



Latino Students' First Year Experience at Goshen College

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OVERALL STUDY PROJECT

An Investigation of the College Experiences of Latino Students at Goshen

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Purpose of the Overall Project: Higher Education Experiences of Latino Students

- Investigate the overall experiences of Latino students at GC.
- Assess their curricular, pedagogical & co-curricular experience.
- Explore their social adjustment, academic support & identity development
- Examine how these experiences match with their needs & previous background
- Investigate how the students are managing any cultural differences in the College
- Compare the college experiences of Latino & Non-Latino students on campus



Research Questions

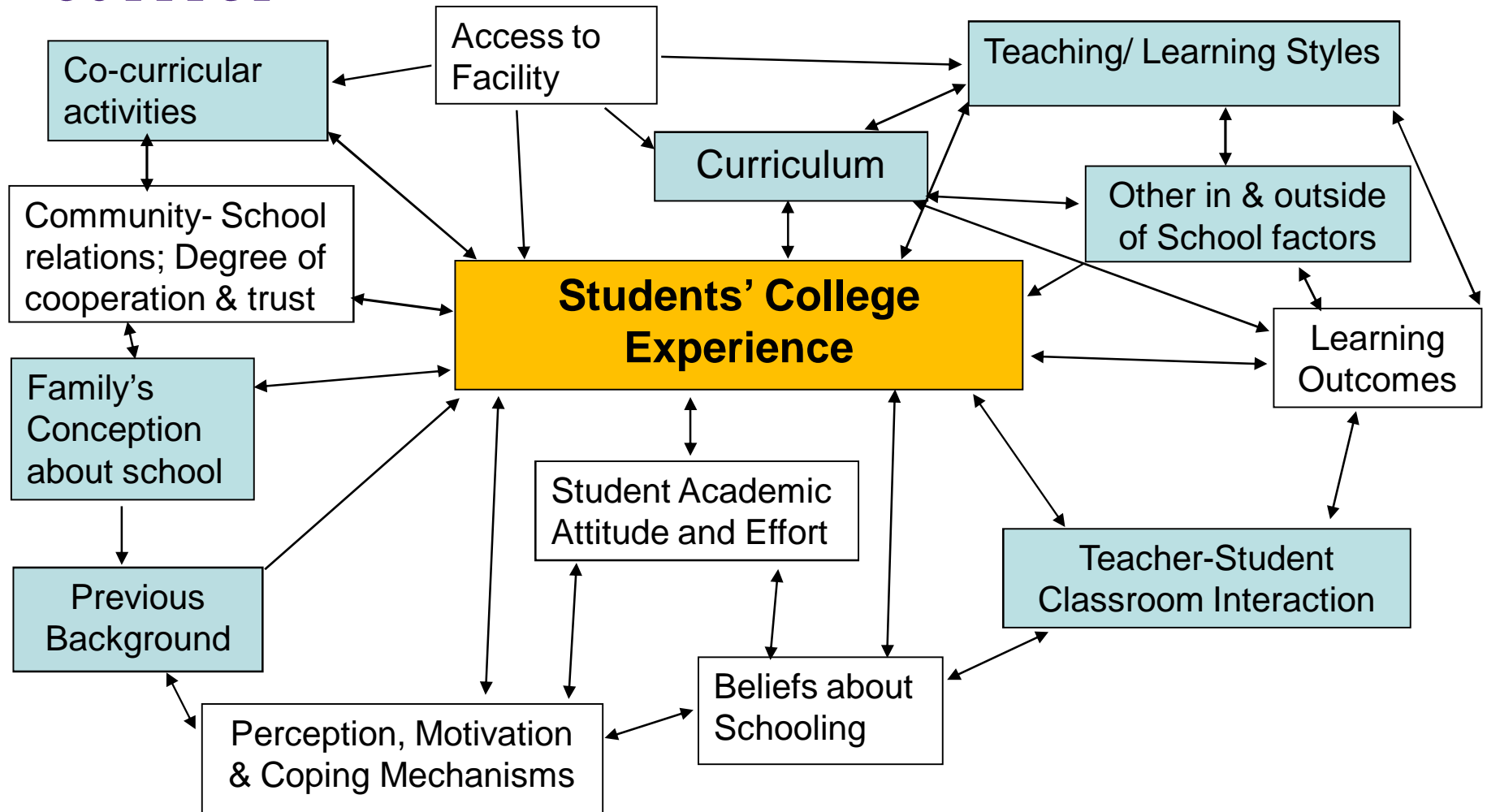
- What types of College experiences do Latino students have?
- To what extent do these College experiences match with the needs, interests & past experiences of the students?
- What curricular & pedagogical practices contribute to the College experiences of the students?
- What aspects in co-curricular experiences & during non-instructional time contribute to the students' involvement in the College's activities?
- What mechanisms do the students use to manage any cultural experience differences in the College?
- How do the different factors that affect students' College experiences interplay in their learning?



