

Report on the Status of Latino/as at Princeton University

Presented by the Latino Coalition of Princeton in collaboration with Acción Latina, Ballet Folklórico de Princeton, CAUSA, Chicano Caucus and the Latino Graduate Student Association

Table of Contents

I. Executive Summary.....	3
II. The Latino Experience.....	4
a. Representation.....	5
b. Academics	7
c. Campus Life.....	8
III. Recommendations.....	11
IV. Conclusion.....	15
V. Acknowledgements.....	16

Executive Summary

Many terminologies apply and have been defined to different levels to represent people of Latin American and Spanish cultural origin and descent. This is only a reflection of the diversity and complexity of what we in this report refer to as Latino, we subscribe to none of the official definitions. We, the Latinos/as at Princeton, come from all different backgrounds, socioeconomic classes, life-histories, and places. We are native U.S. born, first generation immigrants, and international students, uni-racial, bi-racial, and multi-racial students from both public and private schools, from both poor and wealthy backgrounds. We hail from the East Coast the West Coast, North America, South America and all the places in between. We want the University to recognize this by being cognizant and aware of this complexity of the Latino student body as the consider any issues raised by and about the Latinos/as at Princeton.

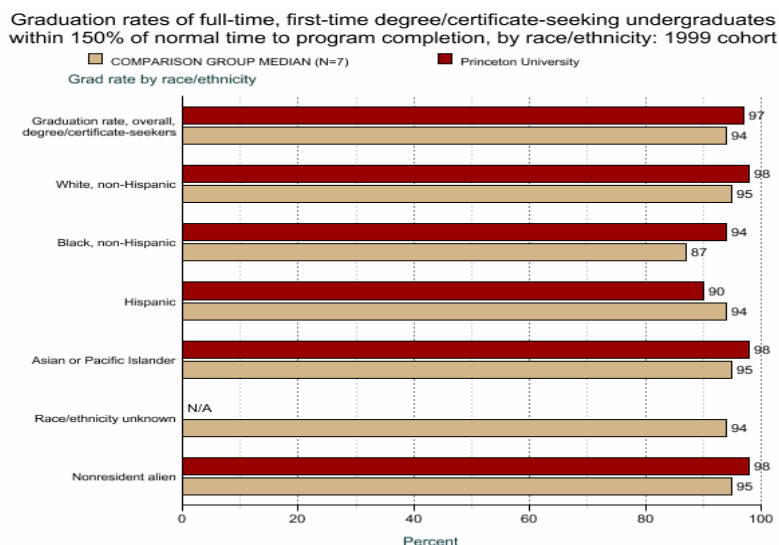
- The Report on the Status of Latino/as at Princeton highlights publicly available statistical data to offer a sense of how Latino/a students at this university fare in terms of representation, academics and campus life.
 - We believe that representation among our fellow students and within faculty, staff and administration is necessary to assert the importance of the Latino/a community within the university's institutional landscape. Through our analysis we found that Latino/as are under-represented at all levels.
 - We found that academic offerings that address the Latino/a community within the U.S. are lacking, especially in comparison to our peer institutions. The lack of exposure to this field of study harms the entire campus community by preventing a multi-dimensional understanding of how the Latino/a community contributes to American culture in a formal way.
 - In our examination of campus life, we found many disturbing disparities between Latino/a students and other ethnic/racial groups. These disparities must be addressed in order to combat social exclusion and to fully integrate Latino/as into the larger campus community.
- Finally, the Report on the Status of Latinos offers concrete recommendations to address the problems which we have identified in the report. Our goal is an institutional commitment to positive change.

This report was compiled by a coalition of Latino/a students, organizations and allies. It represents an extensive collaboration of ideas and goals which are aimed at improving the quality of campus life for students of all backgrounds. Awareness and appreciation of Latino/a culture is an assent to each individual within this campus community. We feel that this report is a necessary step in the promotion of diversity at Princeton University.

The Latino Reality at Princeton

Campus demographics reveal under-representation of Latino/as. Although those of Hispanic origin constitute 13.7% of the U.S. population, they make up only 7.2% of the Princeton University undergraduate student body. This gap will only continue to widen as the yearly increase in the number of Hispanics at Princeton is significantly smaller than the growth rate of the U.S. Hispanic population.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Hispanics graduate at a rate 7% lower than the general university population rate of 97%¹. It is particularly unsettling that the only groups with rates lower than the collective rate are Blacks and Latinos. Also, in comparison with our fellow Ivy League schools, Princeton is the only institution that has a marked difference between the overall graduation rate and the rate for Hispanic students.



