Retention Challenges Facing Native American Students in Higher Education

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HEAL PROGRAM

- HEAL Program
- The Conversations
- The Analysis
- The Grant
- The “Firsts”
  - Cohort
  - Students
  - Classes
  - Papers
- David’s Research
Retention Challenges Facing Native American Students in Higher Education

- Definition and History of Tribal Colleges and Universities
- Success
- Pressure on the Gears
- Focus of Research
Tribal Colleges and Universities

- What is a Tribal College and University?
  - Officially became law in 1978
  - The First Tribal College Started in 1968 when Dine College became the first tribally controlled community college.
  - Six colleges and universities began the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) in 1972. AIHEC’s purpose and mission became to support and develop Tribal Colleges and Universities.
  - Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) are chartered by their respective tribal governments, including the ten tribes within the largest reservations in the United States.
  - TCU’s 75 campuses in 15 states and one Canadian province—virtually covering Indian Country—and serve students from well more than 230 federally recognized Indian tribes.
TCU’S Successes

- In the period of 1990–1996 there was a 62% increase in the number of enrolled in TCU’s American Indians students enrolled at Tribal Colleges and Universities increased from 10,234 students in 1996 to 14,208 students in 2004.
- In 1996 64% of the population of students attending Tribal Colleges and Universities were female verse 36% were male.
- In 2010 the percent of males rose to 37%. Female population accounted for 63%.
- According to AIHEC Non–American Indian females made up 10% of the population and male Non–American Indian students made up 6% of the total population.
- In 2010 19,070 students were enrolled at TCU’s
Enrollment Trends from 1990–2010

Number of American Indian Students at Tribal Colleges 1990
Number of Non American Indian Students at Tribal Colleges 1996
Number of American Indian Students at Tribal Colleges 2004
Number of American Indian Students at Tribal Colleges 2010

- Number of Non American Indian Students at Tribal Colleges
- Number of American Indian Students at Tribal Colleges
Demographic

Enrollment by Gender in 1996
- Male American Indian Students: 36%
- Female American Indian Students: 64%

Enrollment by Gender in 2010
- Male American Indian Students: 53%
- Male Non-American Indian Students: 10%
- Female American Indian Students: 31%
- Female Non-American Indian Students: 6%
Pressure on the Gears

- For the Gears of Retention to move Internal and Outside Factors should be looked at...
Outside Factors

- Childcare
- Transportation
- Gas
- Healthcare cost
- Internet Connectivity
- Family Pressures
- Cost to Attend
- Unemployment
- Employment
Internal Factors

- Poor Student Services
- Lack of Instructional Programming
- Cost
- Financial Aid
- Pell Grant
If one factor grows larger than another the Retention gears won't turn.
Moving Forward

- Survey of Native American students who persist
  - Are there other factors (internal or external) that we have not considered?
  - Questions grounded in the literature (Tinto, Astin, Bean, Metzner, etc).
  - Access to Native American students for participation
    - How, Where, etc

- Policy Issues

- What else?
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