INTRODUCTION

This OASIS Diversity & Equity Portfolio (DEP) describes OASIS’ contribution to important outcomes for Historically Underrepresented Students (HURS) and subsequently, to institutional equity at UCSD. These outcomes include the retention, achievement, learning, development, and graduation of HURS.

OASIS is the campus’ learning center at UC San Diego. It was established during the 1970’s to provide academic support to HURS and underserved students. Thus, prioritizing services for HURS is deeply embedded in the mission of OASIS. The current OASIS mission statement addresses this priority:

The mission of OASIS (the Office of Academic Support & Instructional Services) is to facilitate the intellectual and personal development of UC San Diego students, particularly underrepresented and underserved students. Through a challenging and supportive environment that emphasizes collaboration, validation, equity, and social justice, OASIS contributes significantly to students’ retention, achievement, learning, and empowerment.

Likewise, the OASIS vision statement confirms the importance of serving HURS:

The Vision of OASIS is to play a prominent role in collaboration to ensure a greater institutional focus on teaching and learning and to contribute to a more equitable, inclusive and supportive campus climate at UC San Diego. This focus will ensure that OASIS provides a transformative learning experience that prepares students to provide leadership in a diverse society and be agents of change and social justice.

OASIS Core Values:

- Diversity
- Social Justice
- Equity
- Student Development (intellectual and personal)
- Community (sense of belonging)

OASIS’ early history reflects the national pattern in which “pipeline” programs were assigned the responsibility to serve HURS without adequate resources or authority (Education Advisory Board Council, 2009; Ibarra, 2001). Other important campus entities that should share the responsibility to achieve educational outcomes among HURS, e.g., academic departments, were largely absolved of accountability for such outcomes. Our more recent history features
extensive collaborations with such entities to ensure that HURS are served effectively.

UCSD defines HURS as those ethnic groups that, due to historic and present racism in society, have not enjoyed equitable access to institutions such as UCSD. Thus, their undergraduate enrollment at UCSD is significantly lower than their representation in the population of California. In addition, their outcomes at UCSD (e.g., graduation) are lower than for the general student body.

OASIS’ focus on HURS reflects both dimensions of institutional diversity described by the scholar of higher education Daryl Smith as urgent priorities for universities like UCSD. The first is institutional viability—equity in educational conditions and outcomes. This means that no group of students—regardless of ethnicity, family income, or the education of their parents—should suffer from disadvantages at UCSD or suffer lower outcomes such as graduation, GPA, or culturally sustaining learning opportunities (Paris, 2012). The long-term health of our institution depends on ensuring that such student groups enjoy the full benefits of a UCSD education. To perpetuate disparities in important outcomes as a result of unequal conditions is to jeopardize our accreditation and our support from state legislators (who are increasingly diverse themselves). Unfortunately, at UCSD the five-year graduation rate of African Americans (59%) and Chicanos (70%) lags well behind that of whites (81%). Likewise, the GPA at graduation of African Americans (3.00) and Chicanos (3.03) is significantly lower than that of whites (3.23). OASIS focuses on serving historically underrepresented students in order to reduce these differences in important outcomes.

Smith’s second dimension of diversity is institutional vitality—the ability of all students to experience maximum, positive learning through the contribution of a diverse student body that is engaged in both UCSD’s academic and social life. The ability of an institution to maximize such learning depends on more than just the numbers of student groups—it must also provide the means through which diverse students can interact. However, adequate numbers of student groups are a necessary part of the conditions that maximize student learning. Unfortunately, while African Americas make up approximately five percent of the California population, they are only two percent of UCSD’s student body. Chicanos and Latinos make up almost forty-percent of California’s population (now the largest ethnic group in the state) but are only fifteen percent of UCSD undergraduates. The low numbers of these groups contribute to their isolation and marginalization, and minimize the likelihood that other ethnic groups will enjoy positive interactions with African Americans and Chicanos/Latinos that contribute to learning for all (Milem et al., 2005). OASIS works to provide its services to underrepresented and underserved students in a setting where they interact with other students—maximizing learning.

In addition to the three ethnic groups identified as HURS at UCSD, OASIS also focuses on attracting “underserved” students to utilize our services. These underserved students include other ethnic groups that often experience racism and feelings of marginalization. They are often from working class backgrounds and subsequently lack the human, social, and cultural capital necessary for success at UCSD. These groups include Pilipinos and Southeast Asians (e.g., Vietnamese
As part of the fastest growing “ethnic group” in California—Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders—they also contribute to a learning environment at UCSD that prepares all students for engagement with a more diverse society.

ACADEMIC LITERATURE ON HURS SUCCESS AND OASIS

OASIS’ programs and services are informed by scholarly literature describing effective practices in contributing to HURS’ success. Such literature includes historic theory and research on college students’ success in general as well as more recent studies of the specific needs of HURS in higher education. While an exhaustive overview of such literature is beyond the scope of this paper, examples of the former body of literature include:

Tinto (2012, 2000, 1993)—Tinto’s classic theory of higher education retention emphasizes the importance of students’ “integration” into the academic and social dimensions of higher education institutions. He refuted the deterministic notion that pre-college achievement heavily influences retention by instead emphasizing “institutional experiences.” Tinto also underscored the ability of “sub-communities,” e.g., ethnic student organizations, to contribute to HURS’ retention if such sub-communities were closely and visibly connected to an institution’s priorities. In all aspects of Tinto’s theory, students’ perceptions are critical. Tinto’s later work featured empirical studies of the positive impact of “learning communities” in connecting students’ academic and social experiences in higher education. Tinto’s work helps to inform OASIS’ services that facilitate students’ early transition, utilize holistic approaches to impact students’ academic and social integration, and strengthen students’ supportive sub-communities.

In 2012, Tinto published an updated analysis of principles and strategies that contribute to postsecondary retention, “Completing College: Rethinking Institutional Action.” His current analysis of retention claims that research converges on four conditions that facilitate retention and graduation: expectations, support, assessment and feedback, and involvement. For each principle or best practice he identifies within these four conditions, Tinto describes a model program implemented at a higher education institution somewhere in the United States. To identify a model program that exemplifies effective summer bridge programs, Tinto utilizes the OASIS Summer Bridge Program at UCSD. His description of the program highlights several of its features:

All Summer Bridge students, including those who will be commuters in the fall, live together in a residence hall during the program. Their common experiences in both academic courses and residential life enables them to form important friendships, which ease their transition . . . An important feature of the program is its connection to other programs that follow in the fall. Summer Bridge students transition into the OASIS Learning Communities and Academic Transition Program, which provide each student with an individualized package of tutoring, mentoring, counseling, and networking.
Astin (1993)—Astin documented the key principle of “involvement” in the success of students in higher education. Such student engagement reflects the institutional experiences in Tinto’s theory that provide students learning experiences that connect them to their college or university. OASIS’ services seek to operationalize Astin’s principle of involvement by directly engaging students in their academic and personal development and introducing students to a broad range of campus programs and resources that facilitate their engagement with UCSD and the surrounding community.

