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LATINA/O
TRANSFER STUDENTS
UNDERSTANDING THE CRITICAL
ROLE OF THE TRANSFER
PROCESS IN CALIFORNIA'S
POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

BY

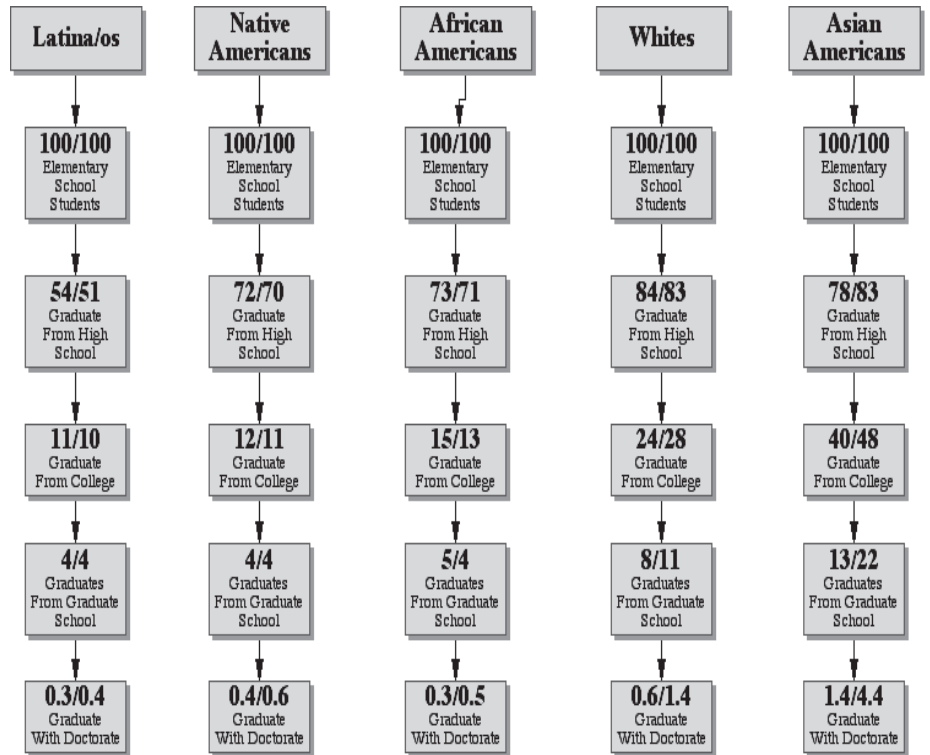
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INTRODUCTION

In educational research, the pipeline metaphor is often used to illustrate how students navigate through primary, secondary, and postsecondary education. Figure 1 illustrates the educational attainment of five major racial/ethnic groups in the United States. For every 100 Latina elementary school students, for example, 54 will graduate from high school, 11 will graduate from college, 4 will obtain a graduate or professional degree, and less than 1 will receive a doctorate.¹ Figures for Latino students are even lower. Given that Latina/o students continue to be severely underrepresented in postsecondary education, it is evident that the educational system is failing to support this population (Fry 2002; Martinez and Fernandez 2004; Ornelas 2002; Ornelas and Solorzano 2004; Solorzano, Villalpando, and Oseguera 2005; Yosso and Solorzano 2006). Although these pipeline data provide a critical look at where many Latina/o students are pushed out of the educational system, figure 1 does not account for the community college segment. Figure 2 allows us to take into account the pathway to community college, where, in fact, the majority of Latina/o students begin their postsecondary education (Fry 2002; Ornelas 2002; Ornelas and Solorzano 2004; Pérez Huber et al. 2006; Solorzano, Villalpando, and Oseguera 2005).

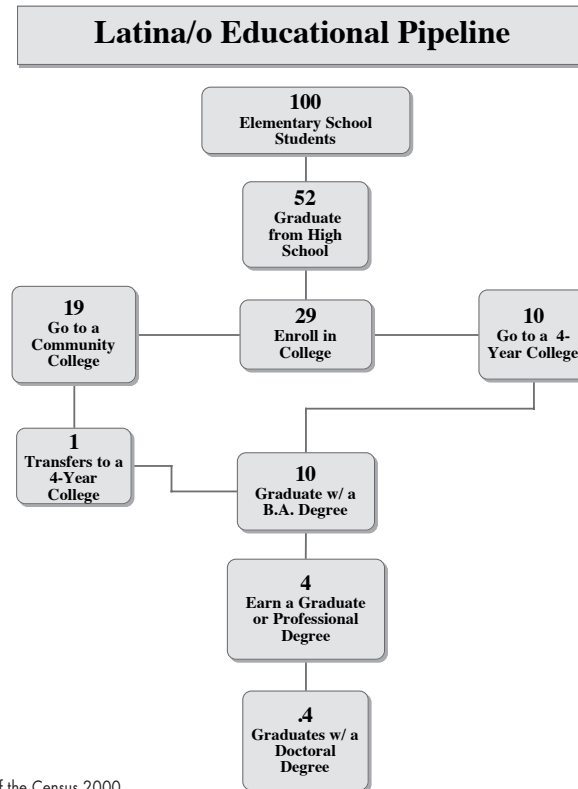
Figure 1. Latina/o students experience the lowest transition rates at each stage of the education pipeline in comparison to other racial/ethnic groups.



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000.

Note: Females are represented by the first number in each pair, males by the second.

Figure 2. Latina/o students who pursue postsecondary education are concentrated in the community college system, and very few transfer to four-year institutions.



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000.

