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## Having or Serving: Perceptions of HSIs

Rebecca Gates

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HAVING OR SERVING: PERCEPTIONS OF HSIS

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## Abstract

Despite substantial growth within the Latinx population and its access to higher education, there are still significant gaps with regard to degree attainment. In 2015, 36% of U.S. adults aged 25 and older had at least a bachelor's degree. However, only 15% of those adults were Latinx, the lowest percentage amongst any racial/ethnic minority (NCES, 2016). While 67% of non-Hispanic White students entering four-year colleges complete their degree in six years, only 47% of Latinxs do so (Carey, 2009). These gaps represent an attainment disparity within higher education based upon population demographics. The purpose of this study was to address the Latinx degree attainment gap by examining the policy logic regarding the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) designation. The current federal policy, known as Title V, attempts to address the challenge of low Latinx degree attainment by providing a sum of grant funds for which eligible HSI institutions may compete. The current policy logic does not account for other issues outside of funding disparities, such as institutional culture. To better understand institutional conceptions of the Latinx degree attainment gap, this embedded, multiple case study examined institutional perceptions of the HSI designation. Institutional perceptions derived from upper-level administrator data at a four-year doctoral granting HSI and a two-year HSI. For the purposes of this study, there were two embedded cases of administrators: traditional administrators (director and above) and faculty administrators (department chair and above) from each institutional type. Using institutionalization as a guiding framework (Curry, 1992; Kezar & Sam, 2013), the data revealed how HSIs conceptualize their status and thus what other barriers in addition to funding resources may be inhibiting Latinx student success.

*Keywords:* Hispanic Serving Institutions, Latinx students, public policy, Title V

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction to the Problem**

The landscape of American higher education is situated upon a unique precipice. Over the past few decades, the United States has developed toward nearly universal higher education via expansion of access and institutional type (Thelin, 2013; Trow, 1970). However, Carnevale & Strohl (2013) note access is still largely stratified based upon income and race/ethnicity, despite the highest levels of racial/ethnic minorities' participation in higher education and indeed the highest levels of participation in higher education amongst the American population as a whole (Thelin, 2013). American higher education institutions are likely to see increasing external pressure to better serve increasingly diverse student populations.

Concurrently, the United States has experienced substantial demographic changes within its population, particularly with regard to Hispanics. In 1970, Latinxs represented only 4.5% of the U.S. population compared to 16.3% in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). It is expected that by 2025, Latinxs will comprise 21% of the U.S. population (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2010). These increased numbers put Latina/os as one of the fastest growing racial/ethnic minorities in the U.S.

As the Latinx population increases so does the number of Latinxs pursuing higher education. In 1976, Latinxs represented only four percent of the undergraduate student population. By 2008, Latinxs represented 13% and their numbers continue to grow (NCES, 2010). Currently, Latinxs are the leading non-White demographic of college students in the U.S. (Fry, 2011). To help better support the institutions that educate Latinx students, the federal government created the Hispanic Serving Institution designation in 1992. Today, a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) is a not-for-profit degree-granting institution where 25% or more



students are of Hispanic origin, and of those students 50% or more are Pell Grant eligible (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). These institutions currently serve 50% of all Latinxs enrolled in higher education; yet represent only 10% of postsecondary institutions (Santiago, 2012). The term Hispanic was developed by the U.S. government, and thus, is viewed by some to be externally conflicting, as compared with Latinx or Latina/o, which is thought to be more “self-referential” (Obler, 1995, p. viii). The terms were used interchangeably throughout this document.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite substantial growth within the Latinx population and its access to higher education, there are still significant gaps with regard to degree attainment. In 2015, 36% of U.S. adults aged 25 and older had at least a bachelor’s degree. However, only 15% of those adults were Latinx, the lowest percentage amongst any racial/ethnic minority (NCES, 2016). Additional evidence of the achievement gap exists along the path to baccalaureate degree attainment. While 67% of non-Hispanic White students entering four-year colleges complete their degree in six years, only 47% of Hispanics do (Carey, 2009). These gaps represent an attainment disparity within higher education based upon population demographics within the U.S. Given the call by the Obama Administration and the Lumina Foundation for 60% of the U.S. population to have some sort of college credential in order to meet the demands of our global economy by 2025 (Carey, 2009), it is essential to target Latinx degree attainment and the institutions in which Latinxs are most likely to enroll.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to address the Latinx degree attainment gap by examining the policy logic regarding the HSI designation. The current policy attempts to address the

problem of Latinx degree attainment by providing a sum of grant funds for which institutions may compete if they are an eligible HSI. Yet, how a problem is conceptualized influences the proposed solution. The current policy logic is not concerned with issues outside of funding disparities, such as institutional culture. As such, the current policy does not account for how institutions conceptualize the gap of Latinx degree attainment, nor how these conceptualizations influence proposed institutional solutions. To better understand institutional conceptions of the Latinx degree attainment gap, this study examined institutional perceptions of the HSI designation. Institutional perceptions were derived from upper-level administrator data at a four-year doctoral granting HSI and a two-year community college HSI. For the purposes of this study, there were two embedded cases of administrators: traditional upper-level staff administrators (director and above) and faculty administrators (department chair and above) from each institution type. Using institutionalization (Curry, 1992; Kezar & Sam, 2013) as a guiding framework, the data revealed how HSIs conceptualize their status and thus what other barriers in addition to funding resources may be inhibiting Latinx student success. This multiple case study examined the policy logic of the HSI designation to inform future studies which may contribute toward policy reform and better address the Latinx degree attainment gap.

### **Research Question**

This multiple case study embedded design was guided by the research question: How do HSIs conceptualize their HSI status?

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework that guided this study was institutionalization: “Institutionalization theory refers to policies and practices becoming institutionalized once they

are a part of the underlying assumptions or norms and become embedded within the culture of an institution” (Kezar & Sam, 2013, p. 59). Schein (1992) refers to an institution’s culture as the basic assumptions, norms and values, and policies and practices. Curry (1992) provided a typology of institutionalization occurring in three-stages: mobilization, implementation, and institutionalization (p. 5). These three stages may be referred to by different names within the change literature (Kezar, 2007), but despite the labels used they reflect similar stages of progression (Kezar & Sam, 2013). These stages can be observed in structural, procedural/behavioral, and cultural levels (Curry, 1992).

In the first stage, mobilization, an organization prepares for change, which may range from a simple awareness of a problem or to a more substantial action such as creating a foundation for policy (Curry, 1992; Kezar & Sam, 2013). Kezar and Sam (2013) note the mobilization stage consists of two parts: galvanizing members and initial structural change (p. 59). In galvanizing members, a change agent(s) may make an effort to get the word out and disseminate information. An example of this would be a university president introducing a new initiative, perhaps at convocation, a university addresses, or the first meeting of the faculty senate. From here, initial structural change may begin to set in, such as the president’s new initiative showing up on departmental meeting agendas. As with most processes, there is a range in which mobilization may be evident. Datnow (2005) contends that structural change occurs when “innovations are reflected in a concrete fashion throughout the organization” (p. 124).

Implementation, the second stage, is evident in the creation of infrastructure and support for the innovation to carry forth momentum (Curry, 1992; Kezar, 2007). Individuals, groups, or both will coordinate and may bring in others for additional support. Supports needed to deal with logistical issues may be identified, such as technology. During implementation policy behaviors,

such as the development of forms or guidelines, are being crafted (Curry, 1992), but there would be no evidence or thought into evaluation or sustainability (Kezar & Sam, 2013). During implementation, the innovation may have the feel of a special project. During this phase, rewards or incentives along with sanctions come into play, but the innovation will not yet be fully integrated into the organizational culture (Curry, 1992). Returning to the idea of a college president introducing a new initiative, during implementation new opportunities for faculty, staff, and/or students to be involved with the initiative would emerge. In addition, preference may be given to internal grant proposal demonstrating a relationship to the new initiative.

During the final stage, institutionalization, the innovation moves into the value system of the organization (Kezar & Sam, 2013). The institutionalization stage reflects a core understanding impacting institutional culture (Curry, 1992; Kezar, 2007). This typically refers to an innovation which has progressed through the stages to a point of becoming “indistinguishable from the rest of the institution” (Kezar & Sam, 2013). The innovation becomes embedded within the organization, to the point of being subsumed within the organizational framework. At the point of institutionalization, the example of a college president’s new initiative would become a part of the accepted practice within the institutional culture. Evidence of this could be dedicated line items in budgets or the initiative being incorporated into the employee evaluation process.

Institutionalization is helpful as a global framework to examine a process that occurs over time along a continuum (Curry, 1992), as opposed to demarcated levels. Likewise, it can be applied to any institution of higher education, recognizing each will differ depending upon the change initiative. Thus far, one study has been found within the literature utilizing institutionalization within the context of an HSI. Garcia and Okhidoi (2015) utilized case study methodology to document how culturally relevant practices at a four-year HSI in the Southwest

serve the Latinx students enrolled. Their study discussed how the Chicana/o studies program and the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) were embedded within the culture of the institution, giving some historical perspective toward this end. While institutionalization was utilized, it was not thoroughly applied within the analysis. Instead, the case study discussed the importance of two departments/programs, and then discussed how elements of those departments/programs had been institutionalized within the institution. Institutionalization was brought into the case study post-facto and was not used in the development of observation protocols. Thus, Garcia and Okhidoi's (2015) study does not use institutionalization as its guiding framework.

Utilizing institutionalization in more a deliberative way could be useful to better understand how institutions conceptualize their HSI status and develop a better understanding of institutional challenges which help or hinder such policies and practices toward serving the Latinx student population, thus informing the attainment gap. For example, institutionalization theory could be utilized as a framework to observe policies, practices, and cultural shifts. Policies would be evidenced in formal structures, practices would be indicative of more informal behaviors representative of adopted norms. Culture would incorporate both policies and behaviors into abstract values, ideas, and contexts (Kezar & Sam, 2013). This type of research seeks to understand whether and how "institutional culture and daily practices are transformed in ways befitting their (HSIs) changing student populations" (Núñez, Hurtado, & Galdeano, 2015, p. 2) and additionally helps to fill the gap within organizational studies of higher education, which has focused primarily on elite institutions (p. 3). Research along this line of inquiry also helps to further inform institutional policy.

## **Overview of Methodology**

This study employed a qualitative design of multiple site case study. Yin (2014) defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (p. 16). Since the focus of the study was to describe HSIs conceptions of their HSI status, a case study is the most appropriate of qualitative methods. Additionally, the study sought to understand *how* these institutions conceptualize their HSI, further reinforcing the use of case study methodology (Yin, 2014). Utilizing multiple case studies helps to further reinforce a compelling interpretation and helps to enhance transferability (Yin, 2014). Additionally, since institutions eligible for the HSI designation are either four-year or two-year institutions, which serve different purposes, it is plausible that the two different institutional types may have differing results. However, both types are present within the HSI population and thus, are critical to addressing the degree attainment gap in higher education. This exploratory case study utilized embedded multiple case study design. Each institution served as a case. Each case had two embedded units of analysis: traditional administrators and academic administrators. This design aligned with Yin's (2014) description and requirements for multiple-case study. Data sources consisted of interviews and institutional documents including, but not limited to: websites, policies, and handbooks. Throughout the data collection and analysis, peer debriefing was utilized (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This process involved engaging a disinterested peer for the processing of probing, exposing any biases, and catharsis.

### **Limitations of the Study**

- Yin (2014) notes in multiple case study design there is dependence on the researcher to determine the appropriate number of cases. Thus, human error may have impacted the design.

- Being knowledgeable of issues related to the cases may have resulted in being unreceptive of opposing data. To increase trustworthiness, multiple sources of data were used, detailed documentation of said data was kept, and member checking was utilized by the researcher (Yin, 2014).
- Since the majority of the data collected was interviews, it is important to keep in mind the tendency of interviewers to over report socially desirable information (Bernard & Ryan, 2010).
- Findings from this study, as with all qualitative studies, are non-generalizable to the larger population (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2014).

### **Delimitations of the Study**

- Participation was delimited to those administrators holding the title of director/chair or higher in order to best represent institutional ideations.
- The study was also delimited to two institutions meeting the federal definition for Hispanic Serving Institution.

### **Definition of Terms**

- *Minority Serving Institution (MSI)* – is an umbrella term to refer to postsecondary institutions who enroll a significant percentage of students identifying as a racial/ethnic minority (citation?).
- *Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)* - a not-for-profit degree-granting institution where 25% or more students are of Hispanic origin, and of those students 50% or more are Pell Grant eligible (U.S. Department of Education, 2011).
- *Pell Grant* – product of the Federal Pell Grant Program which provides access grants to undergraduate students based upon their expected family contribution (EFC), the cost of

attendance (by institution), and the student's enrollment status. These grants are designed to expand college access to low-income students (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

- *Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)* - “any historically black college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of black Americans, and that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association determined by the Secretary [of Education] to be a reliable authority as to the quality of training offered or is, according to such an agency or association, making reasonable progress toward accreditation” (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.)
- *Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs)*- postsecondary institutions that qualify for funding under the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Assistance Act of 1978 or the Navajo Community College Act or is cited in section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (U.S. Department of Education, 2011).
- *Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions(AANAPISI)* – a not-for-profit degree-granting institution where 10% or more of undergraduate students are or Asian American or Native American Pacific Islander origin.
- *Hispanic* - The term Hispanic was developed by the U.S. government via the Census to denote whether a person's origin was Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or some “other Spanish” origin. Today, Merriam Webster defines Hispanic as “of, relating to, or being a person of Latin American decent living in the United States; especially: one of Cuban, Mexican, or Puerto Rican origin.” Frequently the term Hispanic is considered synonymous with Latino. The terms are used interchangeably here.



- *Historically White Institutions (HWI)* – This term refers to an institution of higher education that previously did not have an expressed mission to serve a minority group. Since the majority of HSIs evolved due to changing student demographics, but have retained their same missions, these institutions are frequently described as HWIs.
- *Latina/o* – The term Hispanic was developed by the U.S. government, and thus, viewed by some to be externally conflicting, as compared with Latina/o, which is thought to be more “self-referential” (Obler, 1995, p. viii). The terms are used interchangeably here.
- *Latinx* – This term is used as gender inclusive for of Latina/o.
- *Institutionalization* - “is a particular type of change that becomes sustainable and embedded into the fabric of the institution.” Policies and practices are the focal points of this type of change (Kezar & Sam, 2013, p. 59).
- *Institutionalization theory* – “refers to policies and practices becoming institutionalized once they are part of the underlying assumptions or norms and become embedded within the culture of an institution. Thus, culture, and its policies and practices, are all part of the institutionalization framework” (Kezar & Sam, 2013, p. 59).

### **Significance of the Study**

Thus far, there has been limited research examining the implications of the growth in the number of HSIs or examination of the changes of institutional behaviors required to meet the needs of increasingly diverse student populations (Nora & Crisp, 2009). “We do not know enough about whether changes at HSIs are evolutionary or actively managed so that institutional culture and daily practices are transformed in ways befitting their changing student populations” (Núñez, Crisp & Galdeano, 2015, p. 2). This study helps to address this gap by capturing how

institutions conceptualize their HSI status and thus reveals a clearer picture of how institutional culture informs the HSI status at two different institutions.

Additionally, there is a lack of research focused on administrators. Institutional leaders play a role in shaping institutional environments impacting institutional policy and how policies are executed, or practiced (Bensimon, 2007; Stanton-Sálazar, 2001). Additionally, as Gates (2016) notes, literature regarding upper level administration at HSIs is mostly anecdotal. However, Cortez (2015) utilized qualitative methods with five administrators at an HSI in Texas to elucidate strategies used by administrators to influence institutional culture and additionally describe how administrators make sense of their institutions' HSI status. Cortez's (2015) study represents the beginning of an answer to a call for more research of institutional efforts at HSIs (Santiago, 2006). Additionally, Hurtado and Alvarado (2015) call for research that "documents initiatives, provides evidence toward student talent development, and evidence of culture change regarding the education of Hispanics" (p. 41). Furthermore, in a recent study by Núñez, Crisp, and Elizondo (2016), findings suggest "constituent, resource, and environmental characteristics among different types of HSIs might be associated with large differences in institutions graduation rates" (p. 76). Since the majority of research regarding the constituent diversity of HSIs has focused on faculty (Hubbard & Stage, 2009) and students (Bridges, Kinzie, Nelson Laird, & Kuh, 2008; Cuellar, 2014; Garcia & Okhidoi, 2015) and most research on administrators is concerned with presidents (de los Santos & Vega, 2008; Santiago, 2009; Santiago, Andrade, & Brown, 2004), this study focused on upper level administrators and those faculty members that operate in between the role of faculty and administration in order to answer the research question.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

Before examining HSIs on the individual institutional level, it is critical to understand the larger body of knowledge contributing to the development and study of HSIs. First, it is important to discuss what exactly a Hispanic-Serving Institution is, as there are differing definitions. Next, a discussion of the history of Latinxs within the context of recognition within higher education provides a background for the development of political leverage within the Latinx community, which is then utilized to inform the policy, with regard to the development of the HSI legislation. The subject of policy sets up the transition into a more specific discussion of finance within policy including an analysis of the federal legislation regarding HSIs. The discussion of finance policy is provided as further evidence of the prevailing and problematic policy logic with regard to HSIs. After these key elements there is a discussion of the range of methodologies used in the study of HSIs to date. Lastly, there will be a discussion on institutionalization and its relevance as theoretical framework to examine HSIs.

#### **Defining HSIs**

Perhaps most problematic in studying HSIs is how to define them. There are differing definitions depending on the source being utilized. The U.S. Department of Education (DOE) defines an HSI as a non-profit institution with a full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment of 25% or more Hispanic students, of which 50% or more are Pell Grant eligible (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). However, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), a membership-based organization founded in 1986, which pre-dates the federal legislation defining an HSI, maintains two different lists of HSIs. The first is based upon the Department of Education's (DOE) definition and is HACU's advocacy and research list. The DOE does not

maintain a definitive list of HSIs. Additionally, the definition provided by the DOE is what determines eligibility to apply for grants associated with the HSI status. Meeting the definition and appearing on HACU's advocacy and research list does not necessarily mean the institution is receiving federal funds from the DOE. Since the DOE does not provide a list of HSIs, HACU utilizes data from the DOE, NCES, and IPEDS to create its list.

The other list of HSIs maintained by HACU has to do with membership status within their organization. This definition differs greatly from the advocacy and research definition criteria. In order to be a member of HACU, an institution must have a Hispanic enrollment of 25% or more for total headcount enrollment. Total headcount enrollment includes full and part time students, undergraduates and graduates. Additionally, there is no requirement for a percentage of these students to be Pell Grant eligible to be a member institution of HACU. Data for eligibility to be a member institution of HACU is self-reported every fall. At present HACU lists 282 institutions as meeting their definition of an HSI. While the advocacy and research list maintained by HACU aligns with the DOE definition, it is important when reviewing research regarding HSIs to know which definition is being utilized, as it makes a significant difference regarding which population of institutions. Yet, since the DOE does not maintain a list of HSIs, it is necessary to utilize HACU's advocacy and research list, particularly for studies dealing with the entire population of HSIs. For studies necessitating a smaller number of HSIs, HACU's advocacy and research list is a good starting point. However, to know if an institution on this list is currently receiving federal grant monies, it would be best to consult both institutional resources and the DOE for lists of grant-receiving institutions based upon year. Grants related to HSI status cycle are on either a five year or one year cycle. The process described within this paragraph was utilized within this study. Due to these cycles it is difficult to assess how many

institutions at present are receiving grant funding tied to the HSI status via Title V. However, according to the DOE for fiscal year 2015, 96 grant applications were awarded. In 2016, new grant applications were not solicited due to budget constraints. Instead 2015 awards were reduced, and the DOE awarded 30 additional grants from the previous year's application pool bringing the total number of institutions receiving grants awarded in the two year period to 126. It should be noted that 15 of the 126 are institutions in Puerto Rico (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

### **History of Political Action Leading to the HSI Designation**

In order to better understand the increased participation of Hispanics in postsecondary education leading to the establishment of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), it would be best to begin with the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965. The HEA of 1965 is an appropriate starting point because it notes the beginning of a national conversation regarding expanding access to higher education, particularly ethnic minorities. Macdonald, Botti, and Clark (2007) provide a historical account of Latinxs relationship with higher education and the sometimes problematic relationship with African Americans along the way, due to a fear that creating institutional designations for Hispanic students might take away funding from HBCUs. Covering a 40-year history from 1965 to 2005, when HSIs were placed under Title V, Macdonald, Botti, and Clark (2007) outlined five stages regarding Latinxs complicated history with higher education: visibility and legitimacy in the early to late 1960s; self-determination in the early 1970s; seeking resources beyond the rhetoric in the early 1980s; emulation in the late 1980s and early 1990s; and autonomy in the late 1990s (p. 478). These stages reflected not only a complicated history, but a process of legitimacy within the macro-institution of American higher education. Macdonald, Botti, and Clark's (2007) stages will be utilized for convenience,

and other sources are drawn from to help develop a more thorough picture, but the task of developing a full history of Latinxs access to higher education is beyond the scope of this discussion. Yet, the outline here will provide a scaffold to better understand and provide perspective regarding Latinx populations access to higher education.

**Visibility and legitimacy.** The civil rights movement of the 1960s helped to ignite Latinxs (especially Mexican-Americans) to push against the political machines of the time, and surge toward recognition amongst politicians. An example of this would be the election of Raymond Telles as mayor of El Paso, Texas in 1957. Telles was important in the Viva Kennedy movement, served as an advisor to President Kennedy, and ultimately, secured an ambassador position to Costa Rica. There was also the development of other organizations such as Mexican Americans for Political Action (MAPA) in California and the Political Association of Spanish-Speaking Organizations (PASSO) in Texas (Vargas, 2011; Gates, 2016). While there were many other organizations which developed in support of the far left of the Democratic Party, this movement was the impetus that led to at least the acknowledgement of Latinxs within the public sphere. With this acknowledgement came the hope for Latinxs to also benefit from Johnson's Great Society programs including the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the 1965 Voting Rights Act, the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and the 1965 Higher Education Act. But the rhetoric associated with these legislative acts prioritized African Americans, who possessed an "official social category" (Karen, 1991). So, while Title III, "Strengthening Developing Institutions" of the HEA of 1965 did not name any specific ethnicity, race, or region of the country, it was presumed to support Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in the South. This rhetorical issued remained until the 1986 reauthorization of HEA (Roebuck & Murty, 1993).