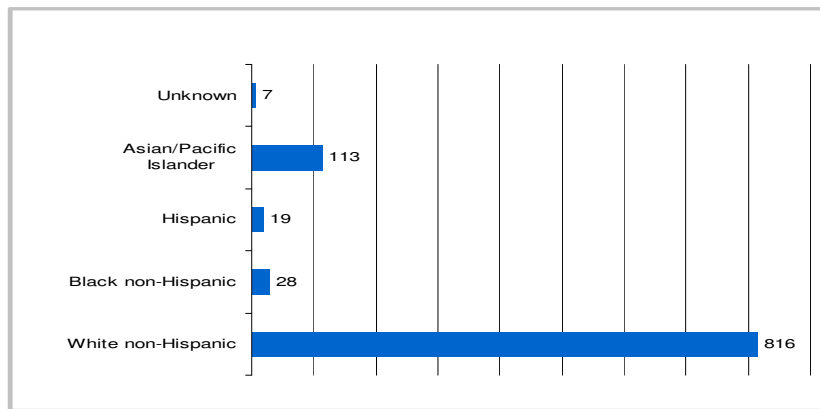
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS): Spring 2006.

Representation

Broad institutional representation is critical to the success of the Latino/a community on campus. Representation—both among their peers as well as in staff, faculty and administration—is crucial for the visibility of the Latino/a community. The quality of representation matters as well. It is not enough just to fill a quota: Latino/as must be present and active in every level of the university, from the highest to the lowest.

¹ These numbers are for graduation within six years. Numbers for graduation within four years for each ethnicity are unavailable. Were these numbers available, we believe they would reflect a greater discrepancy between average and Latino graduation rate based on anecdotal evidence that high numbers of Latino students choose to take time off.

Latino/as in influential university positions create a crucial link between the students and the administration. The figure below shows the total full time faculty by race/ethnicity for 2006 according to the National Center for Education Statistics:



As the data indicates, Latinos/as accounted for an embarrassingly low 1.9% of the over 900 full-time faculty in 2006². This dearth of representation is yet another factor that contributes to the lack of support offered to Latino/a students.

One measure of student representation among peers is participation in Princeton’s Undergraduate Student Government³. This is a particularly good way of examining representation because USG is a large, well-recognized body comprised of students who are either elected or appointed to office by their fellow students. The table below shows Latino/a representation in this organization:

Undergraduate Student Government	Total Number of Representatives	Number of Latinos
Executive Committee	17	1
U Council	9	1
Senate	6	1
Class Officers	20	0
Total	42	3

With only 3 students who identify as Latino out of 42 total USG officers⁴, Latino/as are, not surprisingly, under represented. This fact, coupled with low representation in staff, faculty and administration make visibility a challenge for the Latino/a community on campus.

² The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, National Center for Education Statistics. <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/pas/reportOnVars.asp>

³ Participation in USG is clearly not the only way in which Latino/a students can be visible on campus. However, it is one of the few ways that is easily documented. The USG, unlike other forums for campus leadership, is an established institution that keeps public record of participation. It is only one example of the lack of representation which we believe is a pervasive problem.

⁴ Undergraduate Student Government 2006-2007, Princeton University.

Due to the low representation at all levels, the current Latino/a faculty and administration do not adequately support the student population. Furthermore, a small Latino/a undergraduate population hinders the creation of a strong Latino/a network and contributes to the feelings of isolation and distinct marginalization from Princeton's institutional landscape which the USG Survey on Race and Campus Life identified among Latino/as. Likewise, inadequate representation hinders a cohesive Latino/a network at the faculty, staff, administrative and alumni level which is necessary to support Latino/a students and maintain a sustained dialogue regarding the needs of Latino/a students.

Student relationships forged with a strong network of Latinos/as in influential university positions would create a link between the students and the administration, thus giving a voice to Latino/a concerns at the crucial decision-making level. These figures are essential as role models, counselors and sources of inspiration to Latino/a students. In order to facilitate undergraduate success, students need individuals with whom they identify to be part of the 'institution.'