Pascarella and Terenzini (2005, 1991)—Pascarella and Terenzini’s two volumes summarize and synthesize over forty years of research and theory on college student development and success. Their work identifies both critical student outcomes as well as institutional conditions and strategies that contribute to those outcomes. Pascarella and Terenzini’s research summaries are especially important to OASIS in their identification of learning outcomes, e.g., course content and cognitive/intellectual development, to which OASIS seeks to contribute. Likewise, their articulation of key principles and strategies that facilitate student success are incorporated into OASIS’ services.

Kuh (2010, 2008)—Kuh’s contributions include studies of postsecondary institutions that have documented success in serving a range of students including those from non-privileged backgrounds. His research also identifies “high impact practices” that make significant contributions to college students’ success. Kuh’s work informs a number of OASIS’ services, including our transition programs and learning communities that connect HURS with effective resources and clarify institutional expectations for student success at UCSD.

While such “classic scholars” identify a number of important variables in college student success, their work has been greatly refined by other scholars, including a number of scholars of color, that provide additional nuances to our understanding of HURS’ experiences and success (see Hurtado, Carter, Delgado Bernal, Solorzano, Rendon, Nora, Darder, Smith, Harper, Strayhorn, Villalpando, Smith, etc.).

MORE RECENT RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Recent sources of scholarly literature on successful college students suggest strategies and services that are implemented by OASIS. A number of studies by higher education scholars utilize quantitative and/or qualitative data to identify the needs of students prioritized by OASIS as well as directions to effective educational interventions.

Camille Charles and Douglas Massey

Camille Charles and Douglas Massey are part of a research team that published two books examining the educational trajectory of students that attend selective institutions of higher education. The first, The Source of the River (2003), studied the pre-college experiences of African American, Asian American, Latino, and White students, respectively, at such institutions. The second, Taming the River (2009) looked at the educational experiences of the same students throughout their first two years of college. In this second
work, Charles et al. focused on two outcomes that are addressed by OASIS: achievement (“getting good grades”) and persistence. Among their conclusions:

At the halfway point on the river to college graduation, our results suggest that success in college arises from a complex blend of academic and social processes. Earning good grades is substantially an academic process . . . Although the process of earning good grades may be fundamentally academic, the foregoing academic precursors of grade achievement may be enhanced or undermined by social circumstances on campus . . . In addition to these universal social contingencies, however, minority students face unique social challenges to earning a high GPA (p. 224-225).

They suggest that involvement in academic effort, on-campus housing, joining student organizations, and studying with peers contribute to positive outcomes. Their research further suggests:

Student retention should be seen as more a social than an academic issue, one that reflects two interconnected and mutually reinforcing components: satisfaction and integration. Satisfaction stems from engagement . . . Race and ethnicity inevitably come into play when considering student satisfaction. Minority students who perceive a large social distance between themselves and whites are more prone to dissatisfaction, and although a negative racial climate on campus has a strong effect on the satisfaction on all students, it is especially relevant for groups that have historically been excluded from elite settings. It is thus critically important that institutions maintain an atmosphere of tolerance, acceptance, respect, and appreciation for diversity when it comes to race and ethnicity. Doing so is not about being “politically correct” but about enhancing students’ connection to the institution and the learning it dispenses, which is something of great benefit to whites as well as Asians, Latinos, and African Americans (p. 227-228).

The authors suggest that higher education institutions provide more opportunities for student-faculty interaction, appropriate academic advising, and play close attention to campus racial climate issues that tend to undermine grade achievement for historically underrepresented students. They also emphasize that selective universities are uniquely positioned to train the next generation of leaders so they are equipped with the knowledge and sensibilities to eliminate racial segregation and discrimination. OASIS services directly address a number of the research directions of these studies—academic effort through tutoring, on-campus living-learning collaborations with UCSD’s six colleges, referral to student organizations, etc.

Patricia Gándara and Frances Contreras

In their book, *The Latino Education Crisis: The Consequences of Failed Social Policies* (2009), Gándara and Contreras suggest that research supports the efficacy of mentoring for Latino and other Historically Underrepresented Students (HURS):
Mentoring . . . is the single most common characteristic of all of the successful intervention programs we have assessed, and it seems crucial to each program’s success . . . when defined as a caring, monitoring relationship that is not episodic, but ongoing, mentoring of students is clearly key (p. 292-293).

Gándara and Contreras also attest to the research evidence on the success of summer bridge or transition programs in higher education, particularly for HURS:

We have noted that summer bridge programs . . . when carefully implemented also appear to confer considerable benefits—social, psychological, and academic. They help students build networks of support and give them the confidence that they can perform at the college level (p. 325).

Mentoring is one of the most essential strategies found in OASIS services. It occurs in very formal, direct forms (e.g., students and professional staff serving as mentors to students) as well as in more informal, indirect ways (e.g., tutors that also provide mentoring to students). These strategies are an especially critical element of our OASIS Transition Programs—the TRIO Summer Experience and Summer Bridge.

**Daryl Smith**

Daryl Smith is a nationally recognized scholar of higher education whose work focuses on issues of diversity and equity (2009). In her analysis of “research on institutional qualities that foster student success” (p. 204), Smith identifies several elements that characterize institutions that contribute to positive outcomes among diverse students:

- A mission and philosophy focused on student learning and success closely connected to the institutional culture (p. 206).
- A campus environment focused on learning (p. 206).
- An orientation toward cooperative learning as a central pedagogical strategy (p. 207).
- Clearly marked pathways that inform students how to negotiate the institution for learning and success (p. 207).
- The use of data to make decisions toward serving and teaching students (p. 208).
- A high level of faculty-student engagement in educationally purposeful activities inside and outside classrooms (p. 208).
- Shared responsibility for educational quality and student success that creates “robust and strong webs” of support (p. 209).

OASIS’ services incorporate these principles in our mentoring, tutoring, and the courses we teach. We emphasize learning, e.g., course content and academic skills, as well as achieving high grades. We emphasize collaboration that reflects the social construction of
learning. OASIS services also facilitate a high degree of student engagement with faculty and staff that personalizes students' experiences and ensures an effective “web” of support. We also record, maintain, and analyze data that enables us to refine our services.

**Daniel Solorzano, Laura Rendon, and Sylvia Hurtado**

In 2011, the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA held a Retention Summit to present recent research and theory on higher education retention. The directions they identified emerge largely from the multi-institutional data sets maintained by HERI. In 2012, the American Association of Hispanic Education (AAHE) hosted a Latino Student Success Institute. The institute featured several prominent scholars of higher education that provided findings from research and theory on Latino student success (Latinos are now the largest ethnic group in California and they comprise over fifty percent of K-12 public school enrollment in California). Members of the OASIS professional staff attended these sessions and obtained summaries of the research and theoretical directions, which are described below.

Solórzano (2012) presented research on the academic success of Chicanos and other underrepresented students through the lens of Critical Race Theory (Solórzano et al., 2005). He described cultural capital as the accumulation of knowledge that enables students to navigate institutions of higher education, exploiting their resources and employing successful strategies. While some research identifies the incongruity or mismatch between the cultural capital of underrepresented students and the cultural capital valued by higher education institutions (Berger, 2000; Charles et al., 2009), Solórzano emphasizes that underrepresented students actually bring very useful, positive cultural capital that has the potential to facilitate their success in higher education. Solórzano describes this knowledge as “community cultural wealth, an array of knowledge, skills, abilities, and networks possessed and utilized by communities of color to survive and resist racism and other forms of oppression” (2012). OASIS recognizes such students' community cultural wealth and supports them in utilizing it to develop effective strategies for their academic and sociocultural involvement.

