



ASSOCIATION FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH 2009 DISSERTATION GRANT APPLICATION

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Yes

Title of Proposal

Exploring the Role of Hispanic Serving Institutions in Improving Latino Postsecondary Educational Attainment: Evidence from the Title V program

Statement of the research problem and national importance

It is well documented that Latinos are underserved in higher education (Flores, Horn & Crisp, 2006). Latinos are less likely to complete high school, enroll in a four-year college and attain a B.A. degree than their White peers (Swail, Cabrera & Lee, 2004). Compared to non-Hispanic Whites, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and African American students in higher education, Latinos have the lowest transfer rates from 2-year to 4-year colleges and the highest B.A. attrition rates, making them the least-educated major minority group. The odds of receiving any postsecondary education are even lower for Latinos living in poverty than for their peers who come from more privileged backgrounds (Santiago & Cunningham, 2005). Higher education has long been considered the primary tool for Latino upward mobility. As the Latino population grows, their access to higher education will continue to be a major challenge. Policymakers and educators have recognized that steps must be taken to increase access and retention of Latinos in higher education. Federal recognition of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), is a crucial component of these efforts.

My dissertation explores the current role and future potential of Hispanic Serving-Institutions (HSIs) in improving Latino college participation and graduation rates. I accomplish this by conducting an evaluation of the largest federal investment in HSIs, the Title V program. I examine whether receiving a Title V grant has any effect on 1) the enrollment rates, and 2) graduation rates of Latino undergraduates. As a group, HSIs educate more than half of all Latinos in higher education, and they also tend to serve large low-income populations (Santiago, 2006). Thus, an examination of this growing sector of postsecondary institutions remains timely as the college-bound Latino population continues to grow.

Background

The HSI designation was created in 1992 by Congress as a way of identifying public, two-year and four-year degree-granting postsecondary institutions with high concentrations of both low-income students and Latino students, for the purpose of federal funding allocation. However, these institutions existed long before the official designation was created. Unlike Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), which had a historical mission to serve specific student populations, HSIs first emerged due to shifts in demographics; the definition of what constitutes an HSI is not predetermined by legislation, as is the case for HBCUs and TCUs (Laden, 1999).

Institutions that meet the HSI definition outlined by the Office of Institutional Development and Undergraduate Education Service (IDUES) at the Department of Education are eligible to apply for federal funds from the Developing HSIs program- Title V. The goal of the program is to improve undergraduate educational services by encouraging institutional development in twelve allowable areas. The IDUES definition requires that to meet the criteria to be considered an HSI, institutions: 1) Must be not-for-profit, 2) Must offer at least two-year academic programs that lead to a degree, 3) Must be accredited by an accrediting agency or association recognized by the Secretary of Education, 4) Must have a high enrollment of

economically needy students, 5) Must have low-average education expenditures per student, 6) Must have at least 25% Hispanic undergraduate full-time equivalent (FTE) student enrollment, 7) Must provide assurances that no less than 50% of their Hispanic students are low-income individuals and first-generation college students, 8) Must provide assurances that an additional 25% of their Hispanic students are low-income individuals or first-generation college students (Aragon and Zamani, 2002). After an institution certifies its eligibility, it can apply for a competitive development grant. Those institutions that receive a grant are hereafter referred to as HSI-grantees, while those that apply but do not receive a grant are HSI non-grantees.

The major assumption underlying the Title V program's theory is that Latino postsecondary educational attainment can be increased by improving the institutions they attend. This suggests that it is not necessary to target Latino students, but their schools. There has been virtually no analysis of whether receipt of a grant is associated with improvements in Latino college participation at HSIs (Santiago, 2007). A major obstacle to such analysis is the lack of datasets that identify HSIs and whether these HSIs have received Title V funding. Currently I am compiling a comprehensive national database on HSIs that would allow for the first evaluative study of the Title V program. This process is detailed in a different section of the proposal.

Review the literature and establish a theoretical grounding for the research

Research about low-income Latino college students has largely focused on individual-level patterns of postsecondary attendance (Perna, 2006). It has been well established that Latino college students tend to be concentrated in public two-year postsecondary institutions, many of which are HSIs. Studies have found that cost, location, and program flexibility are critical factors affecting Latino college choice (Perna, 2000).

