



## LATINOS IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

*Community colleges have multiple missions that serve the educational needs of their communities— two-year degree programs, pathways to baccalaureate-granting institutions, life-long learning, job training, and recreation.*

**Overview:** There are almost 1,000 community colleges (997) in the United States enrolling 11.6 million students (6.6 million for credit). This represents 46% of all U.S. undergraduates. A majority of these students are women (58%) and a majority attends part-time (63%). The average age of students at community college is 29. [AACC website: Fast Facts retrieved 4/7/05]

### **Enrollment**

- **The majority of Hispanics in higher education are enrolled in community colleges (56%).** An additional 2% are enrolled at private two-year institutions. [NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics, 2003*, Table 210]
- **Latinos attend community colleges at a rate disproportionate to all other groups in the United States.** While over 55% of Latinos are enrolled in community colleges, only 35% of white, 40% of African American, and 40% of Asian/Pacific Islander students are enrolled in community colleges. [NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics, 2003*, Table 210]
- **Mexican Americans were more likely to be enrolled at community colleges than other Latinos.** Almost 55% of students of Mexican or Chicano descent were enrolled at community colleges. In comparison, about 34% of Cuban students, 20 percent of Puerto Rican students, and 49% of other Hispanic origin were enrolled at community colleges. [analysis with NPSAS 2003-04]

### **Institution**

- **Latino faculty (instruction and research) are disproportionately represented at community colleges.** While Latinos represent only 3% of all faculty in the United States, over 40% of Latino faculty (42%) are employed at community colleges. In comparison, only 30% of white, 36% of African American, and 17% of Asian/Pacific Islander faculty are at community colleges. [NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics, 2003*, Table 228]
- **Almost half of all Hispanic-Serving Institutions are community colleges.** Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) are accredited and degree-granting public or private nonprofit institutions of higher education with at least 25 percent or more total undergraduate Hispanic full-time equivalent student enrollment. In 2001-02, there were 231 HSIs and 112 of these institutions (49%) were community colleges. [NCES, analysis of IPEDS, 2001-2002]

### **Attainment**

- **Latinos are less likely to attain any degree if they start at a two-year institution instead of a four-year institution.** Of Latino first-time postsecondary students starting at a two-year institution, less than 35% had attained any degree in 6 years. In comparison, almost 55% of Latino students who started at a four-year institution had attained a degree in 6 years. [NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics, 2003*, Table 313]
- **Latinos who start at two-year institutions are more likely to drop out without a degree.** Almost 50% of Latino students who started at a two-year institution had not attained a degree and were no longer enrolled 6 years later. In comparison, only 25% of Latino students who started at a four-year institution left without a degree and were not enrolled 6 years later. [NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics, 2003*, Table 313]
- **Latinos who start out at two-year institutions are less likely to transfer and attain a bachelor degree.** Only 5% of Latinos who started at a two-year institution during the 1995-96 academic year had attained a bachelor degree in 2001. In comparison, of Latinos who started at a four-year institution, 44% had earned a bachelor degree. [NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics, 2003*, Table 313]