Data, Practice, and Leadership: Demonstration of HSI Excelencia

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What is the Seal of Excelencia?
Education in Excelencia is committed to significantly increasing the number of Latino students attaining college degrees by 2030. This recognition is a "national certification for institutions that strive to go beyond enrollment to intentionally SERVE Latino students."

UA received the inaugural seal in 2019 and earned recertification in 2022.
Seal of *Excelencia* certified institutions are trendsetting institutions that have earned the Seal of *Excelencia* certification and joined in common cause to ensure America’s future through their unwavering commitment to intentionally SERVE Latino students, while serving all.

**Why It Matters**
What Success in Servingness Looks Like
Application Process

Data Collection and Narratives

- Enrollment
- Retention
- Completion
- Transfer
- Financial Aid
- Representation of faculty, staff, and administration
- Leadership
- Communication
- Goals to 2025
2022 SEAL OF EXCELENCIA

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Application Consultations Offered
- Application Released
- Application Consultations Offered
- Application Review, Finalists Notified
- Notify 2023 Certified Institutions

February
March
April-May
June
July
August
September

Application Deadline
Conduct Interviews with Finalists
Public Announcement of Certified Institutions

(Excelencia in Education, n.d.)
Data Collection

Sources
Team retrieved *existing published reports* on faculty, staff and students

Team identified *key business personnel* to provide unpublished documentation of unit's initiatives and progress toward goals

UArizona's *Strategic Plan*
Data Compilation

For the six required areas (Enrollment, Retention, Completion, Transfer, Financial Aid, Representation of faculty, staff, and administration), data was populated into tables provided by Excelencia.

Information included overall student population numbers for both full-time and part-time students and delineation of Hispanic/Latinx data for each of the last five years, a percentage of change over time, and a goal for the next three years.

Hispanic/Latinx Representation in Faculty/Leadership/Staff also provided to model success.
Narrative Analysis

For the six required areas (Enrollment, Retention, Completion, Transfer, Financial Aid, Representation of faculty, staff, and administration), choose THREE to describe through written narrative.

Describe your institution's strategy for intentionally serving Latino students in that area.

Identify and describe THREE practices/programs for that area that highlight how your institution sustains/scales the practice and evidence (data) on effectiveness.
Highlights from UA Application
Enrollment

- **Project Outreach FAMILIA**

  Purpose is to expand and enhance institutional capacity to increase the number of Hispanic and low-income students entering higher education and earning postsecondary degrees.

- **Pima-UAZ Stem Bridge Program**

  A bridge program for students at Pima Community College who want to transfer to the University of Arizona. Students receive a scholarship, faculty mentor, peer mentor, individualized support from STEM program advisor, transfer guidance and planning, and connection to a community of STEM peers.

- **College Academy for Parents**

  A long-standing free 12-week college preparation program that works with elementary school parents to develop a family college plan for their children. They provide workshops that engage parents to increase their college knowledge.
Retention

- First Cats

First Cats provides support to first-generation college students. The program facilitates connections by bringing together first-gen faculty, staff, and students at events and mixers, including peer mentoring, community-building and cultural activities, workshops to bridge gaps in academic preparation, and outreach programs for families.

- Transfer Student Center

The mission at the Transfer Student Center (TSC) is to cultivate an inclusive environment for students who have transferred to the UA, and guide transfer students as they gain academic and life skills through connections to resources and community.

- Cultural Learning Communities

The Cultural Learning Communities (CLCs) merge culture, identity, and academic support through classes, workshops, and peer mentoring.
Completion

- **University of Arizona Hispanic Alumni Scholarship Program**

  The UAHA Scholarship Program for new freshmen provides opportunities for students to improve their potential for greater success at the UA by providing financial aid and programming.

- **Arizona’s Science, Engineering and Math Scholars**

  ASEMS offers participants academic and personal support through student support specialists, peer, and faculty mentors who provide one-on-one meetings and cohort-based research courses.

- **Arizona Assurance (AZA)**

  Since 2008, the program has supported over 4,500 low-income students. Participation in AZA has shown to increase graduation rates as a result of programming efforts and mentoring that foster strong campus connections.
Consider your institution as an HSI. Take a moment to reflect on the following:

1. What data sources are you aware of or have access to?
2. If you were to apply, which units or leaders would you need to contact for information?
3. Pick one of the 6 topics – enrollment, retention, completion, financial aid, transfer, faculty/staff/leadership representation. What programs or practices would you identify for that area? What data on outcomes of effectiveness would you need to locate?
Break Out Discussion #1

Discuss with your team or a partner.

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Additional Application Sections
for New Applicants
Additional Topics

• **Mission and strategy** – where aspects of the institution’s mission and strategy are articulated and implemented to intentionally include Latino students’ success.

• **Data and practice** – how disaggregated data (by race and ethnicity) and institutional practices are aligned to inform initiatives that improve Latino student success.

• **Human resources** – how recruitment, onboarding, and professional development (especially for faculty) prioritize serving Latino students and the institutional community.

• **Communications** – where internal and external communications are leveraged to share information making the intentionality to serve Latino students clear. This can keep momentum building toward goals set by the college and across the institution and community.

• **Institutional culture** – how the institution articulates authentically its intentionality in SERVING Latino students, including how it is cultivated and supported.

(Excelencia in Education, n.d.)
New Recertification Sections in 2022 included:

Pick 3 to highlight

- faculty/curriculum development,
- pathways/transitions,
- affordability,
- basic needs,
- digital technology,
- workforce

- Leadership communication/engagement with students
- Leadership external communication
- Leadership representation
- Inclusive environment
- Describing the student experience
- Three financial investments
- Leveraging the Seal of Excelencia
More Highlights from UA Application
Faculty/Curriculum Development

- **Strategic Priorities Faculty Initiative**

  SPFI provides temporary financial support to academic departments enabling them to hire additional faculty who will enhance UArizona’s distinctive strengths in advancing **Inclusive Excellence** via equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion, resulting in many Latinx faculty hires.