Sociologists tend to focus on the link between social background and academic preparation in facilitating or hindering access to college, and subsequent academic success, as measured by graduation rates (Deil-Amen- and Lopez-Turley, 2007). This research focuses on who goes to college, usually by examining how ascriptive characteristics help to predict college participation (Blau and Duncan, 1967; Xie and Goyette, 2003). Higher education researchers have examined how financial aid and high school academic preparation affect college participation (Golrick-Rab, Carter, and Wagner, 2007).

My project is guided by a multi-dimensional framework to estimate Latino educational outcomes that takes into account the educational attainment process, the structure of the state postsecondary system, and public finance strategies (St.John, 2003). The framework in Figure 1 in Appendix 1 is adapted from St. John et al.'s (2004) work on college access. It is necessary for the conceptual framework to include state-level factors that may affect the HSIs social context. Previous education research prioritized academic preparation over financial factors or ignored finances all together (Choy, 2005). Economics research estimated the effect of tuition/price on college enrollment, while not paying much attention to the academic context (Manski and Wise, 1983). While various models for college access have been proposed, St

John's (2004) 'balanced access model' takes the most holistic view of college participation by focusing on academic preparation, financial access, and the role of public policies in college preparation and participation.

My dissertation will extend the literature on Latino college students by providing a unique institutional perspective on college participation. By making HSIs the unit of analysis, the project is uniquely situated to determine whether the Title V program is associated with changes in the average Latino enrollment and graduation rates at HSIs. I expand the work of St John and colleagues (2004) by considering the role of a federal finance strategy on the educational attainment of Latino college students. This revised framework is presented in Figure 2, which considers how the Title V program may affect postsecondary attainment for low-income Latinos at HSIs (see *APPENDIX 1: Conceptual Framework from research on College Access*)

Data Preparation

To conduct this evaluation I am merging information from several publicly available sources. The U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) contains enrollment information by ethnicity, which makes it possible to identify whether an institution meets the minimum HSI criteria. Although IPEDS does not collect information on students' income, it is possible to obtain the percentage of students receiving Pell grants by institution. This serves as a proxy for income since Pell grants are need-based federal grants for low-income individuals. One limitation of this measure is that the Pell grant is maximum income eligibility and grant amounts are subject to federal approval. Therefore, it is necessary to use this proxy with caution. IPEDS also collects extensive information on institutional characteristics such as location, student enrollment, types of academic and vocational programs, faculty and staff characteristics, average cost of attendance, type of financial aid awarded, and degrees awarded. I use all pertinent IPEDS data from 1986 to 2007. This time period was selected to include at least five years of data before the implementation of the Title V program. It is also critical to gather data for at least five years after the intervention took place since the maximum length of a grant is five years.

The second source of information will be the IDUES office's list of Title V grantees. I am constructing a control group of similarly situated institutions that are not HSIs. This information will be gathered from the IPEDS's institutional characteristics surveys. It is possible to merge these data with IPEDS because both sources use the same unique institutional identifier assigned by the Department of Education. Once the HSI designation and Title V grantee status information are identified, the database will be arranged by institution and year, creating a new, unique identifier.