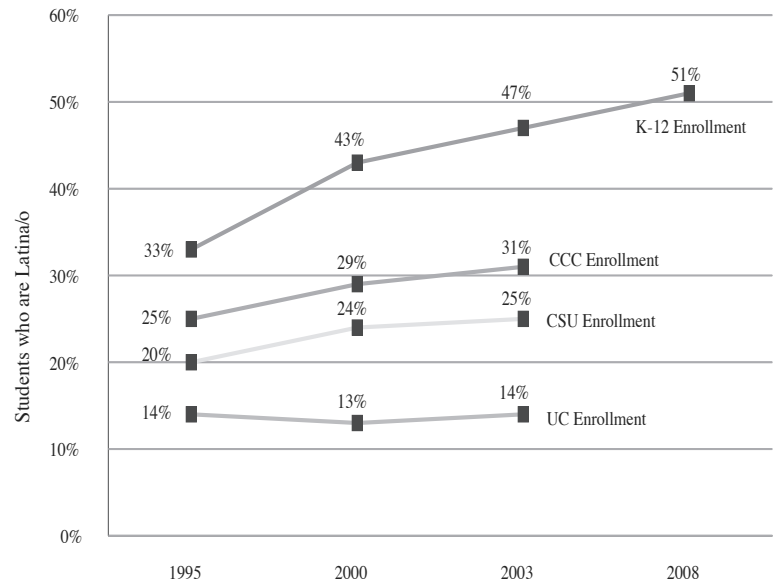
The purpose of this report is to take a closer look at the experiences of Latina/o students who transfer from the California Community Colleges (CCC) to the California State University (CSU) or the University of California (UC). We examine the role of the CCC in the postsecondary education of Latina/o students, the characteristics of these students, the CCC's transfer function, the experiences of Latina/o transfer students at four-year institutions, and their baccalaureate and doctorate attainment rates. The report concludes with recommendations for policy and research initiatives that can increase Latina/o transfer rates and augment our understanding of the experiences of Latina/o students at *all* levels of postsecondary education.²

THE ROLE OF THE CCC

The 1960 California Master Plan for Higher Education established a three-tier system of public postsecondary education for the state's students. According to the master plan, UC admits the top 12.5 percent of California high school graduates, CSU admits the top 33.3 percent, and CCC maintains an open admission policy. Further, the master plan specifies a research focus for the UC and a teaching focus for the CSU, while the CCC has multiple functions: provide vocational education, certificate programs, and educational and career development; grant terminal associate in arts and associate in science degrees; and offer transfer opportunities to four-year institutions (California Postsecondary Education Commission 1998).

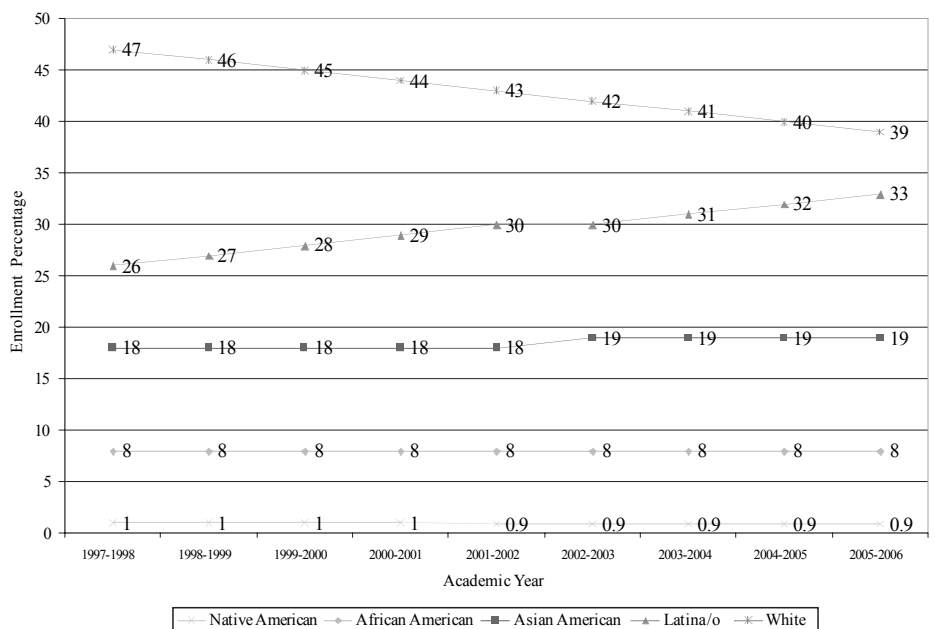
Although this three-tier system is meant to provide all California students with equal access to postsecondary education, the enrollment gap for Latina/o students is steadily widening. Figure 3, which uses K-12 enrollment data as a baseline, shows that Latina/o students continue to be underrepresented in all three segments of public higher education.

Figure 3. Although Latina/o students will soon become the majority in K-12 public education, they are underrepresented at all levels of California's public postsecondary institutions.



Source: Standardized data from California Community Colleges, Chancellor's Office 2007 (CCC Enrollment); California Department of Finance 2000 (K-12 Enrollment); and California Postsecondary Education Commission 2007 (CSU and UC Enrollment). Note: K-12 projection data for 2003 and 2008 are from California Department of Finance 2000.

Figure 4. The percentage of Latina/o students attending CCC grew steadily between 1997 and 2006.



Source: California Community Colleges, Chancellor's Office 2007. Note: Students with unknown gender and unknown day or evening enrollment status are not included.

CCC ENROLLMENT PATTERNS

Latina/os represent a growing proportion of CCC students, as figure 4 shows. Between 1997 and 2006, the enrollment of Latina/os in community college

increased from 26 percent in 1997 to 33 percent in 2006. If this pattern continues, in three to four years the plurality of community college students in the state