Methodology

- Mixed approach of quantitative & qualitative methodology.
- Online survey administered using Qualtrics.
- Qualitative interviewing, observation & documents.
- Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions are being administered to students, parents, teachers & administrative staff.
- The quantitative data will be entered in SPSS & analyzed using the appropriate statistical tools.
- After conducting the interview by using an audio-recorder, the responses are transcribed & analyzed using thematic analyses.

A Conceptual Framework for a Study of Latino Students' Experience at Goshen College



Adapted from Ogbu's (1981) Framework in Miles and Huberman (1994) for a similar study of "Minority Children's School Experience".



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Characteristics of Interview Participants

Participants	Gender	1 st Year	2 nd Year	3 rd Year	4 th Year	Sub-Total	Total
CITL Latino Sts	Female	12	2	-	-	14	21
	Male	2	5	-	-	7	
Non-CITL Latino Sts	Female	1	1	1	2	5	10
	Male	1	1	1	2	5	
Non-Latino Sts	Female	1	1	-	-	2	5
	Male	1	1	1	-	3	
Latino-Sts' Teachers	Female	2	2	1	1	6	11
	Male	2	2	1	-	5	
CITL Latino Sts' Mentors	Female					2	3
	Male					1	
Administrative Staff	Female					6	11
	Male					5	
Latino-Sts' Parents	Female	5	2	1	2	10	20
	Male	5	1	2	2	10	
Sub-Total	Female	21	8	3	5	45	81
	Male	11	10	5	4	36	



INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Participants	Target	Interviewed	Transcribed
1 st Year CITL Latino Sts.	14	13	13
2 nd Year CITL Latino Sts.	7	7	6
Non-CITL Latino Students	10	6	-
Non-Latino Students	5	3	2
Teaching Faculty & Mentors	14	14	5
Administrative Staff	11	11	4
Parents	20	13	1
Total	81	67	31



SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Participants	Target	Respondents as of 02/23/09
Latino Students	48	28
White Students about Latino Sts.	186	98
White Students about themselves	186	158
Teaching Faculty	90	46
Administrative Staff	70	56
Parents (Questionnaire by Mail)	60	7
Total	640	393