Being overlooked by the Johnson Administration frustrated the Mexican American community. Leaders began to engage in increasingly more militant activity. At a regional meeting of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in Albuquerque in March 1966, approximately 50 participants left angrily after feeling like the EEOC had no interests in the problems facing Mexican Americans. The participants who walked out referred to themselves as the Mexican American Ad Hoc National Joint Committee and formed a list of demands for the EEOC, including an audience with President Johnson (San Miguel, 1987).

Five of the leaders from the Committee did get to meet with President Johnson privately. Johnson agreed to form a conference for Mexican Americans and to appoint a Mexican American to the EEOC. Johnson then formed a subtask force to begin the planning for a White House conference of Mexican American problems. Johnson appointed Vicente T. Ximenes as a commissioner within the EEOC and a member of the subtask force (San Miguel, 1987).

However, Johnson backed out of the conference and instead chose to hold Cabinet hearings regarding the plight of Mexican Americans in El Paso, Texas. While Ximenes tried to promote the hearings as more important than a conference, many did not agree. Adding salt to the wound was the list of speakers for the Cabinet hearings. Absent from the list were three of the most notable leaders within the Mexican American community: César Chávez of California, Reis Tijerina from New Mexico, and Rodolfo “Corky” González from Colorado (Vargas, 2011; San Miguel, 1987). “The absence of Chávez and Tijerina was held equivalent to considering the Negro problem without consulting Martin Luther King, Jr., or Roy Wilkins” (Ortego, 1967 as cited in San Miguel, 1987). This insult led a group of leaders invited to the meeting to walk out. Others stayed to air their criticisms, noting that while more rights were being afforded to Black

Americans, Mexican Americans were being left behind, when simple expansion of these civil rights programs could help their cause.

Many who aired these grievances walked out to join the other leaders to hold a conference of their own in the barrios of El Paso, “la verdadera conferencia.” This group coined the name La Raza Unida and ultimately went on to function as a political party. This walk out and ultimate organization represented what became a division between the old and new ways of advocating for Mexican American rights. La Raza represented the new with more militant activity and nationalistic rhetoric, while organizations like the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the American G.I. Forum continued to rely on more traditional forms of political activity. La Raza Unida was strongly fueled by the energy of students and the academic community, ultimately kindling what led to the Chicano movement. But the growing number of Latinx professionals provided the opportunity for specialized and institutionalized methods in advocating for equal rights, specifically through the legal system (San Miguel, 1987; Vargas, 2011).

**Self-determination.** The self-determination in the early 1970s described by Macdonald, Botti, and Clark (2007) represents a period of self-agency by the Latinx population using methods demonstrated in previous years by African Americans. Beyond protests and sit-ins, a movement incorporating a greater sense of militancy began to take hold, particularly amongst Latinx youth and those within the academy (Gates, 2016). This was the beginning of the Chicano movement. At the University of California, Santa Barbara, the Chicano movement was formalized in a document known as *El Plan de Santa Barbara* in April 1969. Within two months student groups from all over California organized into the *Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán* (MEChA). Of particular import of the Chicano movement to Latinxs role in higher



education is the involvement of MEChA in developing curriculum in Mexican American studies and other work regarding education (Vargas, 2011). For the East Coast, Latinxs and Blacks joined together for the cause of access at Brooklyn College and City University of New York (CUNY). Puerto Rican students at Yale organized into the *Boricuas Unidos*. These efforts exemplified the desire for Latinxs to take ownership of higher education institutions.

Additionally, during this time period academic leaders within the Chicano and Puerto Rican communities attempted to establish several institutions to create a Latinx “talented tenth.” While eight schools were established, there is little known about them and they failed to persist beyond the Chicano movement (Macdonald, Botti, & Clark, 2007; Gates, 2016).

Foundations also helped the Latinx community in its push to establish political legitimacy, such as Ford, Carnegie, and Rockefeller. The Rockefeller Foundation became a driving force behind the TRIO programs, such as Upward Bound. The Ford Foundation provided the seed resources for the establishment of Mexican American Legal Defense Education Fund (MALDEF) and the Puerto Rican Legal Defense Fund (PRLDEF) (Macdonald, Botti, & Clark, 2007; Vargas, 2011; Gates, 2016). MALDEF, in particular, would become critical force in future legal battles for Latinxs to have equal access to education.

The beginnings of MALDEF are typically attributed to Pete Tijerina, a Mexican American lawyer from San Antonio who in 1966 was unable to select a suitable jury for his client, in an accident case. LULAC had already fought the legal battle for inclusion of Mexican Americans on jury lists in 1954, however, in a town with a significant population of Mexican Americans, the best the court could do was provide a list that included a Mexican American that had been dead for 10 years and a Mexican national who was called by mistake. This prompted Tijerina to contact Jack Greenburg of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored

People Legal Defense Fund (NAACP-LDF) for advice. Greenburg arranged a meeting between the two with Bill Pincus of the Ford Foundation in hopes for establishing a legal defense fund similar to the NAACP's (San Miguel, 1987).

When Tijerina, Greenburg, and other leaders got a meeting with Pincus the following year, they were the first to bring the concerns of Mexican Americans to the Ford Foundation, who in effect, did not realize Mexican Americans existed. Pincus agreed he would be willing to hear a proposal for a five state legal defense fund. Tijerina gathered support through Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, and Colorado. With the help of Greenburg, Tijerina received a \$6,000 grant in order to prepare and apply for a \$1 million grant from Ford. Ultimately, the Ford Foundation awarded a \$2.2 million grant over five years, with \$250,000 slated as scholarships for Chicano law students. This brought much needed resources and expertise to the Mexican American cause. From 1970-1981 MALDEF litigated over 100 cases, most of them involving school desegregation policies (San Miguel, 1987).

With growing legitimacy and activism within the legal system, attention toward the Latinx population from politicians began to take hold, particularly with regard to party affiliation. Though Latinxs were historically Democrats, President Nixon saw the opportunity to affiliate the voting minority with the Republican Party. In an attempt to find favor with Latinx voters, the new term Hispanic was added as a racial/ethnic category in the U.S. Census by the Nixon Administration via Statistical Directive 15 of 1973 (Macdonald, Botti, & Clark, 2007; Gates, 2016). According to Directive 15, a Hispanic person is “of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race” (United States Office of Budget and Management, 1973).

**Beyond the rhetoric.** Moving into the 1980s Macdonald, Botti, and Clark (2007) note the decade as one of “paradox and contradiction for Latinx higher education” (p. 487). This time period resulted in the closing of most grassroots Chicano colleges, as the civil rights movement began to shift in the post-Vietnam era. Challenging the Black/White rhetoric of the past, Antonia Hernandez, MALADEF counsel, accused both the Departments of Justice and Education in failing to protect Hispanics under Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act in 1983 (Macdonald, Botti, and Clark, 2007, p. 489). She additionally criticized the Department of Education and its oversight of the state of Texas regarding compliance Title IV, a harbinger for *LULAC et al v. Ann Richards, Governor of Texas, et al* in 1987. LULAC filed suit claiming appropriation methods for public higher education discriminated against Latinxs enrolled in institutions along the Texas and Mexico border. Though the court failed to side with LULAC, there was an acknowledgement of a failure to provide “first class” educational opportunities on the Texas border (Macdonald, Botti, & Clark, 2007; Vargas, 2011; Gates, 2016).

The other contributing factor to the plateau in progress was the national conservative mood made evident by the Reagan administration. As education costs began to rise, the Reagan administration shifted to a model favoring student loans over grants, a concept Latinxs traditionally are uncomfortable with (Santos & Saenz, 2014). In 1975, 35.4% of Latinx high school graduates attended college. By 1980, it was 30 % and 27% in 1985 (NCES, 2010). As a result, this change in funding structure significantly impacted lower income Latinx students.

In effort to salvage what the media had termed, the Decade of the Hispanic, some lawmakers and activists tried to realize tangible gains for Latinxs. After reviewing *The Condition of Education for Hispanics Americans* (Brown, Rosen, Hill & Olivas, 1980), Senator Paul Simon, chairman of the Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education, introduced. H.R. 5240 to the

HEA Amendments of 1984, which included reforms designed to assist Hispanic access and retention. Senator Simon dug deeper into the facts regarding Latinx's access to higher education, realizing the lacking rhetoric, particularly of Title III of HEA. Although H.R. 5240 was not approved, it became part of subsequent legislation in the 1992 reauthorization of HEA. Additional legislation came with Albert Bustamante's Hispanic-Serving Institutions of Higher Education Act of 1989. Despite these efforts, neither bill could overcome the national mood. While both bills failed, they garnered enough interest to remain on the political agenda in the 1990s (Macdonald, Botti, & Clark, 2007; Vargas, 2011; Gates, 2016).

**Emulation era.** The emulation era of the late 80s and early 90s (Macdonald, Botti, and Clark, 2007) is marked by the development of a new strategy in putting Latinxs on the educational policy agenda. This was done by uniting colleges and universities which viewed themselves as already serving the Latinx community. This critical element to the history of HSIs is the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU). Administrators from Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio, Texas and leadership from the Xerox Corporation joined forces to support the Hispanic population pursuing higher education (HACU, 2011). Formulated in 1986, HACU originally consisted of 18 two- and four-year institutions. Today, HACU has 272 member institutions (HACU, n.d.). HACU was actually the organization to first coin the term "Hispanic-Serving Institution" which was later incorporated into Titles III and V in the reauthorizations of HEA in 1992 and 1998. Because Latinxs had developed a sizable population of successful professionals of influence, HACU was able to prod the Hispanic Congressional Caucus forward on higher education reform (Macdonald, Botti, & Clark, 2007).

HACU is viewed as the entity responsible for the federal designation of HSIs in 1992, which was first established under Title III (Macdonald, Botti, and Clark, 2007). Defined under

Public Law 102-325 HSIs were defined as: (1) institutions with an enrollment of at least 25% full-time equivalent Hispanic students, (2) not less than 50% of its Hispanic students were low-income and first generation college students, and (3) an additional 25% of its Hispanic students were either low-income or first generation. The bill was introduced by Senator Claiborne Pell.

These stringent requirements made it difficult for institutions to identify appropriate students. Furthermore, while HACU considered it a victory that HSIs were finally a federal designation, the initial funding of for 1993 was not dispersed until 1995. Moreover, only \$12 million of the allotted \$45 million was realized. In 1997, the appropriation was only \$10.7 million. This prompted concern and a bit of resentment toward the healthier funding model of HBCUs. It would not be until the 1998 reauthorization of HEA that these issues were addressed (Macdonald, Botti, & Clark, 2007).

In 2011, HACU produced a document highlighting the history of the organization over 25 years (HACU, 2011). HACU is widely recognized for its role in policy development for HSIs (Nunez et. al., 2013; Galedeno, Flores, & Moder, 2012; Laden, 2001; Laden, 2004; Dayton, Gonzalez-Vasquez, Martinez, & Plum, 2004). Learning from their counterparts in the HBCU lobby, HACU united Hispanic interests in business and government and utilized a new strategy of taking an “insider” approach and utilizing existing power structures. (Macdonald, Botti, and Clark, 2007).

Though there was great progress in the early 90s, it was tinged with disappointments and also a social climate which was becoming increasingly conservative, particularly toward Latinx immigrants. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals decision in *Hopwood v. Texas* regarding affirmative action did not bode well for the future (Macdonald et.al, 2007). Additionally, Propositions 209 and 227 in California limited both bilingual education and affirmative action.

Despite these setbacks, President Clinton's Executive Order 12900 (1994) established the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. Secretary of Education Richard Riley provided leadership to this group which ultimately published the highly influential publication, *Our Nation on the Fault-Line: Hispanic American Education in 1996*. This report noted the dire nature of education for Hispanic Americans noting persistent achievement gaps at all levels of education, inadequate funding for and assessment of Hispanic American educational outcomes, and frequent segregation of Hispanic American students into resource deficient schools (U.S. Department of Education, 1996).

**Autonomy.** Macdonald, Botti, and Clark's (2007) final stage is described as autonomy of the late 1990s (p. 494). This stage is marked mainly by the 1998 amendments to the HEA. In the process leading up to the passage of the 1998 amendments the Hispanic lobby worked diligently to impress upon the HBCU community that funding Latinxs unique interests would not take funding away from their cause. This is indicative of the long occurring competition between Brown and Black in higher education which has ebbed and flowed throughout history. There were some understandable concerns amongst the HBCU lobby.

Since HBCUs were defined under Title III, Part B as institutions created prior to 1964; there are a fixed amount of these institutions. Additionally, HBCUs are a part of the social contract between Blacks and the White majority resulting from the Civil War. But the establishment of HSIs, along with the growing numbers of Latinxs in the United States represented the introduction of a third minority, which had not been considered before (Gasman, Baez, & Turner, 2008).

Unlike HBCUs, HSIs are determined by percentage of Hispanic students, not institutional mission. Coupled with the exploding Latinx population between the 1980 and 1990 census, it

became quickly apparent that HSIs would continue to grow as greater numbers of Latinxs enrolled in two- and four-year institutions. Because of the uniqueness of these institutions, HACU lobbied to have HSIs redefined as their own section, “Part C,” under Title III to separate, while not taking away from HBCUs and TCUs (Macdonald, Botti, & Clark, 2007).

Proponents for HSIs focused on three key reforms for the 1998 reauthorization of HEA: 1) strike down the full-time equivalency requirement, which was not reflective of how most Latinxs enrolled in higher education; 2) eliminate the requirement that 50% of the Latinx students be both low income and first generation; 3) HSIs have their own placement under Title III (Part C). Having a separate section would be more than a cosmetic change to Title III. It would acknowledge that HSIs are unique since they enrolled over half of the Latinxs in higher education. Additionally, there was a moral argument that granting a separate section would provide a similar degree of recognition previously known only to HBCUs, and of course, the unmet needs of adequate funding (Gasman, et. al, 2008; Macdonald, Botti, & Clark, year).

The Higher Education Act of 1965 was amended in 1998 with all recommendations put forth by HACU, with one unexpected exception—HSIs were placed into their own title. Title V, which had been previously devoted to teacher education, was the new home for HSIs within the legislation. This was a tremendous acknowledgement of the legitimacy of HSIs, and their students, within the eyes of the federal government. No longer was the Latinx experience of higher education blended in with the narratives of African Americans (Gasman, et. al, 2008; Macdonald, Botti, & Clark, year).

## **Policy**

Policy is an appropriate area for examination due to its contribution toward developing legitimacy of HSIs and further because it is the mechanism which introduces the concept of an

HSI to higher education as a whole. In essence, policy bridges the gap between political energy and organizational reality. To that end, this discussion of policy regarding HSIs will begin with a brief overview of how HSIs came to be formally recognized in Title III and later Title V of the Higher Education Act (Valdez, 2015), followed by a brief analysis of the policy as it currently reads within Title V which will inform this study's challenge to the current policy logic.

**Overview.** While most recognize the role of HACU (Nunez et. al., 2013; Galedeno, Flores, & Moder, 2012; Laden, 2001; Laden, 2004; Dayton, Gonzalez-Vasquez, Martinez, & Plum, 2004) in lobbying Congress to pass legislation recognizing Hispanic-Serving Institutions in 1992, there were groups working toward this end prior to the creation of HACU. These groups came together in forming what was known as the Hispanic Higher Education Coalition (HHEC). Valdez (2015) notes this group provided testimony during the 1979 Reauthorization of HEA hearings advocating for federal funds toward "Hispanic colleges" (p.7).

The HHEC was a conglomerate of organizations brought together by MALADEF in order to advocate for increased funding for poorly resourced institutions educating large numbers of Latinxs. The original members of the HHEC were: ASPIRA of America, El Congreso Nacional de Asuntos Colegiales, League of United Latin American Citizens, MALDEF, National Association for Equal Educational Opportunities, National Council of La Raza, Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, and the U.S. Catholic Conference (MALDEF, 1979). It was this coalition that first identified Title III, Strengthen Developing Institutions, of HEA as an appropriate place to advocate for funds to benefit those institutions enrolling large number of Latinxs. By using the political power and expert knowledge of its membership, HHEC provided testimony during the 1979 Reauthorization of HEA hearings and subsequently in 1981, 1984,



and 1985. This persistence was necessary in order to propel a social issue into an agenda item within higher education policy arena (Sabatier, 1993; Stone, 2001).

The frequent pushback from policy makers was a belief that Title III existed explicitly for and applied only to HBCUs. In order to convince lawmakers to restructure Title III, the HHEC needed to find other ways to garner support. The HHEC was able to gather support of a bi-partisan group of representatives from the Southwest to offer a letter of support to then president Jimmy Carter. The group came together not necessarily with the intention of advocating for the education of Latinxs, but because they saw a disparity in how their states received little to no Title III funding (Valdez, 2015). In gathering the support of these congressmen, the HHEC was able to apply additional pressure toward re-examining the structure of Title III and ultimately ensuring their participation in the hearings regarding HEA in subsequent years.

The momentum created by the HHEC is what led to Representative Paul Simon (D-IL) to sponsor legislation focused on Latinxs in higher education (Macdonald, et. al, 2007). Though the climate was chilly during the Reagan administration, this effort displayed the ability of the HHEC to leverage political power. While recommendations made by the HHEC were not realized in the 1979 or 1982 reauthorizations, their efforts kept their cause on the policy agenda. By the 1984 reauthorization hearings, there was an attempt to actually define a Hispanic-Serving Institution, and thus began the back and forth of percentages Percentage of Latinx enrollment fluctuated in congressional compromises from 40%-20% before the current 25% was settled upon (Valdez, 2015,p. 15-18). This back and forth compromise is evidence of a negotiation process that would both keep legislators and institutions satisfied with an appropriate threshold. The 1985 Reauthorization of HEA would be the last hearings in which HHEC members would testify. In 1986, HACU was established and took over the cause. This transition, however, is

important when examining the policy development on a macro scale. The HHEC took the momentum of political power over the past several decades and pushed into the congressional policy agenda until the leaders of the institutions educating the majority of Latinxs in the United States, represented by HACU, could take the mantle for recognition and funding. The role of HACU in the 1992 Reauthorization of the HEA is well noted and has already been briefly discussed in the previous section. However, in consideration of the framework from of institutionalization, it is important to note how the policy environment came to favor the notion of a HSI.

**Analysis.** The future of HSIs will be largely influenced by policymakers and how they frame current and future problems and resources. The undercurrent to these policies will be the result of and the continued interest in HSIs by higher education scholars. Undoubtedly, the demographic projections are on target and by 2060 Latinxs will account for 1 in 3 Americans (U.S Census, 2012). Fortunately, the increased recognition of Latinxs in federal policy has led to the development of such organizations as *Excelencia* in Education, which is a frequent contributor to the policy discussion along with HACU (Santiago, 2006). Founded in 2004, *Excelencia* is a not-for-profit which produces data driven analysis in order to further Latino student success. Additionally, *Excelencia* works to create and influence educational policy on the institutional, state, and federal level (Excelencia in Education, n.d.).

There are multiple perspectives and problem definitions regarding the growing number of Latinxs within higher education, and thus differing ideas as to how to best address the Latinx attainment gap. Santiago (2012) conveys the federal government's problem definition utilizing critical mass theory. Accordingly, the idea is that a critical mass of students will provoke operational change to better "serve" that mass. Labaree (1997) noted that higher education policy

is typically viewed from one of three perspectives: social efficiency, social mobility, or democratic equality. Santiago's (2012) problem definition is in line with Labaree's (1997) idea of social efficiency and meeting the national interests of the future workforce. Other problem definitions include those of Medina and Posadas (2012) and Arciniega (2012) who also harken the ideas of Labaree, but from the democratic equality perspective. Medina and Posadas (2012) focus on the student perspective of attending an HSI and, to some extent, the faculty perspective. As such, Medina and Posadas (2012) frame the problem as a need for programming, role models, and mentors so Latinx students can better see themselves equally within the higher education landscape. Arciniega (2012) too, is concerned with leadership development but frames the problem from a historical activist perspective, much like Rhoades, Saenz & Carducci (2005) in their analysis of affirmative action. However, Arciniega sees the HSI designation as the next step toward free higher education for all. Lastly, Galdeano, Flores, & Moder (2012) utilizes Labaree's notion of social mobility with regard to Hispanics as a demographic. HACU will continue to see the HSI designation as capacity-building and advocate for more federal monies to be appropriated to HSIs, which reflects the current policy logic.

At the time the HSI policy was written in 1992, the focus was on institutions which provide access to Latinx students. The policy, as written, has no determinant for success or degree attainment. This is not a problem situated solely within the Hispanic community. Indeed, degree attainment is a part of the new accountability focus of higher education (Zumeta, 2001). However, as the Latinx population continues to expand within the United States, so will the number of institutions enrolling Latinx students, further compounding the issue of accountability.

The tool utilized in the current HSI policy is capacity-building (McDonnell and Elmore, 1987). This design is consistent with the problem definition from the federal governments and HACU's prospective. Indeed, it seems logical that institutions will act in response to a sum of money when the qualifying conditions require little to no effort on the part of the institutions. However, this tool of capacity-building does nothing to ensure Latinxs attain degrees from these institutions and further close the achievement gap for degree attainment. Moreover, the current policy does not require an institutional mission of serving the Hispanic community, unlike Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), though some scholars see this as the next iteration of the HSI designation (Contreras, Malcom, & Bensimon, 2008). Unfortunately, as written, the policy carries the implication of money to acknowledge existence but no commitment to ensure persistence. This could lead to more institutions taking advantage of the growing Latinx population via enrollment but making no commitment to narrow the achievement gap. In fact, the policy could increase the gap (Waller, Glasscock, Glasscock, & Fulton-Calkins, 2006) by rewarding institutions for enrolling Latinx students and not yet not holding them accountable for graduating Latinx students. Additionally, this policy was designed and written without a qualifying precedent. Previous MSI legislation dealt specifically with mission based institutions, not motivating HWIs to act in a way beneficial to a specific ethnic minority because the policy does not mandate institutions change their missions to reflect their changing student populations.

The policy as currently defined seems intentionally vague with no accountability mechanisms. This could be for a number of reasons, but most likely because the policy is situated within the higher education context, whose demographics are changing rapidly even though its institutions are slow to institute change. Moreover, the HACU recognizes that merely

getting HSIs on the policy agenda is monumental: “The strategy of focusing on the greatest concentrations of Hispanic college students still promises to be the most efficient approach to increasing Hispanic educational attainment and closing the gaps” (Galdeano et. al, 2012, p. 161). So the implicit power of the policy is recognition.

However, a policy based solely on access lacks accountability. Medina & Posadas (2012) note the lack of accountability on the institutional level aligning with O’Day’s (2002) push for professional accountability. Arcinega (2012) goes a step further, utilizing a system changing tool (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987) in order to make greater progress toward free higher education for all citizens. And even Santiago (2012) questions the policy’s effectiveness without, at minimum, some basic inducements, such as direct reporting describing how monies used directly contribute to Latinx student success via completion, graduation, or transfer rates. Together, these various stakeholders can all agree: the gaps in the policy will not fill the gaps in attainment for Latinxs.