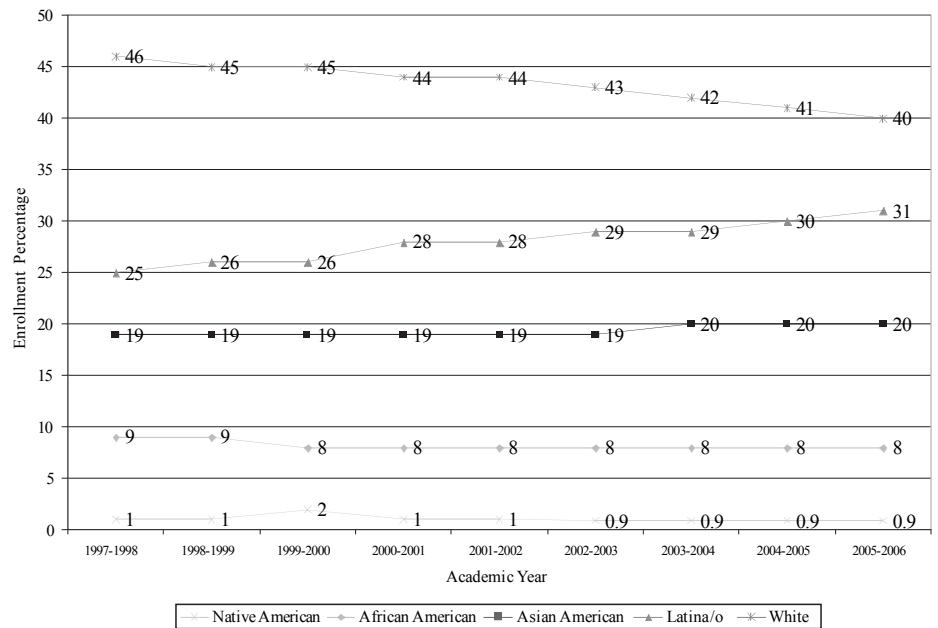
of California will be Latina/o. This trend suggests that the CCC's transfer function will become steadily more important in efforts to increase the number of Latina/o students who graduate from four-year institutions and, eventually, graduate and professional programs (Ornelas 2002; Ornelas and Solorzano 2004; Solorzano, Villalpando, and Oseguera 2005).

Data collected by the CCC indicate that as of 2006 two-thirds of Latina/o students were enrolled in daytime classes, while one-third was enrolled in evening classes (California Community Colleges, Chancellor's Office 2007). From 1997 to 2006 the percentage of Latina/os enrolled in daytime and evening classes rose every year (figs. 5, 6). If this trend continues, Latina/o students will be the plurality of daytime students in four to five years and the plurality of evening students within one year.³ Further, more Latina/os attended a CCC during the evening than did students of any other racial/ethnic group (California Community Colleges, Chancellor's Office 2007). In her study of Latina/o community college students, Ornelas (2002) found that students who took classes in the evening were unable to access institutional support, since most support services were unavailable during evening hours. As a result, these students not only expressed frustration at the lack of support offered but also felt as though they were the "forgotten group" on campus (Ornelas 2002, 53).

PROFILE OF LATINA/O STUDENTS

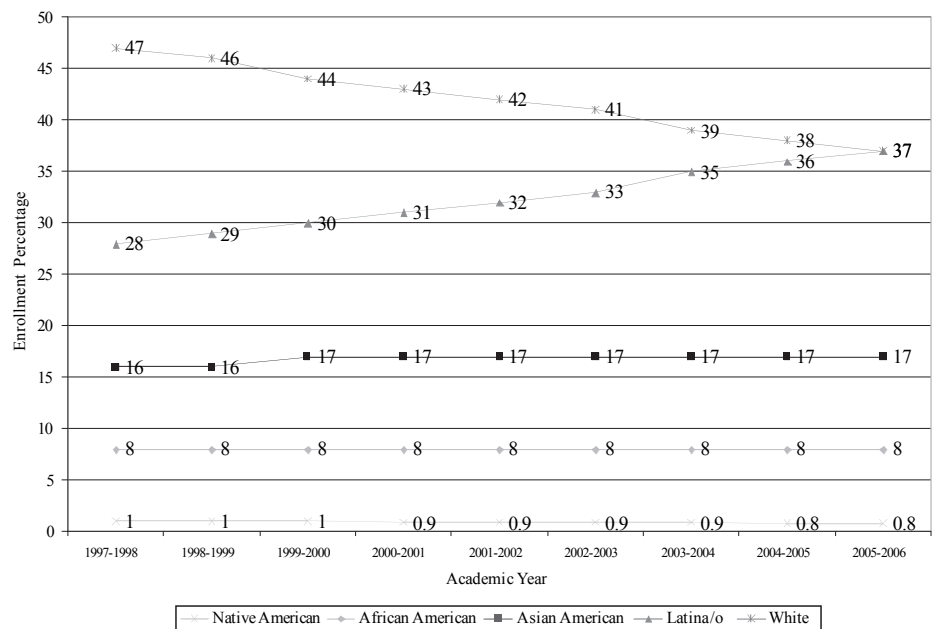
Despite the growing number of Latina/os enrolled at CCC campuses, their educational needs and experiences have not been adequately documented (Castañeda 2002; Lujan, Gallegos, and Harbour 2003; Ornelas 2002; Ortiz 2004; Rendón and Garza 2000; Rendón and Nora 1989; Solorzano, Villalpando, and Oseguera 2005). The research that does focus on Latina/o community college students indicates there are multiple reasons why they attend the CCC.

Figure 5. The percentage of Latina/o students enrolled in daytime classes grew between 1997 and 2006.



Source: California Community Colleges, Chancellor's Office 2007.
 Note: Students with unknown gender and unknown day or evening enrollment status are not included.

Figure 6. The percentage of Latina/o CCC students enrolled in evening classes grew between 1997 and 2006.



Source: Source: California Community Colleges, Chancellor's Office 2007.
 Note: Students with unknown gender and unknown day or evening enrollment status are not included.

ACADEMIC PREPARATION

Most Latina/o students are often ineligible to apply to a four-year institution because of the inadequacy of college preparatory counseling and academic preparation provided by the state's public

K-12 schools (Castañeda 2004; Fry 2002; Gándara 1982, 1995, 1996; Hagedorn and Cepeda 2004; Laden 1992, 1998; Martinez and Fernandez 2004; Nora and Rendón 1990; Oakes 1985; Ornelas and Solorzano 2004; Ortiz 2004; Solorzano,

Villalpando, and Oseguera 2005). Thus, many Latina/o students at the CCC are placed into and must successfully complete remedial classes before they can fulfill the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC), a series of courses that satisfy transfer requirements and lower-division general education requirements at the CSU and the UC. Even though overenrollment in remedial and language proficiency courses may ultimately delay the transfer process, counseling services must guide students toward the IGETC program to ensure that Latina/o students gain the necessary tools to meet their educational objectives (Hagedorn and Cepeda 2004; Nora and Rendón 1990; Ornelas 2002; Ornelas and Solorzano 2004).

