

*Fostering Student Success:
Employing Validation, An
Asset-Based Framework and
High-Impact Pedagogic
Practices*

Laura I Rendón

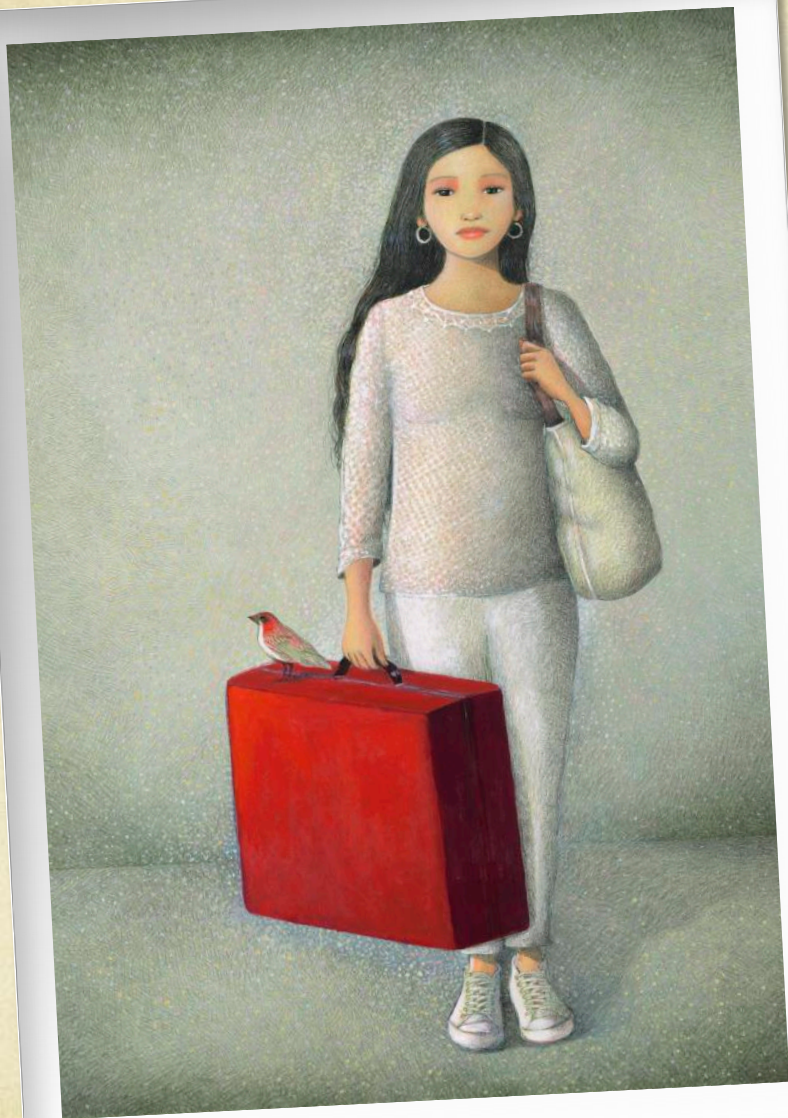
Professor Emerita

The University of Texas at San
Antonio

Student Success Symposium

Texas Association of
Community Colleges

April 25, 2019



*How I Enter This Work:
From the Barrio to the
Academy*

*Student Success is the Key
Equity Issue for Higher
Education*





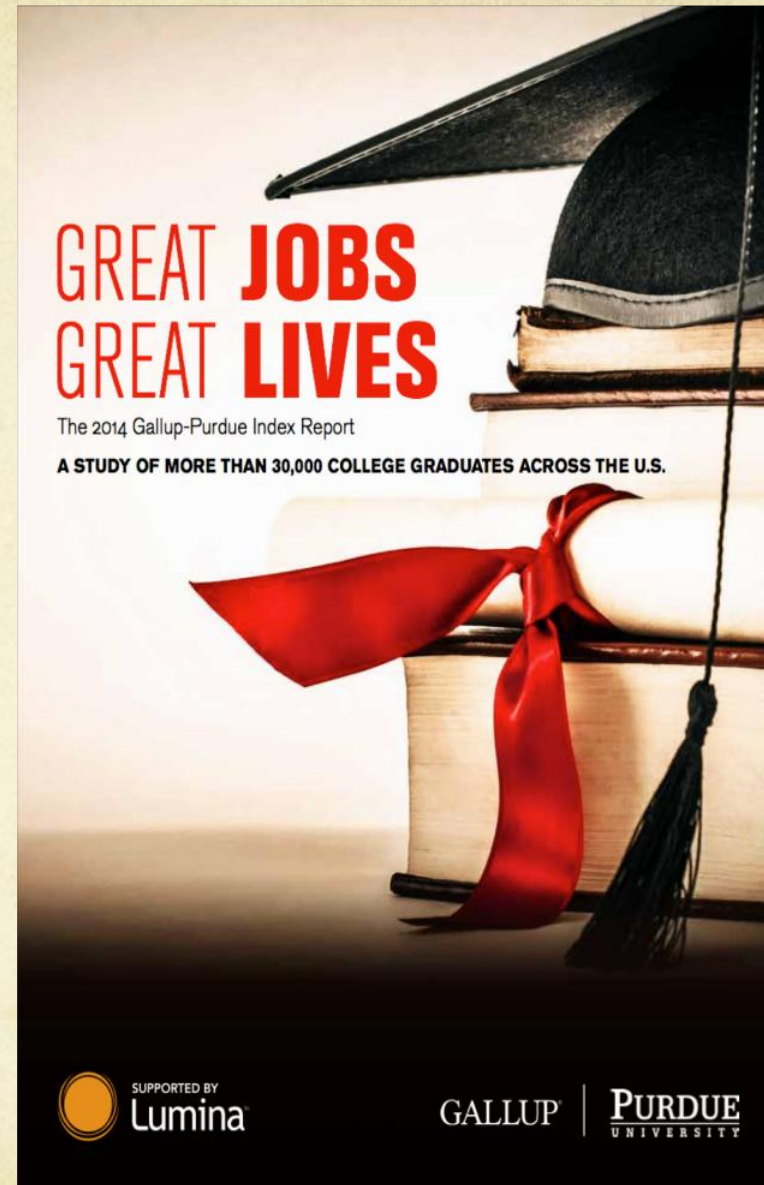
COURSE RE-DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

- Establishing validation-rich teaching and learning contexts
- Knowing your students. Working with an asset-based framework
- Working with HIPs and deep learning experiences

*Moving From A Detachment
Mindset to Building Affirming
Relationships Through
Validation and An Ethic of Care*

Gallup-Purdue Index Report (2014)

The Importance of Validation



2014 Gallup-Purdue Index Report

- Study of more than 30,000 college graduates across the U.S. to determine if the experiences they had in college promoted gains in the workplace and in their well-being.
- Key Findings:
 - If graduates had a **professor who cared** about them as a person, **made them excited about learning** and encouraged them to pursue their dreams, their odds of being engaged at work more than doubled, as did their odds of thriving in their well-being.
