SYNOPSIS OF PROPOSAL

Latina Student Retention Project

1. The research project involves principle investigator, Mary Jo Garcia Biggs (School of Social Work and advisor for Latinas Unidas) and co-investigator, Stella Silva (Office of Multicultural Student Affairs and advisor for Latinas Unidas) that will be working in conjunction with Latinas Unidas members and the mothers or mentors of those students. Latinas Unidas is a University Support Group that is comprised of predominately Mexican-origin female students, many who are first generation college students. Latinas Unidas members will be hosting a Latina Appreciation program on April 25, 2009. Some of the Latinas Unidas members have reported that many times, their well-meaning family did not support their educational pursuit, mostly due to cultural factors and lack of knowledge regarding the university. It is hoped that in addition to honoring their mothers/mentors, the event will help build a bridge between the families, students and institution, thus providing additional support in retention efforts. Dr. Biggs will be presenting two questionnaires – the first being a five item survey examining Latina Appreciation and the students experience at Texas State to be completed by the Latina Unidas members prior to the event. The second questionnaire, a five-item survey examining the mother/mentor perceptions of the students experience at Texas State and will be distributed to the parents on the day of the event.

The anticipated age range of the participants will between the ages of 18 to 65. The primary rationale for examining this group is to determine the effectiveness of the Latinas Unidas program in regards to Latina student retention and the attitudes of parents regarding the Latina Unidas program in regards to retention. There will be no more than 30 Latinas Unidas participants and no more than 30 participants who are the mothers of the Latinas Unidas Students. The exact number will be determined by the numbers of mother/mentors who attend the Latina Appreciation event. There would be no foreseeable exclusionary factor from participation in this research.

2. The participants for this research will come from the membership of Latinas Unidas and the mothers or mentors of those members who attend the Women’s Appreciation Event. Their participation in the event is strictly voluntary.

Written consent forms will be made available to the participants (Latinas Unidas members and their mothers or mentor). One consent form will be in English and one will be in Spanish. Applicable consent forms attached (the Spanish version is currently being created). The verbiage in each consent form is written appropriate to the respective comprehension level and obligatory information. The Latinas Unidas members consent will be sought first, as they will complete their portion of the study prior to the event. The consent of the mothers or mentor will be sought during the event but prior to their filling out the form. Those who agreed to participate may withdraw their participation at any time without prejudice or jeopardy to their standing with the University or its affiliates.

3. A five-question hardcopy survey will be distributed by to Latina Unidas participants at a scheduled meeting prior to the April 25th event and will be collected at the end of the meeting. The day of the event a five-question hardcopy survey (one in Spanish one in English) will be distributed to the mothers or mentors of the Latinas Unidas participants and collected prior to the conclusion of the program. The data will be collected at the conclusion of the event and analyzed at future date. The five-question survey will be formatted in a Likert scale ranging from zero to four. The categories will be: 4 =strongly agree, 3=somewhat agree, 2=neither agree or disagree, 1=somewhat disagree, and 0= strongly disagree. There is also room for comments at the end of each question. The data will be analyzed by the researchers to be disseminated in the future.

4. In this research there are no foreseeable risks to the subjects, physical, psychological, social, or legal risks. Neither the subject matter directly involves any physical activities, psychological trauma, or adverse legal repressions.

5. Regarding the risk of voluntary participation, we have not only provided a clear explanation of their right to voluntary participation in their consent form (in Spanish and English), but it will also be restated prior to the start of the survey administration.

Confidentiality safeguards will also be in place as a means for minimizing risk. To protect the confidentiality of the participant, access to the actual questionnaire responses will be specifically limited to the researchers. In addition, the research data collection process will include reassignment the subject’s name with an identifying number that will be stored in a password-protected file that will only be accessible by the researchers. Finally, the analysis of the data will be completed in another password protected computer program that is solely accessed by the researchers. Neither the computer program nor the final reports will provide any information that will allow the linking of names to specific comments. The survey data will be maintained for a period of three years following the completion of the initial data analysis, at which time the data will be destroyed. This information is clearly stated in the consent form.

6. The direct, potential benefits to the student and their families are relatively minimal in nature considering the retention benefits will not be known until the completion of the students’ degree. A possible immediate benefit may be the students’ feeling that that they and their culture are welcome at Texas State.

7. Compensation will be offered/provided to the participants. Each mother/daughter team will qualify for a total of $150 stipend. Part of the stipends may include payment for prearranged lodging at a hotel, or for travel to the university. There is no extra credit offered to students to participate in the research.

8. There are no foreseeable risks. Retention efforts will increase the university’s goal of reaching Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) status and to better serve Latino students on campus.

9. N/A

10. N/A (a student is not initiating this research)

11. N/A (This research is not a student project, pilot study, thesis, or dissertation)

12. N/A (This research project had *not* had a prior review by another IRB)

13. The only anticipated people that will have access during or after completion of the survey and to the unpublished results of this study will be the researchers, Dr. Mary Jo Biggs and Dr. Stella Silva. It is anticipated that the results be published.