- **Latinx Faculty & Staff Association**

  Launched in 2021 by AVP HSI Initiatives and VP for University Initiatives, LFSA offers opportunities to connect for networking, mentoring, and community building.

- **Culturally Responsive Curriculum Development Institute**

  A week-long, summer immersion to train faculty towards implementing **culturally responsive practices and pedagogy** into existing courses and informed by frameworks that guide practice at HSIs. Twenty-two faculty participated representing 11 colleges with 22 courses redesigned and immediately impacting 2,278 students.
Affordability

- **Arizona Assurance (AZA)**
  Provides scholarship and grant aid to qualified Arizona resident high school students, renewable for four years based on continued academic and financial eligibility. AZA recruits residents with higher financial need.

  AZA effectively drives completion for first generation, Hispanic, and BIPOC students. The lift of AZA participation on 6-Year graduation was highest for first generation Latinx females (+23.2) and male students (+22.3) compared to matched peers. Nearly 3,000 students have been served since 2013.

- **Collective Strategies**
  Offering a guaranteed tuition program to lock in students’ tuition rate for four years, programs such as AZA financial aid, extensive pre-college efforts offered in both English and Spanish to outreach to students and families to financially plan for college, increasing access to student emergency funds, expanding basic needs support, and utilizing HEERF to reduce or eliminate students’ outstanding Bursar balance and award last mile grants to support degree completion.

- **Last Mile Award**
  For students who are in need of one more semester of classes to graduate but exhibit financial need or challenges, which often prolongs or deters degree completion. Among awardees, 32% were Hispanic/Latinx and 48% were first generation college students.
Workforce & Career Development

- Internship Surveys & Collaboration

Seventy-four percent of Latinx students found support in applied learning experiences and through career-oriented conversations. These data were strategically shared with UA’s Hispanic Advisory Council and the Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce to help inform forthcoming partnerships to increase career readiness opportunities for our Latinx students.

- SECD Programs

Student Engagement and Career Development (SECD) unit is devoted to creating campus-wide initiatives and opportunities to support students’ career journeys and has been an essential partner with HSI Initiatives. 12-week mentorship program designed for Latinx students.

- Corporate Partnerships

UA also launched partnerships recently with Amazon, Google, and Victoria Secrets to scale career readiness opportunities for Latinx students and participated in Excelencia’s post-completion success initiative.
Break Out Discussion #2

Consider your institution as an HSI. Take a moment to reflect on the following and then discuss with your team or a partner.

Pick 1 or 2 of the 6 topics to discuss:
• faculty/curriculum development,
• pathways/transitions,
• affordability,
• basic needs,
• digital technology,
• Workforce

What programs or practices would you identify for that area? Which is an area of strength for your institution? Which one is an area that requires more growth?
Investments, Commitments, & Goals to 2025
Investments

Hispanic/Latinx Faculty Recruitment and Retention
• The Strategic Priorities Faculty Initiative (SPFI) - financial support to hire additional full-time, tenure-track faculty or to support continuing-eligible academic professionals who will enhance UA’s distinctive strengths in advancing Inclusive Excellence via equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion
• Between FY2009 and FY2022, SPFI has extended 85 offers, with 55 still active at the university.

Strengthen Pathways and Transition
• The University of Arizona’s Student Success District is an $81M investment into a 9-acre area, renovating existing spaces and creating new spaces

Financial Investments
• Pell Pledge Grant
• Provost Investment Fund
• Title III Part
• HSI Grants, Federal Funding
• Last Mile Award
Commitments

HSI Initiatives prioritized in the University’s strategic plan
• "The University of Arizona will become a premier destination for Hispanic learners, scholars, and partners"

Office of HSI Initiatives
• In 2018, the UA became the first four-year public university in Arizona designated as an HSI and the Office of HSI Initiatives established and supported with a permanent budget

Workforce Development Initiatives
• HSI Initiatives, SECD, and the Guerrero Student Center
• Partnerships with Amazon, Google, and Victoria Secrets

Faculty/Staff/Leadership Development and Representation
• Latinx Faculty & Staff Association
Goals to 2025

- Increase Latinx representation and retention in faculty and staff through recruitment and hiring practices
- Increase rates of degree attainment for Latinx students
  - 75% 6-year graduate rate for Hispanic/Latinx students by 2025
- Increase community-based participation and voice in action research and campus programs and culture
- Continue tracking career outcomes for students
Limitations & Challenges
TIMELINES
Telling the institution's life story with data and evidence in three short months.

TRACKING DOWN DATA
Not all programs have systems for tracking evidence of outcomes. What does your unit do to track enrollment, retention, completion, and beyond?

SETTING REALISTIC GOALS
Recertification required consideration of Goals to 2025 and a critical look at institutional culture, leadership, and financial investments.
Lessons Learned
Lessons Learned

LEADING THE WAY AS AN HSI

ENGAGING MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS

OUTCOMES MATTER, SO DOCUMENT YOUR DATA AND STORY
Next Steps
Sharing Our Story

- Impact Presentation last August
- AZ HSI Summit Presentation
- Social Media Campaign
- Centered on Servingness Webinar Series for 2023-2024
- Marketing literature
- Lo Que Pasa article
- “Road Shows” for internal units
- Continued collaboration across units to ensure we make progress toward 2025 Goals
Thank you

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References


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