Rendón (2012) develops a theory of “validation” based on U.S. Department of Education funded research on the educational experiences of underrepresented students in higher education. She identifies a number of differences between “traditional” and underrepresented students that effect their transition to the university:

- Family college-going (cultural and social capital)
- Finances
- Expectations
- Congruity between the world of the student and the world of college
- Differences in ways high schools prepare students to attend college
- Overall representation in higher education

These differences often result in a more difficult, complex transition process for underrepresented students as they navigate the university's institutional culture. Rendón
suggests that validation can be employed as an effective institutional strategy to support underrepresented students. She describes validation as “an enabling, confirming, and supportive process initiated by in-and-out-of-class agents that fosters academic and personal development” (2012). Rendón identifies two dimensions of such validation: an academic dimension that “validates students’ innate capacity to learn and build students’ academic confidence,” and an interpersonal dimension that “fosters students’ sociocultural adjustment and personal development” (2012). She also provides a number of concrete strategies through which validation can be provided to students. Her summary comments regarding validation reflect a number of the strategies employed by OASIS, particularly with new UCSD students:

Validation, when it is administered early in the student’s transition to college, and consistently throughout the college experience, may be the key to helping students get involved and believing they can learn and achieve their goals (2012).

OASIS services are designed and implemented purposefully to provide validation to HURS both inside and outside the classroom. All OASIS services endeavor to make HURS feel that they belong at UCSD and are capable of making a positive contribution to the academic and sociocultural life of the campus.

Sylvia Hurtado, Director of UCLA’s Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) presented the results of multi-institutional research on college students that yield directions toward a greater understanding of student persistence. Building on the work of other scholars, Hurtado developed a model of persistence and college success based on empirical evidence gathered by HERI. The model considers a number of variables including the socio-historical context, institutional context, climate for diversity, and both curricular and co-curricular processes. Student success or outcome variables include retention and achievement, competencies for a multicultural world, and habits of mind/skills for lifelong learning, all of which contribute to the mission of public institutions such as UCSD: the fulfillment of social equity, democratic, and economic outcomes (Hurtado, 2012).

A key component of Hurtado’s model is that student identity is situated in its center. She identifies a number of actions available to higher education institutions in order to support the success of underrepresented students:

- Know our students’ cultures, histories, needs (financial, academic, familial responsibilities)
- Revise our practices to accommodate students’ academic, cultural, psychosocial, spiritual development
- Take students from where they begin to the next level (talent development, accelerate developmental education, opportunities)
- Acknowledge how our historically white institutions were not build to advance underrepresented students in the same way Historically Black Colleges and Universities were missioned
- Realize that low-income and first generation students rely more on peers and institutional agents to navigate college
• Realize that climate issues and stereotyping and finances still play a role with high-achieving and middle income underrepresented students

In addition, Hurtado identifies a number of strategies found in the research to be successful with most college students, including underrepresented students. These include student interactions with faculty, older students mentoring younger students, students discussing course content outside of class with their peers, and students developing a sense of belonging at their institution. These are all strategies deployed by OASIS in our work with students.

Terrell Strayhorn

Strayhorn’s work (2012, 2011) focuses on the construct “sense of belonging” developed by Hurtado and Carter (1997; cited in Strayhorn, 2012). According to Strayhorn, “sense of belonging refers to students’ perceived social support on campus, a feeling or sensation of connectedness, the experience of mattering or feeling cared about, accepted, respected, valued by, and important to the group or others on campus” (2012, p. 3). Strayhorn’s review of research on sense of belonging finds it to be a positive influence on student retention and achievement in higher education, and that it is associated with a number of learning outcomes (Strayhorn, 2012). He concludes that college students seldom excel without a sense of belonging and that higher education faculty and staff must create conditions that foster a sense of belonging. Situated within the retention theory and research of Tinto (1993) and others, Strayhorn asserts that sense of belonging “is a critical aspect in retaining all students and particularly students of color” (2012, p. 9). Students who struggle to establish a sense of belonging are often subject to feelings of marginalization, isolation, and alienation at their institution.

In addition, Stayhorn describes some of the institutional strategies that contribute to students’ sense of belonging. His quantitative and qualitative studies reveal how student involvement, often facilitated by institutional mechanisms, can increase students’ sense of belonging. Strayhorn identified four ways in which involvement can contribute to sense of belonging:

(1) connecting students with others who share their interests, values, and commitments; (2) familiarizing students with the campus environment and ecology; (3) affirming students’ identity, interests, and values; and (4) generating feelings among students that they matter and others depend on them (2012, p. 115).

Many of the institutional strategies suggested by Strayhorn parallel the principles articulated in the research on validation of students (Rendon, 2012). He suggests that tutoring other students, participating in academic support programs, contact with faculty, participation in student organizations, and similar forms of involvement facilitate a sense of belonging among students. OASIS provides or encourages all of these activities with our students. Strayhorn also emphasizes the important role of summer bridge programs in contributing to students’ sense of belonging and overall college readiness: “...the weight of empirical evidence suggests that summer bridge programs can be effective interventions
Shaun Harper has conducted a number of studies on Black students in higher education (Harper, 2012, 2010, 2009). His most recent scholarly investigation is a qualitative study of successful Black males (Harper, 2012). Harper interviewed 219 Black men on forty-two college and university campuses throughout the U.S. to identify the variables that contributed to their academic success. Among his findings was the importance of the students’ early transition to higher education:

Participants believed they were successful in college because they got off to a good start. Some entered their institutions through summer bridge programs that brought them to campus 6-8 weeks before the start of their freshman year ... Bridge programs made large institutions feel smaller and easier to navigate (p. 11).

Harper also noted that all of the Black students he interviewed were “extensively engaged student leaders on their campuses” (p. 12). According to Harper, his study confirmed previous findings that document a positive link between active engagement outside the classroom and both achievement and persistence. Harper identified student organizations, relationships with professors outside the classroom, and academic collaboration with peers as important sources of student engagement. OASIS emphasizes engagement with all of these variables and more in our work with students.

Summary

Because learning is constructed largely through a social process (Bain, 2004; Souto-Manning, 2010), OASIS places a strong emphasis on collaboration among both professional and student staff. Such collaboration contributes to a more effective process of providing services and serves to model collaborative learning for OASIS students. In addition, collaboration is a more culturally sustaining pedagogy that yields more positive learning outcomes for HURS (Ibarra, 2001; Paris, 2012; Wlodkowski and Ginsberg, 2010).

OASIS seeks to facilitate “deep learning” (Smith et al., 2004), a transformative process in which students experience a “positive, substantive, and sustained change in the way they act, feel, and think” (Bain, 2004). OASIS also applies a holistic model of academic support that contributes to “both the intellectual and personal development of students” (Bain, 2004, p. 85). Thus, OASIS services include rigorous, course-specific tutoring in math, science, and writing as well as counseling that address “external factors” (Tinto, 1993) and mentoring that helps students set goals, accumulate cultural and social capital (Berger, 2000; Stanton-Salazar, 2001), and utilize institutional resources. With synergy and collaboration, these multiple approaches enable OASIS students to focus on their learning...
and development. Such approaches are especially important for UCSD’s HURS that often struggle to find sources of validation both in and outside of the classroom (Rendon, 2012).