PROXIMITY AND AFFORDABILITY

Even when Latina/o students qualify for and are admitted to four-year institutions, they may enroll in community college because these schools are usually closer to students' homes and are substantially less expensive than four-year institutions (Hagedorn and Cepeda 2004; Martinez and Fernandez 2004; Ornelas 2002). Given that Latina/o students are often from working class households, lower tuition costs and living expenses attract these students to the CCC (Gándara 1996, 1998; Laden 1998; Nora and Rendón 1990; Ornelas 2002; Solorzano, Villalpando, and Oseguera 2005). Further, many students pay for their tuition by working one or two jobs, and many attend community college as part-time and/or evening students (Ornelas 2002).

Currently, students eligible to receive financial aid can do so for a total of eighteen terms of full-time enrollment or the equivalent of part-time enrollment (UCLA Financial Aid Office 2006).⁴ This affects the educational trajectories of transfer students because their financial aid is contingent on the number of designated funding terms they have after they transfer. These financial barriers are exacerbated for undocumented students,

who are ineligible to receive federal and state aid and services from financial aid offices.

RESIDENCY STATUS

Ineligible for federal and state assistance, undocumented students often feel their only affordable option for postsecondary education is a community college (Biswas 2005; Guillen 2003; Obrego 2003, 2004; Solis 2004). Although efforts to minimize institutional barriers for undocumented students are ongoing, undocumented students still need adequate counseling and information regarding the transfer function and educational opportunities that take into account their residency status.⁵ Counselors and the general student body are often unfamiliar with this information and unaware of opportunities for undocumented students (Guillen 2003).

FIRST GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS

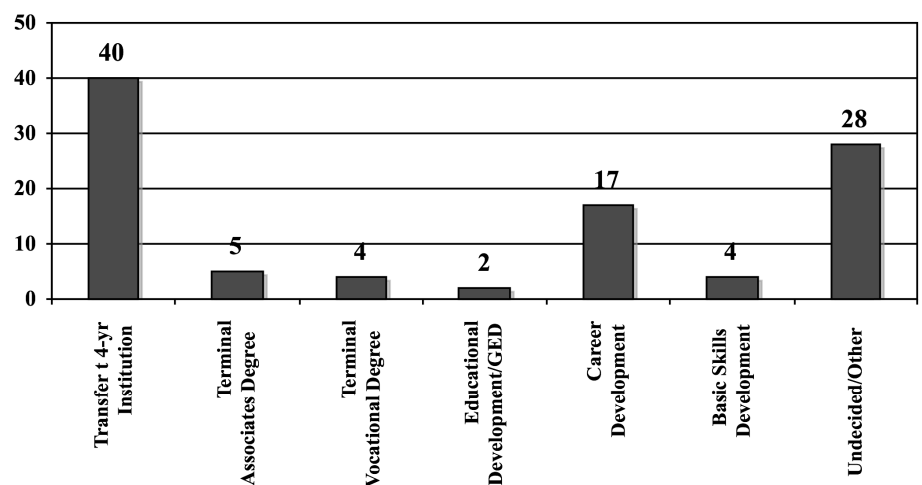
The majority of Latina/o postsecondary students are often the first within their immediate family to pursue a formal postsecondary education (Gándara 1995, 1996; Laden 1992, 1998; Nora and Rendón 1990; Ornelas 2002; Solorzano, Villalpando, and Oseguera 2005). Research suggests that students' awareness of educational opportunities and their educational goals may change

over the course of their community college experience (Bailey, Jenkins, and Leinbach 2007; Brint and Karabel 1989; Clark 1980; Ornelas 2002; Shulock and Moore 2007). Therefore academic and career counseling while students are enrolled in the CCC is essential.

STUDENT ASPIRATIONS

Most Latina/o students enter the CCC with specific educational goals, as figure 7 shows. In 2002–03, 40 percent of entering Latina/o students aspired to transfer to a four-year institution. An additional 28 percent said that they were “undecided” about their goal. One could argue that if these undecided students were provided with an appropriate curriculum and adequate counseling, they too would aspire to transfer to a four-year institution. Hagedorn and Cepeda (2004) found that 88 percent of students enrolled in the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) wanted to attain a degree from a four-year institution.⁶ Similarly, in their national study of community college student goals, Bailey, Jenkins, and Leinbach (2007) found that when compared to other racial/ethnic groups, more Latina/o students—79 percent—aspired to transfer, obtain a baccalaureate degree, and earn a graduate degree.⁷ Thus, access to the transfer

Figure 7. In 2002–03, 40 percent of Latina/o students enrolled at a CCC campus aspired to transfer to a four-year institution.



Source: California Postsecondary Education Commission 2004.

function can have a positive impact on baccalaureate and graduate degree attainment rates for Latina/o students.

THE CCC'S TRANSFER FUNCTION

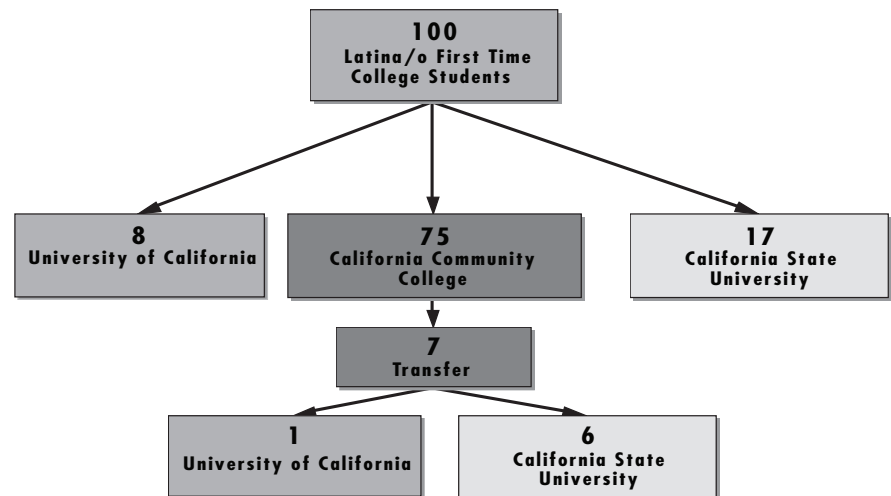
Given the large proportion of Latina/o students that may ultimately transfer into a four-year college or university, an analysis of institutional factors that support the transfer function is crucial. Likewise, we must also understand institutional barriers that may prevent students from attaining this goal.