Academics

Currently, the only established course that has adequately incorporated a curriculum to address Latino/a issues in the U.S. is POL 333 Latino/a Politics in the United States taught by Professor David Abalos⁵. This valuable course has given generations of Princeton Latino/a students the opportunity to explore their place within American society through identity politics. However, the course also has a 20 year history of struggle as students and professors sought to maintain it as part of the curriculum. POL 333 serves as a disheartening reminder that it is the only class of its kind available to address the academic needs of Latino/a students at Princeton in terms of Latino Studies.

Princeton is lagging behind every single other Ivy League institution in the establishment of a Latino Studies Program. Not only do our peer institutions have extensive programs and departments for the study of Latino/as within the U.S., they also have high ranking faculty positions in the field and offer the option of majoring or concentrating within the program. Below is a list of offerings at our peer institutions for comparison:

⁵ Although we acknowledge that there are a few other classes that may address Latino/as in the U.S. such as SOC 338 (not offered this year) and occasional seminars such as AMS 329, they are infrequent and insufficient to constitute an institutional commitment.

Institution	Program	Major Possible?
Harvard University	Ethnic Studies as well as a Latino Studies program within the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies	Yes
Yale University	Program of Ethnicity, Race and Migration	Yes
Columbia University	Comparitive Ethnic Studies, Latino/a Studies in Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race	Yes
University of Pennsylvania	Hispanic Studies as well as Latin American and Latino Studies	Yes
Cornell University	Latino Studies Program, The Stanford Center for the Study of Poverty and Inequality	No
Dartmouth College	Latino Studies in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, Latin American, Latino and Carribbean Studies Program	Yes
Brown University	Ethnic Studies, Hispanic Language & Linguistics, Hispanic Literature & Culture	Yes

A program in Latino Studies would be an asset to everyone within the university community. All students acquiring a liberal arts education should explore issues of race through their academic work. A program in Latino Studies is not just about affirmation for Latino/a students on campus. A lack of Latino Studies is a missed opportunity for Princeton students and faculty to be engaged in a subject matter that is truly part of the American experience.

In recent decades, the Program in Latin American Studies at Princeton University has undergone an impressive expansion with the addition of several world renowned professors in the field, greater funding for undergraduate research and a growing collection of Latin American items available at Firestone Library. While we acknowledge the importance of promoting a program committed to the exploration of historical and social events in Latin America, we urge the University to make a greater effort in providing a Latino Studies Program dedicated to the study of our experiences as a people here in the United States. Latino Studies cannot be equated with Latin American Studies.

Campus Life

Given the data on representation above, it is not surprising that the Latino/a social experience at Princeton is markedly different from that of other racial/ethnic groups.

The most compelling data on social experience on campus comes from the USG's Survey on Race and Campus Life Report which was conducted in the 2003-2004 school year and

released in the fall of 2004⁶. Relevant statistics from this report are compiled into comparison tables below for easier analysis:

Figure 1.1

	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic
Importance of Mentoring Relationships	The largest percentage (17%) chose five, indicating that mentorship relations were quite important to them	The largest percentage (19%) chose six, which indicated an even higher value placed on mentorship	N/A	The largest percentage (20%) chose one, indicating that mentorship relationships were not important at all

Figure 1.2

	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic
Reported being called a racial/ethnic slur	5%	21%	N/A	23%
Reported observing other students being called a racial/ethnic slur	29%	50%	N/A	53%

Figure 1.3

	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic
Reported having visited the Fields Center	48%	90%	76%	72%

Figure 1.4

Eating Club Membership	
White	Least likely (9%) to cite “unwelcoming environment as reason for not joining a club
Black	14% cited “unwelcoming environment” as reason for not joining
Asian	13% cited “unwelcoming environment” as reason for not joining
Hispanic	14% cited “unwelcoming environment” as reason for not joining

Figure 1.5

	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic
Rate Racial Diversity (Mean by Race on a scale from 1 to 5)	3.88	3.44	3.51	3.24
Characterize Race Relations (Mean by Race on a scale from 1 to 5)	4.3	3.6	3.97	3.78
Rate Racial Integration (Mean by Race on a Scale from 1 to 5)	3.48	2.91	3.29	3.14
Rate Your Social Life (Mean by Race on a Scale from 1 to 5)	4.82	3.71	4.23	4.16
Rate Faculty Support (Mean by Race on a Scale from 1 to 7)	5.07	4.79	5.14	4.96

⁶ Survey on Race and Campus Life Report by the Undergraduate Student Government Survey on Race Committee: Matt Shapiro, Chris Willis, Alex Lenahan, Felicia Morris, and Chanakya Sethi. Survey conducted 2003-2004 school year and released in the fall of 2004.