Thus far, the only outcomes found in the literature reviewed is a marked increase in funding for HSIs and the number of institutions with the HSI designation (Galdeano et. al & Santiago, 2012). These results are not surprising since more Americans continue to choose higher education and a greater percentage of Americans are identified as Hispanic. It can be expected this trend will continue. As a result, a smaller percentage of HSIs receive federal funds now, than 25 years ago (Ortega, Frye, Nelligan, Kamimura, & Vidal-Rodríguez, 2015). Additionally important is how the policy will be modified over time based on various stakeholders’ problem definitions. Defining what it means to “serve” the target population would require mandates. Assuring Hispanics attain degrees would necessitate inducements. Working toward free higher education for all high school graduates would require extensive system-changing.

Additional areas of interests will be those policies on both state and federal levels which will impact HSIs. For example, performance based funding may be able to illuminate how budgetary inducements impact various types of institutions (Zumeta, 2001). States utilizing performance based funding typically allot a portion of institutional funds based upon accountability measures such as persistence, retention, four-year graduation rates, and six-year graduation rates. However, broad access institutions frequently struggle with these measures because they serve populations of students from lower socio-economic statuses. Thus, their students may stop-out of school, work full time, all resulting in longer time to degree completion. Likewise, reauthorization of the Higher Education Act is overdue. Further action and amendments to this policy would certainly have a significant impact on present and future HSIs.

HSI designation is subject to abuse. For one, the designation is a misnomer because the policy fails to define what it means to “serve” the Hispanic population. Likewise, policies based solely on enrollment of FTE students are frequently misused because of access to funds with few accountability measures. Furthermore, it is only a matter of time before the policy is obsolete in nature. While the majority of Latinx citizens are located within specific areas of the country, the demographic is steadily growing and spreading along the trajectory of becoming the new majority. Additionally, the policy fails to recognize the diversity of ethnicities encompassed within the term Hispanic and what differing needs may exist for students depending on region and ethnicity. This presents challenges as a greater number of institutions qualify as HSIs. Yet, based on current funding levels, there does not seem to be a move to match funds with growing numbers, a particularly harsh challenge given declining state support of institutions (Zumeta, 2001). The implications for the policy are quite extensive.

Further evidence of the previously untested policy logic lies in an understanding of how states have responded to increasing numbers of HSIs and increasing Latinx student enrollments. Again, the focus is largely on funding in relation to capacity building. However, there is evidence to suggest that state policies reflected significant inequities.

**Finance as problem.** Drilling down further into institutional issues for HSIs unsurprisingly leads to a discussion of finance. Indeed, the focus of the original legislation to define and recognize HSIs sought to provide funds to otherwise under resourced institutions enrolling Latinxs. The federal legislation has a history of being under financed and this trend continues today, despite the growing number of institutions meeting the federal definition of an HSI (Ortega, et. al, 2015) Selected literature is highlighted in order to discuss finance as it impacts families, states, and the broader field of HSIs as a whole.

Using data from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), Santos and Sáenz (2012) conducted a trend analysis utilizing over 30 years (1975-2008) of data collected within the CIRP Freshmen Survey. By examining issues around parental education, family income, and college choice, Santos and Sáenz (2012) found persistent and increasing gaps with regard to income and how Latinxs and Whites view college financing. Additionally, data were broken down within the Hispanic category for a more thorough analysis of how different ethnicities within the Hispanic category behave differently. Utilizing Kingdon's (1984) Multiple Streams framework, Santos and Sáenz (2012) conclude that Lantina/os are caught in a perfect storm with regard to the multiple policy streams of: the problem of spiraling tuition costs, the policy solution of cost sharing being enacted by institutions (meaning student/families being responsible for more of the cost of attendance), and the resulting environment which shifts financial aid policies toward benefiting the middle class (p. 397). The result is that Latinx

students are much more sensitive than White students to changing financial aid policies. However, given the growing demographic of Latinx students combined with efforts by the Obama Administration, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Lumina Foundation emphasizing the need for a more educated workforce now and in the future (Carey, 2009), Santos and Sáenz (2012) see the current policy environment as an opportunity for policy entrepreneurs to act. However, they also warn that failure to do so may leave the U.S. workforce ill-prepared for the future economy. While this study did not look exclusively at HSIs, it does provide valuable information with regard to students who attend HSIs and current policy trends. Since cost is such a significant factor for college choice and Latinxs frequently have less knowledge to draw from regarding financial aid for college, HSIs can anticipate carrying much of the educational burden of the country. One of the major limitations for Santos and Sáenz's (2012) study is that it focused on students attending four-year institutions. Since the majority of HSIs are two-year institutions, it is necessary to investigate finance impacts within the community college realm.

While Waller, Glasscock, Glasscock, and Fulton-Calkins (2006) focused their analysis on the funding of Hispanic-Serving community colleges in Texas, there is a resemblance between the findings and warning given by Santos and Sáenz (2012). Using data from the 2000-2001 academic year, Waller et. al (2006) explored whether there was a “difference in the primary revenue streams between Hispanic-, African-American-, and Caucasian-serving public community colleges in Texas” (p. 470). Not only was there a difference, but their analysis revealed that in-district-tuition-revenue-per-contact hour was significantly higher for Hispanic-serving community colleges compared to African-American-serving community colleges (\$1.88 versus \$1.31). Additionally, Waller et. al (2006) did not find any differences in ad valorem



property tax revenue, thus leaving Hispanic students to pay higher tuition rates. It is assumed these higher tuition rates were to help off-set the additional costs needed in order to best serve underprepared students (Hagedorn & Cepeda, 2004). However, these findings were particularly troubling in light of the expectations of the Texas Higher Education Master Plan, revealing a major flaw: the plan had accountability measures for institutions, but not for the state to appropriately fund those institutions. Forcing the community colleges that serve the largest growing demographic within the state to raise tuition, thereby limiting access, is counter to inclusivity and further, the state's economic competitiveness, which had been the cornerstone of the master plan (Waller et. al, 2006). Waller et. al (2006) expounded upon this inconsistency and called upon state leaders to institute legislation similar to Title V of HEA, but for the state.

While this study was limited to results of one state within one snapshot of time, the implications are far-reaching. First, what happened in Texas is further evidence that indeed most HSIs are underfunded given the needs of their student populations, and legislative bodies need to take action. Second, the behavior of the state of Texas aligns with the findings of Santos & Sáenz (2012): the state legislature supported community colleges at decreasing rates and the cost was passed along to the students. Additionally, while Texas is only one state, it is noteworthy given the demographic changes happening within the United States. The state of Texas has a significant number of HSIs and likewise Latinxs within its population (HACU, n.d.). In some ways, other states can look to the demographic changes within Texas to better predict what changes lay ahead for the country. Waller et. al (2006) provided compelling data on the state level to compare HSIs with non-HSIs. There are now some data to provide broad brush strokes on the national level.

Ortega, Frye, Nellum, Kamimura, and Vidal-Rodríguez (2015) examined national data from 1999-2010 in order to capture the most recent economic recession within the United States. Drawing off the literature of resource heterogeneity allowed for explaining why institutions respond to the same problem in different ways. Additionally, this framework helps to explain the “Matthew effect” (Merton, 1968), which is the notion that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. As such, institutions with more resources available have greater flexibility and can respond to challenges from a place of strength, while less resourced institutions are more likely to respond to fiscal challenges looking to merely survive. In examining national data sets from the National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), and NCES Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Ortega et. al (2015) found some significant trends with regard to the funding of HSIs. These findings are important given the relationship between institutional resources and student success (Braxton, Hirschy, & McClendon, 2004).

First, funding support of HSIs has not kept pace with the increasing number of HSIs. The total amount of federal appropriations between 1999-2010 was \$92-94 million. While the Department of Education did grant new awards in 2008 for HSIs in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), the following year almost half of HSIs were still not receiving Title V funds. So while federal funding is helping some HSIs, those funds have not been distributed or kept pace in way to help sustain institutions through phases of tightening state budgets (Ortega, et.al, 2015). The financial resiliency of HSIs as compared to non-HSIs was also examined for both two and four year institutions. In 2010, nearly 60% of revenues for two-year HSIs were dependent upon state and local appropriations. Their non-HSI peers had 45% reliance on the same appropriations. The least reliant on state and local appropriations were non-

HSI four-year institutions. These institutions, in turn, have the greater flexibility turning tough economic times. In contrast, two-year HSIs, which make up the majority of HSIs and in turn educate a significant portion of Latinxs, are the most likely to suffer from economic constraints (Ortega, et.al, 2015, p. 161). Delving deeper into the data, a significant gap in appropriations per student was found between HSIs and non-HSIs at the four-year level, in favor of the non-HSIs over the time period (p. 163). Additionally, while revenue from tuition and fees has gone up for all institutions, it has done so to a lesser extent at HSIs (p. 165). An area of opportunity for HSIs would be in the area of voluntary support and private giving. Institutions of all types saw a decrease in these funds over the time period, but HSIs did not drop as dramatically as non-HSIs, suggesting a growth opportunity (p. 166). However, the most striking findings had to do with spending regarding education and related expenditures, frequently referred to as E&R spending. Despite fiscal challenges E&R spending at four-year non-HSIs actually increased, while E&R expenditures at four-year HSIs decreased during the time period, widening an already significant gap. Two-year institutions were negatively affected for both HSIs and non-HSIs (p. 167-170). Spending declines in E&R are of particular importance because they have the ability to impact not only student retention and affordability (Gumport, 2001), but also institutional priorities, which is reflected in the findings of Waller et. al (2006).

Taken together, all three of the above mentioned studies regarding finance have important implications for policymakers and researchers alike. . As suggested in the policy section of this chapter, the number of HSIs will only continue to grow and the current policy will quickly become antiquated and ineffective. Additionally, there is a lack of data gathering element as a resource to scholars and a method of accountability for HSIs. While it is uncertain that educational outcomes may or may not be the best measurement of success for HSIs,

adequate data sources are needed in order to reassert the value of these outcomes or support the exploration of different outcomes. Moreover, states play an important role in funding HSIs and likewise need to design funding formulas which best support educational and economic outcomes. For states with large Latinx populations, the implications would be in planning for the growing demographic and funding institutions of higher education appropriately. Indeed, each state needs to consider how they will invest in the Latinx population as their tax base will largely be compromised of Latinxs. Lastly, the private sector needs to place greater investment in the Latinx population, whether it is in the form of industries investing in their local community college districts or larger philanthropic organizations investing in the training and leadership development of Latinx faculty and administration.

Furthermore, continued support toward research within higher education is critical as the landscape of students continually changes. It is important that the research community as a whole being open to asking probing questions without fear of the paradigm shift that may follow. Likewise, the academy needs to work to reflect the population of the students it serves. While higher education has made great strides in access, examples provided here demonstrate the field still has monumental progress to make and that access does not equal success. The increasing demand for higher education from our increasingly diverse population certainly challenges long-held traditions and pushes this field to new levels of creativity and innovation within education. Having a better understanding of how institutions conceptualize the HSI status could inform further studies and contribute toward possible policy reforms.

### **Research regarding HSIs**

There is a mixed body of literature with regard to methodology focused on HSIs and the populations that work within or attend HSIs. While this body of research is mixed, it has only

been in the past five years that quantitative studies have begun to emerge regarding HSIs (Hurtado & Alvarado, 2015; Núñez, et. al, 2015; Núñez et. al, 2016; Cuellar, 2014; Ortega, et. al, 2015; Hurtado, González, & Galdeano, 2015; Rodríguez & Galdeano, 2015; Lara & Wood, 2015; Flores & Park, 2013). This emergence of quantitative studies is mostly likely due largely to qualitative studies from when HSIs became of target of scholarly inquiry (Arciniega, 2012; Bensimon, 2007; Dayton, et. al, 2004; Galdeano, et.al, 2012; Garcia & Okhidoi, 2015; Karen, 1991; Laden, 2001; Laden, 2004; Medina & Posada, 2012; Santiago, 2012) and the significant growth in the number of HSIs allowing for the comparison of aggregate data from larger national datasets.

Within the body of literature there has also been a call to study HSIs from an organizational theory lens (Garcia, 2015). However, most of the studies published in response to this call have been quantitative in nature (Hurtado & Alvarado, 2015; Núñez, et. al, 2015; Núñez et. al, 2016). To date, there have been two studies (Garcia & Okhidoi, 2015; Garcia, 2017) which have attempted to respond to this research agenda from a qualitative stance. While Garcia & Okhidoi (2015) provided helpful insights and suggestions for cultural relevant practices which may benefit students attending HSIs, their study was a single site case study, loosely grounded in institutionalization. ). However, Garcia (2017) developed a typology for what she terms as “Latinx-serving institutions.” Using theoretical grounding in both organizational theory and cultural theory, Garcia’s (2017) single-site case study of a four-year federally designated HSI suggested that HSIs view their identities along the axis of outcomes and culture. Garcia’s study notes that HSIs may identity as *Latinx-enrolling*, *Latinx producing*, *Latinx-enhancing*, and *Latinx serving* (Garcia, 2017, pp. 121S-122S). Using data collected from students, faculty, staff, and administrators Garcia (2017) notes how institutional aspirations and organizational realities are

not yet aligned to serving Latino students. Garcia's study is important in beginning to better describe how HSIs serve Latino students.

There is a critical reason to study HSIs from an organizational theory lens. With a few exceptions, HSIs missions are not focused on serving the Latinx community, but instead emerged alongside changing demographics of student enrollment. As such, most HSIs are HWIs (Gasman, Baez, & Turner, 2008). Thus far, there has been limited research examining the implications of the growth of these institutions or examination of the changes of institutional behaviors required to meet the needs of increasingly diverse student populations (Nora & Crisp, 2009). "We do not know enough about whether changes at HSIs are evolutionary or actively managed so that institutional culture and daily practices are transformed in ways befitting their changing student populations" (Núñez, Hurtado & Galdeano, 2015, p. 2). Equally scarce is research addressing community colleges and less selective four-year institutions, which accounts for 80% of student enrollment in the U.S. (Kirst, Stevens, & Proctor, 2010) and the majority of HSIs. As student bodies become increasingly diverse and institutional budgets increasingly strained, student outcomes such as retention and graduation are more critically viewed as measures of success. HSIs are often criticized on these measures when compared to other institutions (Contreras, Malcom, & Bensimon, 2008). Yet, "research to date has typically not examined the institutional characteristics, resources, and activities within HSIs that could contribute to these outcomes, nor has it looked at how these institutions operate on the ground level" (Núñez, Hurtado, & Galdeano, 2015, p. 6).

### **Institutionalization**

Institutionalization theory developed out of the organizational change literature in order to better understand the question: What is permanence in organizational change (Curry, 1992)?

More specifically, organizational change scholars were interested in better understanding how innovations either became adopted into an organization's culture or alternatively, were terminated. Equally interested in this phenomenon are organizational leaders and innovators who seek to deliberately create change and want to ensure their innovations become institutionalized within the organization. Curry (1992) provided a typology of institutionalization occurring in three-stages: mobilization, implementation, and institutionalization (p. 5). These three stages may be referred to by different names within the change literature (Kezar, 2007), but despite the labels used they reflect similar stages of progression (Kezar & Sam, 2013). These stages can be observed in structural, procedural/behavioral, and cultural levels (Curry, 1992).

It is important to note that within the change literature, institutionalization is discussed as both a process and an outcome (Kezar, 2007). The current study is concerned with institutionalization as a process and thus is grounded within the process literature. As such, analysis elements as discussed in Chapter 3 are defined within institutionalization as theory and not as outcome.

Mobilization, the first phase of institutionalization, is descriptive of an organization preparing for change. Preparing may range from a simple awareness of a problem or to a more substantial action such as creating a foundation for policy (Curry, 1992; Kezar & Sam, 2013). Kezar and Sam (2013) note the mobilization stage consists of two parts: galvanizing members and initial structural change (p. 59). In galvanizing members, a change agent(s) may make an effort to get the word out and disseminate information.

The second stage, implementation, is evident in the creation of infrastructure and support for the innovation to carry forth momentum (Curry, 1992; Kezar, 2007). Individuals, groups, or both will coordinate and may bring in others for additional support. Supports needed to deal with

logistical issues maybe be identified, such as technology. During implementation policy behaviors, such as the development of forms or guidelines, are being developed (Curry, 1992), but there would be no evidence or thought into evaluation or sustainability (Kezar & Sam, 2013). During implementation, the innovation may have the feel of a special project. During this phase rewards or incentives along with sanctions come into play, but the innovation will not yet be fully integrated into the organizational culture (Curry, 1992).

The last stage, institutionalization, is noted by evidence of the innovation moving into the value system of the organization (Kezar & Sam, 2013). The institutionalization stage reflects a core understanding impacting institutional culture (Curry, 1992; Kezar, 2007). This typically refers to an innovation which has progressed through the stages to a point of becoming “indistinguishable from the rest of the institution” (Kezar & Sam, 2013). The innovation becomes embedded within the organization, to the point of being subsumed within the organizational framework.

Kezar (2007) used institutionalization to help describe college presidents who successfully implemented diversity agendas within their institutions. For Kezar’s (2007) study, the focus was on strategies institutional leaders could use at each stage of the institutionalization process. This qualitative study utilized interviews with a sample of 27 presidents from various institutions types across the U.S. whose institutions were at the various levels of institutionalization of diversity agendas. Kezar (2007) outlined leadership tasks at each stage of institutionalization. Findings indicated the importance of presidents being aware of which stage the agenda was at, and thus, being able to better allocate time and resources based upon the institutionalization stage.



Kezar and Sam (2013) also used institutionalization in their study of equitable policies and practices regarding contingent faculty. In their qualitative study of 45 instructors at 30 different institutions, Kezar and Sam (2013) were able to identify factors and strategies for moving toward more equitable policies for contingent faculty, along with challenges an institution may encounter along the way in trying to institute more equitable policies. In their findings, Kezar and Sam (2013) identified tactics utilized by participants, along with outcomes for each stage of institutionalization. The findings reaffirmed institutionalization theory and the need for institutional leaders to be aware of the phase their institutions may be in order to effectively navigate through change.

Institutionalization is helpful as a global framework to examine a process that occurs over time along a continuum (Curry, 1992), as opposed to demarcated levels. Likewise, it is applicable any institution of higher education, recognizing each will differ depending upon the change initiative. Thus far, one study has been found within the literature utilizing institutionalization within the context of an HSI. Garcia and Okhidoi (2015) utilized case study methodology to document how culturally relevant practices at a four-year HSI in the Southwest serve the Latinx students enrolled. Their study discussed how the Chicana/o studies program and the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) were embedded within the culture of the institution, giving some historical perspective toward this end. While institutionalization was utilized, it was not thoroughly applied within the analysis. Instead, the case study discussed the importance of two departments/programs, and then discussed how elements of those departments/programs had been institutionalized within the institution. Institutionalization was brought into the case study post-facto and was not used in the development of observation protocols. Thus, Garcia and Okhidoi's (2015) study does not use institutionalization as its guiding framework.

This review of the literature covered the differing definitions of an HSI, the historical events leading up to the HSI designation, outlined the policy context for HSIs, discussed the nature of current empiricism regarding HSIs and outlined institutionalization as a theoretical framework and its use within the higher education literature. The present study will begin to fill the gap of qualitative literature from an organizational theory lens (institutionalization) to better understand how HSIs conceptualize the HSI status from the perspective of two differing institutions. The study will contribute to the body of knowledge regarding how institutions institutionalize the HSI status. A better understanding of institutional culture with regard to the HSI status could further inform policy reform in order to derive at a policy logic which targets the Latinx attainment gap.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

The purpose of this study was to address the Latinx degree attainment gap by examining the policy logic regarding the HSI designation. In order to better understand institutional conceptions of the Latinx degree attainment gap, this study examined institutional perceptions of the HSI designation by gathering data regarding traditional administrators' and academic administrators' perceptions from a four-year and two-year institution. This multiple case study examined the policy logic of the HSI designation and sought inform future studies to contribute toward policy reform to better address the Latinx degree attainment gap by answering the research question: How do HSIs conceptualize their HSI status?

In order to achieve the purpose of this study, this chapter outlines the research design and methodology. First, the positionality of the researcher is discussed. Second, rationale for the applicability of a qualitative, multiple-case study embedded design is presented. Next, a discussion is presented of the selection of participants, procedures for data collection, and analysis. The chapter concludes with a discussion of validity, reliability and ethical issues associated with the research design.

### **Research Design**

#### **Positionality of the Researcher**

Creswell (2013) notes “researchers have a personal history that situates them as inquirers” (p.51). The researcher’s interests in institutional conceptualizations of the HSI status emanates from several areas. First, I am doctoral student at an MSI. My current institution is currently the most diverse in the United States according to *U.S. News and World Report* (2018) and has been designated as both an HSI and an AANAPISI. Additionally, the institution is on the

culp of having a minority majority of graduate students. The demographics of the institution were an attraction point during the doctoral institution selection process and the beginning point of my research agenda formulation.

Second, I am originally from Texas and grew up around strong influences of Hispanic culture. As such, I had both indirect and direct experiences with two significant historical events as presented in Chapter 2, which highlight examples of the impact of institutionalized racism. First, I was a young girl when LULAC sued the State of Texas regarding funding disparities for institutions of higher education along the border between Texas and Mexico. Furthermore, I was a college student at a second-tier institution of higher education from 1998-2002 within the state of Texas. During this time, Texas instituted its Top Ten Percent plan as a response to the end of affirmative action within college admissions processes (Flores & Morfín, 2008). As such, my educational journey in the state of Texas was uniquely situated within a timeframe marked by on-going friction regarding fair and equitable educational policies with regard to race in the state. Consequently, these policy struggles had both direct and indirect impacts on my own education with regard to institutional funding, enrollment patterns, and the demographic profile of my class. Currently, the state of Texas has one of the largest concentrations of HSIs in the United States. As such, this study, which aims to ultimately provide useful information to impact HSI policies, contributes not only to the HSI institutional field, but a significant number of institutions within my home state of Texas.

Third, I have been involved within the field of higher education for nearly 20 years as student, staff, and instructor. Having the opportunity to observe several different institutional environments across the U.S. has cultivated a keen interest in institutional behavior and more specifically, policy. Throughout my doctoral education, the interest in policy expanded to a

national level and a desire to articulate relationships amongst various levels of policy. This expanded interest in policy supports my desire to examine institutional perceptions of federal policy with the hope that these perceptions may inform future policy changes.