TRANSFER RATES

Although a high proportion of Latina/o students aspire to transfer to a four-year institution, only a small percentage eventually do so (Bensimon and Riley 1984; Hagedorn and Cepeda 2004; Handel and Herrera 2006; Laden 1992, 1998; National Center for Education Statistics 2003; Ornelas and Solorzano 2004; Rendón, Justiz, and Resta 1988; U.S. Department of Education 2001). As figure 8 shows, 75 of every 100 first-time Latina/o college students in California will enroll in a community college. Of these 75 students, around 7 will transfer into a public four-year institution in California. Six of these students will continue their education at a CSU campus, while only 1 will transfer to a UC. These data imply that an ongoing mismatch exists between students' aspirations to transfer and the institutional support needed for students to meet this goal. This disparity must be examined and modified (Ornelas 2002; Ornelas and Solorzano 2004; Yosso and Solorzano 2006).

Although various community colleges do offer support services developed to enhance transfer rates, such as ASSIST, Puente Program, and Transfer Alliance Program, the consistently low transfer rate for Latina/o students highlights the need for an institutional *transfer culture*. According to Ornelas (2002), a transfer culture would, in part, provide accurate information regarding the transfer function and adequate funding for academic

Figure 8. The majority of Latina/o first-time college students are concentrated at the CCC, yet only a small percentage transfer into a four-year institution.



Source: California Postsecondary Education Commission 2004.

support programs such as tutoring and mentoring. It would ensure that the transfer curriculum is available to all students and that counselors, faculty, and administrators receive the most recent information regarding transfer options. It would also encourage family and community as well as students to be involved in each stage of the transfer process. Implementation of a transfer culture requires a statewide effort to standardize the transfer function from the CCC to four-year institutions and to guarantee that all students who seek to transfer to the university are able to do so in an effective and efficient manner (Ornelas 2002; Ornelas and Solorzano 2004).

TRANSFER MISINFORMATION

Postsecondary institutions often fail to provide clear and explicit instructions on how students can accomplish the goal of transferring to a four-year college or university. Community colleges often do not disseminate accurate information regarding transfer articulation and admission requirements for CSU, UC, or private institutions (Ornelas 2002; Ornelas and Solorzano 2004; Solorzano, Villalpando, and Oseguera 2005). For example, students have been told that the completion of the requirements

for an associate in arts or an associate in science degree will also fulfill the requirements needed to transfer to a four-year institution (Ornelas 2002; Rivas 2003; Solorzano, Villalpando, and Oseguera 2005; Talavera-Bustillos 1998). Unfortunately, this misinformation may lead students to take additional courses that do not meet transfer requirements. This often forces students to prolong their stay at the CCC, causing frustration as their goal to transfer becomes more difficult to attain (Brint and Karabel 1989; Clark 1980; Ornelas 2002; Ornelas and Solorzano 2004).

Community college students often feel that counselors and faculty have negative expectations for their educational future (Davies, Safarik, and Baning 2003; Ornelas 2002; Rivas 2003). Nonetheless, the counselors and faculty who are proactive, providing academic and moral support to their students, are often overwhelmed by the number of students who seek guidance (Ornelas 2002; Rivas 2003). As a result, students often turn to peers who have already transferred to a four-year institution, or whose course of study follows the IGETC requirements, with the hope of planning a transfer agenda on their own (Ornelas 2002; Rivas 2003).

PARTNERSHIPS FOR TRANSFER

Alliances between community colleges and four-year institutions can strengthen the transfer function and increase Latina/o transfer rates (Handel and Herrera 2006; Nora and Rendón 1990; Ornelas 2002; Rendón and Garza 2000; Rivas et al. 2007). One example of a successful alliance is UCLA's Center for Community College Partnerships (CCCCP). The CCCC offers opportunities for administrators, faculty, and students from the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) and UCLA to develop strategies that will provide LACCD students with adequate information and support from counselors, mentors, and institutions throughout the transfer process and beyond. Among CCCC's outreach efforts is the Summer Intensive Transfer Experience (SITE), a summer residential program in which first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented community college students live on the UCLA campus. SITE participants attend workshops that focus on attaining the academic and social skills and the knowledge that they need to transfer, to make academic and social transitions, and to excel (Handel and Herrera 2006). Equally important, CCCC employs current UCLA transfer students as mentors and counselors for community college students in SITE and other outreach programs. Thus, the partnership between LACCD and UCLA not only encourages LACCD students to transfer but also supports the retention of current UCLA transfer students (Rivas 2003).

Summer residential programs such as SITE offer prospective CCC transfer students experiences that prepare them for their transition to the four-year campus. Another example is the Transfer Summer Program (TSP) offered by UCLA's Academic Advancement Program. TSP is a six-week residential academic program in which admitted transfer students take upper division coursework, attend tutorial sessions, interact with faculty and teaching assistants, attend academic

and social workshops, and establish peer networks before they begin the academic term.⁸ Another type of program that may help Latina/o transfer students are *transfer-specific summer research programs* (Rivas et al. 2007). Transfer-specific research programs would invite CCC students to engage in research projects with various faculty and graduate students at four-year institutions. When offered to CCC students early in their careers, these transfer-specific research programs could provide the mentorship opportunities and the information that CCC students need to achieve their goal of transferring and obtaining a baccalaureate degree and, eventually, graduate and doctoral degrees.⁹

TRANSFER STUDENTS AT FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Despite the high number of Latina/o CCC students who aspire to transfer to a four-year institution, their consistently low transfer rates reveal that these students experience *transfer institutional neglect* as they navigate the postsecondary pipeline. Transfer institutional neglect refers not only to the failure of community colleges to ensure transfer readiness but also to the failure of four-year institutions to provide outreach, recruitment, enrollment, and retention once transfer students reach a four-year institution (Rivas, forthcoming).

