

[Name of Two-Year Institution] Faculty and Staff Focus Group Protocol Latina/o Student Transfer

Possible Target Population/Groups

Latina/o students who intend to transfer

Focus Group Purpose

[Name of Institution] is conducting a series of focus groups with students and employees on our campus(es). Our objective is to build understanding of the kinds of experiences that [Latinas/os] who intend to transfer perceive are critical in the community college as well as the kinds of challenges they face. What we learn can be very helpful as [Name of Institution] works to serve its students more effectively.

Focus Group Outcomes

Outcome 1: Understand faculty and staff perceptions of the experiences, assets, and challenges of Latina/o students on their campuses.

Outcome 2: Learn about faculty and staff perspectives about institutional policies, programs and initiatives at two- and four-year institutions that impact Latina/o student engagement, completion and transfer.

Focus Group Outline

Each focus group will comprise the following activities:

- Meeting overview
- Consent forms
- Participant introductions
- Questionnaires (e.g., demographics forms, survey items, etc.)
- Discussion
- Summary
- Thanks (and stipends, if used as incentives)

Approximate Total Time 75-90 minutes

Focus Group Prompts (Pre-Discussion)

- 1. Introduce facilitator:** Hello, my name is [Name of Facilitator]. I work for [Name of Institution].
- 2. Explain purpose of focus group.**
- 3. Explain desired outcomes and how information gathered will be used.** [Name of Institution] will prepare a report that captures your voices and major themes of this conversation. [List any additional ways the information will be used or disseminated]. However, you will not be identified by name.

NOTE: *At this time, the facilitator can read aloud the outcomes provided in this protocol.*

4. **Explain consent forms and request signatures:** Because we will be recording (and videotaping, if applicable) the focus group conversation, we are required to ask that you sign a form that stipulates your consent. Participation is absolutely voluntary.
5. **Describe facilitator role:** My role as facilitator is to:
 - ask questions and keep the group on track, and
 - explain that we'll be moving through the material fairly quickly, even though people might have more to say about a topic.
6. **Describe participants' role:** Each participant is expected to do the following:
 - share experiences and opinions, both positive and negative;
 - participate in discussion and fill out response forms as requested; and
 - offer advice to college leaders about steps they can take to promote Latina/o student engagement and transfer.
7. **Audio taping/videotaping/note-taking:**
 - Video and audio recording are for the purposes of gathering information to help [Name of Institution] make improvements in its processes for students; writing a report to the college; using video clips in presentations and workshops; and, if applicable, for college leaders to share with faculty and staff to help identify improvement strategies.
 - No names will be used in the report. If you are wearing a name tag or, or any other identifiers, please remove them.
8. **Logistics:**
 - 90 minutes maximum
 - Arrangements for water and restroom break
 - Other?
9. **Ground rules:**
 - One person speaks at a time; no side conversations.
 - No one person dominates; everyone will have a chance to be heard.
 - There are no right or wrong answers; the discussion is about your experiences at this college; what we learn will help not only this college but others as well to improve their work with students.
10. **Questions:** Now, are there any questions before we get started?

Background and General Information About Participants

1. **Verify that all faculty/staff fit the criteria established for the group** (gender/faculty and staff representing transfer, diversity and equity programs).
2. **Discuss other elements of *Faculty/Staff Profile Sheet***, if desired, to better understand characteristics of participants.

3. **Introduce participants:** a) name, b) role(s) at the college/university, including roles with transfer advising and/or diversity equity initiatives, c) how long each has worked at the college/university.

Focus Group Discussion Questions

Outcome 1: Understand faculty and staff perceptions of the experiences, assets, and challenges of Latina/o students on their campuses.

- Q1: From your perspective, do you see differences between Latina/o students and other groups of students on your campus? In terms of:**
- Academic goals and expectations?
 - Challenges and barriers they face on and off campus that could potentially impact their academic success?
 - Challenges and barriers that arise from their prior experiences?
 - Challenges and barriers to success that they encounter at the college?
 - Cultural strengths and assets they bring with them to college that faculty and staff can build upon?
 - If yes, please explain the differences.

Outcome 2: Understand faculty and staff perspectives about institutional policies, programs and initiatives at two-year institutions that impact Latina/o student engagement, completion and transfer.

- Q1: Does the college currently set a priority on developing an academic plan for each student?** If so, describe how that takes place. In the student's first term? First year?
- Q2: From your perspective, is there an institutional emphasis on encouraging students to continue their education by transferring to a four-year institution?** If so, is the emphasis on transferring as soon as possible or on earning a community college degree, then transferring?
- Q3: Are there specific offices, programs, or outreach efforts here at your college that focus on transfer students and/or promote transfer to four-year institutions? For Latina/o students specifically?** If yes, please name the programs and explain their role and how they work with students.
- Q4: Does the college currently have programs in place that support the success of Latina/o students?** If so, do these programs include a focus on college completion and transfer? What services do these programs offer? What percentage of Latina/o students participate in these programs?
- Q5: [Question specifically for faculty:] What knowledge or familiarity do you have about offices, programs, or outreach efforts that focus on transfer students and/or promote transfer to four-year institutions? For Latina/o students specifically?**
- Q6: To your knowledge, does this college currently have collaborative relationships with any four-year institutions to simplify and facilitate streamlined transfer between the community college and the four-year institution? If so, please describe.**

- a. *[If yes to the above question]* **Does the college work directly with four-year institutions to create an academic plan that connects both the community college and four-year institution course requirements?** If yes, please describe.

Q7: From your perspective, how effective are the college's current efforts to encourage and support transfer to four-year institutions for all students?

Q8: From your perspective how effective are the college's current efforts to promote and support transfer for Latina/o students in particular? What do your data tell you about the impact of these initiatives?

Q9: By contrast with programs targeting student groups, has the college community discussed changes the institution might need to make in order to promote and support college transfer for more students? For Latina/o students?

Q10: What role do faculty and staff have in any conversations about potential changes in practices and policies that might be needed to remove barriers to success and more effectively support student completion and transfer? Have any changes in policy or practice been implemented as a result of these conversations? How would you describe the progress made?

Summary & Close

Q1: From your perspective, what steps could the institution take to improve completion and transfer for all students? For Latina/o students?

Q2: From your perspective what are the most important changes the college/university could make that would respond to students' challenges and eliminate any barriers to success that we discussed earlier? For Latina/o students? Changes in institutional policy and practice? Changes in collaboration with feeder schools and four-year institutions? Changes in how faculty and staff work with students? Other?

Q3: Thank you.

Q4: Collect forms.