Finally, I situate myself as a social constructivist researcher. This fuels a desire to understand how individual meaning is socially constructed and the on-going dialogue between the individual and the society which actively redefines the individual. As such, I am inclined to examine lines of inquiry which challenge accepted norms regarding social problems. I seek to reframe those problems and focus attention on society and the institutions included within it, in order to better understand social problems. This is different from the currently accepted model of examining the individual as the focus of social problems. Therefore within the policy realm, I do not accept the predominate view that individuals are the sole source of social problems, and thus, should not be the sole policy targets and instead work to uncover how society and institutions can better respond to individual needs.

### **Applicability of Qualitative Methodology**

Creswell (2013) outlines several reasons when qualitative research is appropriate as the research design. These reasons include when a problem or issue needs to be explored or when a complex understanding of the issue is needed, much like this study (p. 47). Additional reasons include when wanting to understand a context and statistical analysis fails to fit the problem (p. 48). To gain this detailed understanding, Creswell (2013) notes qualitative research necessitates talking directly to people within their environments uninhibited by researcher expectations. These characteristics of qualitative research are aligned with understanding how institutions conceptualize their HSI status. For this study, the most appropriate qualitative method was multiple case study design.

## **Applicability of Case Study**

Yin (2014) notes that case study design is most advantageous for studies asking “how” or “why” questions in which the researcher has little to no control of the participants or environment being observed (p. 14). This study sought to describe *how* institutions conceptualize their HSI status. Additionally, the research question necessitated gathering data which cannot be separated from the institutional environment, nor could the researcher control participants since the desire is to gather authentic data with no expectations of responses.

Furthermore, Yin (2014) defines the scope of case study as an empirical inquiry which examines a contemporary phenomenon in a real world context in which the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context may be difficult to determine (p. 16). As noted in Chapters 1 and 2 of this proposal, HSIs are recent developments within the higher education landscape. Additionally, this study sought to capture institution’s conceptualizations of the HSI status as it was happening, rather than reflecting on a process within the institutional history. Lastly, data collected in this study reflected elements of each institution’s culture and spoke to how those cultures interact with the HSI status.

Yin (2014) also discusses the features of a case study as a part of his two-fold definition. Case study is a method which has the ability to “cope with a technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points” (p. 17). Thus, case study relies on multiple sources of evidence and benefits from prior development of theory to guide collection and analysis. A more thorough discussion of the multiple sources of evidence in order to achieve triangulation are discussed in the Data Collection and Data Analysis sections of Chapter 4, along with the theoretical propositions which guided this study. What is important to note is that because of the unique nature of the cases that were examined in this study, case study

was the most appropriate method because it embraced the multiple variables at play within an institutional environment.

This study utilized multiple case study design based upon replication logic. Yin (2014) notes the logic of multiple case study design is to utilize either a literal replication or a theoretical replication (p. 57). A literal replication predicts the same results for both cases. A theoretical replication predicts different results for each case based upon a theory. Since four-year institutions and two-year institutions have very different missions, it was anticipated the two cases would have contrasting results. Thus, this study was based on theoretical replication logic in that the two cases would have differing results based upon the differing nature of their institutional missions.

### **Case Study Design**

The unit of analysis for the multiple case study design was administrators at a four-year HSI and a two-year HSI. Traditional administrators holding the title of Director or higher, but with no teaching responsibilities were one embedded case. The other embedded case was academic administrators. These administrators hold the title of Program Chair or higher and may or may not have teaching responsibilities in addition to their leadership position. Additionally, there was a natural opportunity to test theoretical replication with this study by choosing a four-year and two-year institution.

**Participants.** The purpose of this study was to address the Latinx degree attainment gap by examining the policy logic regarding the HSI designation. To better understand institutional conceptions of the Latinx degree attainment gap, this study examined institutional perceptions of the HSI designation. To address this line of inquiry, administrators from a two-year, Southwestern Community College (SCC), and a four-year institution, Western University (WU),

served as representatives of institutional perceptions. Six administrators from each institutional type were interviewed. Table 1 outlines participants and case structure.

Table 1

*Participants*

Case	<u>Academic</u>		<u>Traditional</u>	
	Pseudonym	Title	Pseudonym	Title
WU	Sherri	Dean	Celeste	Asst. Vice President
	Janis	Dean	George Norman	Asst. Vice President
	Teresa	Dept. Chair		Asst. Vice President
SCC	Sally	Dean	Elizabeth	Executive Director
	Hank	Faculty & District Coordinator	Helen	Acting Director
	Gloria	Discipline Coordinator	Joan	Director

There were two embedded cases of administrators at each institutional type, or case: traditional administrators and academic administrators. Traditional administrators are those holding the title of Director or higher but have no teaching responsibilities. Academic administrators are faculty holding the title of Program Chair or higher who may or may not have teaching responsibilities in their administrative role. Administrators were appropriate because individuals holding these positions are typically viewed as institutional leaders. Institutional leaders, as such, play a role in shaping institutional environments impacting student success and likewise may impact institutional policy and how policies are executed, acting as institutional agents (Bensimon, 2007; Stanton-Sálazar, 2001). In short, institutional leaders impact institutional context. Additionally, as Gates (2016) notes, literature regarding upper level administration at HSIs is mostly anecdotal. Furthermore, in a recent study by Núñez, Crisp, and



Elizondo (2016), which created a typology of HSIs, findings suggest “constituential, resource, and environmental characteristics among different types of HSIs might be associated with large differences in institutions graduation rates” (p. 76). Since the majority of research regarding the constituential diversity of HSIs has focused on faculty (Hubbard & Stage, 2009) and HSI students (Bridges et. al, 2008; Cuellar, 2014; Garcia & Okhidoi, 2015) and most research on HSI administrators is concerned with presidents (de los Santos & Vega, 2008; Santiago, 2009; Santiago, Andrade, & Brown, 2004), this study focused on administrators to begin addressing the gaps within the literature in order to better understand institutional perceptions within the HSI landscape.

Participants were recruited via email correspondence based upon organizational and directory information from each institution. The email contained a brief description of the study and inclusion criteria, along with supporting documentation from the researcher’s dissertation committee chair and salient documentation from the researcher’s IRB. One week after the initial email, a follow-up email was sent to prospective participants yet to respond. Prospective participants that did not respond within two weeks of the initial email were assumed unwilling to participate and the researcher continued with recruiting other participants in a similar fashion. Six participants were recruited for each case.

## **Data Collection**

**Interviews.** Semi-structured interviews allowed for the collection of similar information for comparison purposes while allowing flexibility for the researcher to probe for needed information (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). Both Bernard and Ryan (2010) and Yin (2014) recommend developing an interview protocol. Institutionalization theory guided the structure of the interview protocol to elicit data regarding department/division conceptualizations and

knowledge of the HSI status and the Latinx student populations which they serve, institutionalization theory (Curry, 1992; Kezar, 2007; Kezar & Sam, 2013) guided the structure of the interview protocol. Each interview lasted 30-75 minutes and was conducted via phone during the 2016-2017 academic year. All interviews were audio recorded. All interviews were conducted by the researcher and were immediately transcribed after the interview data were collected. Interviews, notes, and memos were all transcribed by the researcher. Transcribed documents utilized pseudonyms and were kept in a Dropbox file on a password protected computer. The Dropbox file was only accessible to the researcher and primary investigator. Additionally, all transcribed materials were uploaded to Dedoose (Dedoose, n.d.), a cloud-based computer software package, to aid in organization and subsequent analysis.

A pilot study took place prior to data collection to mimic research conditions and further refine the research protocol. One administrator meeting the definition of each embedded case were recruited from the researcher's home institution in September 2016. The researcher's home institution had recently met the criteria to achieve the HSI status. Each administrator was formally recruited via email. Interviews were conducted over the phone and audio recorded. The researcher immediately transcribed each interviewed and allowed the administrators to review the content for accuracy. Additionally, each administrator provided feedback on the interview protocol itself. The interview protocol is provided in Appendix A.

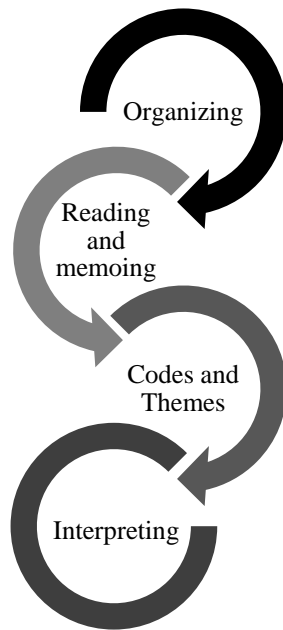
**Documents.** Documents related to institutional and department/divisional context were reviewed. These documents included mission and values statements for the campuses and the larger state-wide systems, department manuals, handbooks, policies, procedures, websites, etc. for each institution. I used data from institutional research sites for each institution to better understand student demographics and outcomes. This data was also useful in triangulating data

provided by participants. Additionally, websites directly associated with the maintenance and study of HSIs were reviewed. During the fall semester of 2016 the websites of the HACU, the U.S. Department of the Education, the Center for MSIs at the University of Pennsylvania, and Excelencia in Education were reviewed in order to continually understand the real-time context of HSIs. This is an unobtrusive form of data gathering which can help to support other data collected.

### **Data Analysis**

Creswell (2013) discussed how analysis of qualitative data involves preparing and organizing the data, reducing the data into themes via coding, and then using figures, tables, or discussion, to represent the data (p. 180). Additionally, Creswell (2013) noted that this data analysis process is not linear in nature but moves in “analytic circles,” best represented by the data analysis spiral (p. 182-183). It is important to have an analytic strategy prior to analysis (Yin, 2014). As discussed in this section, the analysis process was cyclical in nature. Creswell’s (2013) Data Analysis Spiral, which reflects the interrelated nature of data collection, data analysis, and report writing (p. 182), was utilized. The loops of the spiral include organizing the data; reading and memoing; describing, classifying, and interpreting data into codes and themes; interpreting the data, and representing and visualizing the data (pp. 182-188). Organizing the data involved putting the data into files and useful units. The use of computer programs was particularly helpful during this loop because the large amount of data this qualitative study produced.

**Figure 1 The Data Analysis Spiral (Creswell, 2013)**



*Figure 1. Representation of Creswell's (2013) Data Analysis Spiral. Adapted from *Qualitative Inquiry and Design: Choosing from the Five Approaches*, p. 182. Copyright 2013 by Sage Publications. Used with permission. See Appendix B.*

Reading and memoing involves the researcher becoming immersed in the data. During this immersion process of reading and combing through the data, the researcher began taking memos of short phrases and concepts which helped with the formulation of categories. As noted previously, memoing served multiple purposes for this study, not just theory building.

The third phase was describing, classifying, and interpreting data into codes and themes. During this phase, detailed descriptions were written and coding began. Coding is the aggregation of text or visual data into small categories of information (Creswell, 2013, p. 184). Codes were then aggregated into themes. The interpretation loop involved abstracting beyond the codes and themes, giving meaning to the data. Then, the interpretation was put into a representative form. Coding emerged from the memoing process.

Memoing was of critical importance throughout the study and was utilized throughout the data analysis process. Yin (2014) advocated using memos during the data collection phase before direct analysis begins. Birks, Chapman, and Francis (2008) viewed memoing as having four important functions: mapping research activities, extracting meaning from the data, maintaining momentum, and opening communication (p. 70). Strauss and Corbin (1990) described three different types of memos: code memos, theory memos, and operational memos. Memoing, in effect, is much like journaling. The researcher kept detailed memos noting the decisions being made throughout the study providing a trail of all decisions made within the study process. During the data collection phase, the researcher kept memos regarding feelings and influences after each data collection point and to what end the collection of data impacts and influences the researcher. As the analysis of data began, memoing was used to begin identifying codes, themes, and theory generation. Table 2 provides examples of memos used throughout the study including before and during analysis.

Table 2

*Examples of Memos*

Date & Time	Place	Activity/Type	Whom (pseudonyms)	Memo
10/5/16 11:30am	My office	Mapping research activities	Self	The participant recruitment process is very frustrating. I have not received responses from my first choice institutions. I discussed with my PI yesterday whether I need to adjust the expected time commitment for participants in my initial recruitment email and will ask my methodologist for advice on the situation. In case there is a continued lack of response, I will move on to second choice institutions and send out recruitment emails on 10/10/16.
12/1/16 5pm right after conducting an interview	My office	Extracting meaning from the data/theory memo	Janis	I love this last bit about the 20 <sup>th</sup> vs. 21 <sup>st</sup> century demographic and how WU has lessons to share with institutions because they are the future of higher education. I felt like she was brisk at times and not too keen on talking about HSI, but I feel her “disdain” for HSI as a topic actually provides some “reverse” lessons. Yes, they are Hispanic majority, which makes them unique, but it also speaks to institutional behavior in valuing what is the majority. For most HSIs, whites are still the majority....and you can expect that these institutions still behave in ways that benefit the majority of students. However, schools like WU can serve as examples of in providing profound and even subtle ways, institutional behavior can be modified.
4/25/16	My office while coding	Extracting meaning/code memos	George regarding the code “student comfort”	This is a very interesting way of framing institutional priorities...even priorities FOR students. The goal seems to be that students can comfortably participate in college and feel safe while doing so.....very basic level needs. But how often do institutions really consider a student’s comfort with the institutional environment---which is not coddling or making college painless---but making a college an environment in which they feel comfortable....belong...aren't outsiders...and are genuinely cared for. In reality, these priorities are no different than what any other AVP of SA would have....but how he encapsulates these priorities is where you can see the nuances of culture come through.

Additionally, the researcher utilized both deductive and inductive coding procedures. Deductive codes were based upon institutionalization theory (Curry, 1992; Kezar, 2007; Kezar & Sam, 2013) and its phases of mobilization, implementation, and institutionalization. Examples related to the phases of institutionalization can be demonstrated on structural, behavioral, and cultural levels. Institutionalization occurs along a continuum, so there are no clear demarcations between the phases. Table 3 below provides examples from the data deductively coded using institutionalization.

Table 3

*Example Deductive Codes*

Phase	Quote	Participant	Level
Mobilization	“The university is really promoting interdisciplinary research and so there’s a lot of encouragement generally speaking to collaborate with other departments, but there’s no...no one ever says, ‘hey, why don’t you work with Women’s Studies?’ or ‘why don’t you work with Biology?’ or ‘why don’t you work with ...’ It’s more of individual choice.”	Teresa, WU	Behavioral
Implementation	“One, the college has received awards because of our number of Hispanic graduates in differing degrees. And we’ve also applied for various grants which are required for...to have HSI status. And I’ve known for several years about our status.”	Sally, SCC	Behavioral and Structural
Institutionalization	“And probably in ways we’re not aware of because of how dominant the culture is here, it does absolutely shape essentially everything that we do. The example I just gave you was from the Career Center because I oversee the Career Center and that drives so much of services and the workshops and programs that we provide. So, yeah, I do think it does have a direct impact on how we run our departments.”	Norman, WU	Behavioral and Cultural

Inductive codes were developed using “ground up” strategy, which Yin (2014) describes as a process of “playing with the data” to identify patterns and concepts (p.137). Such a strategy is situated within grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014). During this phase of analysis code memoing and theory memoing were of particular importance. Line by line transcripts were analyzed using the constant comparative method which involves continually comparing as it emerges data, codes, categories, and concepts (Charmaz, 2014) along with negative case analysis, which involves considering rival explanations during analysis (Yin, 2014). With each transcript analysis, the findings built and evolved until theoretical saturation was achieved. A codebook was developed to ensure consistency throughout the coding process. Table 4 provides an example of the inductive coding process for the study. Initial coding was done in Dedoose (Dedoose, n.d.) and then exported into an Excel file.



Table 4

*Example of Inductive Codebook for Western University*

Id	Parent Id	Depth	Code Name	Code Definition	Excerpt
2		0	Awareness of status	Participants convey that they are aware that their institution has the HSI status	So, yes, I am aware. I came to WU in 2004.-Teresa
3	2	1	Prior	Participant conveys they had knowledge of the institution's HSI status prior to working at the institution.	Well, I was definitely aware of WU's HSI status prior to arrival here-Sherri
4	3	2	Sources (prior)	Participants conveys the source(s) of the HSI designation when awareness of the HSI status occurred prior to being hired at the institution.	I came from California State-San Bernardino, which is also an HSI. And when I was at Cal State-San Bernardino that's probably when I first came to understand what an HSI was and when I came to WU, I was aware right from the time I was hired.-Teresa;
5	4	3	Previously worked at an HIS	Participant conveys knowledge of the HSI status based upon working at an HSI previously to their employment at current institution.	And so, that is one of the reasons why I chose to come to WU because of those demographics. Because this is a student population that I have worked with a good portion of my professional life and wanted to do so in an administrative position. -Sherri
6	4	3	Previously worked with demographic	Participant conveys knowledge of the HSI status prior to employment at participant institution based off working with the demographic (Hispanics) in their career.	'I came here in 2000...that status...probably was not known to me until 2003-2004-Janis
7	2	1	After	Awareness of the status came sometime after the beginning of employment at the institution.	Well, I think in part because of meeting people in the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, HACU. And also, starting I guess about 2003 I was co-PI on a National Science Foundation grant on an advanced grant which was designed to increase women in higher education in the STEM fields as well as the social sciences. And so, I of course came across it a lot then.-Janis
8	7	2	Sources (after)	Participants conveys the source(s) of the HSI designation when awareness of the HSI status occurred after being hired at the institution.	And also, starting I guess about 2003 I was co-PI on a National Science Foundation grant on an advanced grant which was designed to increase women in higher education in the STEM fields as well as the social sciences. And so, I of course came across it a lot then. -Janis
9	8	3	Grant writing	Participant conveys knowledge of HSI status via experience in grant writing.	

## **Validation**

Creswell (2013) defines “‘validation’ in qualitative research to be an attempt to assess the 'accuracy' of the findings, as best described by the researcher and the participants" (p. 249-250).

While there are many differing views on validation and its role in qualitative research, Yin (2014) outlines four criteria useful in evaluating the quality of the case study research design: construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability. Each criterion is discussed.

**Construct Validity.** Yin (2014) defines construct validity as "identifying correct operational measures for the concept being studied" (p. 46). The researcher addressed construct validity in two ways. First, data collection consisted of multiple sources of data: interviews, and documents. This allowed for convergence of evidence, or the triangulation of data. Another way to address construct validity was member checking (Creswell, 2013). In member checking, participants are provided a draft of the case study report to review, and either corroborate or challenge the researcher's findings and interpretations (Yin, 2014). Allowing for such review enhances the accuracy of the report, and minimizes misrepresentation of the participants, or what is sometimes described as “getting it right” (Creswell, 2013, p. 243).

**Internal Validity.** Internal validity for use in explanatory research is "seeking to establish a causal relationship, whereby certain conditions are believed to lead to other conditions, as distinguished from spurious relationships" (Yin, 2014, p. 46). Since this study was exploratory in nature, internal validity was not a concern.

**External Validity.** According to Yin (2014), external validity is "defining the domain to which a study's findings can be generalized" (p. 46). External validity typically relies on statistical generalizations in quantitative research. In contrast, Yin (2014) posits that the type of generalization applicable to case study research is analytic generalization. Analytic

generalization extends or modifies theoretical concepts. This study contributed to the theory or logic of the current HSI policy.

**Reliability.** Reliability is defined as "demonstrating that the operations of a study - such as the data collection procedures - can be repeated, with the same results" (Yin, 2014, p. 46). In contrast to replicating results, reliability assumes another researcher could conduct the same case later and arrive at the same conclusions. Following Yin's (2014) advice, reliability was addressed via protocol, thoroughly documenting the case study procedures, and by developing a case study database. Because qualitative research is naturalistic, it requires flexibility and is subject to change. Therefore, the researcher rigorously maintained documentation of case study procedures, so there was a clear chain of evidence throughout the process.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Gathering data from human participants always presents ethical issues, thus no data were collected until IRB approval was granted from the researcher's institution. For this study, the target was institutional perceptions which were developed from participant responses. For this reason, it was important to be extremely thoughtful in the construction of the interview protocol to illicit institutional level responses, or else participants might attach and respond to the questions outside of their leadership roles. Additionally, since this study was concerned with how an institution conceptualizes its HSI status, discussions inevitably touched upon race which can be a subject many feel uncomfortable discussing. Again, a thoughtful interview protocol was critically important. Additionally, interviews were conducted in a quiet private environment of the participant's choosing. Furthermore, pseudonyms were used for all individuals and institutions and departments/divisions are not named. Additionally, participation in this study was voluntary, and participants could have elected to leave the study at any time without

consequence. Following the requirements of IRB, all participants signed an informed consent acknowledging their decision to participate in the study.

### **Summary**

This chapter provided an overview of the research methodology used to analyze the data related to the research question of how HSIs conceptualize their HSI status. First, the positionality of the researcher was discussed. Second, rationale for the applicability of a qualitative, multiple-case study embedded design was presented. Next, a discussion of the selection of participants, procedures for data collection, and analysis were delineated. The chapter concluded with a discussion of validity, reliability and ethical issues associated with the research design.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Findings**

The purpose of this study was to address the issue of Latinx degree attainment by examining the policy logic of the HSI designation. This study was guided by the research question: How do HSIs conceptualize their HSI status? To better understand institutional conceptions of the Latinx degree attainment gap, this study examined institutional perceptions of the HSI designation. Institutional perceptions derived from upper-level administrators at a four-year doctoral granting HSI and a two-year HSI. For the purposes of this study, there were two embedded cases of administrators: traditional upper-level administrators (director and above) and academic administrators (department chair and above) from each institution type. To address the research question, a multiple case study was conducted using the lens of institutionalization theory. “Institutionalization theory refers to policies and practices becoming institutionalized once they are a part of the underlying assumptions or norms and become embedded within the culture of an institution” (Kezar & Sam, 2013, p. 59). This chapter provides an overview of participant selection, data analysis, and findings.

### **Study Context**

Since both Western University (WU, four-year HSI) and Southwestern Community College (SCC, two-year HSI) are located within the same geographical area, it is important to describe and frame the environment in which these institutions are located. Situated along a bi-national borderline, WU and SCC are located within a widespread metropolitan area covering three cities across two states and an international border. As such, residents of the area use a Spanish language term translated loosely as “Border-plex” to refer to the bi-national area, reflecting a view of one city across two countries. WU and SCC are located within one U.S. city

of the Border-plex, however they serve the region of approximately 2.5 million people and have articulation agreements with other institutions across state and international lines. The Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) (2010) noted in its higher education report that the area saw a substantial increase in population, largely due to the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), increasing by 52% between 1990 and 2008 (p. 15). But this population influx was mostly of low-skilled labor in search of jobs. As such, poverty is a critical issue for this region and for the students attending WU and SCC. According to OECD data collected in 2007 but utilized in the 2010 report, the poverty rate for the city where WU and SCC are located hovers just below 30%, whereas the U.S. national average is 13% (p. 51). The issue of poverty is critically important in understanding the population these institutions serve.