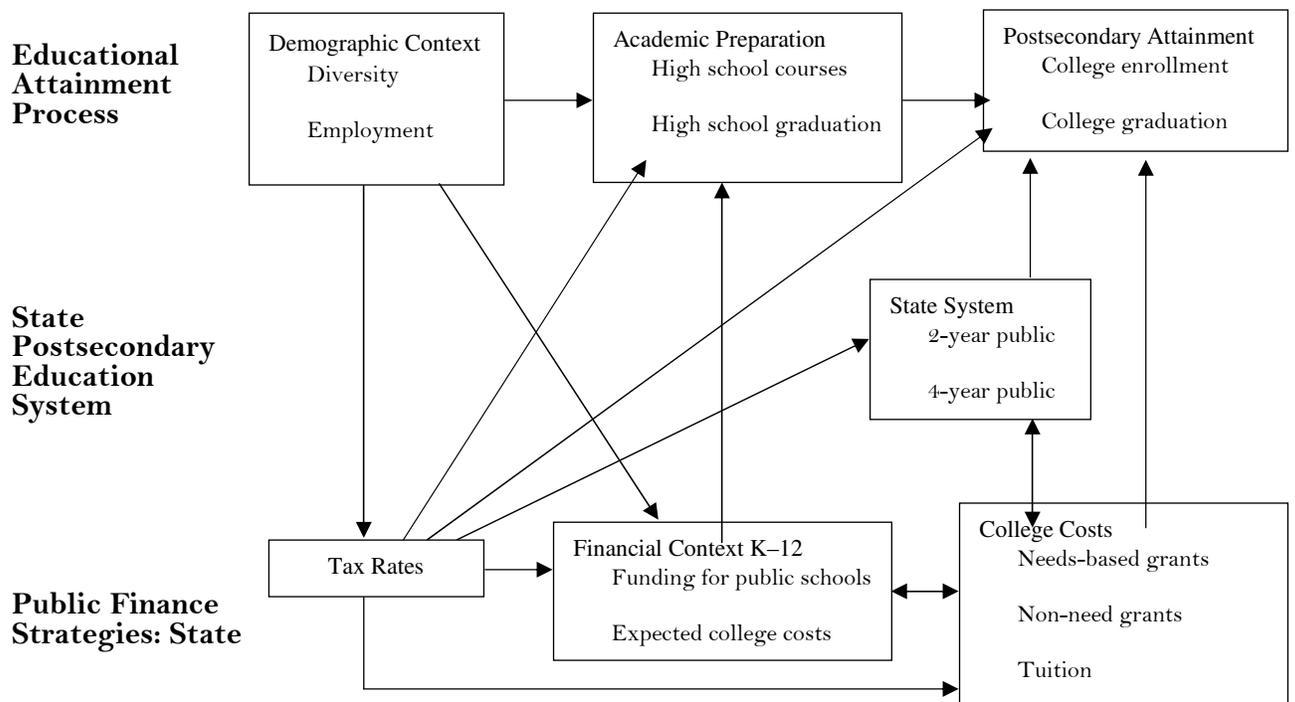
The third source of data to be merged into the HSIs database comes from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS). Because IPEDS includes institutional location, it is possible to match the institution to IPUMS county-level data to obtain demographic information about the county in which the institution is located. The IPUMS data contains county-level information

on both the median number of families and individuals with income below the poverty level. This income information complements the institutional variable that approximates the average percentage of low-income students enrolled within an HSI. By comparing these measures, it is possible to see if the institutional pattern mirrors the percentage of low-income residents within a county. Including measures of the HSIs' demographic context allows for more accurate comparisons across similarly situated institutions.