One way to mitigate the transfer institutional neglect that Latina/o transfer students face is to provide targeted training to counselors, faculty, and administrators at all segments of postsecondary education. These sessions could keep educational agents up to date by imparting the most recent data and information on transfer articulation requirements (Herrera and Handle, 2006; Ornelas, 2002). Training would ensure that counselors, faculty, and administrators are familiar with resources that encourage the retention of transfer students and that increase graduation rates from community college through graduate school.

COLLEGE CHOICE PROCESS

Although research on college choice is essential to understand the Latina/o experience in higher education, little is known about what transfer students experience as they negotiate the transfer process, apply to a four-year institution, and finally decide which college to attend (Martinez and Fernandez 2004; Rivas, forthcoming).¹⁰ Research suggests that proximity to family and cost of education influence Latina/o students' decision to begin their postsecondary education at community college, but not enough research has documented the college choice process for transfer students (Martinez and Fernandez 2004).

TRANSITION TO A FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTION

The experiences of Latina/o students after they transfer to a four-year institution constitute another area that demands additional research. A few studies have shown that transfer students in general often experience financial difficulties and a decline in grades—known as a “transfer shock”—after they reach a four-year institution (Cejda 1994, 1997; Glass and Harrington 2002; Laanan 1996, 1998, 2000, 2001). In addition, these students often feel academically and socially marginalized after transferring (Kodama 2002; Laanan 1996, 1998, 2001; Tintiangco 2000; Wawrzynski and Sedlacek 2003).

Transfer students who manage to overcome these obstacles eventually attain a grade point average that is comparable to those of their peers who did not transfer from a community college (Cohen 2003; UCLA Office of Analysis and Information Management 2007). Moreover, when we analyze the time it takes undergraduate students to earn a degree at UCLA, we see that after four years transfer students receive their baccalaureate degree at a rate that is comparable to that of nontransfer students (table 1).

Table 1. The percentage of transfer students who received a baccalaureate degree from UCLA in 2006 was comparable to the percentage of nontransfer students.

Percentage of UCLA Transfer Students	Percentage of UCLA Nontransfer Students
56% in 2 years or less	62% in 4 years or less
83% within 3 years	87% within 5 years
89% within 4 years	89% within 6 years

Source: UCLA Office of Analysis and Information Management 2007.
 Note: Only time enrolled at UCLA is shown; transfer students' time enrolled at CCC is not included.

DEGREE ATTAINMENT

Qualitative data on the rate of baccalaureate and doctoral degree attainment for Latina/o transfer students and, especially, analyses by gender and race/ethnicity are necessary for a full understanding of the educational trajectories of these students.

BACCALAUREATE ATTAINMENT RATES

Of all Latina/o students who received a baccalaureate from CSU between 2001 and 2005, over 50 percent were CCC transfer students (fig. 9). During the same period, less than 33 percent of the Latina/os who graduated from UC were CCC transfer students (fig. 10). A

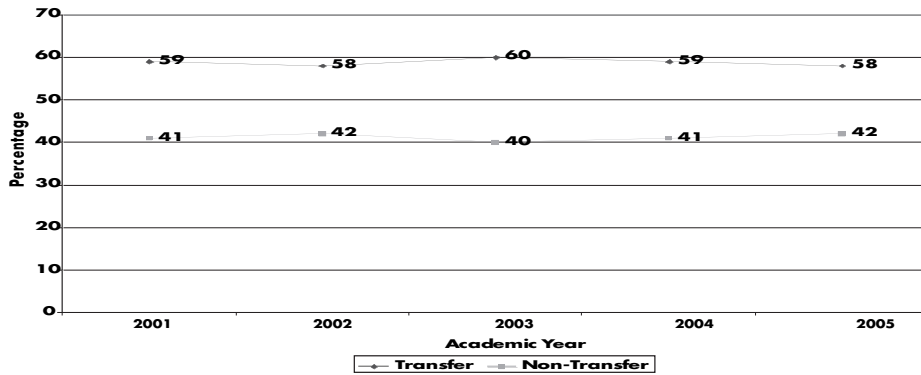
closer look at baccalaureate attainment rates in 2005 reveals that of the baccalaureates granted to Latina/os by CSU and UC, the smallest percentage went to Latina CCC transfer students in the UC system (fig. 11).

Although it is clear that external factors can impact degree attainment rates, more research is needed to document these influences (Ornelas and Solorzano 2004; Rivas et al. 2007; Rivas, forthcoming; Solorzano, Rivas, and Velez 2005). For example, when we analyze CSU and UC baccalaureate attainment data for Latina/os, we must consider whether issues of affordability, part-time enrollment opportunities, and proximity to home pull Latina/o transfer students—especially undocumented students—into the CSU system. Further, the analysis of Latina/o baccalaureate attainment rates by gender highlights the importance of disaggregating data to better understand the transfer experience.