Both WU and SCC have made tremendous efforts over time to expand access to higher education in order to provide vocational skills and academic access to a low-skilled and low-income population, although the success had some negative side effects for the area. For example, WU is known for producing the highest percentage of Hispanic engineers in the country, but because of their success and employers' desires to hire an increasingly diverse workforce nationally, 75% of its engineering graduates leave the Border-plex (OECD, 2010), resulting in what is commonly known as a brain drain of the area. While there is some demand in the regional economy for engineering and closely related fields, those demands primarily come from the U.S. Military and the Department of Defense, who have much more specific training requirements for those roles.

Lastly, it is important to note how isolated this Border-plex is from other metropolitan areas and institutions of higher education, even within the state WU and SCC reside. The two

U.S. cities within the region are only approximately 50 miles apart and are situated across two states. The city across the international border is only 11 miles away. However, for WU their next peer institution within the same state is a difference of approximately 350 miles. As such, the participant institutions are very much isolated from their peers within their own state, making them of critical importance to the region. Additionally, because of the isolation, residents born in the region frequently stay in the region to pursue education because additional educational opportunities are so far from home, thus the K-12 educational system in the area is tightly coupled with WU and SCC. Indeed, amongst the participants within the study, approximately half were from the area. The other half were brought to the area by the military or because of their specific interest in an HSI as noted in participant interviews. The region served by WU and SCC is a very unique microcosm. It represents the future of the U.S. demographics due to a population that is 89% Hispanic, but yet also is very unique unto itself because of its isolated location along the border.

### **Case 1: Western University**

#### **Context**

Western University or WU (pseudonym) is a large urban four-year public institution and part of a large state university system, serving a bi-national area of 2.5 million people. At the time of the study, WU was classified as doctoral granting research high by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, n.d.) and enrolled 23, 922 students. The annual budget for WU is approximately \$450 million, employing over 3,000 faculty and staff. The institution has a rich history in serving its borderland region, dating back to the local community's call for a school of mining, the first iteration of WU. It also includes a 25-year-old Pre-K-16 collaborative

partnership between local school districts, an area community college, and businesses.

Throughout WU's history, there is a consistent pattern of local community demand and response accompanied by overwhelming support (Erekson, 2012). WU houses over 20 research centers and has recently (2017) begun construction on an \$85 million interdisciplinary research building. WU has achieved notoriety for its programs in business, fine and performing arts, education, behavioral sciences, and the humanities. WU's mission and goals are centered on having highly competitive research programs while serving a 21<sup>st</sup> century demographic. WU's mission states:

Western University is dedicated to the advancement of the [city] region through education, creative and artistic production, and the generation, interpretation, application and commercialization of key discoveries, and the dissemination of knowledge. WU embraces its role as an intellectual, cultural and socioeconomic asset to the region, offering programs to meet human resource needs and contribute to the quality of life.

As a public university, WU is committed to providing access and opportunity to the people of the [city] region and the State. WU's mission of ensuring access is coupled with a commitment to excellence reflected in rigorous programs, which prepare students to make significant contributions to their professions, their communities and the world.

As a research/doctoral institution, WU fosters a climate of scholarly inquiry, with a special focus on applying innovative interdisciplinary approaches to explore and address major issues that confront the multicultural, U.S.-Mexico border region (WU's institutional website).

WU has seen extensive growth and expansion within its 450-acre campus adding residence halls, parking garages, recreational facilities, and other quality of life elements for students. The student life at WU has all the elements typical of a large public four-year



institution: student organizations, residence life, fraternities and sororities, career services, study abroad, athletics, shows and events, and traditions. Unique to WU's student experience is the housing of undergraduate research opportunities under the student life umbrella – providing a central location for the opportunities which are typically housed within academic departments, but also creating an assumption of academic research for students seeking ways to become engaged.

Additional perspectives of the student life context are reflected throughout websites and publications, like the weekly student newspaper and bi-annual student magazine, are celebrations and criticisms of faculty, students, and the local area. Both publications are bilingual and contain advertisements and reports from both sides of the border. While certainly state, national, and international concerns are a part of the collective conversation, these events are framed within the WU context. For example, at the time of data collection, the 2016 U.S. presidential election was underway, thus there was significant discussion and commentary on how the results of the election could directly impact WU and the students it serves in personal ways with heightened sensitivity. Beyond concerns over border walls and deportations, there were also other issues. For example, the day after the election of President Trump the value of the peso declined significantly, impacting WU students, especially those that cross the border daily.

WU's student population is 80% Hispanic, with another 5% Mexican nationals and thus is the only research doctoral institution with a Mexican American majority in the United States (WU's institutional website). WU is a participant institution within the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) which produces datasets collectively known as The College Portrait ([www.collegeportraits.org](http://www.collegeportraits.org)). Since WU is a part of a state university system that is a member of the VSA, all institutional demographic data provided by WU is a product of The College

Portrait, known as the Common Data Set. The most recent institutional data collected is from the 2014-2015 academic year. Table 5 displays the diversity of the undergraduate student population (Retrieved from, <http://www.collegeportraits.org>)

Table 5

*WU Institutional Undergraduate Student Demographics*

	Undergraduate Number	%
Men	9358	46
Women	10,862	54
American Indian/Alaskan Native	34	<1
Asian	163	1
African American /Black	522	3
Hispanic	16,783	83
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	20	<1
White	1,357	7
Two or more races	149	1
International	1,122	6
Not reported	115	1

According to the Common Data Set 2014-1015, 67% of WU undergraduate students were awarded need-based aid. While no data were available regarding the demographic make-up of staff in 2014-15, 57% of faculty reported as male and 43% female. There was no detailed demographic break down of faculty other than 47% reported as minority (<http://www.collegeportraits.org>).

## **Participants**

Each participant was recruited via an email which included an attachment of the IRB approval for the study and the interview guide. Recruitment of participants began in September 2016, with the last interview conducted in March 2017. Prior to interviews, institutional documents were reviewed and collected to better inform the researcher of the institution. Interview times were established at the administrator's convenience. A total of six (n=6) administrators were interviewed from WU: three (n=3) who met the definition of an academic administrator and three (n=3) who met the definition of a traditional administrator. Of the academic administrators, all three were female and two served as deans of their colleges. Two identified as white and one as Latina. Given the nature of the sample and the geographic location of the institutions, generalized position descriptions are discussed in the interest of participants' anonymity. Deans have oversight of all programs, faculty, and activities within their colleges including budget, policies, procedures, and accreditation. Deans also are frequently engaged with fundraising endeavors. The other administrator served as a department chair, having oversight of an academic department within a college (McArthur, 2002; Bowman, 2010). Department chairs oversee many of the same areas as a dean, but on a much smaller scale. Additionally, department chairs have much more interaction with faculty members and students. Two of the academic administrators identified as white and one identified as Latina. Traditional administrators for this study comprised of two males and one female. All three of the traditional administrators served at the assistant vice president level. Assistant vice presidents direct and coordinate the activities of one or more departments within the division of student affairs, providing leadership and direction toward the development of policies, procedures, long term goals, and the assessment of those goals (McArthur, 2002; Bowman, 2010). One administrator identified as black, one as

Latino, and one as Latina. Table 6 list all participants from WU including the date and length of interviews.

Table 6

*Participants from Western University*

Embedded Case	Pseudonym	Gender	Ethnicity	Title	Years at WU	Years in current role	Interview Date	Length of interview
Academic	Sherri	Female	White	Dean	3	3	11/4/2016	52:46
Academic	Janice	Female	White	Dean	17	5	12/1/2016	37:48
Academic	Teresa	Female	Latina	Dept. Chair	13	3	11/3/2016	48:48
Traditional	Celeste	Female	Latina	Asst. VP	9	2	12/5/2016	51:25
Traditional	George	Male	Black	Asst. VP	9	3	11/15/2016	50:04
Traditional	Norman	Male	Latino	Asst. VP	5	4	12/2/2016	39:02

**WU Data Analysis**

All interviews were conducted over the phone by the researcher and audio recorded, with an average duration ranging between 37-52 minutes. Memos were taken during the interviews to note the researcher’s thoughts and feelings. Additionally, after each interview ended, the researcher took memos regarding the interview overall and initial perceptions. All interviews were transcribed by the researcher and included the researcher’s initial memos. These transcripts were uploaded into Dedoose (Dedoose, n.d.). Before coding began, the researcher read through each transcript at least three times, again utilizing the memo process. During this time, the researcher noted points to confirm from each participant using institutional documents, such as

student demographics, changes in organizational structure, and creation of offices. Each participant reviewed their transcript clarity and accuracy.

Institutional documents were reviewed and collected to better inform the researcher of the institution. Documents were obtained via institutional websites and websites directly linked by the institution. Documents included organizational charts from all divisions of WU; student demographic data via The College Portrait and WU; historical information regarding the institution such as anniversary publications, past issues of student newspapers, and magazines; policies and handbooks including all past digitized course catalogs (1968-present), student conduct policies, and departmental handbooks; procedures pertaining to institutional research policies, matriculation and graduation, and funding & procurement requests; forms related to financial aid procedures, applications, accounts payable, facilities, human resources, payroll, purchasing, and travel along with other communiques. Additionally, documents were reviewed from organizations directly associated with the study, understanding, classification, and promotion of HSIs, which included: U.S. Department of Education, *Excelencia* in Education, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), and The Center for Minority Serving Institutions at the University of Pennsylvania. Document review began in September 2016 and continued through March 2017.

Coding was conducted utilizing Dedoose (Dedoose, n.d.). Saldaña (2009) describes coding as assigning a “word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute” (p.3). After coding interviews for each embedded case at WU, codebooks and transcripts were reviewed with a peer debriefer for consistency and clarity. Once codes were agreed upon, the iterative process of putting codes into categories commenced. Again, a peer debriefer was consulted in the creation of categories based upon both

frequency of codes and code definitions. Categories were created by grouping codes which seemed to be describing a similar essence or element. All categories were defined as representing data from at least four out of the six participants. By comparing categories, themes emerged. Each theme was defined as a description of the processes encompassed within the categories and codes (Saldaña, 2009, p. 13). A peer debriefer was utilized in each step of analysis from initial coding to the development of themes. Themes reflected data from at least five of the six participants. Based upon this iterative process, the data from WU yielded two themes: Presidential Mission and Stretched Thin.

### **WU Findings**

**Presidential Mission.** Codes reflecting the president's support of students and the importance of the institutional mission, nested within this theme. All six participants across both administrator types from WU contributed to this theme. The data revealed the importance of the role of the president over the years in advocating for students of the surrounding area to attend WU, thus influencing the institutional mission. Participants shared how the president advocates for students, particularly with regard to state performance metrics, like graduation rates. "Ze's very good about pushing back on expected four-year graduation rates and talking about why...students who have to work to support themselves through school need more time...why graduation rates are misleading" (Teresa, AA). Norman (TA), reinforces this notion stating, "Ze's not shy about saying that ze disagrees with those metrics." Further, four of the six participants noted how the president frames the student population of WU while being resistant to state metrics, such as graduation rates, retention, and progression. "Our president has this great metaphor about the express train and the slow train; how our students will come to school for like a year, and then work for a semester to save money, and then go back to school" (Teresa,

AA). Instead of traditional metrics, participants reflected how the president is more concerned with other types of metrics, such as overall degree completion. “Ze [president] says the metrics we focus on—degrees awarded and some of the other emerging student success metrics---are far more relevant to the needs of our students and who they are” (Norman, TA). Another way the student population is framed is in relation to the socio-economic status of the area. As George (TA) notes, “We have one of the lower social status bases in the country. And so, a lot of our mission is specific to access and excellence is trying to give access to education to those who previously had not necessarily had access.”

In addition to the president advocating for students, five of the six participants described how the president embodies the institutional mission. Celeste (TA), who has worked at WU for nine years and only two years in her current role noted, “Our university mission has for so long been about serving Latino students and students of color.” However, three participants shared how WU was not always an institution committed to access and success for the students in the surrounding area. “WU used to be very much an Anglo-serving institution and when Dr. X [pseudonym] became president, ze really said ‘Look! Look at it. WU does not reflect the demographics of our area” (Sherri, AA). George (TA) further noted, “There was a point in time where WU, back in the 70s, was about 70% white and the area demographic has not changed since then.” George’s quote is supported by institutional data regarding the timeframe of the president’s term, but also speaks to the demographics of the local area, which has been predominantly Hispanic long before the founding of WU. When the current president was named, the mission of WU began to change, and with it the demographics of the student body, thus resulting in a mirroring the demographics of the surrounding area. Currently, WU’s mission is dedicated to serving the students within the local area and beyond. “WU’s entire mission is

committed to the service of Latino students. We really see ourselves as the university that's commitment to serving the students of our region, which consists primarily of Latino students" (Celeste, TA). Norman further elaborates who, specifically, WU serves stating, "Our whole mission is access and excellence and our president talks so much about being the first research institution serving a 21st century student demographic. So by that, we mean Latino. We mean first gen. We mean lower socio-economic status." Additionally, three participants added the importance of the president and upper administration in maintaining WU's mission and focus on Latinx students. Teresa (AA) reflected, I don't know that other HSIs would be as focused on the HSI status and what that means for its students and faculty, but I think we very much are because of those circumstances that I just mentioned.

Sherri (AA) asked "What's the focus of your upper administration? 'Cause I don't know that some of this can exist if there's not someone in your administration saying this is a priority and a focus for us." Beyond Presidential Mission, the other prominent theme that emerged from the data related to the financial resources of the area, its residents, and the institution.

**Stretched Thin.** Codes regarding money and addressing the needs of a low socio-economic population were incorporated within this theme. All six participants from WU contributed to this theme. The data within this theme revealed how limited financial resources impacted students, staff, and faculty. The backdrop of this theme was the poverty of the area surrounding WU. "Thirty-five percent of our student body comes from families that make \$20,000 or less a year. That's a continual stressor on them" (Janis, AA). High poverty rates can be a barrier to students meeting their educational goals: "So often they stop out or they drop out. We have, you know, a large number of students who after their freshmen year drop out.



Sometimes its financial reasons, either they need to support themselves or support their families” (Sherri, AA).

Participants additionally noted how smaller expenses may be huge barriers for students. Thus, WU has a small loan program to assist students with unexpected expenses that could be prohibitive to their pursuits “like if a student’s car battery has died, now they have no way to make it to campus. They may quit. Or they may stop out” (Sherri, AA). Teresa shared a story she heard from the Dean of Student Life at WU, in which a student had been fully funded to participate in a study abroad experience, but at the last minute refused to go after attending all the orientation sessions because “they were talking about packing the suitcase and the student got really stressed because they didn’t have a suitcase. And so, little things like that I think our administration and faculty are really aware of those kinds of things.” Celeste (TA) shared one of the sources of her awareness noting, “There are conversations that happen within socio-economically disadvantaged communities that don’t happen in more affluent communities.” George (TA) shared a conversation the student body had with administration a few years ago, regarding a new student fee. “A lot of us [administrators] thought it was a good idea, but the student body when the referendum came around voted ‘no’ and they had some financial reasons why they did that. The university understood and moved forward.” With both financially aware students and administrators, tuition is a critical concern. As Celeste (TA) noted:

We’re very proud that we have one of the lowest net tuition cost in the state and really nationally for a four-year research institution. That is purposeful. That doesn’t mean we haven’t had to be creative about how we use our resources on campus, but it absolutely means that anytime we consider a tuition increase, we think twice.

Low tuition rates may also present other institutional challenges such as having enough resources to meet demands for staff and faculty. George (TA) shared how having enough staff can be a challenge, “Staffing and funds...I believe that everyone across the campus is as lean as we have to be based on the number of students we have and the low tuition that we have.” Norman (TA) noted how limited funding impacts his areas of his oversight directly, “Usually a division our size would have a dedicated assessment staff member, if not a director at least a coordinator or a manager. And we don’t. We just simply need any resources available to staff more programmatic and service needs.” Limited financial resources also have an impact on academic departments as well. Sherri (AA) shared, “I’d love to be able to support more doctoral students at a higher rate and I’d like to just recruit more students. You know, it’s just money. Money to be able to do all the things we want to do.” Additionally, Teresa (AA) noted, “and the people I have in my department are already stretched too thin. We have like five majors and two people who can teach the main classes in those majors.”

### **Summary of WU Case**

In summary, administrators at WU conceptualized their HSI status around the concepts of Presidential Mission and an institution Stretched Thin. These themes demonstrate the importance of the role of the president in executing the institutional mission, and thus, the conception of the HSI status. Additionally, the theme of Stretched Thin demonstrates a lack of resources for WU, which is an attribute common to MSIs (see, for example, Cunningham, Park, & Engle, 2014). All six administrators, who served in their positions an average of 3 years from WU contributed to these themes.

## **Case 2: Southwest Community College**

### **Context**

Southwest Community College or SCC (pseudonym) is a very large urban two-year institution classified as a high transfer/high traditional by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, n.d.). As of Fall 2016, approximately 49% of SCC students received Pell grants. SCC has an enrollment of over 29,000 students and enrolls approximately 8,000 continuing education students across five campuses located throughout the city and near a military base. SCC offers dual-credit courses for high school students, but also operates 12 Early College High Schools in conjunction with eight school districts in the area. These Early College High Schools are designed for underserved students in the area. Additionally, SCC has a Law Enforcement Training Academy and offers Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of Arts in Teaching, Applied Arts degrees and certificates in over 60 programs. SCC has been nationally recognized for awarding degrees to Hispanic students and to veterans by *The Hispanic Outlook* magazine. Additionally, SCC is located in close proximity to a military base and thus, has over 2,300 students with military status as a part of their enrollment. SCC employs over 3,000 full and part-time faculty and staff and in 2016 had revenues totaling over \$180 million. SCC is guided by its mission “to provide accessible, quality and affordable education that prepares students for academic, professional and personal growth and advance our regional workforce” (SCC institutional website).

SCC has an active campus life, with over 40 student clubs/organizations, an active student government, a veteran’s resource center, an annual student leader conference, intramural sports, and campus life offices at all five campuses, which help to provide a “one stop shop” experience for all students. SCC also has a thriving athletics program with successful NJCAA intercollegiate teams. Students participate in a large array of programs including the annual

Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration and the Fall Festival, which is an opportunity for students to bring their families and children to campus to participate in rides, booths, and games.

Additionally, SCC hosts several arts events for the surrounding community, including the annual Chopin Festival which attracts a world-class pianist to the borderland each year. SCC students are also very engaged with state politics, sending delegations of students every year to the legislature. During data collection for this study, students at SCC delivered concerns regarding the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act and other state policies which are directly tied to benefits for veteran students and their families.

Approximately 85% of SCC students identify as Hispanic. Table 7 represents the diversity of the student population enrolled in credit-bearing coursework based off institutional data from 2015 (SCC institutional website).

Table 7

*SCC Institutional Demographic Data of Students Enrolled in Credits*

	Undergraduate Number	%
Men	12,576	43
Women	16,164	57
African American /Black	690	2.4
Hispanic	24,515	85.3
White	2,299	8.0
Other/Nonresident Alien	920	3.2
Unknown	316	1.1

SCC has also received accolades, such as the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award from *INSIGHT into Diversity*, which recognizes institutions for recruitment and retention efforts of minority students and staff, *Newsweek's* “Beating the Odds” award which nationally ranks early college high schools, and ASPEN’s Top Ten Community Colleges recognition (Gonzalez, 2016).

Table 8 represents the diversity of the faculty and staff at SCC (SCC institutional website).

Table 8

*SCC Demographic Data of Faculty and Staff*

	Number	%
Men	1,303	44
Women	1,650	56
Hispanic	2,172	74
White	647	22
Other	67	4

**Participants**

Of the six (n=6) administrators interviewed at SCC, three (n=3) met the definition for an academic administrator and three (n=3) met the definition for a traditional administrator. Of the academic administrators two were female, one identified as black and the other as white.

Additionally, there was one white male academic administrator. Given the nature and location of the sample, their roles are described in generalized terms in an effort to protect their anonymity.

There was one campus dean, one professor who served as a campus coordinator, and one assistant professor who served as a district wide discipline coordinator. The Campus Dean is

responsible for leadership within the campus and includes, implementing, managing, and evaluating assigned programs, activities, facilities and services. The Campus Dean serves on the President’s Administrative Team and also serves concurrently as an Instructional Dean and therefore also assumes all functions and duties of an Instructional Dean. A faculty coordinator assists the Dean with coordination of campus-based discipline activities. The faculty coordinator works with district-wide discipline faculty, assumes district-wide responsibility for discipline coordination as well as for curriculum development and review (SCC institutional website). Of the traditional administrators, all three were women and all identified as Latina. Two served as directors and one served in the role of executive director. An executive director is responsible for providing vision, strategic direction and accountability for developing programs and services and oversees multiple departments or programs. A director is responsible for the administration and development of one or two departments (SCC institutional website; McArthur, 2002).

Table 9 lists all participants from SCC including the date and length of interviews.

Table 9

*Participants from Southwest Community College*

Embedded Case	Pseudonym	Gender	Ethnicity	Title	Years at SCC	Role	Interview Date	Length of interview
Academic	Sally	Female	White	Campus Dean	37	20	10/21/2016	52:38
Academic	Gloria	Female	Black	Discipline Coordinator	12	4	12/6/2016	30:11
Academic	Hank	Male	White	Faculty & District Coordinator	4	2	3/14/2017	59:58
Traditional	Elizabeth	Female	Latina	Exec. Director	10	2	10/31/2016	1:13:30
Traditional	Helen	Female	Latina	Acting Director	23	3	2/22/2017	37:59
Traditional	Joan	Female	Latina	Director	22	4	3/24/2017	1:14:58

## **SCC Data Analysis**

Again, it should be noted that SCC refers to its academic departments as disciplines, thus Gloria is the coordinator for her campus's discipline. Some disciplines are represented at more than one of the five SCC campuses, such as English. Thus, Hank is a coordinator for his discipline across multiple campuses and additionally serves as a Faculty Coordinator for his home campus.