 - If graduates had an **internship** or job where they were able to **apply what they were learning** in the classroom, were **actively involved** in extracurricular activities and organizations, and **worked on projects that took a semester or more to complete**, their odds of being engaged at work also doubled (p.6).
 - **Validation, support and deep learning** experiences matter!

Validation Theory: Affirming Students

- **Validation** is an enabling, confirming and supportive process initiated by in- and out-of-class agents that fosters academic and personal development (Rendón, 1994)
- There are two forms of validation:
 - **Academic** ~ when in- and out-of-class agents take action to assist students to trust their innate capacity to learn and to acquire confidence in being a college student
 - **Interpersonal** ~ when in- and out-of-class agents take action to foster students' personal development and social adjustment

Faculty & Student Affairs Staff Should Understand The Importance of Validation

- Helps students to feel that they **matter**.
- Faculty and student affairs staff work with an ethic of care that fosters a **sense of belonging**.
- Validate student voice.
- Help students believe in themselves/ **I can do this!**
- **Inclusive curriculum** reflects student lives and experience.

*Knowing Your Students:
Working With Student Assets*

TG Philanthropy Study at UTSA

○ PURPOSE

- To illuminate the positive and negative aspects of the college experience of Latinx students.
- To identify cultural assets Latinxs employ to become survivors and move past obstacles.