APPENDIX 1: Conceptual Framework from research on College Access

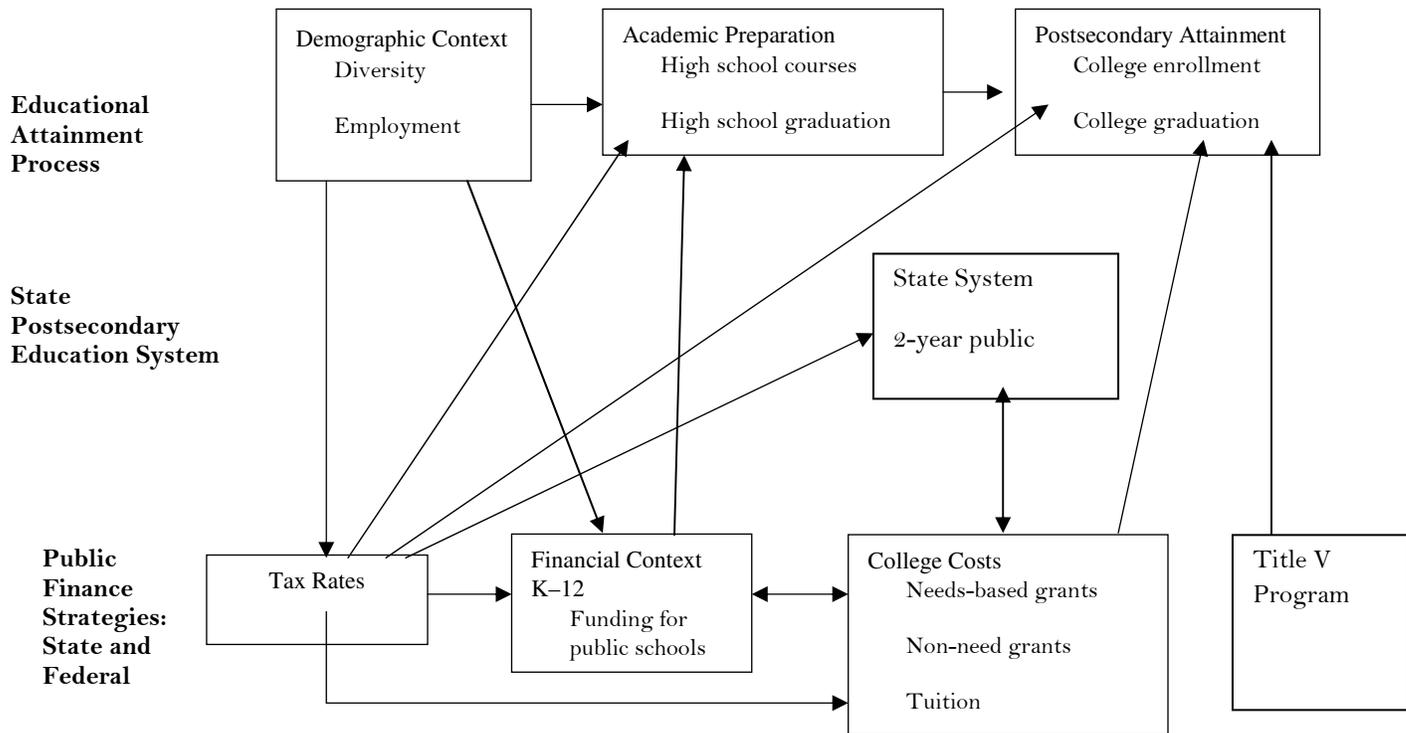
Figure 1 below shows the conceptual framework used to guide the statistical analyses for this project. The framework is adapted from St. John et al. (2004). The proposed study will expand this framework by assessing the effects of HSIs on the educational attainment of low-income Latino college students. In Figure 2, a revised framework considers how the Title V program for funding HSIs may affect postsecondary attainment for low-income Latinos at HSIs.

Figure 1. Framework for assessing the impact of public finance strategies on postsecondary attainment



Source: E. P. St. John, C. G. Chung, G. D. Musoba, A. B. Simmons, O. S. Wooden, and J. Mendez, *Expanding College Access: The Impact of State Finance Strategies*, Lumina Foundation for Education, Indianapolis, IN, 2004.

Figure 2 Revised Conceptual Framework to assess the impact of public finance strategies on postsecondary attainment



Describe the research method that will be used

The empirical inquiry is guided by two sets of research questions about HSIs. First, I explore whether there are differences in the two main outcomes of interest over the 1986 -2006 period. I ask: 1) Do grantee-HSIs differ from non-grantee HSIs in changes in their average enrollment rates of full-time degree seeking undergraduate Latino students?, and 2) Do grantee-HSIs differ from non-grantee HSIs in changes in their graduation rates for Latino students? After a descriptive examination of variance in these dependent variables I use a difference-in-difference design to estimate the effect of the Title V program on Latino enrollment and graduation rates. The second set of questions focuses on the effect of receiving a Title V grant:

1a) What is the average institutional percentage change in the enrollment rates of full-time degree seeking undergraduate Latino students at the end of the intervention for grantee-HSIs?

1b) What is the average institutional percentage change in the enrollment rates of full-time degree seeking undergraduate Latino students at the end of the intervention for non-grantee HSIs?

2a) What is the average institutional percentage change of Latino graduates after the intervention at grantee-HSIs?

3b) What is the average institutional percentage change of Latino graduates after the intervention at non-grantee-HSIs?

By comparing average performance for the grantee-HSIs (experimental group) to the non-grantee-HSIs (control group) I will learn whether there is an effect associated with the Title V program.

To measure whether the Title V program (the intervention) had any effect on the enrollment and graduation rates of Latino students, I carry out three main tasks: 1) I identify a treatment and control group, 2) I estimate a regression model for each outcome (enrollment and graduation rates), and 3) I measure the average difference in performance pre- and post-intervention for each of my outcomes.

The treatment group includes all HSIs that were Title V grantees in any given fiscal year between 1995 and 2002. The control group is a set of similarly situated institutions that are not HSIs. I balance the experimental and control groups on observed covariates. This design requires the longitudinal data structure of the HSI database to measure institutional enrollment and graduation rates before and after the Title V program intervention. While the database collects information on HSIs up to the current year, the last Title V grantee cycle I examine is 2002, allowing for the five-year grant period to pass before measuring the 2007 post-intervention.