Those who identified as Hispanic overwhelmingly indicated that mentoring relationships are not important at all (Figure 1.1). This is in sharp contrast to the high level of importance placed on these relationships by both White and Black students. The dismissal of mentoring relationships is likely due to the lack of access that Latino students have to faculty and administration of Latino background. The dismissal relates also to Latino/a students' perceptions of faculty support. Both Latino/a students and Blacks ranked faculty support significantly lower than their Asian and White peers (Figure 1.5).

Social exclusion is apparent in the answers to this survey as well since Latino/a students are more likely than any other group both to have been called a racial/ethnic slur or to witness other students being called a racial/ethnic slur (Figure 1.2). They are also less likely to have visited the Carl A. Fields Center than other minority groups which suggests a need for more targeted programs for Latino/a students hosted by the Center (Figure 1.3).

In other areas, Latino/a students have responses similar to their fellow minority groups—which collectively continue to be disparate from the statistics for White students. Blacks, Asians and Hispanics are all far more likely to cite an “unwelcoming environment” as the reason for not joining an eating club than their White peers (Figure 1.4).

Overall, there is a striking sense of disparity among students' experiences of Princeton depending on each student's race/ethnicity. Both Blacks and Latino/as give low ratings to racial diversity, race relations, racial integration, and social life as compared with their peers (Figure 1.5). At the time of the publication of the Survey on Race and Campus Life, much attention was given to the survey's implications for Black students on campus. We commend the recognition of disparity that occurred at that time. However, we now insist upon our inclusion in the dialogue—attention must be paid to the disparities present for Latino/a students.

Recommendations

While Latino/a students at Princeton University constitute a greater percentage of the student body each year, Princeton continually fails to provide support and resources to its Latino/a students, especially as compared to other Ivy League and academic institutions. For this reason, the Latino Coalition of Princeton issues the following recommendations. These recommendations respond to the concerns highlighted in this report and represent the urgent action we feel Princeton University should take in strengthening its *institutional* commitment to its Latino/a students.

- 1. Provide a physical space on the Princeton University campus to serve as the heart of the Latino/a student support system and to promote greater cultural understanding and awareness of Latino/a issues.** Ideally, this space would be integrated into planning for the new Carl A. Fields Center. The space will be used for anything that promotes the Latino/a culture including but not limited to public speakers, conferences, panel discussions, study groups, and celebrations. The staff of the Carl A. Fields Center will work to ensure effective communication and a strong Latino/a community presence on campus. The incorporation of the Latino/a community as a strong component in the new Carl A. Fields Center could increase the rate of Latino/a alumni giving by offering a donation option that will directly help Latino/a students. It will also provide Latino/a students with critical resource and support opportunities to address feelings of isolation and exclusion from campus life.
- 2. Establish a full-time administrator within the staff of the new Carl A. Fields Center to deal specifically with issues of Latino/a student recruitment and retention.** This individual should work closely with the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate students, the Vice President of Campus Life, the Carl A. Field's Center, student organizations and other entities to ensure an enriching experience for all students of color at the University. They should focus specifically on Latino students by offering advice, supporting Latino/a efforts, and acting as a liaison to upper administration. They will provide prospective and/or current Princeton Latino/a students with a much needed direct contact for communicating interests to the Princeton administration.

- 3. Implement a targeted recruitment plan to actively recruit and hire more high-level Latino administrators, managers, and staff.** Placing competent Latino/a candidates in high level positions at the university will enable the consideration of Latino/a perspective in decisions relating to university policies and procedures. Likewise, these individuals will serve as role models for Latino/a students and help cultivate a diverse Latino/a community at the university.

- 4. Make a strong commitment to maintain diverse staff within the Admissions Office.** We recognize that the Admissions Office is one area where Latino/as are well represented within the university and we commend the efforts of those who have made this representation a priority. We would like to reiterate, however, the focus on attracting and retaining Latino/a students at Princeton. We would like to see admissions and recruitment programs already in place make a larger effort to engage the Latino/a students currently at the university. Additionally, the Admissions Office should work with Latino student organization leaders to identify prospective Latino/a students and to create a network of Latino/a students and staff. At the present moment, no such formal mechanism exists for current students to extend support to incoming Latino/a students.