○ METHOD

- Focus groups, N=47
- One-on-one videotaped interviews, N=6

Upside of College

New Friends

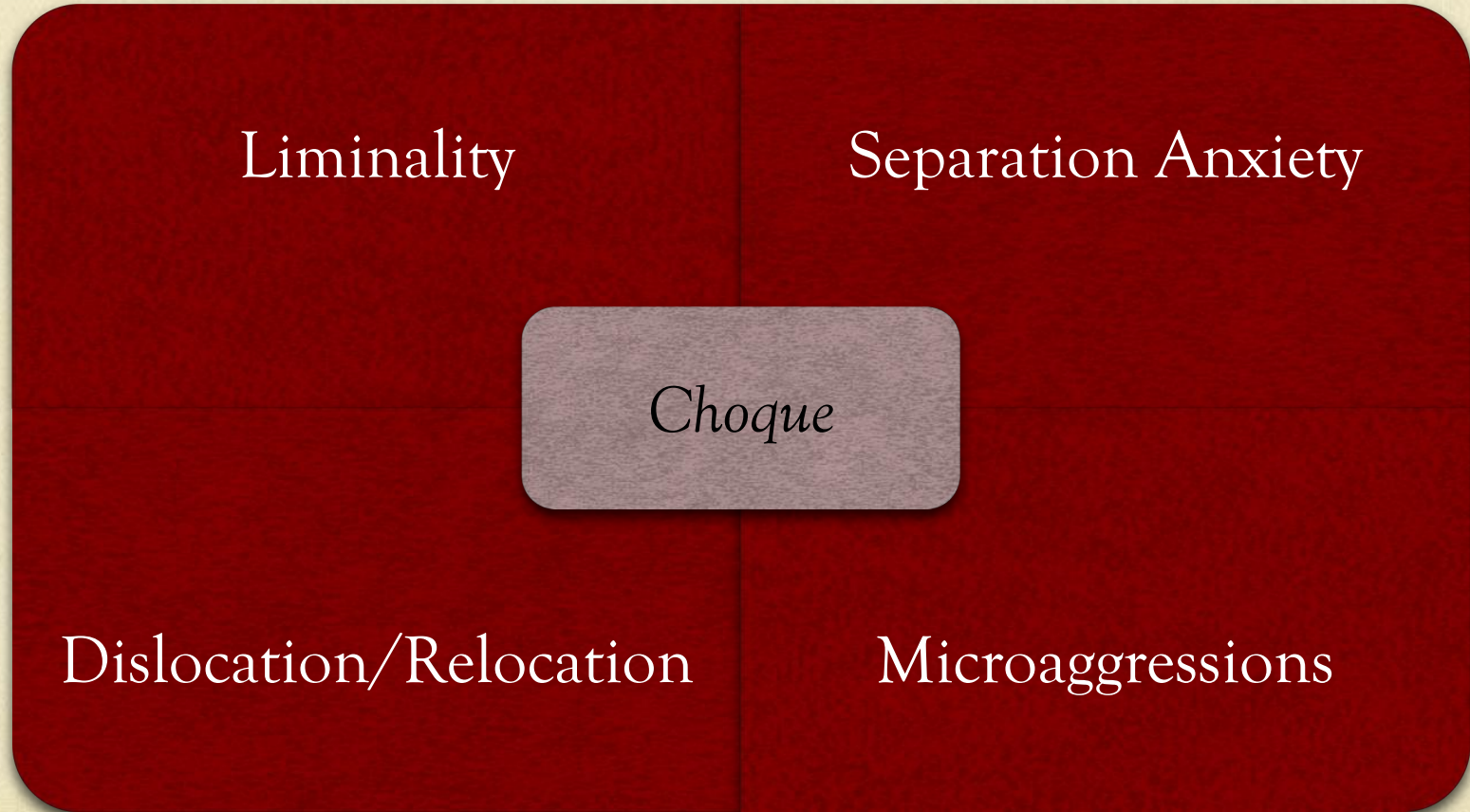
Interactions with Diverse
Students

Exciting
Moments

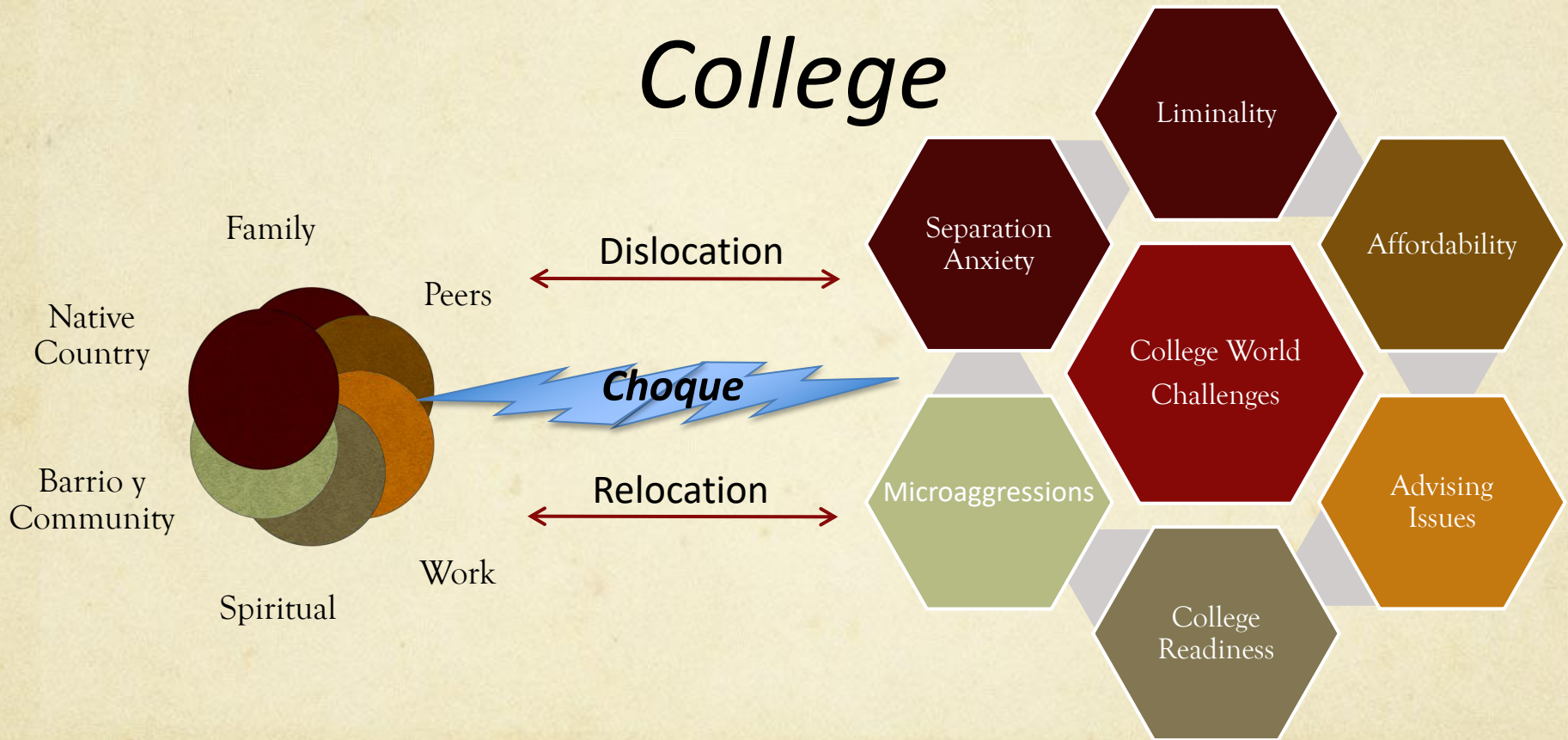
New Perspectives

New Experiences

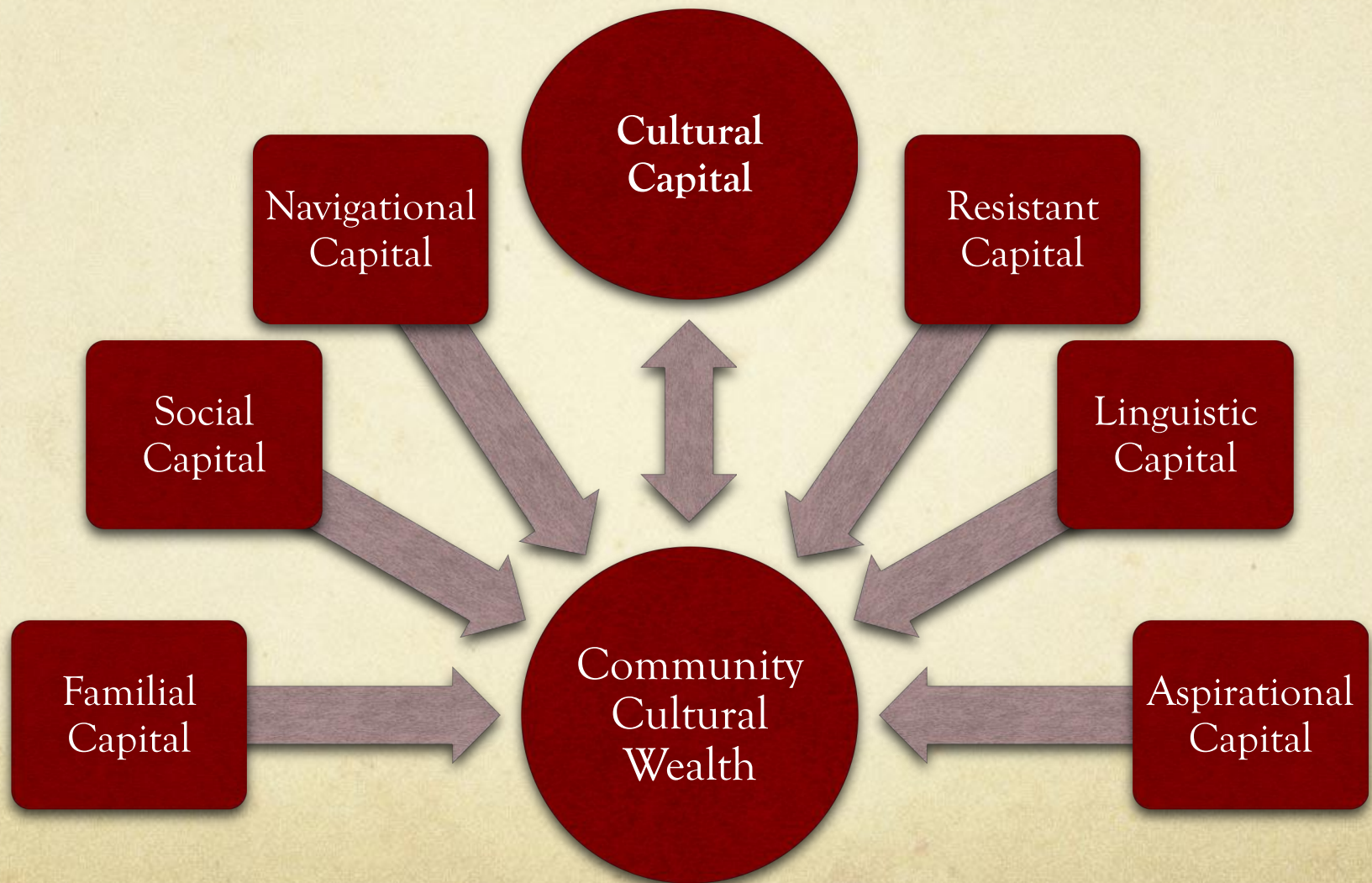
The Downside of College: Choque/ Cultural Collision



Entre Mundos: Navigating the Transition to College



Tara Yosso's Community Cultural Wealth Model



Student Assets

Aspirational

- Set high aspirations
- Recognize value of education
- Remain hopeful about future

Linguistic

- Employ two or more languages
- Engage with formal and informal modes of expression

Student Assets

Familial

- Model strength & determination of family
- Benefit from *consejos, respeto, testimonios y educacion*

Social

- Form peer networks
- Form study groups
- Peer validation

Student Assets

Navigational

- Operate in liminal spaces
- Traverse multiple, distinct social contexts
- Dislocate and relocate
- Adapt to new culture

Resistant

- Resist stereotypes; combat and overcome microaggressions
- Overcome hardships such as poverty and lack of guidance and resources

Student Assets

Ganas/ Perseverance

- Develop inner strength; determination to succeed
- Recognize and embrace sacrifice made to attend college

Giving Back

- Proud of Latino heritage and being in HSI/Prove Latinos can do it
- Recognize microaggressions & inequities
- Want to complete college because they recognize others have paved way for their success
- Know they can be role models

Student Assets

Spirituality/ Faith

- Employ faith in God/higher power
- Develop sense of meaning and purpose
- Embrace concepts such as gratitude, goodness and compassion