DOCTORATE ATTAINMENT RATES

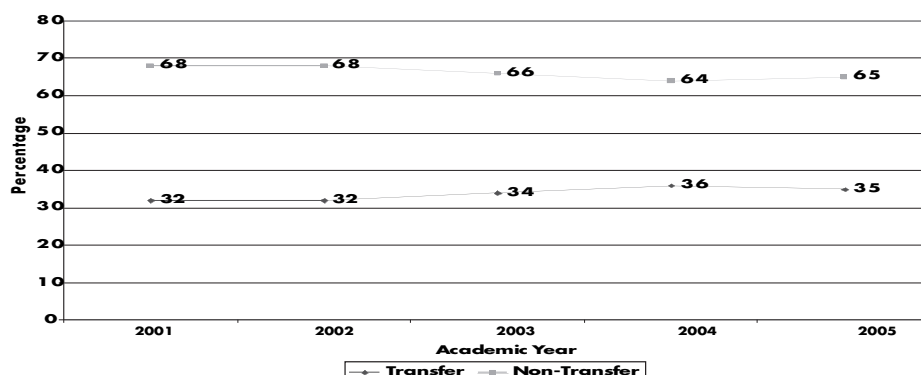
Despite a body of work on Latina/o graduate and doctoral experiences (Achor and Morales 1990; Cantú 2001; Cuádriz 1996, 2005; Cuádriz and Pierce 1994; Gándara 1982, 1995, 1996; González et al. 2001; Sandoval 1999; Segura 2003; Solorzano 1993, 1998; Watford et al. 2006; Williamson 1994), there is little literature on the experiences of Latina/o transfer students in graduate school (Rivas, forthcoming). Analysis of doctorate production by racial/ethnic groups in the United States indicates that community colleges play a critical role in doctoral production. When the Latina/o student population is disaggregated into its constituent subgroups, the data show that although 14 percent of all Latina/o doctoral recipients attended a community college en route to earning a doctorate, 23 percent of Chicana/os navigated this pathway (fig. 12).¹¹ Thus, Chicana/os are more likely than any other racial/ethnic group to attain a doctorate by way of the community

Figure 9. Of the baccalaureate degrees awarded to Latina/o students by CSU between 2001 and 2005, over 50 percent were earned by transfer students.



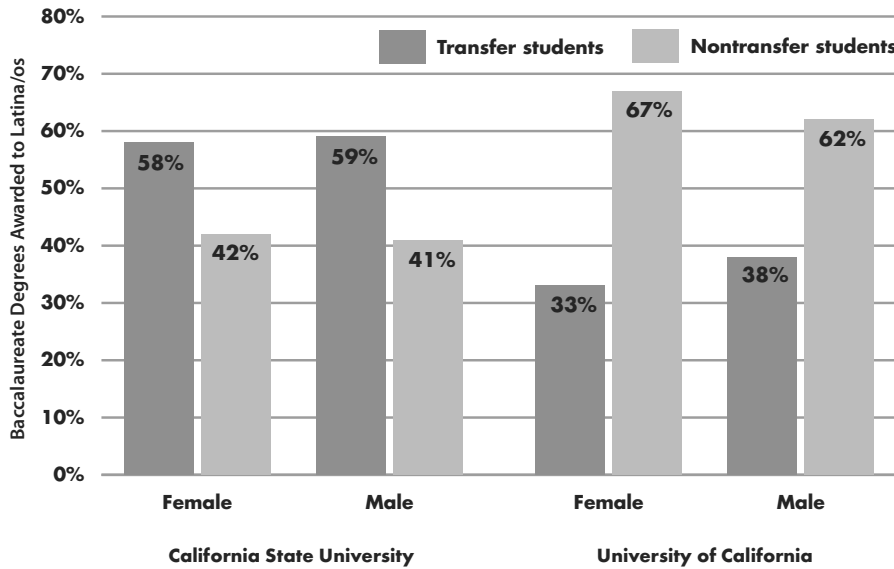
Source: California Postsecondary Education Commission 2007.

Figure 10. Of the baccalaureate degrees awarded to Latina/o students by UC between 2001 and 2005, less than 33 percent were earned by transfer students.



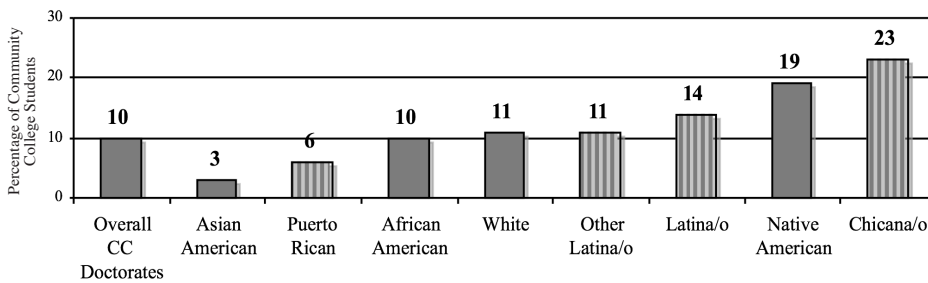
Source: California Postsecondary Education Commission 2007.

Figure 11. A comparison of baccalaureate degrees awarded to Latina/os by CSU and UC in 2005 shows a large disparity between the percentage of degrees earned by transfer students and those earned by nontransfer students.



Source: California Postsecondary Education Commission 2007.

Figure 12. Of all students earning doctorates in the United States between 1990 and 2000, Chicana/os were more likely than any other racial/ethnic group to have attended a community college en route to the degree.



Source: National Opinion Research Center 1990–2000; see also Solorzano, Rivas, and Velez 2005.

Note: Doctoral recipients were U.S. citizens or permanent U.S. residents. "Latina/o" includes all constituent subgroups. "Other Latina/o" includes doctoral recipients who self-identified as "Cuban," "Latina/o," or "Other Latina/o." "Chicana/o" indicates doctoral recipients who self-identified as Mexican or Mexican American.

college (Solorzano, Rivas, and Velez 2005). These data suggest that the transfer function should be a pivotal factor in efforts to enlarge the pool of Latina/o graduate and professional students, especially attempts that focus on Chicana/o students.¹²

In their study of the graduate school choice process that Chicana students follow in pursuit of a doctorate, Ceja and Rivas (2003a, 2003b) found that access to mentors who are Faculty of Color and opportunities for research early in their undergraduate careers helped

shape their aspirations toward graduate school.¹³ Chicana transfer students who were interviewed for this study said, however, that they felt restricted in their efforts to establish rapport with faculty at four-year institutions because their length of attendance was limited by their enrollment as transfer students. For the same reason, Chicana transfer students also said that they often did not have access to research programs that required letters of recommendation and sponsorship from faculty on campus (Rivas and Ceja 2003).

