

Key Takeaways from Research on Latinx College Enrollment

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Latinx College Enrollment: Trends and Influential Factors



Trends

Nationally from 2010-2020, the number of Latinx student college **enrollments rose for 4-year institutions**, but **fell for 2-year institutions**. Looking across states, Latinx enrollment in Illinois public 2-year institutions is higher than average, but enrollment in public 4-years is well below average.

Key Factors Derived from a Structural Barriers & Latinx Community Agency Framework



Finances

Latinx college enrollment is influenced by **Latinx family socioeconomic status**, which is lower than that of White families on average, and Latinx hesitancy towards taking on debt. Policies that provide for need-based aid, aid for undocumented students, and state funding for colleges can enhance enrollment opportunity for Latinx students.



Families

Whole families are instrumental to Latinx student decision-making about college. The concept of **familismo** prioritizes family needs over individual needs, and students weigh responsibilities to family in decisions related to college enrollment (and persistence). Families are key sources of support *during* college as well.



Location

Latinx students **value being closer to home**, to draw on family and community supports. Decisions about college application and enrollment are thus influenced by location. Two-year and for-profit institutions are often located near Latinx neighborhoods and recruit heavily.



Peers & Community

Latinx students **value colleges that have proven to have success with their peers**. Latinx students enroll in colleges friends or community members attend or have attended. College enrollment is also influenced by whether college is viewed to have a community benefit, in addition to an individual benefit.

Implications of These Factors for Enrollment Decisions



Undermatch

Latinx students undermatch more than other student populations, meaning that well-prepared Latinx students apply to and enroll in colleges with lower requirements than others for which they could qualify. This occurs for many of the reasons described above, including wanting to be closer to family, selecting institutions that their peers attend, and prioritizing family needs over their own.



HSI Enrollment

In general, Latinx students enroll in colleges with high proportions of Latinx students (i.e., Hispanic-Serving Institutions or HSIs). Around 560 HSIs serve two-thirds of all Latinx college students. These institutions tend to be public, in urban and suburban areas, and concentrated in some states more than others (including Illinois).

Latinx College Student Characteristics



The Latinx college student population has unique characteristics, including:

- 44% are first-generation college students
- Most are born in the U.S.
- 32% work 40 or more hours per week while enrolled in college