I use a multivariate regression to model the treatment effects. I estimate the effect of the Title V on the percentages of Latino students who enroll at HSIs as:

The i and t subscripts denote the postsecondary institution and the year respectively. LatinoEnroll_{it} signifies the percentage of Latino students that enrolled at HSI i during the year t . The α is a constant term and X_{it} is an indicator variable with a value of 1= after the intervention or 0= before the intervention. Z_{it} is a vector of covariates that includes: sector (public vs. private), size, financial aid availability, percentage low-income students, student/faculty ratio, percent non-Latino minority students enrolled, selectivity, etc. The error term, ϵ_{it} , is assumed to be random unobserved term that contains all other determinants of LatinoEnroll_{it} otherwise omitted from the model. Similarly, the second outcome is modeled as:

$\text{LatinoGraduates}_{it}$ signifies the percentage of Latino students that graduate at HSI i during the year t . The model interpretation is the same as above, except for the outcome.

Other factors can impact Latino outcomes at HSIs. It is possible that changes in state and local appropriations to higher education, increases in number of college-age Latinos, and the economic conditions in a given state may all affect trends in higher education. Therefore, the models will also include controls for state and local appropriations per student per institution, the state percentage of college-age Latinos, and the state unemployment rate.

After obtaining estimates for α , β , and δ for both outcomes, I will then use a difference-in-difference technique to estimate the effect of the Title V program intervention on Latino enrollment and graduation rates. In this quasi-experimental design, the difference between the

pre- intervention and post-intervention percentages for the outcomes of interest represents the estimated effect of the intervention.

Since the year when an HSI received a Title V grant varies, I specify the beginning (pre) and the end of intervention (post) separately for each institution. I allow for a five-year lag period between the pre- and post- intervention measures, given that a five-year period is the standard duration of a grant. The post-intervention percentage will be measured after the five-year period. Thus, the estimated treatment effect is a difference in average performance.

Figure 1 below illustrates how the specification of the pre- and post- measures would be calculated for two schools that received a grant in different years:

SCHOOL A: Grantee in 1995	SCHOOL B: Grantee in 1997
t=1994 = pre-intervention	t=1996 = pre-intervention
t+1= 1995, first year of intervention	t+1= 1997, first year of intervention
t+6= 1999, end of intervention	t+6= 2001, end of intervention
t+7=2000, post- intervention measure	t+7=2002, post- intervention measure

The estimate for Latino enrollment at School A & B is:

$$\text{LatinoEnroll} = \text{or } (\% \text{ Latino Enroll in } 2000) - (\% \text{ Latino Enroll in } 1994)$$

$$\text{LatinoEnroll} = \text{or } (\% \text{ Latino Enroll in } 2002) - (\% \text{ Latino Enroll in } 1996)$$

The treatment effects for the graduation outcome are calculated in the same way. I examine differences between the treatment and control groups. If in calculating the difference between pre-and post- times, there is a positive change in enrollment and graduations rates, then we can say that the Title V program has a positive effect on Latino college participation. I expect that there will be an increase in both enrollment and graduation rates after the Title V program intervention.

My dissertation will provide the first empirical information on a relatively new federal intervention aimed at improving the postsecondary educational attainment rates of Latino students. These findings will contribute to an emerging literature about HSIs and how the federal government can successfully promote Latino college participation.

Will you use a NCES target dataset?

Yes

Will you use a NSF target dataset?

No

Please select the datasets that you intend to use:

NCES-IPEDS_Completions_(C),
NCES-IPEDS_12-Month_Enrollment_(E12),
NCES-IPEDS_Fall_Enrollment_(EF), NCES-IPEDS_Finance_(F),
NCES-IPEDS_Graduation_Rate_(GRS),
IPEDS_Institutional_Characteristics_(IC)

Explain why each dataset best serves this research.

Include a variable list for each dataset used.

The project will use three different sources of data: 1) data from the Title V program grantees, available from the Title V project office, 2) data from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS). The foundation of the HSI database that I am constructing comes from the IPEDS's institutional characteristic surveys since this is the most comprehensive source of institutional-level data available. Below is an abbreviated variable table with the IPEDS variables that will be used in the analysis. Since the variable label may change over time, I also include a description of the measure. The variable descriptions are in most cases taken directly from the IPEDS data directory.