CONCLUSION

The Latina/o student population continues to increase and be concentrated in California's community colleges, the largest community college system in the United States. This report examines the status of Latina/o community college transfer students in all three tiers of public postsecondary education in California. We identify several factors that will help increase transfer rates and the retention of Latina/o students once they reach a four-year institution. We also identify issues that need further research if we are to better our understanding of the Latina/o transfer experience. The following policy and research recommendations are targeted at educators, administrators, counselors, and policy makers. If implemented, they will help increase educational access and opportunities for Latina/o community college students.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The California Community College segment of the education pipeline is essential for California's Latina/o students. Nonetheless, it is important to highlight that *all* segments of postsecondary education play a critical role to encourage and prepare students to transfer into a four-year institution and, ultimately, pursue a graduate degree. With this in mind, we offer the following policy recommendations.

1. Strengthen alliances between community colleges and four-year institutions to ensure outreach, mentorship, recruitment, enrollment, and retention of community college students.
2. Implement the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) as the default curriculum at all community college campuses.
3. Prioritize and strengthen the transfer function and work to develop an institutionalized *transfer culture*.
4. Implement *transfer development training* for counselors, faculty, and administrators at *all* segments of postsecondary education.

5. Initiate *transfer-specific summer research programs* at four-year institutions for CCC students and faculty.

6. Expand *transfer summer bridge programs* to all CSU and UC campuses.

7. Increase need-based and merit-based financial support for students by increasing the number of academic terms allocated to receive financial aid.

8. Continue legislative and educational efforts to support and encourage undocumented students through *all segments* of postsecondary education.

RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the limited amount of research that is specific to the experiences of Latina/o transfer students in all three tiers of public postsecondary education in California, we posit the following research questions. Addressing these points will strengthen quantitative methods to measure the status and attainment rates of transfer students by race/ethnicity, gender, class, and immigration status, and will increase qualitative efforts to critically examine the day-to-day lived experiences and resiliency of these students.

1. Community college experience: What alternate pathways (for example, continuation schools, work, military service) do Latina/o community college students take en route to the community college? Are there differences among rural, suburban, and urban transfer students (Castañeda 2002)? If so, what are they and how can we support transfer opportunities throughout the state of California?

2. College choice process: How do Latina/o community college transfer students navigate the college choice process? How do transfer students select which four-year institutions to apply to? How do they choose which institution to attend? How do CCCs and four-year institutions support students through these processes?

3. Transfer students in undergraduate programs: How do Latina/o transfer

students navigate four-year institutions? What barriers do they overcome to attain their baccalaureate degrees? What factors help their success rates? How do four-year institutions encourage students who are en route to graduate school? How do Latina/o transfer students navigate the graduate school choice process?

4. Transfer students in graduate programs: What are the experiences of Latina/o transfer students at the graduate level? Does the transfer experience affect career choice and opportunities for these students?

5. Undocumented transfer students: In addition to lack of financial support, what barriers do undocumented students confront and overcome within all segments of higher education? What barriers do they confront and overcome at community colleges, after they transfer, and after they obtain baccalaureate and graduate degrees?

NOTES

The purpose of the 2007 Latina/o Education Summit Conference is to identify factors that are critical if educators and policy makers are to successfully prepare community college students to make the transition from community college into four-year institutions and, eventually, graduate school. Additionally, our goal is to compile policy and research recommendations from the literature that offer practical solutions to educators, policy makers, and students. By focusing this conference on California's postsecondary education system we will be able to share, create, and build on the research, resources, and relationships that are necessary to remedy and strengthen the educational pipeline for Latina/o community college students.

1. The term *Latina/o* refers to a non-homogenous group of persons of Latin American descent or origin, residing in the United States irrespective of generation or immigration status. It should be mentioned that while most studies use the term *Latina/o* as a homogenous category, there are difference among and within various Latina/o subgroups (see fig. 12).

2. Given the dearth of research that focuses specifically on Latina/o transfer students, we recognize that there are additional factors and issues that need to be thoroughly examined to further understand and document their experiences.

3. Although "evening status" enrollment data are based on data collected by the California Community College Chancellor's Office, we

recognize that students may enroll in both day and evening programs simultaneously.

4. The eighteen terms of financial aid eligibility include academic quarters, semesters, and winter and summer terms.

5. For example, Assembly Bill 540 exempts undocumented immigrant students from paying out-of-state tuition if they fulfill certain requirements. They must have attended a California high school for three years and graduated from a California high school; they must be enrolled in an accredited postsecondary institution in California; and they must declare, through an affidavit, that they are in the process of legalizing their immigration status or will do so as they become eligible. For more information on AB540 and additional support programs for undocumented students such as The Leticia A. Network and The DREAM Act (The Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act), see Guillen 2003; Obrego 2003, 2004; and Solis 2004; or visit <http://www.nilc.org/immlawpolicy/DREAM/Dream006.htm>.

6. Almost half (2,462) of the LACCD students in their sample were Latina/o (Hagedorn and Cepeda 2004).

7. Findings for other racial/ethnic groups were: 70 percent for whites, and 68 percent for blacks (Bailey, Jenkins, and Leinbach 2007, 3).

8. The academic communities and peer support networks that students form can last throughout their undergraduate career. For example, some students who attend TSP continue to refer to themselves as "TSPers" after the program is over (Rivas 2003, 13).

9. Similar programs include Minority Access to Research Careers-Undergraduate Student Training in Research [MARCUS*STAR] and McNair doctoral training programs. These programs, however, are not transfer-specific.

10. For research on college choice, see Ceja 2001; McDonough, 1997; Talavera-Bustillos 1998.

11. The terms *Chicana* and *Chicano* (*Chicana/os*) refer to female and male persons of Mexican descent or origin, irrespective of generation and immigration status, who are residing in the United States. Please note that these terms have social, historical, and political dimensions that will not be addressed in this report.

12. Latina/os make up at least 13 percent of the U.S. population. Chicana/os comprise an estimated 58 percent of the Latina/o population (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000). In California, Chicana/os make up approximately 80 percent of the Latina/o population (Johnson 2001; U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000). Further, within California public schools, Chicana/os represent the majority of all Latina/o K-12 students (Gándara et al. 1998).

13. *Faculty of Color* is capitalized to reject the standard grammatical norm. Capitalization is used as a means to defy the marginalization of this group; it is a grammatical move toward social and racial justice.

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