suggestion from CCC leadership	No resistance or little resistance to implementing the policy suggestion from CCC leadership

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