Throughout its more than 35 year history, the mission of OASIS has always included an emphasis on contributing to institutional diversity at UCSD and to prepare students to enact roles that contribute to social justice. Such an emphasis reflects UCSD’s responsibility to provide equitable, supportive conditions for all students at a public institution (“institutional viability,” Smith, 2009). It also reflects the considerable research evidence (Chang et al., 2004; Milem et al., 2005; Milem and Hakuta, 2000; Smith, 2009) that documents the positive contribution of institutional diversity to the educational environment and learning of all students.

OASIS PROGRAMS & SERVICES

OASIS has four broad programs in which students may participate somewhat separately as well as initiatives featuring a strong degree of collaboration between these programs to serve students more effectively. In addition, the four discrete programs are intertwined in OASIS Learning Communities for students who participate in OASIS Transition Programs. All OASIS programs work to contribute to the outcomes described above. A brief description of each OASIS program is provided below.

The OASIS Transition Programs (OTP)

OASIS Summer Bridge Program

The OASIS Summer Bridge Program (SB) is designed to contribute to the academic success and the satisfaction of first-year UCSD students. It achieves this objective by providing a strong, holistic support system throughout students’ freshman year. Students invited to apply to SB are primarily from Quintiles 4-5—the bottom two-fifths—of high schools in California (high schools that produce the least amount of UC eligible students). Other criteria for selection include first-generation college status, low-income status, GPA, SAT scores, and Entry Level Writing Requirement scores. Other students are welcome to apply. The quintile 4-5 students are very diverse. Our focus on them for recruitment results in over half to two-thirds of SB students being HURS.

SB begins with a four-week, residential program that provides a sort of “early socialization” (Tinto, 1993) experience in the academic and sociocultural dimensions of university life. Summer Bridge engages students in two credit-bearing courses. One, Contemporary Issues I: The University in Society, addresses policy issues that link higher education and society with an emphasis on equity and diversity. The course asks students to analyze the causes of “minority underachievement” (Massey et al., 2003) as well as alternative directions toward the improved academic performance of HURS (Hu-DeHart, 2001; Maramba and Velasquez, 2010; Mariscal, 2005; Chang et al., 2004). We emphasize UCSD’s mission to develop graduates that will be engaged in civic society and committed to social justice outcomes (Milem et al., 2005). The course utilizes meaningful content shaped through a compelling question that enables students to develop their skills in conceptual reading, critical thinking, verbal and written expression, theoretical differentiation, and collaboration (Bain, 2004; Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005).
The second Summer Bridge course, Education Studies 20, provides an introduction to several areas of math and science (e.g., nutrition, oceanography, statistics, and physics) as well as strategies for collaboration to enhance learning in these subjects. The EDS 20 course enables students to link theoretical concepts with real world applications in STEM fields (Bain, 2004). Such connections are important for the success of HURS in UCSD’s math and science “gateway” courses.

In addition to its credit-bearing courses, Summer Bridge provides a very structured residential experience in terms of both content and process. The residential staff facilitates frequent discussion of “non-academic” issues that can impact students’ first year experience (e.g., identity development, relations with family, work and finances, involvement in student organizations, substance abuse, sexual harassment, etc.). These discussions are conducted on both a one-to-one basis and in groups. In their study of students in selective universities, Charles et al. (2009) found that a significant percentage of such Black and Chicano/Latino students came from communities that feature a high degree of segregation, violence and social disorder. The counseling component of Summer Bridge, with direct support from Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff, enables us to address such factors that often disrupt the academic focus of HURS students.

The staff also works to facilitate the formation of strong peer networks among the Summer Bridge students since research has documented the powerful effects of peer-to-peer learning (Astin, 1993; Hurtado, 2012; Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005). The residential staff receives strong and active support from a number of campus offices, including Counseling & Psychological Services, Student Financial Services, Campus Recreation, and the six UCSD colleges. These entities, external to OASIS, also collaborate to conduct a series of sessions for all Summer Bridge students called College Success Strategies. These activities form a basis for one of the main strategies of Summer Bridge: to acquaint new students with helpful, supportive resources and encourage their engagement with such resources.

At the conclusion of Summer Bridge, the program continues its structured support throughout the participating students’ first year at UCSD. Students sign a “contract” to utilize a number of OASIS services that are bundled to form OASIS Learning Communities (OLC’s). The elements of the OLC’s include:

- Individual conferences with peer counselors referred to as Academic Transition Counselors (ATC’s). The students work with the same ATC who supervised them in the residential halls during Summer Bridge.
- Individual conferences with professional staff to provide support for students’ academic and sociocultural issues.
- Tutoring in students’ math and science courses. The program’s preference is to engage the students in weekly workshops facilitated by undergraduate tutors.
- Tutoring in students’ courses that feature writing assignments. A strong focus is placed on the students enrolled in “preparatory” courses leading to the fulfillment of the university’s basic writing requirement. The tutoring is provided through both workshops and individual conferences facilitated by undergraduate tutors and/or professional staff.
Weekly seminars that employ a “college success” model (Laufgraben et al., 2004) to address academic and sociocultural dimensions of the students’ transition to UCSD. The seminars are facilitated by a combination of OASIS professional staff, OASIS undergraduate mentors, and staff from UCSD’s six colleges.

SB employs a system of more intense follow-up for its students who are placed on academic probation or subject to dismissal status following the fall and/or winter quarters.

OASIS Student Support Services Program

The OASIS Student Support Services Program (SSSP) is part of the national TRIO network of federally funded, educational equity programs that also include the Upward Bound Program for pre-college students and the Ronald McNair Program that provides undergraduate research experience for students. Directed by federal Department of Education guidelines, the OASIS SSSP serves students who are low-income and/or first-generation college students (as well as students with disabilities). The intersection of such variables with ethnicity ensure the diversity of SSSP students including a strong representation of HURS. The program provides a holistic set of services that include individual counseling, mentoring, and tutoring. The services are provided by both professional and student staff. Like Summer Bridge, most of the student mentors and tutors are former participants of SSSP.

The SSSP serves at least two hundred students annually. Approximately forty of the students (two thirds of whom enter UCSD as transfer students and one third as freshmen) begin their SSSP experience through the TRIO Summer Experience, a one-week residential program before their first quarter at UCSD. The TRIO Summer Experience provides a comprehensive experience that contributes to students’ cultural and social capital and their subsequent ability to negotiate UCSD’s institutional demands. Such forms of institutional capital have proven especially important to the success of HURS (Berger, 2000; Rendon, 2012; Stanton-Salazar, 2001). Learning about UCSD’s academic and sociocultural resources and the development of a supportive network among TRIO Summer Experience students (and SSSP staff) are key elements of the program. Once students have been accepted into SSSP, the program provides them support through their graduation from UCSD. One other facet of this support is special financial grants to SSSP students provided in collaboration with UCSD’s Student Financial Services office.

The OASIS Tutorial Programs

OASIS provides two tutorial programs for UCSD undergraduates. The programs are designed to contribute to students’ course achievement, learning, and retention.