Pluriversal

- Adapt and operate in multiple worlds and diverse educational and geographical contexts
- Hold multiple and competing systems of meaning in tension

African American Cultural Wealth

(Farmer-Hinton, Lewis, Patton & Rivers, 2013)

- Family
- Aspirations
- Resistance
- Navigational
- Social
- Spiritual

Asset: Giving Back & Paving the Way for Others



CIENTÍFICOS LATINXS

The Untold Story of Underserved
Student Success in STEM Fields of Study

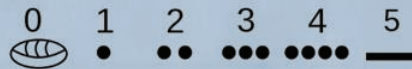
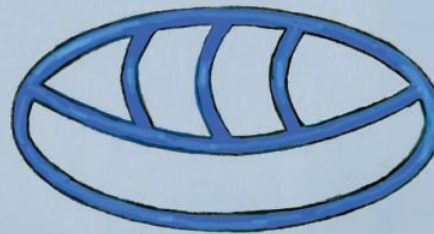
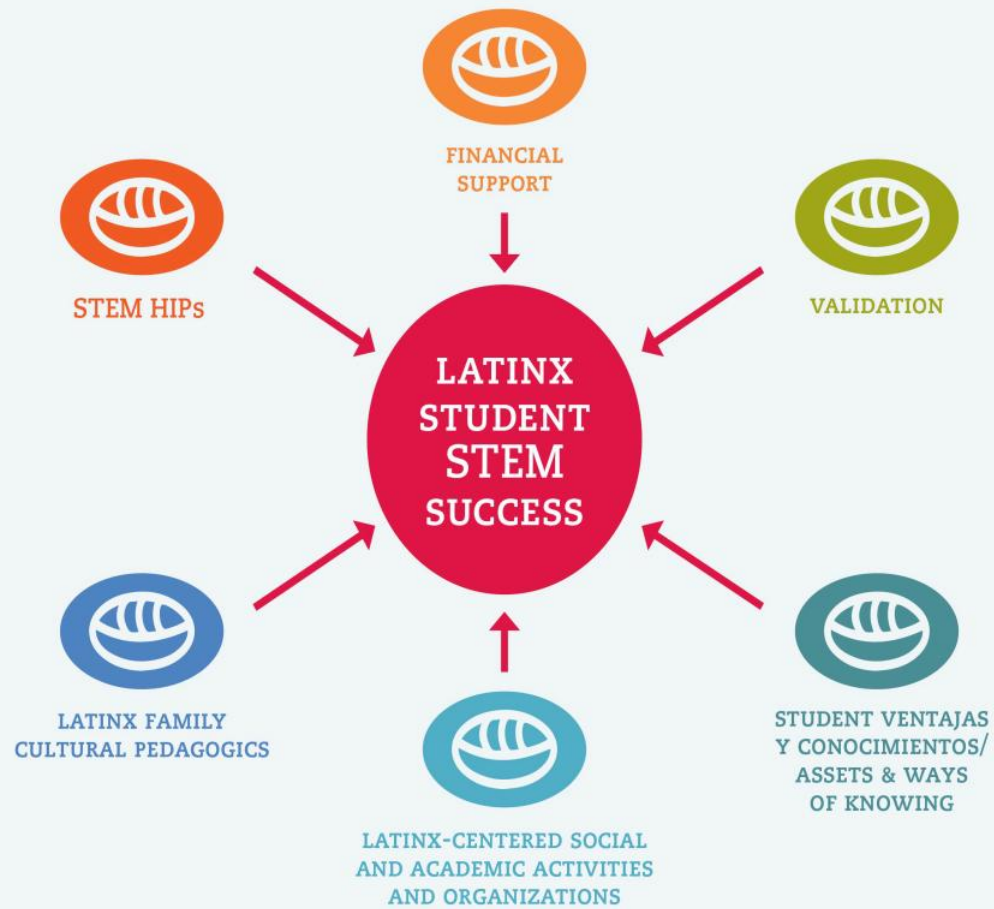
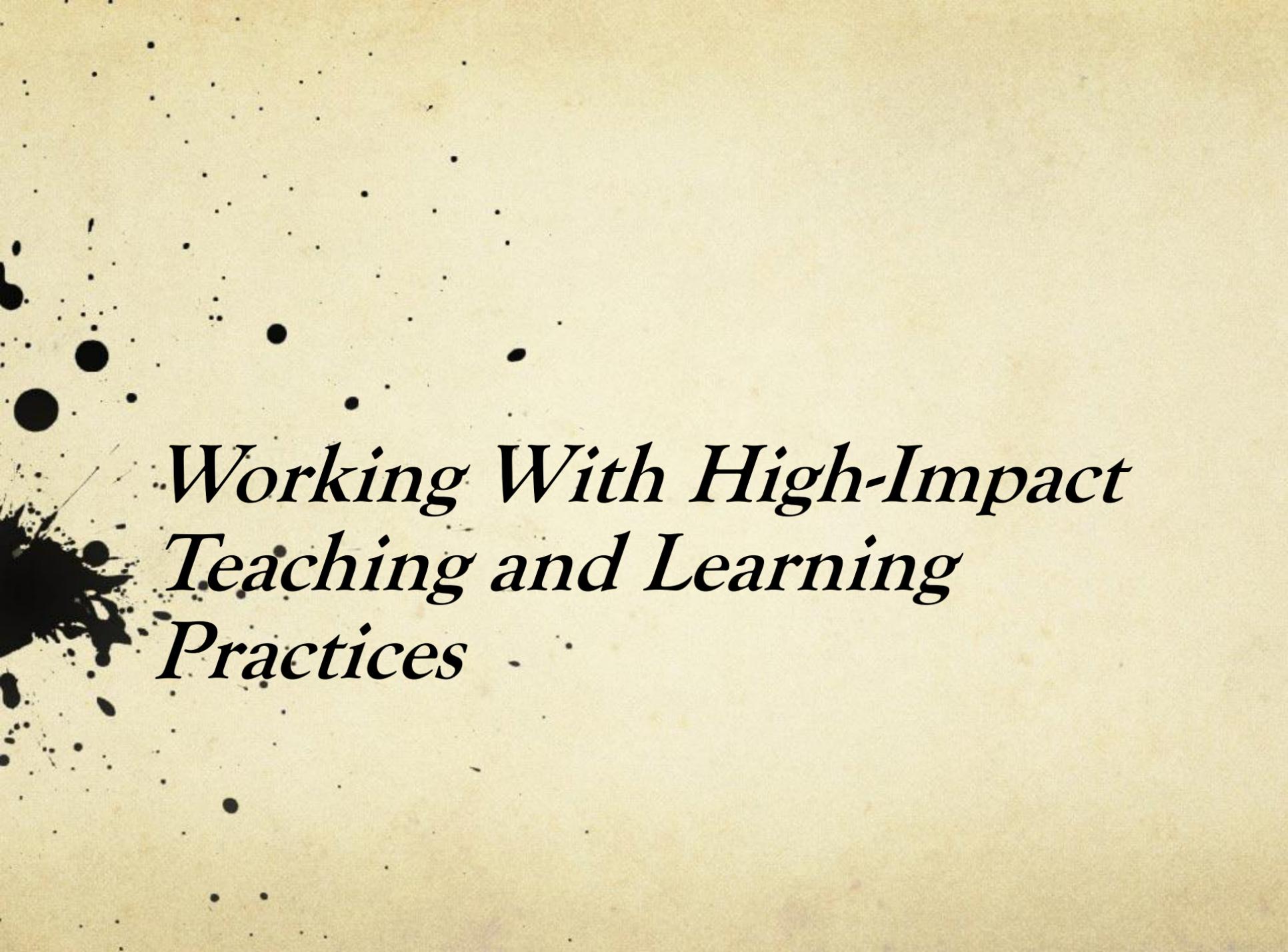