Participants were recruited via an email which included an attachment of the IRB approval for the study and the interview guide. Recruitment of participants began in September 2016, with the last interview being conducted in March 2017. Prior to interviews, institutional documents were viewed and collected to better inform the researcher of the institution. Interview times were established at the administrator's convenience. All interviews were conducted over the phone by the researcher and audio recorded and ranged from 37-75 minutes. Memos were taken during the interviews to note the researcher's thoughts and feelings. Additionally, after each interview ended, the researcher took memos regarding the interview overall and initial perceptions. All interviews were transcribed by the researcher and included the researcher's initial memos. Transcripts were uploaded into Dedoose (Dedoose, n.d.). Before coding began, the researcher read through each transcript an average of three times again utilizing the memo process. During this time, the researcher noted points to confirm from each participant using institutional documents, such as student demographics, changes in organizational structure, and creation of offices. Each participant reviewed their transcript clarity and accuracy.

Institutional documents were reviewed and collected to better inform the researcher of the institution. Documents were obtained via institutional websites and websites directly linked by the institution. Documents included, but were not limited to: organizational charts, student

demographic data, historical information regarding the institution, policies, handbooks, procedures, forms, and other communiques. Additionally, documents were reviewed from organizations directly associated with the study for understanding, classification, and promotion of HSIs, which included: U.S. Department of Education, *Excelencia* in Education, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), and The Center for Minority Serving Institutions at the University of Pennsylvania. Document review began in September 2016 and continued through March 2017.

Coding was conducted utilizing Dedoose (Dedoose, n.d.). Saldaña (2009) describes coding as assigning a “word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute” (p.3). After coding interviews for each embedded case at WU, codebooks and transcripts were reviewed with a peer debriefer for consistency and clarity. Once codes were agreed upon, the iterative process of putting codes into categories commenced. Again, a peer debriefer was consulted in the creation of categories based upon both frequency of codes and code definitions. Categories were created by grouping codes which seemed to be describing a similar essence or element. All categories were defined as representing data from at least four out of the six participants. By comparing categories, themes emerged. Each theme was defined as a description of the processes encompassed within the categories and codes (Saldaña, 2009, p. 13). A peer debriefer was utilized in each step of analysis from initial coding to the development of themes. Themes reflected data from at least five of the six participants. Analysis of interviews from administrators at SCC yielded two themes: Collaborative Development and College Going Culture.

### **SCC Findings**



**Collaborative Development.** Within this theme, codes related to a pro-collaboration culture, the Faculty Development Program, and training/development initiatives. All six participants from SCC representing both administrator types contributed to this theme, in which the data described how faculty and staff engage with professional development and how this development impacts the institutional culture.

A source of pride for SCC is its Faculty Development Program: “We have a faculty development program that has won many awards. And we have several tracks in that every semester and that’s put together by the faculty themselves” (Sally, AA). The content of the Faculty Development Program is specific and intentional. Hank (AA) elaborates “depending on their status faculty are required to attend one or more workshops. But we offer all sorts of relevant, again, best practices...lessons learned...especially with the new offerings.”

In addition to the Faculty Development Program, staff can engage in either a professional development series tied to pedagogical practices and/or a series focused on leadership. Sally (AA) further described these opportunities as “a chance for participants from classified staff, professional staff, faculty, and administration to attend sessions together and talk about leadership, ethics, procedures...learn about what’s happening in different departments of the college.” Having various types of training and development, particularly for faculty, may also be necessary due to SCC’s location. Sally (AA) shares, “convincing someone to move to the desert...sometimes is challenging. So, in specialty areas we may not have global talent that we can recruit, so sometimes we end up growing our own through intensive orientation and training of them and working with them to development them as they move into the position.”

Five of the SCC participants further noted the collaborative environment of SCC. Joan, a traditional administrator provided this perspective, “that’s one thing here we do very well

[collaborate]. And everybody is more or less cross-trained because we've been operating with such a tight budget. Everybody knows when asked for...you know...SOS....everybody comes and helps.” The notion of being cross-trained emerged across student staff, professional staff, and faculty. Elizabeth (TA), who oversees new student orientation at SCC, explained, “One of the things my previous assistant director ensured was that there was cross-divisional training of students. Students were aware of all the aspects they needed to know to effectively engage with [new] students.”

Joan (TA) referred to the cross-training of staff as “crucial. We didn't have enough people to cover all the financial aid nights. We were able to call the orientation leaders...the ambassadors from campus life.” Helen (TA), who oversees financial aid, also emphasized the importance of cross-training, including professional staff. When sharing the agenda of a recent professional development session with other professionals from admissions she noted how important the training was in creating “kind of like a one stop shop....so if a student were to come and ask what forms or where do I get them in admissions, the staff has the know-how to answer that question.”

Furthermore, these specific training and development initiatives help contribute to an overall culture of collaboration at SCC, across divisional silos. “We collaborate with a great degree of faculty members. So, faculty members across all disciplines. And that's not a blanket answer” (Elizabeth, TA). Sally (AA) further described the collaborative culture stating, “we have a good cooperation among all the departments, not just in the instructional area, including student services and institutional research, human resources, everything. So, we have a good collaborative relationship and good team work.”

**College Going Culture.** Codes included within this theme described how SCC focuses on recruiting and retaining students, but begins the recruiting process at a young age within the predominantly Latino community. Additionally, the data revealed SCC recruits not only prospective students, but also the families and members of the community in order to change the culture of the city and area SCC serves. This theme resulted from codes addressing the creation of a college culture, recruitment and retention programs, and community collaborations. Five out of the six administrators directly contributed to this theme.

Creating a College Culture begins early on in the community SCC serves. Joan (TA) describes one of these important efforts, known as College Bound. “It is for K-6. And what we do as an office is we go and in conjunction with the major independent school district here, we adopt a school of the choosing of the district (Joan, TA). There are various programmatic efforts with the chosen school throughout the year Joan (TA) further shares how parents become involved with College Bound stating, “We’re trying to create this culture. At the same time we’re also having meetings with the parents because the parents also want to jump into this...ask for GED classes...ask for ESL classes.” Sally (AA), further discussed the importance of recruiting students early and how it can benefit the greater community by offering dual credit. “We’re working a lot with our high schools right now to enhance dual credit and early college high schools, so the students are entering college at a younger age and being successful” (Sally, AA).

Once students decide to attend college, completing financial aid forms can be challenging for families. SCC works with the nearby four-year institution and the local chamber of commerce to host FAFSA nights in order to make the process less intimidating. Helen (TA) shares, “a lot of our high school students, their parents are Spanish-speaking only. So we try to

make sure that those schools where we see that there are more Spanish-speaking parents, we provide people that are bilingual as a collaboration.” Elizabeth (TA), who oversees all elements of the on-boarding process of students, also discussed programs which support students as they transition to college, “I can also tell you very specifically how we support Latina/Latino students is by way of our pre-college outreach efforts.”

Once students are enrolled in a program at SCC there are additional means to help retain them and persist to graduation. Gloria (AA) described the Pathways Project as a new initiative as an effort to identify not only the “major courses they’ll need in their first term or that first semester, but the geology, the type of math, the science that is needed as well to help them focus more clearly on the path that they need.”

Both academic and traditional administrators expressed creating College Going Culture as being of essential importance. “Creating a college going culture or mindset...to raise people up out of poverty so they can advance and do better for their families” was Gloria’s (AA) summation. Joan (TA) emphasized the importance of beginning early, “So, how do we help Latino communities? We try to educate them as early as possible.”

### **Summary of SCC Case**

In summary, administrators at SCC conceptualized their HSI status around the concepts of Collaborative Development and creating a College Going Culture for the area SCC serves, which is predominantly Latino. All six (6) administrators from SCC contributed to these themes. These themes highlight a spirit of shared governance and collaboration within the institution. Additionally, the theme of College Going Culture suggest the importance of framing the HSI status in relation to the surrounding region, including a significant population of English language learners with little economic capital.

## Across Case

### Academic Administrators

Inductive analysis of the embedded cases of Academic Administrators was conducted from both participant institutions. Interview data for Academic Administrators were coded utilizing Dedoose (Dedoose, n.d.). After coding interviews for each embedded case of Academic Administrators, codebooks and transcripts were reviewed with a peer debriefer for consistency and clarity. Once codes were agreed upon, the iterative process of putting codes into categories began. A peer debriefer was consulted in the creation of categories based upon both frequency of codes and code definitions. A peer debriefer was utilized in each step of analysis from initial coding to the development of the theme. Based upon this iterative process, the embedded case of Academic Administrators (n=6) yielded one theme: Latino Serving Institution. Latino Serving Institution was chosen because the weight of the data based on code definition and frequency, thus the intersection between cases and AAs reflected an importance on *whom* their institutions serve and that both institutions high percentage of Latino students distinguishes them from other HSIs. For clarity, Table 10 below lists all Academic Administrators.

Table 10

*Participants within the Academic Administrator Embedded Case*

Institution	Pseudonym	Gender	Ethnicity	Title	Years at Institution	Role	Interview Date	Length of interview
SCC	Sally	Female	White	Campus Dean	37	20	10/21/2016	52:38
SCC	Gloria	Female	Black	Discipline Coordinator	12	4	12/6/2016	30:11
SCC	Hank	Male	White	Faculty & District Coordinator	4	2	3/14/2017	59:58
WU	Sherri	Female	White	Dean	3	3	11/4/2016	52:46
WU	Janice	Female	White	Dean	17	5	12/1/2016	37:48
WU	Teresa	Female	Latina	Dept. Chair	13	3	11/3/2016	48:48

**Latino Serving Institution.** Codes related to the demographic being greater than the HSI status and expressions of the participant institutions being unique to other HSIs. The theme Latino Serving Institution is defined by participants’ emphasis on student demographics, thus making the institutions explicitly focused on serving the needs of Hispanic students, who are the majority of students. It should be noted that the theme of Latino Serving Institution is not a within case finding because it was not found across both administrator types at any one institution. Instead this theme emerged from data collected from only Academic Administrators. Additionally, the data within Latino Serving Institution revealed that administrators viewed their institutions as unique from other HSIs. Original codes contributing to this theme included: Demographic > Status, That's who we are, Unnamed essence, and Different kind of institution. All six academic administrators contributed to this theme.

Frequently, administrators asserted that the demographic make-up, not necessarily the HSI status, was most important in making institutional decisions. Janis of WU noted “we’re

much more guided by the fact that we're 77% Hispanic/Mexican American majority institution than...or at least, I am because it's so much more significant." Sally of SCC, when discussing how priorities are established stated, "not because of the HSI status itself, but our college population is over 80% Hispanic." Hank, who teaches at an SCC campus very close to the international border with Mexico expressed, "Our students, all of my classes are Latino/a. They all cross the border. And our daily work is all about serving their needs."

Participants also shared how they felt their institutions were uniquely different from other HSIs, providing several examples. Janis of WU noted, "there's just a lot more recognition. You know we have degree programs that are bilingual. We had the first degree program...bilingual Creative Writing program online in the country." Teresa, also of WU, provided additional examples of how this difference is expressed within the institutional culture:

We focus a lot on Latina/o issues in our department for teaching and research. Also, we're big supporters of the National Association for Hispanic Journalists because a lot of our students are Hispanic journalists. And then under organizations, a lot of us participate in the Latina/o Communication Division of the National Education Association, which is our major conference or national organization.

Lastly, participants expressed how the notion of serving Hispanic students is engrained within the institutional culture. Janis of WU clarifies "this is really a different kind of institution than an HSI in many respects." Additionally, Sherri of WU contends, "we are truly a Hispanic serving institution. And the emphasis is on the serving the population that we have here. Teresa of WU adds, "I think it's just kinda infused in what we do. So, it's not like we have policy where we say let's recruit more Latina/o, but it's just what we do."

## **Traditional Administrators**

Inductive analysis was conducted of the embedded cases of Traditional Administrators from both participant institutions. Interview data for Traditional Administrators were coded utilizing Dedoose (Dedoose, n.d.). After coding interviews for the embedded case of Traditional Administrators, codebooks and transcripts were reviewed with a peer debriefer for consistency and clarity. Once codes were agreed upon, the iterative process of putting codes into categories occurred. Again, a peer debriefer was consulted in the creation of categories based upon both frequency of codes and code definitions. By comparing categories, a single theme emerged. A peer debriefer was utilized in each step of analysis from initial coding to the development of the theme. The embedded case of Traditional Administrators (n=6) and yielded one theme: Borderland Community. Borderland Community was chosen because was chosen because the weight of the data based on code definition and frequency, thus the intersection between cases. TAs reflected on the importance on *where* their institutions are located in relation to the institutional conception of the HSI status. For clarity, Table 11 below lists all participants within the embedded case of Traditional Administrators.



Table 11

*Participants within the Traditional Administrator Embedded Case*

Institution	Pseudonym	Gender	Ethnicity	Title	Years at Institution	Role	Interview Date	Length of interview
WU	Celeste	Female	Latina	Asst. VP	9	2	12/5/2016	51:25
WU	George	Male	Black	Asst. VP	9	3	11/15/2016	50:04
WU	Norman	Male	Latino	Asst. VP	5	4	12/2/2016	39:02
SCC	Elizabeth	Female	Latina	Exec. Director	10	2	10/31/2016	1:13:30
SCC	Helen	Female	Latina	Acting Director	23	3	2/22/2017	37:59
SCC	Joan	Female	Latina	Director	22	4	3/24/2017	1:14:58

**Borderland Community.** Codes describing the border, seeing Mexico, and serving families contributed to this theme. Data from Traditional Administrators revealed the importance of the border and its impact on students and families. Thus, the border has an impact on their work and institutional responses. Five of the six Traditional Administrators contributed to the theme of Borderland Community. Again, the theme of Borderland Community emerged from data from the Traditional Administrators at both institutions.

Norman of WU provided an example of how he sees WU characterizing their students, despite the many challenges they face. “They are very driven. They are bilingual, for the most part. They are bi-national. They are multicultural. They are not entitled because they have to work so much for every tuition dollar; it’s a family commitment.” Joan of SCC described how the area SCC serves is viewed as one community, despite an international border. “So we see ourselves as one community...because if your grandmother is on the other side, obviously you will go visit grandma on the weekends.” Elizabeth of SCC shared, “we are an example of what,

I believe, is a response to better serving our borderland community.” George of WU discussed how being a border institution impacts the focus of institutional efforts in noting, “we have a lot of people on campus whether it be academic researchers or practitioners who have really looked into some of the dynamics not just with Hispanic/Latino students but also taking into consideration that we’re a border institution.” George then provided a specific example of how WU was able to respond to unique student concerns when safety across the border was threatened. “We have accommodations for on-campus housing, so that the student, rather than being stuck on that side of the border...can actually stay in campus housing and we could actually give a pro-rated type of value or cost.

### **Summary of Embedded Cases**

Analysis of the embedded cases of Academic Administrators and Traditional Administrators from both participant institutions yielded two themes. The embedded case of Academic Administrators viewed working at an HSI in a more nuanced way descriptive of a Latino Serving Institution with a focus on *whom* they serve. The embedded case of Traditional Administrator conceptualized working at an HSI in terms of serving a Borderland Community, with a focus on *where* they serve.

### **Deductive Findings**

The theoretical framework guiding this study was institutionalization theory (Curry, 1992; Kezar, 2007; Kezar & Sam, 2010). Institutionalization’s phases are mobilization, implementation, and institutionalization, which can be demonstrated on structural, behavioral, and cultural levels. Table 12 below defines the phases of institutionalization.

Table 12

*Phases of Institutionalization*

Phase	Definition
Mobilization	Organization is preparing for change evidence by galvanizing members and initial structural change
Implementation	Organization is engaged in the creation of infrastructure and seeks support to carry forth momentum. There may be a feeling of a special project.
Institutionalization	Organization has absorbed the innovation or idea into its value system.

*Note.* The definitions above are based upon Curry (1991), Kezar (2007), and Kezar & Sam (2013).

Institutionalization occurs along a continuum, from mobilization to institutionalization, so there are no clear demarcations between the phases. All institutional data collected were also analyzed deductively in Dedoose (Dedoose, n.d.) using the a priori codes of mobilization, galvanizing members, initial structural change, implementation, and institutionalization. It should be noted that the codes of galvanizing members and initial structural change are specific elements indicative of mobilization as defined by Kezar (2007). The other two phases of institutionalization do not, as of yet, have defined elements outside of the original definitions put forth by Curry (1992). Because of the lack of clear demarcations between phases, the researcher also used additional codes for data indicative of two phases, possibly in transition. Thus, codes of mobilization into implementation and implementation into institutionalization were also used. A peer debriefer was utilized to ensure consistency of coding. Any discrepancies were discussed until consensus was reached. Additionally, in consultation with the peer debriefer any data coded

as being in between two phases were discussed until consensus was reached and data were then recoded as mobilization, implementation, or institutionalization. For example, Sally (SCC, AA) had stated: “the college has received awards because of our number of Hispanic graduates in differing degrees. And we’ve also applied for various grants which are required for...to have HSI status.” This was initially coded as implementation, however, the researcher and peer debriefer engaged in a conversation around the idea that receiving awards might indicate something beyond implementation, thus institutionalization. However, in discussions, implementation was ultimately agreed upon because the quote speaks to evidence of carrying forth momentum, which is a defining characteristic of implementation. Deductive analysis provided further insight into the institutional environments of each institution and to support the inductive findings. Finding for deductive analysis are discussed below.

### **Western University**

Since there are no clear demarcations between the phases of institutionalization, data were coded as mobilization, mobilization into implementation, implementation, implementation into institutionalization, and institutionalization. Any data coded as mobilization into implementation or implementation into institutionalization were then reevaluated according to which of the three phases would be the best fit for describing the data. Coding and recoding were conferred with a peer debriefer. Deductive analysis of WU data is discussed according to each phase of institutionalization.

**Mobilization.** Mobilization, the first phase of institutionalization, is descriptive of an organization preparing for change. Preparing may range from a simple awareness of a problem or to a more substantial action such as creating a foundation for policy (Curry, 1992; Kezar &

Sam, 2013). Kezar and Sam (2013) note the mobilization stage consists of two parts: galvanizing members and initial structural change (p. 59). Because mobilization is concerned with an organization preparing or becoming aware, it should be expected that data coded as mobilization would be limited and may not support inductive findings. Such was the case with WU. However, this data provides insight into the possible future institutional trajectory of WU. Data coded as mobilization were concerned with three over-arching ideas: the expansion of a research culture, the need for data gathering culture, and the interest in creating a community of HSIs.

Expansion of research culture was noted by the need to improve upon doctorate programs, developing research agenda within faculty, and the development of an interdisciplinary research center. Sherri (WU AA) noted, “we’re actually on campus building an interdisciplinary research center that is going to really promote and support interdisciplinary research not only across campus but within the community and beyond.” Teresa added, “The University is really promoting interdisciplinary research and so there’s a lot of encouragement generally speaking to collaborate with other departments.” With regard to improving the doctorate experience, Sherri reflected, “it’s the level of mentorship we need to provide to them (doctorate students) to not only think about a career in the academy, but also be successful in doing so.” Teresa (AA) expresses frustration with motivating current faculty to continually pursue their research agendas, without much success. Instead she now focuses on the hiring process. “I’m trying to hire good assistant professors and work on foreseeing faculty who could come in...who already have a proven research record” (Teresa, AA).

The need to collect, utilize, and adopt systems that handle data was also demonstrated at the level of mobilization. Norman (TA) noted, “Our division, I guess, has dabbled and done a

little bit of assessment previously, but it had always been limited to satisfaction and attendance metrics, never really venturing too much into learning outcomes field.” He added, “it builds credibility across campus. It helps assure that our resources are delivering the outcomes and results that we need.”

Lastly, Sherri (AA) mentioned twice in during her interview a convening of HSIs at WU hosted by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU). “HACU has been trying to pull some people together to try and start that dialogue about what it really means to be an HSI. And I, that’s actually a really great question.” Again, while this meeting was brought up by a single administrator, it could be indicative of future initiatives in which WU tries to play a role in developing a community of HSIs.

**Implementation.** Implementation is evident in the creation of infrastructure and support for the innovation to carry forth momentum (Curry, 1992; Kezar, 2007). Individuals, groups, or both will coordinate and may bring in others for additional support. Supports needed to deal with logistical issues may be identified, such as technology. During implementation policy behaviors, such as the development of forms or guidelines, are being crafted (Curry, 1992), but there would be no evidence or thought into evaluation or sustainability (Kezar & Sam, 2013). During implementation, the innovation may have the feel of a special project.

For WU, data most indicative of the implementation phase was concerned with a targeted effort at increasing student support/success. This effort is largely supported by the mass expansion and reorganization of the division of student affairs, along with other efforts within academic affairs focused on advisement and student retention. Janis (AA) notes, “We have a student success initiative that started about three years ago. The goal is very simple. It’s to graduate every student in the College.” This effort was supported by the hiring of a student

success director and the addition of advising staff, resulting in a massive decrease of students on academic probation within the College. Sherri (AA) noted similar changes within her college as well, “we’ve targeted the areas that we’ve added new positions or expanded on positions...we’ve totally restructured our advisement center to be a center for student success so that we could...help students more.”

Within the division of student affairs there has also been an expansion of infrastructure and staff. George (TA) reflected, “When I got here it was 2009 and I think the expansion really started to happen in about 2010-2011...the structural changes when it comes down to the reporting lines, departments, those types of things.” The division grew from approximately 12 departments to 33 departments, all focused on student support as the University increased access. This expansion was supported by data collected from other WU TAs and by institutional documents such as organizational charts.

**Institutionalization.** During institutionalization, the innovation moves into the value system of the organization (Kezar & Sam, 2013). The institutionalization stage reflects a core understanding impacting institutional culture (Curry, 1992; Kezar, 2007). This typically refers to an innovation which has progressed through the stages to a point of becoming “indistinguishable from the rest of the institution” (Kezar & Sam, 2013).

Data reflecting the institutionalization was largely supportive of the inductive findings of Presidential Mission and Stretched Thin, which were discussed in a previous section of this chapter. It should be expected that initiatives/ideas/concepts within the institutionalization phase would be reflected both inductively and deductively, because they are reflected throughout the institutional culture. As such, there is large support across the institutional landscape to support these ideas from data collected from participants and triangulated via document data. For

example, WU began to address issues of access within its mission in 1984 (Erekson, 2014). WU's current president assumed the role in 1986 and has continued to champion this change in mission. As a result, the mission of the WU is closely tied to this particular president, so much so that many of the staff who were hired during the previously mentioned expansion attribute WU's mission and success specifically to this president. WU's survival over the years was largely due to the local community it serves, which has a high poverty rate. Being at odds financially with the State and yet surviving on the limited resources available has further reinforced the notion of being Stretched Thin.

### **Southwest Community College**

As with WU, data from SCC were coded as mobilization, mobilization into implementation, implementation, implementation into institutionalization, and institutionalization. Any data coded as mobilization into implementation or implementation into institutionalization was then reevaluated according to which of the three phases would be the best fit for describing the data. Coding and recoding were conferred with a peer debriefer. Deductive analysis of SCC data is discussed according to each phase of institutionalization.