Table 1. 2007 IPEDS Institutional Characteristics, Enrollments, & Completion Surveys

Variable	Variable Name	Description
CITY-10011	City	Location of Institution
ZIP-10021	Zip Code	Zip Code of Institution
OBEREG-10031	Geographic Region	New England , Mid East, Great Lakes, Plains, Southeast, Southwest, Rocky Mountains, Far West
OPEID-10071	Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) ID Number	Identification number used by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) to identify schools that have Program Participation Agreements (PPA) so that its students are eligible to participate in Federal Student Financial Assistance programs under Title IV regulations.
SECTOR-10086	Sector of Institution	Control categories are public, private not-for-profit, and private for-profit. Level categories are 4-year and higher (4 year), 2-but-less-than 4-year (2 year), and less than 2-year.
ICLEVEL-10091	Level of Institution	A classification of whether an institution's

		programs are 4-year or higher (4 year), 2-but-less-than 4-year (2 year), or less than 2-year.
HLOFFER-10101	Highest Level of Offering	Highest level of offering: Certificate or diploma of less than one academic year, Associate's degree, Bachelor's degree, Post-baccalaureate certificate, Master's degree, Post-master's certificate, Doctor's degree
DFRCGID-15230	Data Feedback Report comparison group category	This indicator is used to create an automatic comparison groups in the IPEDS Data Feedback Report/Executive Peer tool, when institutions did not provide their own comparison group. This variable was derived using institutional control, Carnegie classification, highest level of offering, geographic region, program concentration and enrollment size.
OPENADMP-10516	Open admission policy	Does your institution have an open admission policy for all or most entering first-time undergraduate-level students? (Admission policy whereby the school will accept any student who applies.)
ADMSSN-11021	Admissions total	Please provide the number of first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students who applied, were admitted, and enrolled (full or part time) at your institution for the most recent fall period available.
ENROLLMENT		
ENRLFT-11026-	Enrolled full time total	Total number of first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate enrolled full time.
ENRLPT-11031	Enrolled part time total	Total number of first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate enrolled part time.
TUITION2-11636	In-state average tuition for full-time undergraduates	Charges to full-time undergraduate students for the full academic year 2007-08 In-state average tuition
TUITION3-11656	-Out-of-state average tuition for	Charges to full-time undergraduate

	full-time undergraduates	students for the full academic year 2007-08 Out-of-state average tuition
FYRACE03-20676-	Black non-Hispanic men	12-month unduplicated headcount by race/ethnicity and gender Black, non-Hispanic men enrolled for credit during the 12-month reporting period Black, non-Hispanic - A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa (except those of Hispanic origin).
FYRACE04-20681-	Black non-Hispanic women	12-month unduplicated headcount by race/ethnicity and gender Black, non-Hispanic women enrolled for credit during the 12-month reporting period Black, non-Hispanic - A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa (except those of Hispanic origin).
FYRACE05-20686-	American Indian or Alaska Native men	12-month unduplicated headcount by race/ethnicity and gender American Indian or Alaskan Native men enrolled for credit during the 12-month reportin period AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE- A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.
FYRACE06-20691	American Indian or Alaska Native women	12-month unduplicated headcount by race/ethnicity and gender American Indian or Alaskan Native women enrolled for credit during the 12-month report in period AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE
FYRACE07-20696-	-Asian or Pacific Islander men	12-month unduplicated headcount by race/ethnicity and gender Asian or Pacific Islander men enrolled for credit during the 12-month reporting period. ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER
FYRACE08-20701	Asian or Pacific Islander women	12-month unduplicated headcount by race/ethnicity and gender Asian or Pacific Islander women enrolled for credit during the 12-month reporting period. ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER.