OASIS Language and Writing Program

The OASIS Language and Writing Program (LWP) provides a wide range of services, in the areas of composition, text analysis, and writing practice, to UCSD undergraduate students for whom English is not their First Language (ENFL). It also provides writing practice and grammar sessions for undergraduate students enrolled in Spanish language
classes. A significant number of Chicano/Latino, Pilipino, and Vietnamese students at UCSD are non-native English speakers. They make up a high percentage of students utilizing the LWP.

The LWP’s services are delivered through workshops and individual tutoring sessions. They cover a wide range of disciplines in lower and upper division courses. Individual assistance is available during the entire writing process, from interpreting a prompt to the final draft. Well-trained, knowledgeable tutors who have already taken the class or specialize in a given topic or area, work with students in various aspects of the preparation of academic papers.

LWP also provides writing workshops for students enrolled in SDCC 1 or SDCC 4 classes (so-called “preparatory” courses generally taught by local community college instructors; these courses provide no academic support or instructor’s office hours). This two-hour, weekly activity conducted by experienced LWP facilitators focuses on the organization of ideas and the structure of argumentative writing. The workshops are complemented by individual practice of writing and grammar sessions that focus on the student’s specific needs. Over many years, OASIS has noted the negative impact of SDCC enrollment on the retention and achievement of HURS. For example, two of three Summer Bridge 2010 students (from a total of 140 students) that did not return for their second year at UCSD were negatively impacted by their experience in an SDCC course.

LWP also offers workshops for DOC (Dimensions of Culture, the Thurgood Marshall College Writing sequence), where students discuss readings, analyze texts, and plan their writing assignments guided by facilitators who have taken the class and attend DOC’s lectures. Individual assistance, special discussion, planning, and editing sessions are also available for transfer students. LWP student and career staff continually examine the effectiveness of the program and, when necessary, design new material or approaches to support students’ academic work.

**OASIS Math & Science Tutorial Program**

The OASIS Math & Science Tutorial Program (MSTP) provides course-specific group workshops in chemistry, math, and physics. The program is open to all UCSD undergraduates. A very diverse group of students participates in MSTP, with HURS represented at a much higher degree than their representation in the UCSD student body. Thus, when white and Asian American students participate in MSTP workshops, they are very likely to experience close, frequent academic interactions across ethnic groups. This interaction provides an important diversity initiative according to Milem et al. (2005), who describe diversity as such a process rather than merely ethnic composition.

The MSTP workshops are offered twice weekly throughout the quarter and feature the same facilitator working with the same group of students who are enrolled in the same course. Thus, it features key elements of learning communities that have been documented as effective educational practices, especially with historically underrepresented students (Kuh et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2004; Tinto, 2000). Based on the model developed by Uri Treischman at UC Berkeley and subsequently replicated on a national level (Bain, 2004), the MSTP workshops provide challenging material from course concepts that students engage in a collaborative learning strategy. As such, the workshops increase students’ comprehension of course content, conceptual understanding, and collaboration skills.
The workshops are focused primarily on math and science courses that feature enrollment by lower division students and represent a significant portion of new students’ academic transition to UCSD. UCSD undergraduates who have taken the course they facilitate and trained through the Education Studies 116 course that includes a math-science practicum, facilitate the MSTP workshops.

**OASIS Learning Communities: Integrating Academic and Sociocultural Support**

Within the last decade, learning communities have emerged as a proven, “high impact” institutional strategy to maximize learning among students in higher education (Kuh et al., 2008; Laufgraben et al., 2004; Smith et al., 2004; Tinto, 2000; Tinto and Goodsell, 1994). As an instructional strategy, learning communities employ structures and pedagogy based on recent research findings on student learning. Among such findings are the nature of learning as a social process and the efficacy of interdisciplinary instruction to facilitate “deep learning” (Smith et al., 2004).

One of the most impressive research findings on learning communities is that their effectiveness seems most pronounced with students who often underachieve in higher education:

The effects of participating in high-impact practices are positive for all types of students. But historically underserved students tend to benefit more from engaging in educational purposeful activities (e.g., learning communities) than majority students (Kuh et al., 2008, p. 17).

Tinto’s research on learning communities (2012, 2000) finds that their use of student cohorts and collaborative pedagogy contributes to increased student learning and a greater sense of responsibility among students to contribute to their own learning environment. He finds that learning communities contribute to a significantly higher level of engagement among students in their courses with subsequent higher levels of student persistence.

The curricular structures of learning communities vary among a range of models. While there are significant differences in the degree of interdisciplinary course clusters and team teaching among learning communities, perhaps their core element is the utilization of cohorts of students placed in the same course lectures, discussion sections, seminars, etc. According to Tinto, such cohort placements help college students bridge the gap between their academic and social lives, which contributes to higher rates of persistence and meaningful learning. It also contributes to a greater sense of belonging (Hurtado and Carter, 1997; Strayhorn, 2012) among students and more time on task through student collaborations outside of class.

OASIS applies these elements of student cohorts in our OASIS Learning Communities (OLC’s). Those students who participate in Summer Bridge or the Student Support Services Program’s TRIO Summer Experience are enrolled by cohort in a number of the first quarter courses (e.g., chemistry and math) and in the OASIS workshops (e.g., chemistry, math, and writing) that correspond to those courses. Such cohort placement reduces perceptions of isolation by ensuring that a relatively small number of students will
see one another frequently across several academic activities with subsequent engagement in collaborative learning.

In addition, the students are enrolled by cohort in weekly OLC seminars. The seminars incorporate content and elements from the nationally successful model of freshman seminars (Kuh et al., 2008). In the fall quarter OLC seminars, themes include:

- Academic success strategies, including study skills and use of faculty office hours
- Setting and achieving goals
- Strategies for achieving a satisfying sociocultural transition to UCSD
- Managing relationships with parents and siblings

The winter quarter OLC seminars focus on exposing students to critical resources (e.g., the Undergraduate Library, Student Health Center, Career Services Center, Student Financial Services, etc.). The spring quarter seminars focus on students’ long-range goals and the experiences they can engage at UCSD to facilitate those goals.

The one-hour, non-credit bearing seminars are highly interactive and collaborative. They bridge the gap between academic and social life and help participating student to avoid the isolation that is often a major cause of departure for HURS (Hurtado and Carter, 1997; Strayhorn, 2012; Tinto, 2012, 1993). Both an OASIS professional staff member and an undergraduate student mentor facilitate the seminars. Most of the OLC seminars group students by their UCSD college. Those seminars enjoy the direct support of staff from each college who co-facilitate the seminars with OASIS professional and student staff. Those seminars are generally located at their respective colleges. In addition, each quarter the colleges’ academic advisors visit OLC seminars to assist students with their course enrollment for the following quarter.

Responding to the general pattern of higher education in which students often experience a diffused, disconnected set of academic and sociocultural experiences that undermine learning, the OLC seminars serve as a unifying element in students’ learning (Kuh et al., 2010). The OLC seminars integrate students’ coursework, academic support, and sociocultural transition in a manner that maximizes their learning experiences. Given the wide range of variables that affect the early adjustment of HURS (Harper, 2010), this multidimensional integration of their transition process is critical.