FOCUS OF TODAY'S PRESENTATION

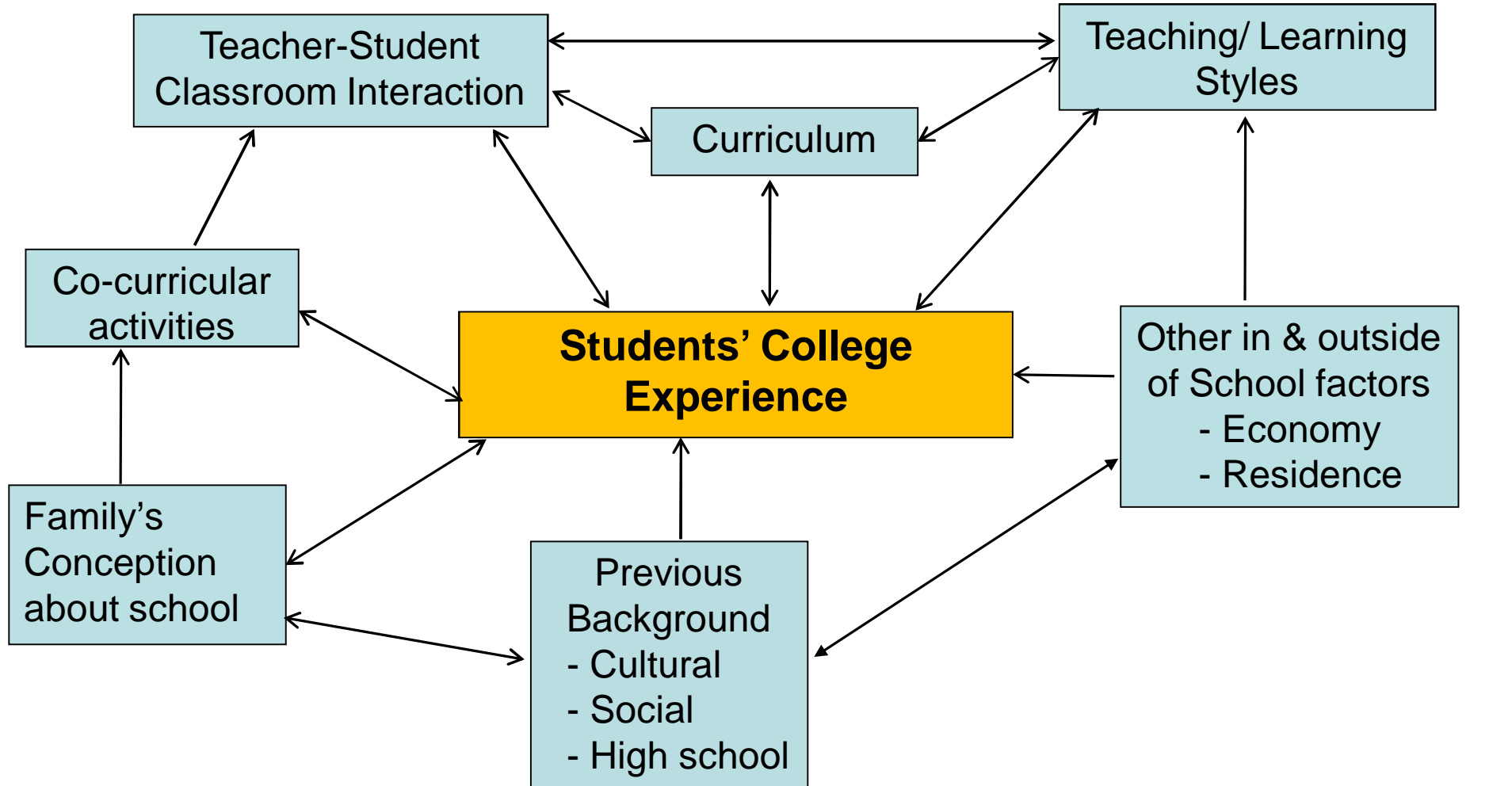
Latino Students' First Year Experience at Goshen College



Specific Purpose of this Presentation

- Assess their curricular/pedagogical & co-curricular experiences, and how cultural experiences helped/hindered their transition.
- Identify the factors that contributed to their positive/negative college experiences .
- Discuss about the possible solutions of the different challenges encountered by the Latino students.

1st Year Latino Students' Experience at Goshen College





Group Characteristics

- 13 full time 1st year Latino students
- Gender: 11 Females, 2 Males
- Fall GPA: 3.5 – 4.0(2); 3.0 – 3.49(1); 2.5 – 2.99(2);
2.0 – 2.49(3); 1.5 – 1.99(4); 0.5 – 1.0(1)
- Permanent Address: Indiana (11); Out of State (2)
- 8 are first generation/first child to attend college
- US born (6); Foreign born (7)
- Mexico (11); Ecuador (1); Puerto Rico (1)
- Economic Status: Lower (8); Lower Mid (2);
Middle (3)



Findings: Why Goshen College?

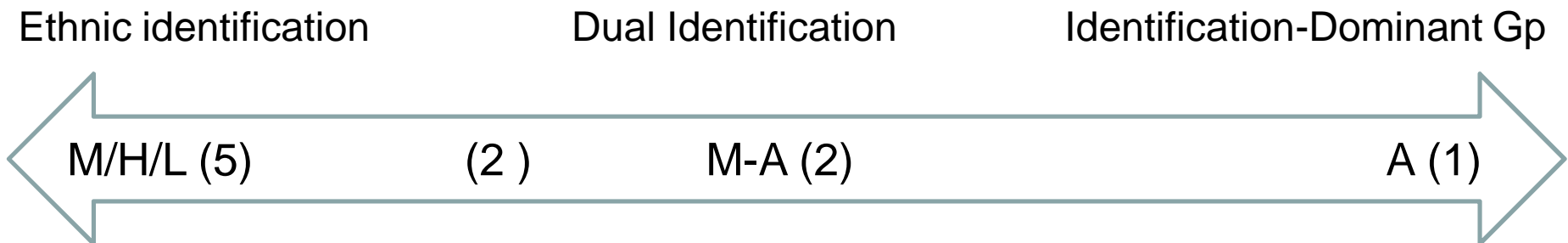
- Proximity (8)
- Better scholarship package, CITL (6)
- Recommended by family members or friends (4)
- Small campus (4)
- Small class size (4)
- Visited and liked it (3)
- Faith-based institution (3)
- Heard that Latinos are welcome/ feel included/ friendly people (3)



Identification with Ethnic Category

(how do students identify themselves?)