**Mobilization.** For SCC, data reflecting the stage of mobilization (preparing for change) was largely associated with the theme of a College Going Culture. As Gloria (AA) noted, There's several initiatives going on here where, in fact because our president, Dr. Y wants to focus primarily on creating what ze calls a 'college going culture' because the way out of poverty and that type of thing is to have a least some type of advanced degree.

Gloria's excerpt provides a direct example of galvanizing members (Kezar & Sam, 2013).

Additionally, several administrators referenced the 4DX process, which the current president of



SCC has been utilizing for the development of a new strategic plan. Additional support for this was in institutional documents on the institution's website. All data coded as mobilization were concerned with the notion of a College Going Culture, indicating that SCC is actively in the midst of change.

**Implementation.** Data reflecting the phase of implementation, which is largely concerned with creating infrastructure and support, is reflective of an intersection between the inductive findings of College Going Culture and Collaborative Development. As Sally (AA) noted, "we're working a lot with our high schools right now to enhance dual credit and early college high schools, so the students are entering college at a younger age and being successful." This is indicative of growth in this area and is heavily supported via institutional documents.

Joan (TA), commented how "for the first time I'm seeing the academic side working with the student services side, for the good of the students, instead of working separately," indicating that there has been change within the institutional culture for academic affairs and student affairs to work together in collaboration. This notion is further supported by institutional data and the organization of SCC's website, which presents as a singular institution, not as an institution with divisions.

**Institutionalization.** As noted previously data reflecting the phase of institutionalization should be noted within the core of the institutional culture. Deductive analysis of participant data reflected overwhelming support of the inductive finding of Collaborative Development. This finding was then triangulated via institutional documents. SCC has an entire web menu dedicated to its professional development efforts for both faculty and staff, which is the main building block for Collaborative Development. As Joan (TA) succinctly noted, "I think this is the right direction we're taking of depending on each other."

## **Summary of Deductive Findings**

Deductive findings for both WU and SCC further supported and confirmed inductive findings. However, deductive analysis helps to further illuminate how these two institutions differ. For WU, findings indicate a much more mature institution with a long history which has influenced the development of its institutional culture. This history is largely marked by the presence of a profound and long-term leader who has become synonymous with the WU's mission. For SCC, which is a younger institution, the role of the state reflects an alignment with SCC's mission as a community college. Indeed, some of the data supporting the finding of College Going Culture was a result of state action and further supported by national programs, such as Achieving the Dream. Deductive findings reveal that SCC is an organization in the midst of great change. Aiding SCC in these changes is a long established cultural norm to work in a collaborative manner.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter provided an overview of participant selection, data analysis, and findings of this study which addresses the issue of Latinx degree attainment by examining the policy logic of the HSI designation via the research question: How do HSIs conceptualize their HSI status? In order to better understand institutional conceptions of the Latinx degree attainment gap, this study examined institutional perceptions of the HSI designation. Institutional perceptions derived from upper-level administrators at a four-year doctoral granting HSI and a two-year HSI. For the purposes of this study, there were two embedded cases of administrators: traditional upper-level administrators (director and above) and academic administrators (department chair and above) from each institution type. To address the research question, a multiple case study was conducted using the lens of institutionalization theory.

Inductive analysis yielded the themes of Presidential Mission and Stretched Thin for Western University (WU). Analysis of data from Southwestern Community College (SCC) yielded the themes Collaborative Development and College Going Culture. Embedded cases of Academic Administrators (AAs) and Traditional Administrators (TAs) yielded one theme each. Data analysis of AAs yielded the theme of Latino Serving Institution, reflecting an emphasis on *whom* their institutions serve. Data analysis of TAs yielded the theme of Borderland Community, reflecting an emphasis on *where* their institutions are located. Deductive analysis of the data further reinforced and supported these findings.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to examine how Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) conceptualize their HSI status. This chapter provides a discussion of the most salient findings. The findings are presented by answering the research question with regard to each case and comparisons across those cases. Following discussion of the findings, implications for practice, policy, and research are presented. The research question guiding this study was: how do HSIs conceptualize their HSI status?

Thus far, there has been limited research examining the implications of the growth in the number of HSIs or examination of the changes of institutional behaviors required to meet the needs of increasingly diverse student populations (Nora & Crisp, 2009). “We do not know enough about whether changes at HSIs are evolutionary or actively managed so that institutional culture and daily practices are transformed in ways befitting their changing student populations” (Núñez, Hurtado & Galdeano, 2015, p. 2). This study helps to address this gap by examining how institutions conceptualize their HSI status and thus reveals a clearer picture of how institutional culture informs the HSI status at two different public institutional types.

Administrators from a two-year institution, Southwestern Community College (SCC), and a four-year institution, Western University (WU), served as representatives of institutional perceptions. Additionally, there were two embedded cases of administrators at each institutional type, or case: traditional upper-level administrators (director and above) and academic administrators (department chair and above) from each institution type. Thus, discussion of the findings is presented by case, WU then SCC, and the across case: academic administrators and traditional administrators.

Institutionalization (Curry, 1992; Kezar, 2007; Kezar & Sam, 2010) was the framework guiding this multiple case study. Institutionalization theory developed out of the organizational change literature in order to better understand the question: What is permanence in organizational change (Curry, 1992)? More specifically, organizational change scholars were interested in better understanding how innovations either became adopted into an organization's culture or alternatively, were terminated. Equally interested in this phenomenon are organizational leaders and innovators who seek to deliberately create change and want to ensure their innovations become institutionalized within the organization. Curry (1992) provided a typology of institutionalization occurring in three phases: mobilization, implementation, and institutionalization (p. 5). Institutionalization's phases of mobilization, implementation, and institutionalization can be demonstrated on structural, behavioral, and cultural levels. Mobilization, the first phase of institutionalization, is descriptive of an organization preparing for change and is most likely to be demonstrated on the behavioral and sometimes structural levels. Mobilization on a behavioral level may involve signaling by a change agent and/or leader, which others within the organization will mimic or reinforce. On a structural level, examples of mobilization would be a new line item on a budget or a non-permanent position creation. Implementation is evident in the creation of infrastructure and support for the innovation in order to carry forth momentum. Implementation is most evident on the structural (i.e. permanent appointments and consideration in budget planning) and behavioral levels and begins to appear on the cultural level (i.e. mimicking evolves to acceptance and understanding). The last phase, institutionalization, is noted by evidence of the innovation moving into the value system of the organization (Curry, 1992; Kezar, 2007; Kezar & Sam, 2013) and is demonstrated on all levels, via organizational charts and budgets (structural), how the institution and its participants act and

policies created (behavioral), and what institutional participants expect and assume (cultural). Institutionalization is helpful as a global framework to examine a process that occurs over time along a continuum (Curry, 1992), as opposed to demarcated levels. Likewise, it is applicable to any institution of higher education, recognizing each will differ depending upon the change initiative.

This exploratory case study utilized embedded multiple case study design. Each institution served as a case. Each case had two embedded units of analysis: traditional administrators and academic administrators. Data sources consisted of interviews, and institutional documents including, but not limited to: websites, policies, and handbooks. Institutionalization was utilized in the design of the interview protocol and thus inductive findings, along with deductive analysis of the data. Thus, after discussion regarding the inductive findings, a discussion of the deductive findings will follow. This chapter concludes with implications for practice, policy and research.

### **Within Case Findings**

**Western University.** Themes emerged to suggest the culture was actively managed by the president of the WU, thus how WU institutionalized its HSI status is dependent upon the president. Four administrators from WU mentioned how long the president had served in her role, which could be a contributor to her management of the of WU's HSI identity. Terms of presidency at institutions of higher education average around seven years (Ross & Green, 2000), however, WU's presidency represents an extreme outlier. "It's not very often that you have a president that's been in power...been in that position for 30 years. So, I don't know that other HSIs would be as focused on the HSI status and what that means for its students and faculty, but I think we very much are because of those circumstances" (Teresa, AA). Additionally,

participants from WU attributed the change in institutional mission to the president over time. “When ze became president over 20 years ago, our university looked very different. It did not look like our region...So with zer vision ze worked to change our institution” (Celeste, TA). Sherri (AA) also reflected on the idea of the president being tied to the evolution of WUs mission. “WU used to be very much an Anglo-serving institution and when Dr. X became president, zze really said ‘Look! Look at it. WU does not reflect the demographics [referring to the region].’” The relationship between the president and the mission is so tightly knitted that one participant expressed concern for the mission of the institution should ze no longer be able to serve.

We just don’t know how much longer ze’s going to be in the role and be able to serve in the role. A lot of us are concerned about the preservation of the mission of access and excellence and being dedicated to serving the region (Norman, TA).

The data does not definitively point toward length of tenure or deliberative action by the president but a combination of both, which presents an interesting point of comparison when considering the types of MSIs that exist within the greater institutional landscape. Having a president serve for 20 plus years is more commonly found, though still rare, at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) (Ross & Green, 2000), which are mission based MSIs. Established before the Civil Rights Act of 1964, HBCUs were established with the principle mission of educating black students due to segregation in the United States. Thus, HBCUs provide an academic setting and a campus culture intentionally designed to support the needs of black students, including highly supportive and diverse faculty, expanded counseling and remediation opportunities, and a highly diverse student body (Roebuck & Murty, 1993). As a result of their focused mission and efforts, HBCUs have seen great success in educating black

students. For example, 75% of black persons holding a doctorate degree completed their undergraduate degrees at HBCUs and 50% of black faculty at historically white institutions, earned their undergraduate degrees at HBCUs (Department of Education, n.d.). However, WU as an HSI, is representative of demographic based MSIs, or MSIs that were created in response to changing demographics in the United States, but do not exist with the mission to educate a particular minority group, and thus frequently do not have a mission, faculty, and resources dedicated to the purpose of education Latinos. Furthermore, the theoretical framework of institutionalization does not account for time. In this case, there is a question as to whether the timeframe the president had to push the HSI identity is dependent upon the institutionalization of the identity, or if the change in mission which supports the HSI identity, would have been reversed or redirected, without the presence of a president leading the institution in this direction and reinforcing both the mission and the identity. With WU, there seems to be a unique situation in which a demographic based MSI is exhibiting characteristics more in line with a mission based MSI (Hubbard & Stage, 2009), in that the mission of the institution reflects a priority in serving Latinos by emphasizing serving the local area. But also interesting regarding the president's lengthy tenure is the time when she assumed the role of president, during the Emulation Era and continuing through the Autonomy Era as defined by Macdonald, Botti, and Clark (2007). Her assumption of the role of president happened just as the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) was formed (Galdeano, Flores & Moder, 2012) and a need for recognition of institutions which serve Hispanic students became a part of the policy agenda, through legal oppositions to affirmative action and bilingual education, into an era where needs of institutions serving Latinos were recognized as unique. In essence, the president of WU assumed her role during a unique and important time in history in relation to HSIs---when HSIs



were moving from mobilization into implementation within the policy landscape and continuing from the mobilization into implementation within the MSI and institutions of higher education landscape. This momentum of historical significance combined with effective leadership has resulted in significant institutional change. The data suggest a parallel alignment between the term of WU's president and the evolution of what we now refer to as HSIs within the policy landscape. This finding points to a possible relationship between the institutionalization of the HSIs within the higher education landscape and WU's own institutionalization of the HSI status. Though WU represents a unique case within the higher education landscape, the body of literature regarding presidents of HSIs is largely anecdotal (Gates, 2016). This study, while not focused on presidents of HSIs, is the first with empirical findings tied to the role of the president at an HSI. As such, it suggests that further investigation into the role and impact of presidents at HSIs is needed.

The finding of Stretched Thin for WU supports the literature reflecting that financial resources are an issue not only for HSIs, but for Latinos attending college in general (Santos & Sáenz, 2012; Waller et. al, 2006; & Ortega, et.al, 2015). Indeed most MSIs are under-resourced despite having greater resource needs for the students enrolled (Cunningham, Park, & Engle, 2014). Undoubtedly, the high rate of poverty for the area WU serves further amplifies the impact of being under-resourced, a point that was iterated by all administrators at WU. "This is not a wealthy town and as I said you have 35% of your student body coming from families that make \$20,000 or less a year. That's a continual stressor on them: where to get the money to go to school" (Janis, AA). As a result of the high poverty rates in the area WU serves, a large proportion of WU's students work. This often translates into stopping out, in order to make money to continue attending. The literature indicates that HSIs budgets are more heavily

dependent on state appropriations than non-HSIs (Ortega et. al, 2015). When reliance on state funds is combined with performance based measures, such as retention, persistence, and completion rates, there is a potential to harm HSIs due to the nature of the very students they serve. A student that stops out will no longer be counted toward institutional retention rates or possibly completion rates depending upon the time at which they stop out (Astin & Oseguera, 2005). Put more bluntly with regard to WU, budget formulas based upon these metrics would be harming institutions that are upholding their mission. This then harms institutions already serving under-resourced students, leaving them with limited options for action.

**Southwestern Community College.** Unlike WU, SCC's mission and focus does not appear to be managed by the president, which is more than likely due to SCC's institutional type as a two-year institution, which necessitates that it serve its surrounding Latino community. Thus, SCC's mission management occurs from the bottom up. However, the finding of Collaborative Development may suggest that the institutional environment is managed by a sense of shared governance used to shape institutional policy. As Sally (AA) shared,

SCC has a lot of staff that have been here for a long time. And, we tend to work together for many years. So we have a good cooperation among all the departments, not just in the instructional area, including student services and institutional research, human resources, everything. So, we have a good collaborative relationship and good team work.

Joan (TA) viewed Collaborative Development as a phenomenon that happened out of necessity, due to funding constraints, but that ultimately was a positive outcome for the institution.

Faculty is the heart of an institution so it's very important that is happening now and I really like that trend. And I think it's just because we've been pushed together because of

the budgetary constraints and we're expecting even more in the future. So I think this is the right direction we're taking of depending on each other.

For SCC, enrollment numbers are of tremendous priority in relation to state funding, thus an emphasis on building a college going culture so community members will be comfortable and familiar in order to enroll, may lead to increased student enrollment. Indeed, several administrators discussed the institutional goal of increasing enrollment by 3% for the academic year. As Helen (TA) noted, "Our enrollment is pretty flat right now. We've set a goal institutionally for it to be up 3%." However, creating a college going culture is very much aligned with education as a means of social mobility—lifting a group up in providing an educational opportunity. As Gloria (AA) reflected, "I'll have to go back to creating a college going culture or mindset to raise people up out of poverty so they can advance and do better for their families." Joan (TA) also reflected the notion of social mobility in terms of the dream of college. When sharing about SCC's outreach to K-6 school children and families she noted, "I think that's something we need to give our population. We need to give them some dreaming because that's the only way that they will make it a fact." It is important to keep in mind the regional context of SCC and how that may contribute to valuing social mobility. Since the area has a high poverty rate, mostly low paying jobs, and a significant immigrant population, it is reasonable that SCC sees itself as an institution of social mobility stewardship. However, Title V, the legislation which defines HSIs and how funds are to be distributed to HSIs, is framed from a social efficiency perspective—providing institutions with a critical mass of a population with funds for economic efficiency, which could be why the data indicate a lack of institutionalization within the HSI identity for SCC. This could be an example of how regionalism plays into institutional identity, particularly with regard to the economic status of

residents within the Borderland. Or it could be compelling evidence that the current Title V policy as written is not aligned with how HSIs frame the problem of the Latino achievement gap. Again, how a problem is framed impacts the solution. It could also indicate that the policy as written does not frame the problem of the Latino achievement gap in a context that is well-aligned with community colleges structures and cultures. If so, it presents a problematic concern, since approximately 50% of HSIs are two-year institutions (Espinoza, Turk & Taylor, 2017). In this case, there seems to be a disconnection between how the policy frames the problem of the achievement gap and how the institution addressing it (SCC) frames the problem. The SCC data indicates it is beginning to institutionalize an identity as a college of social mobility, particularly due to the population needs of the region it serves.

### **Cross Case Findings**

Since the majority of research regarding the constituential diversity, human capital resources, of HSIs has focused on faculty (Hubbard & Stage, 2009) and HSI students (Bridges et al, 2008; Cuellar, 2014; Garcia & Okhidoi, 2015) and most research on HSI administrators is concerned with presidents (de los Santos & Vega, 2008; Santiago, 2009; Santiago, Andrade, & Brown, 2004), this study focused on administrators to begin addressing the gaps within the literature in order to better understand institutional perceptions within the HSI landscape. Institutional leaders play a role in shaping institutional environments impacting institutional policy and how policies are executed, or practiced (Bensimon, 2007; Stanton-Sálazar, 2001). Findings in the embedded cases of academic administrators and traditional administrators suggest that there is a nuanced difference in how these groups of administrators view their institutions and that the two findings may be inter-related.

Academic administrators expressed a focus on *who* their institutions serve, thus yielding a theme of Latino Serving Institution. The theme of Latino Serving Institution was defined by participants conveying that their institution is unique and/or different from other HSIs, largely due to their Hispanic majority student demographic, making the institutions explicitly focused on serving Hispanic students. As Hank (SCC) noted, “It’s just sort of inherent that we’re doing the best to meet and support our students. And just because of the demographic, that’s who our students are, mostly in large part Latino/a students.” Teresa (WU) observed, “So I think that those (priorities) aren’t necessarily because of our HSI status, but because of our student body and what people are interested in.” Additionally, Sherri (WU) summarized the theme of Latino Serving Institution when she noted:

But I think that we understand what an HSI is. And what I mean by that is we are not just a designation, that offers us an opportunity to apply for federal grants and things like. We are truly a Hispanic serving institution. And the emphasis is on the serving the population that we have here...It’s that, that’s who we are. And so, it’s just understood that anything that’s more connected to serving our student body will certainly have a higher priority in that regard.

Traditional administrators framed their institutions in terms of *where* their institutions are located, thus the theme of Borderland Community, which is defined by TAs describing the importance of the Border and how being on the border impacts students and their families and therefore, the work of the institutions. Elizabeth (SCC) notes, “The institution has evolved over the years significantly in response to what I believe is us as a border community.” George (WU) adds, “We have a lot of people on campus whether it be academic researchers or practitioners who have really looked into some of the dynamics not just with Hispanic/Latino students but

also taking into consideration that we're a border institution." Joan (SCC) succinctly captures one of the critical aspects of being a Borderland Community, "You can literally view the villages, and the towns, and the poverty in Mexico. So you can see all this."

For the two different administrator types, the resulting themes interplay like a call and answer. Academic administrators call out "Latino Serving Institution" and traditional administrators offer the answer of "Borderland Community" with both themes speaking to the uniqueness of HSIs located along the U.S. border. The similarities to these themes was a bit surprising given the data contributing to them was gathered from two different institutions. There was no expectation of two closely related findings would emerge since the data contributing to them came from two institutions. While the findings of Latino Serving Institution and Borderland Community are unique, they suggest that some greater common element may be contributing to these cultures: the Borderland itself. The themes emerging from the data at WU and SCC indicate that HSIs along border areas are different from the body of HSIs within the U.S. as a whole. While a typology of HSIs now exists based on institutional type (Núñez, Crisp, & Elizondo, 2016) and a typology exists based upon HSIs organizational behavior (Garcia, 2017), neither recognize the uniqueness of borderland institutions. The embedded case findings from this study suggest the need for further research and expansion of these typologies.

### **Deductive Findings**

Analysis of data also incorporated deductive methodology via the theoretical framework of institutionalization (Curry, 1992; Kezar, 2007; Kezar & Sam, 2010). Institutionalization has three phases along a continuum of mobilization, implementation, and institutionalization with no clear demarcations between the phases. Phases can be demonstrated on structural, behavioral, and cultural levels. Mobilization, the first phase of institutionalization, is descriptive of an

organization preparing for change. Preparing may range from a simple awareness of a problem or to a more substantial action such as creating a foundation for policy (Curry, 1992; Kezar & Sam, 2013), such as when Gloria (SCC, AA) noted: “There’s several initiatives...because our president, wants to focus primarily on creating what he calls a ‘college going culture’ because the way out of poverty and that type of thing is to have a least some type of advanced degree.” Gloria’s observation reflects the initial buzz that frequently comes with the mobilization of an idea. The second phase, implementation, is evident in the creation of infrastructure and support for the innovation in order to carry forth momentum (Curry, 1992; Kezar, 2007) such as when Sherri (WU, AA) shared, “We’ve totally restructured our advisement center to be a center for student success so that we could meet these...you know, help students more.” The final phase, institutionalization, the innovation moves into the value system of the organization, thus reflecting a core understanding impacting institutional culture (Curry, 1992; Kezar, 2007), such as when Norman (WU, TA) responded that the HSI’s status impacts are felt “probably in ways we’re not aware of because of how dominant the culture is here, it does absolutely shape essentially everything that we do...So, yeah, I do think it [HSI status] does have a direct impact on how we run our departments.”

Utilizing both inductive and deductive analysis allowed for a more nuanced view of each institutional culture and allowed for greater visibility into the areas in which institutionalization may be observed (structural, behavioral, and cultural). Additionally, deductive analysis helped to affirm or challenge inductive findings. Thus deductive analysis helps to further narrow findings to those which are both sound and cogent. For this study, the deductive findings provided further insights as to where each respective institution was with regard to institutionalizing the HSI status.

Most revealing about the deductive findings was the illustration that the two institutions studied were at very different points along the institutionalization continuum, which runs from mobilization to institutionalization, with regard to the HSI status. An example of SCC being in mobilization with regard to the HSI status include when Hank (SCC, AA) observed, “I think our faculty needs to better understand...cause I feel like I’m pretty much in tune with our college, you know I don’t know what it means to be designated HSI.” Institutionalization of the status was reflected in Sherri’s (WU, AA) assessment:

I think that we understand what an HSI is. And what I mean by that is we are not just a designation that offers us an opportunity to apply for federal grants and things like that. We are truly a Hispanic serving institution. And the emphasis is on the serving the population that we have here... it’s that, that’s who we are.

Difference in findings were expected because institutions represent two different institutional types: community college and doctoral granting. However, during the course of data collection it became apparent that WU’s mission was focused on the local surrounding area, just like SCC, but with differences in degrees awarded and emphasis on research. Despite unexpected similarities in mission, the findings were still unique, situating WU at one end of the continuum, near institutionalization, and SCC at the other end of the continuum, near mobilization. The data suggests these differences along the continuum may be related differences in institutional leaders. For the last 32 years, WU has been under the leadership of one president, who has expressed a strong commitment to serving the HSI status. As Sherri (AA, WU) reiterated, “What’s the focus of your upper administration? Cause I don’t know that some of this can exist if there’s not someone in your administration saying this is a priority and a focus for us.” While there was no definitive list of past presidents of SCC found in the research for this study,



participants conveyed there has been issues with turnover in leadership. Hank (AA, SCC) explained of the past presidents, “in the previous 10 years we’ve had 4 presidents, so while they went on to do great things at different institutions, I feel like our faculty was left.... feeling up in arms.” Thus, a lack of stable leadership at SCC may have contributed to their lack of institutionalization with regard to the HSI status. SCC has been stuck at the beginning stages of institutionalization.