Living-Learning Communities

Beginning in fall 2010, OASIS began another collaboration with UCSD’s six colleges—the OASIS Living-Learning Communities. The colleges offered on-campus housing to students who participated in the TRIO Summer Experience and Summer Bridge, respectively, that was arranged so that they lived in close proximity to other students who participated in these OASIS Transition Programs. In many cases, the students were also enrolled in the same lecture and/or section of their college writing program. This strategy facilitated more discussion of course discussion among the students outside the classroom, a variable found to contribute to students’ learning and persistence (Hurtado, 2012). It also provided students a sense of belonging and “membership” in another supportive network.
The Living-Learning Communities were offered to OASIS Transition Program students in 2011 and 2012 as well.

THE EDUCATION 116 COURSE: OASIS STUDENT STAFF TRAINING

Each quarter, OASIS professional staff presents the Education Studies 116 course. The OASIS Director serves as instructor of record for this four-unit, pass/no pass course that serves as the primary pre-service “training” for prospective OASIS student staff. OASIS Coordinators supervise the practicum dimension of the course. Students meet weekly with the OASIS Director and Assistant Director to discuss assigned readings and writing and their connection to the work performed by OASIS. Those course readings and writing address a number of critical elements in the scholarly literature on college student development and success. The various practicum focus on the discipline-specific aspects of OASIS’ support: mentoring, language, writing, mathematics, and science. Thus, the course provides students an experience in educational praxis: research, theory, reflection, dialogue, and practice that seek to maximize the learning and success of OASIS students. The course enrolls approximately fifteen-thirty students each quarter, which enables the application of collaborative pedagogy in both the “lecture” and practicum dimensions of the course.

Because of the OASIS mission and its focus on contributing to the success of HURS, a large portion of the EDS 116 curriculum focuses on the research and theory on HURS in higher education and the lived experience of HURS at UCSD. Topics such as theory on HURS’ retention, the empirical evidence of diversity’s contribution to learning, campus racial climate, and the developmental process of ethnic identity are included in the curriculum. As students read and write on such topics, they also discuss their application at UCSD and the ways in which OASIS addresses such critical areas.

OASIS STRUCTURE AND INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

In order to achieve maximum organizational efficiency and effectiveness of our services, OASIS emphasizes a high degree of collaboration between our programs. Holding regular staff meetings several times each quarter enables OASIS staff to work collectively on issues of service delivery and program improvement. By design, the OASIS Learning Communities and OASIS Transition Programs are collaborations between our programs. This structure facilitates collaboration to serve individual students with needs that might be academic, sociocultural, family, personal, or a combination of needs. The OASIS structure, diversity of professional staff, and collective staff experience ensure an informed focus on the needs of HURS at UCSD.

OASIS PROFESSIONAL AND STUDENT STAFF DEVELOPMENT

OASIS provides periodic staff development for its professional staff. Such staff development activities are provided during regular staff meetings and specially scheduled meetings. A staff development committee, in consultation with the OASIS Director, identifies topics for such activities. Most of the topics include a focus on diversity, equity, and the educational experiences of HURS. Often the OASIS professional staff will read a
journal article and dialogue about its application to UCSD and OASIS services. In the past, such articles have addressed campus climate, expectations for HURS, and microaggressions. When budget permits, OASIS staff travel to conferences that focus on the educational experiences of HURS. The staff’s findings are communicated to the rest of OASIS’ staff through dialogue and dissemination of materials.

Each summer, the professional and student staff of both OASIS summer programs conduct several days of training within their specific component (e.g., TRIO Summer Experience, Summer Bridge residential life). The training includes one day in which all program components come together for a lengthy session that addresses common challenges for staff in OASIS summer programs. The challenges focus on a number of aspects related to serving diverse students and in some cases, teaching diversity. All staff members complete an evaluation of the training, the results of which inform subsequent training.

OASIS PARTNERSHIPS

The effectiveness of OASIS services lies in both their holistic strategies that avoid fragmentation of HURS’ learning and the many partnerships OASIS enjoys with other campus resources. Our partnerships recognize the critical reality that OASIS’ early experience with students cannot always sustain students’ success through graduation without additional institutional interventions. Gándara and Contreras (2009) emphasize that the pathway to college graduation for HURS is fragile, and that when interventions end, such students are vulnerable to institutional exclusion. Important partnerships that feature direct collaboration with OASIS to serve HURS include:

Student Affirmative Action Committee (SAAC) organizations (APSA, BSU, KP, MEchA, QPOC)
SPACES (Student initiated outreach and retention programs)
Academic Enrichment Programs
Career Services Center
International Center
Six Colleges (Academic Advising, Residential Life, Student Affairs)
Counseling & Psychological Services
Admission & Enrollment Services
Student Financial Services
Student Legal Services
Campus Recreation
Conference Services
Development Office
Summer Session
Alumni Association
Campus Community Centers
Academic Affairs
Academic Departments
These partnerships are essential to providing services that meet the needs of HURS, provide “high impact” involvement (Kuh et al., 2008), and support students’ learning.

OASIS STAFF COMPOSITION

OASIS regards the ethnic diversity of its staff, both professional and student, as an important means through which we create validating experiences for HURS (Rendon, 2012; Rendon et al., 2000). OASIS seeks to employ “transformative mentors and role models” that help HURS negotiate a historically white institution (Solorzano and Delgado Bernal, 2001). OASIS has thirteen professional career positions. Our most recent ethnic composition (2013) is:

Chicano/Mexicano—five
Latino/a—one
African American—one
Pilipino—three
Vietnamese—one
Guamanian—one
South Asian—one
White—one

The disaggregation of professional staff in OASIS by administrative level:

Administrative staff—two Chicanos, one Guamanian
Coordinators—two Pilipinos, one Chicana, one Latina
Assistant Coordinators—one African American, two Chicano, one South Asian
Subject Coordinators—one White
Program Assistants—one Vietnamese, one Pilipina

OASIS would benefit from greater representation of African American professional staff, particularly at higher administrative levels.

The need for transformational role models to serve HURS is equally important at the level of OASIS student staff. OASIS hires approximately 200 students each year as clerks, counselors, facilitators, interns, mentors, and tutors. Our undergraduate student staff delivers the most intensive, consistent services to OASIS students. The ethnic composition of OASIS student staff by program during the 2012-13 academic year:

**Summer Bridge**
African American/Black—four
Chicano/Mexicano—fourteen
Pilipino—one
Biracial—one

**Language & Writing Program**
African American/Black—six
Chicano/Mexicano—twelve
Latino—three
Pilipino—one
White—one

Math & Science Tutorial Program
African American/Black—four
Chicano/Mexicano—eighteen
Chinese—eleven
Latino—one
Pilipino—four
South Asian—two
Vietnamese—four
White—six
Other Asian—one
Unknown—two

Student Support Services Program
African American/Black—one
Chicano/Mexicano—eight
Chinese—one
Latino—one
Pilipino—one
South Asian—one
Vietnamese—two
White—two
Biracial—one

OASIS Learning Community Mentors
African American—one
Chicano/Mexicano—four
Chinese—one
Latino—three
Vietnamese—two
Biracial—one

Student Receptionists
Chicano/Mexicano—four
Vietnamese—one

Research Assistants
Chicano/Mexicano—one

TOTALS
African American/Black—sixteen
Chicano/Mexicano—sixty-one
Chinese—thirteen
Latino—eight
Pilipino—seven
South Asian—three
Vietnamese—nine
White—nine
Other Asian—one
Biracial—three
Unknown—two
TOTAL--132

Employing adequate numbers of HURS (classified by UCSD as African Americans, Chicanos, and Native Students) in all OASIS programs is a priority. There is an obvious absence of Native Students among our student staff. The overall presence of African American students is relatively strong (12% of OASIS student staff are African American while they represent slightly less than 2% of UCSD undergraduates); however, some OASIS programs are more successful than others in employing African American students. Chicano student staff are well represented across all OASIS programs (46% of OASIS student staff are Chicano while they represent only 13% of UCSD undergraduates).