**Consent Form**

**Latina Student Retention Project**

**IRB REFERENCE NUMBER:**

You have been invited to participate in a research study conducted by Drs. Mary Jo Garcia Biggs and Stella Silva. Dr. Biggs can be reached at 512-245-2586 or [mb56@txstate.edu](mailto:mb56@txstate.edu) Dr.Silva can be reached at 512-245-2278 or [ss23@txstate.edu](mailto:ss23@txstate.edu).

The purpose of this research is gain a better understanding of the Latinas Unidas organization and the needs of its members. You have been asked to participate in this study in order to obtain your opinion about the Latinas Appreciation Program and the Latinas Unidas Organization.

The participation in this study involves completing a survey. The survey consists of five questions and will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Although the study participation has minimal direct benefits to you, the outcomes of this research may help to improve the Latinas Unidas organization. There are no potential risks that may result from participating in this study.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose to withdraw your participation at any time during the study without prejudice or jeopardy to your standing with the University or its affiliates. If answering any of the questions makes you uncomfortable, you may omit them.

Your name will appear only on this consent form, which will be stored in a storage case separate from all other information collect during the study. Your responses to the survey will be anonymous. All data collected will also be kept in a locked file cabinet at the School of Social Work, HP 150. Researchers, Dr. Mary Jo Garcia Biggs and Dr. Stella Silva will have access to the data collected. Data and consent forms will be stored in a locked file cabinet for three years.

A summary of the results will be available via email upon your request after the study has been completed. Please direct your request to Dr. Mary Jo Garcia Biggs at [mb56@txstate.edu](mailto:mb56@txstate.edu).

If you have any questions regarding the research, your rights as a research participant, please contact the Institutional Review Board chairperson, Dr. Jon Lasser, or the Compliance Specialist, Ms. Becky Northcut. Dr. Jon Lasser can be reached at 512-245-4313 or at [lasser@txstate.edu](mailto:lasser@txstate.edu), and Ms Becky Northcut can be reached at 512-245-2102.

After reading this form, if you agree to participate, please sign anywhere on this page to indicate that you voluntarily give your consent to participate in this study. If you would like to have a copy of this consent form for your records please let us know.

**Questions for Latinas Unidas Daughters/Mentees**

PLEASE READ THE COVER LETTER EXPLAINING INFORMED CONSENT PRIOR TO PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY AND BEFORE COMPLETING THE QUESTIONAIRE

Instructions: Please circle the most appropriate response and/or respond in the space provided. The questionnaire should take no more than 15 minutes of your time, depending upon the amount of detail you provide; however, we encourage you to take as much time as you like in responding. There are no correct or incorrect answers. The information requested will be used to better understand Latinas Unidas and the needs of its members. Results will be reported in summary form only (that is, your identity will not be associated with your responses). Therefore, please feel free to be as honest as you can in answering the questions.

1. **This program has helped me feel welcomed at Texas State.**

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0 1 2 3 4 4 =strongly agree 3=somewhat agree 2=neither agree or disagree 1=somewhat disagree 0= strongly disagree

COMMENTS:

1. **This program was beneficial to my college experience.**

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0 1 2 3 4 4 =strongly agree 3=somewhat agree 2=neither agree or disagree 1=somewhat disagree 0= strongly disagree

COMMENTS:

1. **My involvement with Latinas Unidas is helpful in my retention at Texas State.**

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0 1 2 3 4 =strongly agree 3=somewhat agree 2=neither agree or disagree 1=somewhat disagree 0= strongly disagree

COMMENTS:

1. **The format used in today’s program was informative.**

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0 1 2 3 4 4 =strongly agree 3=somewhat agree 2=neither agree or disagree 1=somewhat disagree 0= strongly disagree

COMMENTS:

1. **Additional comments or suggestions about this program?**

**Questions for Latinas Unidas Mothers/Mentors**

PLEASE READ THE COVER LETTER EXPLAINING INFORMED CONSENT PRIOR TO PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY AND BEFORE COMPLETING THE QUESTIONAIRE

Instructions: Please circle the most appropriate response and/or respond in the space provided. The questionnaire should take no more than 15 minutes of your time, depending upon the amount of detail you provide; however, we encourage you to take as much time as you like in responding. There are no correct or incorrect answers. The information requested will be used to better understand Latinas Unidas and the needs of its members. Results will be reported in summary form only (that is, your identity will not be associated with your responses). Therefore, please feel free to be as honest as you can in answering the questions.

1. **This program has helped my daughter/mentee feel welcome at Texas State.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
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0 1 2 3 4 4 =strongly agree 3=somewhat agree 2=neither agree or disagree 1=somewhat disagree 0= strongly disagree

COMMENTS:

1. **This program was beneficial to my daughter’s/mentees college experience.**

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0 1 2 3 4 4 =strongly agree 3=somewhat agree 2=neither agree or disagree 1=somewhat disagree 0= strongly disagree

COMMENTS:

1. **My daughter’s/mentee’s involvement with Latinas Unidas is helpful in her retention at Texas State**.

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0 1 2 3 4

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COMMENTS:

1. **Additional comments or suggestions about this program?**