FYRACE09-20706	Hispanic men	12-month unduplicated headcount by race/ethnicity and gender Hispanic men enrolled for credit during the 12-month reporting period HISPANIC - A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race
FYRACE10-20711	Hispanic women	12-month unduplicated headcount by race/ethnicity and gender Hispanic women enrolled for credit during the 12-month reporting period HISPANIC.
FYRACE11-20716	White non-Hispanic men	12-month unduplicated headcount by race/ethnicity and gender White, non-Hispanic men enrolled for credit during the 12-month period. White, non-Hispanic - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East (except those of Hispanic origin).
FYRACE12-20721	White non-Hispanic women	12-month unduplicated headcount by race/ethnicity and gender White, non-Hispanic women enrolled for credit during the 12-month period.
FYRACE13-20726	Race/ethnicity unknown men	12-month unduplicated headcount by race/ethnicity and gender Race/ethnicity unknown men enrolled for credit during the 12-month period. Race/ethnicity unknown - This category is used ONLY if the student did not select a racial/ethnic designation
FYRACE14-20731	Race/ethnicity unknown women	12-month unduplicated headcount by race/ethnicity and gender Race/ethnicity unknown women enrolled for credit during the 12-month period.
COMPLETERS		
CRACE18-31100	Black non-Hispanic total	Awards/degrees conferred between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007 to Black non-Hispanic men and women. Black non-Hispanic - A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa (except those of Hispanic origin).

CRACE20-31110	Asian or Pacific Islander total	Awards/degrees conferred between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007 to Asian or Pacific Islander men and women. Asian or Pacific Islander
CRACE21-31115	Hispanic total	Awards/degrees conferred between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007 to Hispanic men and women.
CRACE22-31120	White non-Hispanic total	Awards/degrees conferred between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007 to White non-Hispanic men and women.
CRACE23-31125-	Race/ethnicity unknown total	Awards/degrees conferred between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007 to race/ethnicity unknown men and women.

Will you address the NPEC focus topic?

No

Provide a timeline of key project activities:

At the time this application was completed, the Title V project had already been granted an exemption from the IRB board at the University of Michigan. The following timeline provides a summary of the upcoming key project activities that will lead to the completion of the dissertation.

Month	Activity
January / February 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -File FIOA form to title V office- to collect more details about the emergence of the HSIs program, travel to D.C. -Database construction with IPEDS surveys, merging and cleaning data -Continue to work on introductory chapter
March/May 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Complete literature review of Title V program information collected -Continue to work with IPEDS data -Begin to clean IPUMS data -Turn in draft of introductory chapter to

	committee -Schedule Defense meeting
June/September 2009	-Merge all data sources -Turn in literature review and background chapter draft to committee -Conference submission for ASHE, AERA
October/December 2009	-Continue to work on data analysis -Turn in data analysis chapter to committee
January/April 2010	-Continue revisions of all chapters, schedule dissertation defense -Defense and post-defense meetings -Conference submission for the ASA meetings 2010
May/June 2010	-Present at AIR Forum in Chicago -Complete any corrections and file dissertation

List deliverables such as research reports, books, and presentations that will be developed from this research initiative:

The AIR dissertation grant would allow me to focus entirely on my dissertation project. If selected for the grant, I plan to apply to submit presentation proposals for several relevant academic conferences including: the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE)'s public policy forum, the American Education Research Association, the American Sociological Association. The findings from this project will also be presented during any job market interviews I secure during my last year in the doctoral program when I apply for both postdoctoral appointments and assistant professor positions.

Describe how you will disseminate the results of this research:

In addition to the presentation in the 2010 AIR forum, I will submit conference proposal for the academics conference listed in another part of this application.

Additionally, in the process of researching the origins of Title V, I have been in touch with current and former Department of Education policy analysts. These contacts have put me in touch with Excellencia in Education, a public policy advocacy organization that disseminates information about effective practices for Latinos in higher education. They have expressed interest in a presentation of my research findings. I intend to follow up with this invitation and share my findings.

After completion of the dissertation I plan to submit article manuscripts to several academic journals. These include *Sociology of Education*, the *Journal of Public Analysis and Managements*, *Research in Higher Education*, the *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, and the *Journal of Higher Education*.

Provide a reference list of sources cited:

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Swail, S. W., Cabrera, A. F. and Lee, C. (2004). Latino youth and the pathway to college. Pew Hispanic Center. Washington D.C..

Xie, Y. and Goyette, K. (2003). Social mobility and the educational choices of Asian Americans. *Social Science Research*, 32: 3.

Statement of Institutional Review Board approval or exemption

An application for this project was submitted to the University of Michigan's Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board, which granted an exemption. This was determined because the project will not include identifiable private information about individual members, employees or staff of the institutions that are the subject of the research. All IRB documentation is available from the Principal Investigator (PI) upon request.