OASIS PROFESSIONAL STAFF RECRUITMENT AND HIRING

OASIS prioritizes the maintenance of a diverse professional staff. We utilize the posting process of UCSD Student Affairs and Human Resources, respectively, to ensure that vacant positions are disseminated through the UCSD web site. Over many years, OASIS has also developed extensive networks with OASIS alumni and organizations (nonprofits, professional associations, higher education institutions, etc.) that serve historically underrepresented communities. We utilize these contacts to ensure that the pool of applicants for OASIS vacancies is as diverse as possible. State law strictly prohibits the consideration of race or ethnicity in public hiring, so the development of a diverse applicant pool is essential to ensure an inclusive hiring process. OASIS places a high priority on applicant’s cultural competence; in this context, it requires their demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the educational needs of HURS in higher education.

OASIS STUDENT STAFF RECRUITMENT AND HIRING

OASIS employs much the same principles in its recruitment and hiring of student staff. There are two majors mechanisms through which OASIS recruits its student staff: the pool of students who utilize OASIS services (e.g., former participants from Summer Bridge or SSSP, LWP or MSTP workshops) and student organizations at UCSD. Students are encouraged to apply for positions through the individual programs of OASIS.
STUDENT SERVICE BY ETHNICITY

OASIS served 2,415 students in the 2011-12 academic year. This total includes the 150 students served in Summer Bridge and the forty students served in TRIO Summer Experience in summer 2012. Those 2,415 students received 74,798 hours of service, or 31 hours per student throughout the academic year. The table below identifies the number of students served that we consider underrepresented or underserved along with the number of service hours they received. In addition, the table shows the percentage of students and service hours, respectively, among OASIS students and the number and percentage of those groups' representation among all UCSD undergraduates in fall 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th># of students</th>
<th># of hours</th>
<th># &amp; % of UCSD enrllmnt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&amp; % OASIS</td>
<td>&amp; % OASIS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>124/5%</td>
<td>4,478/6%</td>
<td>420/&lt;2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicano</td>
<td>747/31%</td>
<td>24,979/33%</td>
<td>2,557/11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>13/&lt;1%</td>
<td>341/&lt;1%</td>
<td>117/&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>136/6%</td>
<td>4,042/5%</td>
<td>705/3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilipino</td>
<td>122/5%</td>
<td>4,529/5%</td>
<td>986/4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>222/9%</td>
<td>7,524/10%</td>
<td>1,578/7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,364/56%</td>
<td>45,893/61%</td>
<td>6,363/27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The totals demonstrate that a much higher percentage of these six groups are represented among OASIS students (and service use) than their representation among UCSD’s undergraduate enrollment. The six underrepresented and underserved groups above accounted for 56% of all OASIS students and 61% of all OASIS service hours for the 2011-12 academic year; those groups account for only 27% of UCSD undergraduates. For each of the six groups, OASIS representation is at least equal to that of undergraduate enrollment. The very high percentage of Chicanos among OASIS students contributes most to the high total for the combined groups.

The relatively strong presence of underrepresented and underserved students among those utilizing OASIS services responds to two important dimensions of diversity. One dimension is equity (or “institutional viability,” Smith, 2009). These students are often those most likely to benefit from the sense of community and direct support (counseling, mentoring, and tutoring) provided by OASIS—not because of their own deficits but because of their disconnection from the historical legacy and institutional culture of UCSD. Thus, their participation in OASIS helps to make the academic and sociocultural “playing field” fairer toward these groups.

The other dimension of diversity addressed through the presence of underrepresented and underserved students in OASIS is learning. When students
who are white, Chinese, Korean, etc. visit OASIS to use our services, they are much more likely to interact with underrepresented and underserved students than on most other spaces on the UCSD campus. These “cross-ethnic” interactions facilitate learning, or “institutional vitality,” (Smith, 2009) among all students at OASIS. Such learning experiences constitute both intellectual and “democracy” outcomes (Milem et al., 2005).

OASIS OUTREACH TO HISTORICALLY UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS

OASIS employs a number of strategies to encourage underrepresented students to utilize our services. Each OASIS program has its criteria to determine priority students, some of which include pre-college experience, language proficiency, and socioeconomic level. Our outreach strategies include:

• Direct email to newly admitted and enrolled first-year students.
• Web site with information on OASIS programs and services.
• Direct contact with student organizations.
• Announcements and articles in campus publications (e.g., SPACES’ “Collective Voice”).
• Encourage participating students and OASIS student staff to publicize OASIS within their peer networks.

The same strategies are employed to recruit underrepresented students to become staff members of OASIS. Direct email is often utilized to contact students who utilized OASIS services in the past. Annual OASIS job fairs are another strategy.

OASIS ASSESSMENTS

OASIS employs several strategies to assess the effectiveness of its services:

• “Program monitoring” that records which students use OASIS services, their frequency of service use, and the type of OASIS service utilized.
• “Process evaluations” that record students’ evaluation of OASIS services’ contribution to their achievement, learning, and satisfaction. These evaluations can be quantitative (e.g., surveys), qualitative (e.g., focus groups or interviews), or a combination of both.
• “Impact assessments” of programs such as Summer Bridge that measure students’ retention and grade point average.

Each of these assessments includes a focus on HURS. Through program monitoring, we ascertain the number of HURS that utilize OASIS services (see previous section on students who use OASIS services). Process evaluations enable us to determine if HURS receive positive contributions from their use of OASIS services while impact evaluations reveal the extent to which HURS who utilize OASIS programs experience academic success. Consistent internal review of these assessments informs OASIS
strategies to serve HURS more effectively. A number of OASIS assessments are located on the OASIS web site link, “OASIS Assessments and Reports.”

THE OASIS PHYSICAL SPACE

OASIS is located on the third floor of Center Hall, one of UCSD’s classroom buildings. Its physical layout includes a large lobby area, several smaller lobbies, long hallways, small meeting rooms designed for two students, large workshop rooms, and professional staff offices. A student receptionist staffs the main lobby but student traffic is allowed to flow throughout the office without the need to check in with the receptionist. We believe this approach is more personable and therefore culturally relevant to HURS and underserved students. Throughout virtually all rooms and hallways, pictures depict historical figures and themes that reflect the lived experiences of HURS. Other pictures portray the students who have used OASIS service over many years. Such graphics provide another dimension of validation for HURS and a personalized atmosphere that reflects their cultures. These stand in stark contrast to the rest of UCSD, which largely ignores the contributions of HURS in its graphic or “artistic” representations.