### **Framework Considerations**

The difference in the deductive findings highlight important issues with regard to the theoretical framework of institutionalization when examining HSIs. While institutionalization emerged from organizational change literature and situated itself within higher education (Curry, 1992; Kezar, 2007; Kezar & Sam, 2013; Garcia & Okhidoi, 2015), it does not account for issues of time and leadership, or furthermore time *within* leadership. Also, striking in light of these deductive findings are the embedded case findings of Latino Serving Institution and Borderland Community, which again, seem to indicate that borderland institutions who have a majority of Latino students are unique within the landscape of HSIs. So while WU and SCC exist at different points on the institutionalization continuum with regard to how they conceptualize their HSI status, the data suggest they are equals with regard to an identity as a borderland institution. Thus, the borderland is a catalyst which impacts how both WU and SCC behave and adapt as unique institutions.

Western University’s president certainly brings up questions of the impact of time *within* leadership when conceptualizing the HSI status, and certainly is an anomaly across the entire higher education landscape. However, the presidency at WU also is an unexpected anomaly with regards to institutionalization. Given that institutions dedicated to educating a minority, such as

HBCUs, have a *mission* to serve black students, the assumption that a community college with a *mission* to meet the needs of a community, would display characteristics of having institutionalized the HSI status, since community served is predominantly Latino. This presents an interesting juxtaposition to the findings of WU's HSI identity being institutionalized and actively managed by the president, versus SCC's identity as an HSI being in the mobilization phase and emerging from the faculty and staff. The data suggests the uniqueness of WU's president contributes to these unexpected findings and brings up an interesting point with regard to the limitations of institutionalization.

These finding present questions of how to best interpret organizational behavior with regard to the HSIs status. The findings of this study suggest that institutions' adoption of the HSI status may not be adequately explained using traditional organizational theories, such as institutionalization. Further, based upon the location of the HSIs in this study, there is evidence to support that borderland HSIs may behave differently than other HSIs.

During the data collection and analysis of this study, Garcia (2017) published a typology of Latinx-serving institutions, grounded in both organizational theory and cultural theory. Garcia's study notes that HSIs may identity as *Latinx-enrolling*, *Latinx producing*, *Latinx-enhancing*, and *Latinx serving* (Garcia, 2017, pp. 121S-122S). Applying Garcia's typology to these two cases could provide further clarity regarding their differences in their conceptualizations of the HSI status, though Garcia's initial study did not examine community colleges. Garcia's (2017) research seems to indicate a move toward developing organizational theories unique to HSIs. Indeed, further research such as this could reveal even greater differences in the organizational behavior of HSIs, but also the larger community of MSIs.

### **Implications for Practice**

Since the purpose of this study was to examine how HSIs conceptualize their HSI status the findings of this study support recommendations for the growing number of HSIs within the United States. These recommendations are offered with an air of caution regarding generalizability. Generalizability is dependent upon statistical sampling in order to extend findings to the larger population. Multiple case study does not provide generalizability, but instead, draws upon the notion of transferability. The reader should judge the context within which this multiple case study is situated before deciding whether the findings are applicable to their own context.

The findings suggest that the institutional environment within the context of the HSI status is indeed, actively managed. For WU, the management clearly falls to the president and at SCC, the management appears to reside with the faculty and staff of the institution. This is an important consideration for other HSIs in considering who is managing the institutional identity. These findings also suggest the possibility that it is necessary for the management of this identity to belong to different parties based on institutional type. For example, community colleges like SCC have missions that align with community needs; thus, a ground up perspective. For four year research institutions like WU the drive of the institution comes from the top down, meaning that the mission, which typically is not focused on a community or specific population, but academic purpose. To add nuance to this concept, mission must come from its primary executor: the president. As such, a four year institution's adoption of an HSI identity would be largely dependent upon signaling from the president. Presidents of HSIs or perspective presidents of HSIs should take this into consideration regarding their leadership approach to institutions. Organizations will seek continual stasis until a catalyst and/or need motivates the organization to change. Having a student population that is 25% Latino may not be a powerful catalyst for

change within an institution that is potentially hundreds of years old. Thus, presidents may need to consider that they are not only the chief executive officer of an institution, but also may be the chief identity officer. Of additional concern for presidents or potential presidents of HSIs is how they in and of themselves are tremendous resources for the institution. A president of an HSI would be wise to consider how involved of an advocate and lobbyist they will need to be in order to ensure student success.

Further, there are also important considerations for hiring practices at HSIs. There is already a well-established lack of minority faculty within higher education. However, even at institutions like WU and SCC, where the majority of students are Latino/a, the faculty do not reflect the diversity of the student population. One possible opportunity for growth in this area reflected within the data collection and analysis of this study is the need for a formalized community of HSIs. Having formalized communities could help HSIs facilitate pathways between each other with regard to Latino/a faculty and staff. Further, a community of HSIs could combine resources to help funding visiting professorships and fellowships for young emerging Latino/a scholars and mentorship programs for more established scholars.

### **Implications for Policy**

This study also has important implications for policymakers and governing boards when making decisions regarding funding formulas on the state level and inducements on the federal level. As mentioned previously, Title V as a policy is designed from a social efficiency perspective, meaning Title V provides funds to serve institutions which have a critical mass of Latino/a students. However, the HSIs in this study view their role as HSIs from a social mobility perspective, meaning that in providing education to an underserved minority, they are providing an opportunity for upward economic and social mobility. State policymakers and governing

bodies would do well to consider the perspective of their funding formulas. For example, utilizing metrics focused on number of students graduated, realized economic impact, and ability to find gainful employment, might better suit the intents and purposes expressed by these institutions. Additionally, the federal government would do well to reframe Title V, by adding accountability measures that motivate institutions receiving grants to demonstrate *how* they are contributing to social mobility of Latinxs and at what level of success.

### **Implications for Research**

The research question guiding this study was: How do HSIs conceptualize their HSI status? Using institutionalization (Curry, 1992; Kezar & Sam, 2013) as guiding framework, findings from this study suggest that HSIs conceptualize their HSI status in both abstract and concrete ways and that these conceptions will differ based on institutional type. While this study answered how HSIs conceptualize their HSI status, additional questions emerged. These questions as well as recommendations for future research will be outlined in this section.

First, due to the nature of the research design, this study was limited to two HSIs located within the same state and region. Additionally, these institutions were located within a borderland community, thus the findings may be unique due to the high Latino population of the area. Further studies should examine institutional perceptions in areas that are not predominantly Latino. However, there are also many more borderland institutions within multiple states in the United States. Additional studies could help answer the questions regarding the uniqueness of these institutions and a better understanding of how location, regionalism, and local culture play a role in institutional decision-making, mission, and crafting of policies. Additionally, the HSIs within this study had student populations which were predominantly Mexican-American or

Mexican. Other HSIs which serve other populations within the Latino diaspora may yield differing results and unique perspectives.

The findings of Latino Serving Institution and Borderland Serving Institution present the questions of whether sectors exist within the sector of HSIs and additionally present questions regarding institutional agency and the power of naming. After data collection but during analysis of this study, Garcia (2017) published findings offering a typology of HSIs based upon outcomes and institutional culture, which begins to address these questions. However, there is need for continued research to explore how HSIs develop their identities within the greater landscape of HSIs, particularly for two-year institutions.

Further, the case of WU is unique, particularly with regard to its president. As such, applying Garcia's (2017) to the case of WU from an organizational evolution perspective could provide further insights as to how and why institutional change occurs within HSIs. Additionally, because WU is a demographic based MSI which has exhibits institutional behaviors like that of a mission based MSI, further research is needed regarding how MSIs behave and what impacts, leadership, location, and population have on that behavior. Further study in this area could inform prospective HSIs of early option behaviors that could help ensure student success in the future.

Additionally, there were significant differences in how these two institutions conceptualized their HSI status. While the same interview guide and methods were used for all interview data, participants from WU spoke specifically and directly toward the HSI status, while the data from SCC was much thinner and focused more on second-language learners and students crossing the border. This also supports the need for more in depth work like that of Garcia (2017) and supports the idea that there may be different types of HSIs that go beyond the

difference in institutional type. Further research is needed in this area and could help contribute to a theory of HSI institutionalization.

Further, findings from this study highlighted time in leadership roles with regard to institutional change. Institutionalization does not account for time. The issue of time in leadership roles indicates that still further research is needed which examines HSIs through an organizational lens. The findings from this study indicate that HSIs may behave in unique ways within the higher education landscape. As the number of HSIs continues to increase, it is important to have an understanding of how these institutions will behave individually and collectively.

Lastly, this study focused on two institutions within a bounded time period. Longitudinal studies could help address not just whether an HSI identity evolves or actively managed, but how this process occurs over time within the life cycle of an institution and takes into greater consideration the surrounding environments impacting the institution during the course of change.

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to describe how HSIs conceptualize their HSI status. Using institutionalization as a guiding framework, academic and traditional administrators at both a two-year community college and four-year doctoral university with the HSI served as the institutional “voice” for this study. Findings indicated that HSIs conceptualize the HSI status in both concrete and abstract ways, and that these ways differ between institutional types. WU aligned its identity as being resource poor financially, but also closely aligned its identity and mission with the institutional president. SCC situates its identity around a collaborative culture of shared governance and its drive to develop a college going culture within the region.

Additionally, findings indicated that academic and traditional administrators have slightly nuanced but important differences in how they see their institutions' execution of their identities.

This chapter provided an overview of the most salient findings. The findings were presented answering the research question with regard to each case and comparisons within those cases. Following discussion of the findings, implications for practice, policy, and research were presented.



## **Appendix A: Interview Guide-based upon Institutionalization (Curry, 1992)**

### **MSI Defined**

Minority Serving Institution (MSI) is an umbrella term for types of post-secondary institutions in the United States with diverse student bodies. MSIs consist of Historically Black Colleges (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs). These institutions are designated as such by the U.S. Department of Education.

### **HSI Defined**

A Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) is a not-for-profit degree-granting institution where 25% or more students are of Hispanic origin, and of those students 50% or more are Pell Grant eligible (Department of Education, 2011). An institution which holds the HSI designation, like Institution X, is eligible to apply for certain grants from the Department of Education.

### **I. Background**

1. Tell me about your history and role as \_\_\_\_\_ at Institution X?

Probes:

-How long have you worked at Institution X?

-Which departments?

-Always with this department?

2. Anything else about your history or background you think is relevant for me to know?

### **II. Mobilization/Implementation**

3. Are you aware of Institution X's status as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)?

Probes:

- Can you describe how you became aware of Institution X's HSI status?

-What is your understanding of the HSI status?

4. Since obtaining the HSI designation (provide date if needed), have you noticed any structural changes within your department? The institution?

Probes:

-Structural changes being funding allocations, positions, titles, policies in relation to the HSI designation.

5. Have you observed preferential treatment, positive or negative, within the Institution toward proposals/collaborations/programmatic efforts which are connected to the HSI status?

Probes:

-Within your own department?

6. Does the HSI status have any impact on your department?

Probes:

- If yes, can you describe how?
- If no, why not? Are there other institutional designation/initiatives you see as having a direct impact?

7. What departments/areas does your department collaborate with and why?

Probes:

- Are there departments you've been encouraged to collaborate with?
- Are there departments you've been discouraged to work with?
- In the future, what departments would you like to see your department collaborate with?

### III. Institutionalization

8. How does Institution X support Latina/o students?

Probes:

-How does your department support Latina/o students?

-How do you know?

9. What institutional priorities is your department particularly focused on?

Probes:

-How were these priorities communicated or set?

-Have you been asked to focus time/attention/money toward a specific institutional initiative?

10. Is your department evaluated on said priorities?

11. Do your department evaluations reflect these priorities?

12. How does the training/orientation/development your staff receives reflect these priorities?

Probes:

-Institution mandated vs. training/orientation/development that originates from your department?

13. As the administrator of your department, what are the biggest challenges you face in meeting these priorities?

Probes:

-Where are the roadblocks and bottlenecks?

-Are there similar challenges for your colleagues in other departments?

14. Do you feel these priorities, as established by the institution, are in line with meeting the needs of the students?

Probes:

-Having vs. serving.

15. What could Institution X do a better job of?

Probes:

-How do you know?

16. From your perspective as an administrator, what should be the important to Institution X with regard to the HSI designation?

17. Is there anything else you'd like to talk with me about?

## Appendix B: Permission from SAGE Publications

The screenshot shows a Gmail inbox in a web browser. The browser address bar shows a search for 'permissions@sagepub.com'. The email subject is 'Creswell-Qualitative Inquiry and Design'. The sender is Rebecca Gates (gates@unlv.nevada.edu) and the recipient is permissions@sagepub.com. The email is dated 9/6/17. The content of the email is as follows:

**Rebecca Gates <gates@unlv.nevada.edu>**  
to order ▾  
9/6/17 ☆ ↶ ▾

Hello,

I am a doctoral candidate in Higher Education at the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV). For my dissertation study, I am applying the use of Creswell's Data Spiral, which is represented as Figure 8.1 (p. 183) in the 3rd edition (2013). I would like to ask permission to use a representation of the Data Spiral in my dissertation or, if you have a file of Figure 8.1 for scholars to use, I would welcome that as well.

The title of my dissertation is *Having vs. Serving: Perceptions of HSIs*. My chair is Doris Watson.

If you could help me best direct my inquiry, I would greatly appreciate it.

Sincerely,  
Rebecca Gates

**permissions (US) <permissions@sagepub.com>**  
to me ▾  
9/6/17 ☆ ↶ ▾

Hello Rebecca,

Thank you for your request. While I am unable to provide any material or files from our books/journals, I am happy to report that you can consider this email as permission to use the material as detailed below in your upcoming dissertation. Please note that this permission does not cover any 3rd party material that may be found within the work. You must properly credit the original source, SAGE Publications.

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## Appendix C: Informed Consent



### INFORMED CONSENT

Department of Educational Psychology and Higher Education

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**TITLE OF STUDY: Having or Serving: Perceptions of HSIs**

**INVESTIGATOR(S): Doris L. Watson, PhD and Rebecca J. Gates, MS**

For questions or concerns about the study, you may contact Doris L. Watson at 702- 895-5085 or [doris.watson@unlv.edu](mailto:doris.watson@unlv.edu) or Rebecca J. Gates at 585-413-8061 [gates@unlv.nevada.edu](mailto:gates@unlv.nevada.edu).

For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted, contact **the UNLV Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects at 702-895-2794, toll free at 877-895-2794 or via email at [IRB@unlv.edu](mailto:IRB@unlv.edu)**.

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#### **Purpose of the Study**

You are invited to participate in a research study. This multiple case study embedded design is guided by the research question: How do HSIs conceptualize their HSI status?

#### **Participants**

You are being asked to participate in the study because you fit this criteria: adults, age 18-99, whose occupation is an administrator holding at least the title of Director or Program Chair at an 2 year or 4 year doctoral granting institution of higher education holding the federal designation of a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI).

### **Procedures**

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following: provide 60-90 minutes of your time for an audio recorded interview and to review the transcript of your interview. The review of your transcript should take approximately 30 minutes.

### **Benefits of Participation**

There may not be direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. However, we hope to learn more about how the HSI designation is institutionalized within the institutional culture. As such, you may gain additional insight into opportunities and/or challenges for your own institution in serving Latina/o students.

### **Risks of Participation**

There are risks involved in all research studies. This study may include only minimal risks. *Risks for this study include breach on confidentiality. To minimize this risk, all data will be password protected and participants and their institutions will be assigned pseudonyms.*

### **Cost /Compensation**

There will not be financial cost to you to participate in this study. The study will take 60-90 minutes for the interview and 30 minutes for the review of your interview transcription. You will not be compensated for your time.

### **Confidentiality**

All information gathered in this study will be kept as confidential as possible. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study. All records will be stored in a locked facility at UNLV for three years after completion of the study. After the storage time the information gathered will be destroyed.

### **Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your relations with UNLV. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or any time during the research study.

**Participant Consent:**

I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I have been able to ask questions about the research study. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been given to me.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Name (Please Print)

Audio/Video Taping:

I agree to be audio or video taped for the purpose of this research study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Name (Please Print)



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The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Curriculum Vitae

**Rebecca J. Gates, Doctoral Candidate**

Department of Educational Psychology & Higher Education

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

**Contact Information**

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**Education**

**University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Las Vegas, Nevada**

PhD in Higher Education

Expected graduation, May 2018

**Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma**

M.S. in Counseling and Student Personnel Services

May 2005

**Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas**

B.A. in English with Highest Honors, Minor in Philosophy

May 2002

## **Professional Experience**

**Senior Specialist**, College of Southern Nevada; Division of Student Affairs (February 2018-Present)

**Part-time Instructor**, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; Lee School of Business (June-July, 2017; August-December, 2014).

**Teaching Assistant**, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; College of Education (January-May, 2017; August-December 2016).

**Research Assistant**, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; College of Education (January-May, 2016; August-December 2015; January-May 2014; August-December 2013).

**Radio Higher Ed, LLC**, Remote, (January –December 2016; January – December 2015; June-December. 2014).

**Program Coordinator**, University of Connecticut; Honors Program (July 2013-May 2009).

**Resident Director**, SUNY Brockport: Residential Life & Learning Communities (May 2009-August 2005)

**Hall Director**, Oklahoma State University; Residential Life and Dining (May 2005- May 2003).

## **Undergraduate Courses Taught**

Business Connections (BUS 103), First Year Seminar (COE 102), Peer Mentoring and Leadership (EGEN 3200), Mentorship Practicum (EGEN 3092), Honors First Year Seminar

(INTD 1784), Helping Relationships For College Students, (EDC 302), First Year Seminar (UNIV 1111).

### **Graduate Courses serving as a Teaching Assistant**

Readings (EDH 624), Qualitative Methods (EPY 718), Advanced Qualitative Methods (EPY 719, Public Policy in Higher Education (EDH 738).

### **Research**

#### ***Publications***

Gates, R.J. (2016). Policy implications for student affairs professionals at Hispanic-serving institutions. *Journal of Student Affairs*, 25, 99-103.

#### ***Referred Conferences Papers and Presentations***

Gates, R.J., Watson, D.L., & Nehls, K. (2017). *Having or Serving: Perceptions of HSIs*. Research paper presented at 2017 ASHE Conference in Houston, TX.

Gates, R. J., Louie, G., Watson, D.L, & Nehls, K. (2017). *A Comparative Case Study of Campus Climate at Two MSIs*. Research poster presented at the 2017 ACPA Convention, Columbus, OH.

Bennett, L., Bragg, K., Caridine, E. Gardner, C., Gates, R., Hough, T., Neff, W., Tian, L., Zenteno, A.P., & Nehls, K. (2016). *Case Study of Disconnected Youth Reconnecting through YouthBuild Las Vegas*. Research paper presented at the 28th annual Ethnographic and Qualitative Research Conference, Las Vegas, NV.



Nehls, K., Zenteno, A.P., Tian, L., Neff, W., Hough, T., Gates, R., Gardner, C., Caridine, E., Bragg, K., & Bennett, L. (2016). *Beyond the Textbook: Learning Case Study Method through a Comprehensive Class Research Project*. Symposium presented at the 28th annual Ethnographic and Qualitative Research Conference, Las Vegas. NV.

## **Service**

*University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

**Fall 2016- Spring 2017 Chief Diversity Officer Selection Committee.** Served as graduate student representative for the hiring of a Chief Diversity Officer.

**October 2016 Commission of Presidential Debates.** Served as a Debate Hall Usher when UNLV hosted the third presidential debate.

**Summer 2016 Vice President for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement Selection Committee.** Served as graduate student representative for the hiring of a Vice President.

**Fall 2015-Summer 2016 Graduate and Professional Student Association.** Served as representative for the Department of Educational Psychology & Higher Education

*Ethnographic and Qualitative Research Conference*

**February 2015 & 2014 Conference Volunteer.**

*Association for the Study of Higher Education*

**November 2017, 2016, 2015, 2013 Conference Volunteer.**

*University of Connecticut*

**Fall 2012 Leadership Program Coordinator Selection Committee.** Served as Chair of the selection committee.

**Fall 2012-Spring 2013 Berdon Family Fund, UConn Foundation.** Was nominated and appointed to committee which oversees funds specifically dedication to LGTQ programming.

**Fall 2010-Spring 2012 Women's Center.** Was nominated and appointed to serve as a member of the Fundraising Committee.

**Fall 2010-Spring 2013 Leadership Legacy.** Appointed to serve on the selection committee for Leadership Legacy, a premier leadership development opportunity for already established student leaders.

*SUNY Brockport*

**Fall 2008-Spring 2009 Coordinator for Leadership Academy.** Served as the liaison for Residential Life & Learning Communities with the Office of Leadership & Community Engagement to oversee over 90 resident assistants' completion of the Leadership Academy.

**Summer 2008-Spring 2009 Coordinator for Leadership Development Initiatives.** Served as chair of all leadership development committees for professionals and paraprofessionals within Residential Life & Learning Communities.

**Fall 2007-Spring 2008 Learning Communities Initiative.** Served as Chair of a campus wide committee to explore the development and expansion of living-learning communities.

**Fall 2006-Spring 2007 EDC 302.** Chaired the committee chaired with revamping the curriculum for EDC 302-Helping Relationships in College, which serves as a training mechanism for all resident assistants.

**Fall 2005 – Spring 2006. Student Conduct Board.** Served on the committee to develop and create policy for Brockport’s first Student Conduct Board.

### **Honors & Awards**

Fall 2013	Grant funded assistantship from national search.
Fall 2013	National recruitment scholarship.
Spring 2013	Finalist for Advisor of the Year
January 2012	Received Discretionary Salary Increase for outstanding performance
January 2009	Received Discretionary Salary Increase for outstanding performance
January 2008	Received Discretionary Salary Increase for outstanding performance
June 2003	Gold Pin Recipient from the Director of the National Association of College and University Residence Halls
May 2002	Frank Cloud Award from the Frank Cloud Chapter of the National Residence Hall Honorary
April 2002	Sammy Award Recipient
January 2002	Parents Association Scholarship Recipient

April 2001

Outstanding Junior Student Leader