Statement of Use of Restricted Datasets

The proposed project does not require the use of any of the restricted datasets. All the information for the IPEDS, IPUMS, and the Title V grant program is available for public use. I will be traveling to the Title V office in February to collect more in-depth information about the Title V program process and oversight. I have been in touch with program officers in the past year, which encouraged me to file the FOIA form to obtain this information.

Biographical Sketch

I am currently a doctoral candidate in the joint program for Public Policy and Sociology at the University of Michigan where I earned a Master's Degree in Sociology in 2006. At this point I have completed all requirements except for the dissertation. I have formed a committee with whom I have worked closely in crafting this research project.

Prior to entering graduate school I attended Pomona College where I graduated with a double major in Sociology and Russian. After completing my bachelor's degree, I joined the Institute for Social Science Research at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) as a post-baccalaureate research fellow under the supervision of Prof. Walter R. Allen. At UCLA I

collaborated in the CHOICES research project which examined the transition to college for African American and Latino students attending California high schools.

I have pursued my passion to improve Latino educational opportunity and preparedness at every step of my educational journey by focusing on policy-relevant research inquiries. At Michigan I have worked with faculty and students in the fields of higher education and public policy. I have gained research skills and expanded my content knowledge by working on research projects about the transition to college for underrepresented minorities, the graduate student socialization process and, more recently on a state-level longitudinal database project.

All of these research experiences as well as rigorous theoretical and methodological training in my program have prepared me to pursue this dissertation project. I have also successfully connected with current and former Title V officers to gain a more nuanced understanding the way the program works.

During my first year at Michigan, I was part of a research team under the supervision of Dr. Deborah F. Carter of the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education. This project examined the transition from high school to college for African American and Latinos students participating in university-sponsored summer enrichment programs. My role on the team was to create and implement the survey instrument and to conduct statistical analyses.

During my second year at Michigan, I worked with Prof. Alford Young Jr. of the Sociology department on a pilot study about academic socialization. As the only graduate student collaborating on an interdisciplinary research team, I was responsible for developing thematic codes and applying these to the qualitative data. Over the time I worked with this project I was also responsible for updating the literature review to prepare for a manuscript submission. I also created thematic reports that emphasized the differences between the experiences of students of color and white students in doctoral programs in the humanities and social sciences.

As part of a program requirement, I completed an empirical paper in 2007 which examined the role of the school-level and family-level characteristics on the probability of B.A. degree completion for Latino undergraduates. This was my first experience using a longitudinal, nationally representative dataset, the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS).

During 2008 I began a research assistantship with Dr. Edward P. St John, working on the Promoting Equity in Higher Education Projects, funded by the Ford Foundation and housed at Michigan's National Center for Institutional Diversity. I have multiple research responsibilities in this role. I collaborated on the creation and maintenance of a state-level database. We merged IPEDS into one place to be able to conduct state-by-state analyses of the relationship between K-12 public policies and the college continuation rates of underrepresented minority students. Currently, I am co-author of a manuscript that examines how race-ban policies and a state's history of postsecondary desegregation affect Latino college enrollment at public institutions across states. I am also part of a team of researchers working to collaborate with the Detroit Public Schools and other entities in Michigan that are interested in building a state

student-unit longitudinal database for more effective policy evaluation. In this area, I am analyzing and adding to the information about the information already being used to assess state policies.

In June of 2008 I was selected as an AIR/NCES/NSF National Summer Data Policy Institute fellow. As a fellow I gained valuable exposure to the array of NSF and NCES datasets available. It was then that I began to piece together the current HSI project while looking in-depth at IPEDS data surveys. I had the opportunity to talk about this research idea with Mr. Randy Swing, who was extremely helpful at this preliminary stage. By far, this summer experience was the most influential in my selecting my current dissertation project.

Budget	
Salary/Stipend: 13,192.00	Tuition & fees: 5408.00
Travel: 700	Other travel related expenses: 700
Other research expenses: 0	Total Request: 20,000

Statement of Prior, Current, and Pending Funding

Currently I am employed by the University of Michigan as a Graduate Student Instructor (GSI) until April 2009 when my appointment ends. I have applied for another fellowship (Ford Foundation Diversity Fellowship). I will not know the outcome of that competition until late Spring 2009.

If I am not awarded a dissertation fellowship I will reapply to be a GSI for the 2009-2010 academic year.