- 5. Allot financial support for the immediate implementation of a Latino Mentoring Program to serve as a matchmaking organization between all members of the Latino/a community at Princeton⁷.** The Latino Mentoring Program is modeled after the LAMP Program under the Black Student Union. It will serve to benefit all Princeton Latino/a students by pairing sophomore students with incoming freshmen for aid in adjustment to student life, advice on courses, etc. and by pairing upperclassmen with Latino/a faculty and staff to aid with independent work, theses, and life after Princeton including career and graduate school opportunities. The program must receive an adequate amount of funding from the university in order to successfully serve the Latino/a community at Princeton.

⁷ An option should exist to link current Latino/a students with prospective Latino/a students during the April Hosting weekend on a voluntary basis as part of a revised April Hosting application and approach to attracting Latino/a students to the University. Such a simple yet important change can dramatically improve the relations between prospective and current Latino/a students at Princeton, increasing relations between classes and improving the community of Latinos at Princeton.

- 6. Aggressively seek out and hire Latino/a faculty in every academic department of Princeton University and work to ensure that diverse faculty will have every opportunity to research and publish—necessary steps to receive tenure status at Princeton.** In order to sustain high numbers of Latino/a faculty at the university, it will be necessary to implement a development program that aids young Latino faculty to successfully arrive at tenure status at the university. In order to begin to diversify the faculty of every academic department at the university, it will be necessary to create or open several senior positions in order to successfully attract Latino/a scholars.
- 7. Establish a Diversity Scholars Exchange Program with other universities in order to increase the number of talented Latino scholars to Princeton.** Bringing different Latino scholars to Princeton University will not only help to bolster Latino student representation at the graduate level but provide the Princeton academic community with a greater diversity of ideas and contributions. Universities which could participate in such a partnership include: University of Texas, University of California – Los Angeles, Stanford University, New York University, University of Puerto Rico, as well as many others.
- 8. Begin immediate discussions between University administration, faculty, and students on a plan for the incorporation of a Latino Studies Program at Princeton University.** The current students of the Latino Coalition of Princeton believe that the most important step that can be taken on the part of the university to increase its visible support and commitment to the Latino/a community at Princeton and the country is through establishing an interdisciplinary Program in Latino Studies. The program could be established incrementally through the Program in American Studies, similar to the establishment of the Center for African American Studies. Such a program would attract prominent Latino Studies scholars, increase the number of Latino/a faculty at Princeton, and serve to enrich the University community as a whole.
- 9. Maintain an active and direct communication between Latino students and the President of the University and other senior administrators.** A Latino Student Advisory

Board, elected by peers, will meet with the President of the University along with other senior administrators at the beginning and ending of each semester to discuss plans that pertain to the adoption of the recommendations which we have outlined, engage in discourse about the current status of the Latino/a community, and gauge how the administration, faculty, and staff are responding to student needs at the University.

Conclusion

It is inconceivable that the university would place the burden of fighting for equal representation on the students. It is the institution's responsibility to address these stark inequities and the campus community should not have had to wait for already overburdened students to place pressure on the university to tackle this problem. While we are aware that the university is already taking steps toward dealing with the problems identified in this report, we still feel that much more needs to be done to confirm and bolster a genuine commitment and openness toward addressing the needs of Princeton's Latino/as. We look forward to seeing a positive commitment from all of those who are exposed to this report to the task of fully integrating the Latino/a community into the institutional landscape of Princeton University.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to Victoria Celia Laws '08 for providing a bulk of the research required to write this report and for taking such an active leadership role in its ultimate publication. Thank you to Alma Moedano '08, David Feliciano '08, Oscar Castro'09, Laura Morales'09, Jessica Gamboa '10 and Isabel Wojtowicz '10 for taking time out of their busy summers to contribute to the writing of this report. A special thank you to Cristina Mora-Torres, Makeba Clay, Anna Almore '08, Irene Route '08 and Sarah Zaslów '08 who offered both support and constructive criticism throughout the editing process. And finally, we wish to acknowledge all members of the Latino Coalition of Princeton, Acción Latina, Ballet Folklórico de Princeton, CAUSA, Chicano Caucus, the Latino Graduate Student Association and a myriad of other supportive individuals for making this report possible through collaboration and cooperation.