UCSD’S INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS FOR HURS

OASIS’ frequent, intensive work with HURS, including those who work as our student staff, enables us to perceive trends and patterns in their experience that identify institutional barriers to their success. These direct student experiences intersect with directions from the scholarly literature on HURS, particularly those strands of research that recognize supportive or hindering conditions for HURS. OASIS has identified a number of institutional barriers that in all likelihood contribute to lower levels of success and satisfaction for HURS:

- Many classrooms feature pedagogy that is not culturally sustaining (Paris, 2012). It often reflects the extreme individualism and competition common to the model of the German research institution (Ibarra, 2001). Research on HURS shows that more collaborative pedagogy is effective with such students (Bain, 2004; Hurtado et al., 1998; Smith, 2009).

- In the same vein, an institutional culture described by Ibarra (2001) as “low context,” in which the “product” is much more important than the “process,” and in which social connections are not valued. In his view of anthropological and sociological literature, Ibarra finds that such an institutional culture works against the achievement of HURS.

- There is a distinct lack of historically underrepresented faculty and administrative staff, resulting in few “transformational mentors” (Solorzano and Delgado Bernal, 2001). Because such faculty are more likely to conduct research on diverse communities, teach diverse curriculum, and utilize
collaborative classroom pedagogy, potentially supportive conditions are undermined by the lack of underrepresented faculty (Milem et al., 2005).

- Lack of important validation for HURS both in and outside the classroom (Rendon, 2012). This condition permeates classrooms, where many faculty lack the cultural competence to enact such validation, to Student Affairs, where units often lack underrepresented staff in leadership positions, to the physical environment, where virtually all public art reflects abstract, Eurocentric tastes. Rendon and her associates have described validation as an effective, requisite condition for the success of HURS. Lack of validation also works against HURS’ developing a sense of belonging, another variable found necessary but insufficient for the success of HURS (Strayhorn, 2012).

- The low numbers of enrolled HURS at UCSD contributes significantly to their perception of marginalization, isolation, and identity threat (Charles et al., 2009; Massey et al., 2003; Milem et al., 2005; Smith, 2009; Tinto, 1993). Lack of a “critical mass” of HURS creates “minority stress” and feelings of tokenization, both of which are associated with lower outcomes for HURS (Milem et al., 2005).

- HURS at UCSD continue to experience microaggressions, “racialized verbal and nonverbal insults in academic and social settings” (Yosso, 2006, p. 101). Such microaggressions contribute to a negative racial campus climate and subsequently undermine the success of HURS (Harper and Hurtado, 2010; Wing Sue, 2010; Yosso, 2006).

   It is important to note that these hindering conditions do more than merely interfere with HURS’ efforts to succeed at UCSD. They also inhibit the involvement and engagement of HURS throughout the campus, which limits their cross-ethnic interaction with other students. Such interaction is the key to maximizing the educational benefits of diversity for all UCSD students (Milem et al., 2005; Smith, 2009; Strayhorn, 2012).

DEP MEETING OF OASIS STUDENT AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF

In April 2013, OASIS held a meeting of its professional and student staff to discuss the OASIS Diversity & Equity Portfolio. This meeting was held mainly to capture input from OASIS student counselors, mentors, research assistants, and tutors regarding the content of the OASIS DEP. Since our student staff are most directly involved with providing services to UCSD students, we knew that their observations are critical to ensure that the DEP includes all important aspects of OASIS’ contribution to HURS.

A total of fifty-two student staff members attended the meeting, a representative fraction of the approximately 140 student staff employed by OASIS in spring 2013. The initial draft of the DEP, along with an explanation of its purpose,
was sent to all OASIS student staff before the meeting. An expanded explanation of the objective of the DEP was presented at the beginning of the meeting. Student staff members were then placed in small groups of approximately eight students with an OASIS professional staff member in each group. The student staff members were asked to share their perceptions of the DEP draft and to identify additional points that should be included in the final DEP. The small groups were formed purposefully so that each group included counselors, mentors, and tutors from both language and writing and math and science. The professional staff in each group recorded the observations and recommendations in his/her group. The entire group then convened so that each small group could report its recommendations.

The professional staff of OASIS summarized each small group’s conclusions in writing. Two professional staff compiled the conclusions, noting the trends and directions in student staff responses from the small groups. The summary of those trends and directions, clustered around the questions posed during the staff meeting, are reported below:

**What is effective in the DEP?**
- Students needs are well-addressed through OASIS strategies
- Description of programs well written
- The literature review helps to understand what informs OASIS services
- Good job including the diversity within our own staff
- DEP is very clear (e.g. mission, vision)
- Great use of statistics

**What is needed in the DEP?**
- Student testimonials. Also, expand student testimonials to discuss personal development (e.g. family, responsibilities, pressures)
- DEP is good, but more specific description of each program would be helpful.
- Video to capture the DEP
- Show that OASIS is where student leaders come from (use examples such as Compton Cookout)- being advocates for social justice and agents of change
- The outcomes and impact of OASIS lasts throughout undergrad career and after
- OASIS creates agents of change – students want to go back and reform their communities (civic engagement)
- Transfer students are largely absent from the document (non-traditional)
- Include graduation rates of OASIS students
- Include more statistics (including average GPA, progress quarter-by-quarter, graduation rates)
- Describe specific collaborations with other units, not just a list
• Provide detailed information about student staff training (ex. EDS 116 & Practicum) and how that contributes to professional growth that improves service to HURS
• Clarify and specify who HURS and underserved students are
• Extend diversity beyond Latina/Black to include LGBT, gender, AB540, first-generation college students - provide statistical data on these student populations
• Include the contributions (support and funding) OASIS makes to other groups on campus (ex. RAZA and BSU grad, Cesar Chavez Month, ethnic student organizations)
• Elaborate on how student staff (mentoring and tutoring) is effective to programs. Also, students who utilize services return to work for the program
• Student employment is a tool for retention, helps with their academic performance, and financial and social struggles

Recommendations for Improvement of OASIS Services

• OASIS should help students beyond their first year – 2nd year services are needed
• Advertising/promoting OASIS services more so it is not perceived as an “exclusive space” for only SB/SSSP students
• Outreach to HURS who did not attend SB/SSSP--Do we follow up with students who applied to OASIS summer programs but did not get in or attend during the summer?
• Help students prepare for post-graduate life – offer workshops, guest speakers, alumni speakers, etc.
• Increase interaction between OASIS and faculty and staff
• Need more physical space
• Tutoring beyond math and science is needed, especially in the social sciences
• Workshops to foster relationships between students and professors - invite professors to be a part of workshops, have them present, or have meet professor so-in-so session

These observations and recommendations will be considered in planning OASIS services and in future iterations of the OASIS DEP.

CONCLUSION

The responsibility to provide effective services that contribute to the success of UCSD’s HURS is complex. As reflected in the scholarly literature on diversity and equity, such a focus must be intentional and comprehensive, permeating every aspect of a professional office such as OASIS (Milem et al., 2005). We endeavor to
enact such intentionality from the knowledge and experience that informs our practices and through the assessment of their effectiveness in serving HURS. We hope that this OASIS DEP captures the breadth and depth of our focus and that it identifies principles and strategies helpful to similar efforts in UCSD Student Affairs.

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