FIGURE 1. LATINX STUDENT STEM SUCCESS MODEL





*Working With High-Impact
Teaching and Learning
Practices*

High-Impact Teaching & Learning Practices

- Applied Learning/Experiential Learning
- Validating Experiences
- Study Groups
- Learning Communities
- Service Learning
- Capstone Courses
- Internships
- Research With A Faculty Member
- Deep Learning Experiences/Sentipensante Pedagogy

LAURA I. RENDÓN

sentipensante

(SENSING/THINKING)

pedagogy



EDUCATING FOR
WHOLENESS, SOCIAL JUSTICE
AND LIBERATION

FOREWORD BY MARK NEPO

*A Pedagogy
Grounded in
Wholeness,
Justice &
Equity*

HOW CAN WE TRANSFORM EDUCATION TO HELP STUDENTS DEAL WITH SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES?

- CLIMATE CHANGE
- IMMIGRATION/ICE RAIDS
- UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS
- ANTI SEMITISM
- WORLD CRISES—TERRORISM, SYRIAN CONFLICT, WARS
- RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE
- RACISM, SEXISM AND DISCRIMINATION
- WOMEN'S RIGHTS & #ME TOO MOVEMENT
- STANDING ROCK AND THE RIGHTS OF NATIVE PEOPLE
- VIOLENCE AGAINST GLBTQ+ COMMUNITY
- VIOLENCE AGAINST PEOPLE OF COLOR
- POVERTY
- BLACK LIVES MATTER
- HATE CRIMES OF WHITE SUPREMACISTS (attacks on Black churches and mosques; Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, South Carolina; Charleston, VA march)
- RIGHTS OF DIFFERENTLY ABLED PEOPLE

Norma Cantú-English

- Dr. Norma Cantú, English (Trinity University-San Antonio, TX)
- Author of *Canícula*, an autobiography featuring photographs of her childhood
- Contemplative tools that foster deep learning:
 - Guided imagery through use of photographs
 - Reflective autobiographical essays

Professor Norma Cantú
Trinity University-San Antonio



*Contemplative Performance:
Apartment on Austin by Nova
Venerable*

- Documentary: Louder Than a Bomb—depicts world's largest youth poetry slam held in Chicago
- Nova's father was an addict. Her younger brother suffered from diabetes



THEORETICAL LENS

- Liberatory Pedagogy where purpose is to liberate low-income students from believing they can't write and can't learn
- Culturally responsive pedagogy

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Writing skills
- Engage students in deep reflective practices that connect them more intimately to the value of their lives, culture and family

SENTIPENSANTE PEDAGOGIC PRACTICES

- Write Essays
- Read Books
- Cultural autobiographical essays based on student experiences
- Slam poetry
- Guided imagery through photographs
- Journaling

STUDENT OUTCOMES

- Reading & writing proficiency
- Connect students to their culture
- Allow students to witness themselves as powerful learners

Alberto Pulido, Ethnic Studies & Sociology

- Teaches ethnic studies at University of San Diego
- Contemplative tools:
 - Arts-Based *Cajita* Project
 - Visits to sites where social justice themes are highlighted such as Chicano Park in San Diego

Professor Alberto Pulido
University of San Diego







Example: Equity & Justice Service Learning Projects In STEM

TOPIC EXAMPLES:

- WATER QUALITY IN COMMUNITY
- CLIMATE CHANGE
- MENTAL HEALTH
- DIABETES, CANCER, LIVER DISEASE
- IMPACT OF DROUGHT, HURRICANES, FLOODING
- DECLINING INFRASTRUCTURES—BRIDGES, ROADS
- DISEASE OUTBREAKS—ZIKA, MEASLES, ANTIBIOTIC-RESISTANT BACTERIA, ETC.

STUDENT PROJECT EXAMPLES:

- SERVICE LEARNING
- INTERVIEWS WITH PEOPLE IMPACTED BY ISSUES
- PHOTO EXHIBIT
- DIGITAL STORYTELLING, DOCUMENTARIES

EXAMPLES OF CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICES THAT FOSTER DEEP LEARNING

- Autoethnographies—autobiographical essays
- Contemplative photography—nature images, personal stories
- Arts-based projects: *cajitas*, murals, beads, pottery, drawings, paintings
- Service learning with reflective component
- Meditative experiences in nature; moments of silence
- Slam poetry/contemplative performance that reflects student lived experiences (see *Louder Than A Bomb* documentary)
- Music—ethnomusicology, writing music based on personal experiences

Celebration of the Marriage of Heart and Mind

Why does one write, if not to put one's pieces together?

From the moment we enter school or church, education chops us into pieces: it teaches us to divorce soul from body and mind from heart.

*The fishermen of the Columbian coast must be learned doctor of ethics and morality, for they invented the word, **sentipensante**, feeling-thinking, to define language that speaks the truth.*



*~Eduardo Galeano, **The Book of Embraces** (1989), p. 121*

~Orlando Fals Borda, Columbian Researcher and Sociologist

Moving Forward With Fostering Student Success

- *Faculty and Student Affairs Commitment*
- *Openness to Change & Innovation*