- Mexican (0);
- Latino/a (3)
- All in one (Latino, Hispanic, Chicano /LISPANO) (1)
- Associate myself more with Latino b/s of CITL (2)
- American (1)
- Do not care (1)
- Mexican-American (2)
- Hispanic (1);





Findings: Residence

(Where do they live?)

❖ Live off campus (7)

Effect:

- Difficult to meet other students for social interaction.
- Have no computer & internet at home to do HW.
- Lose focus on study at home (distraction at home).
- Difficult to meet study groups.
- Takes time to commute & (I) have to get up early.
- Living on campus: “In addition to being more social, I’m more independent b/s I live away from home”.



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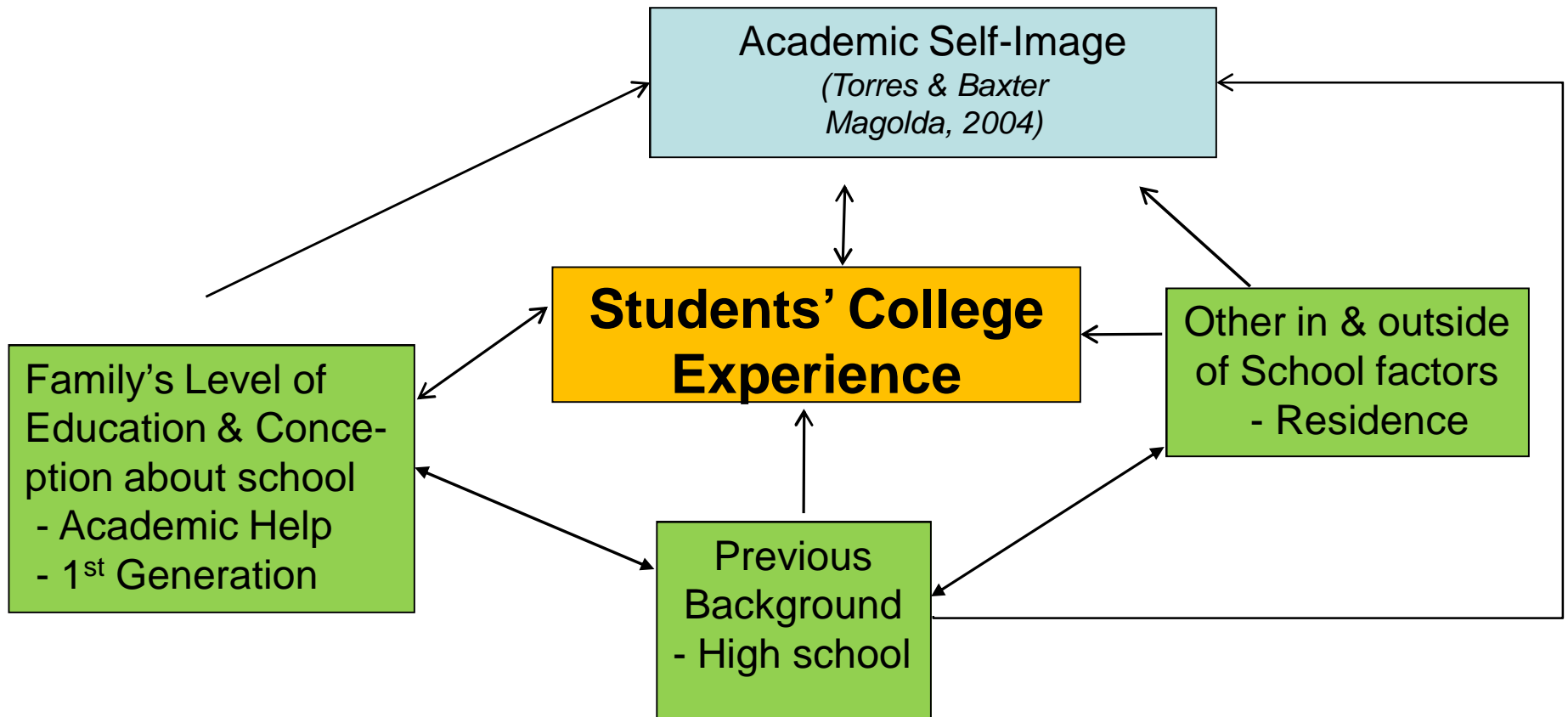
Findings: Curricular Experiences

(Experiences in interacting with the different subjects)

- Most contents are useful for my life but some aren't directly connected to my future career (7 students)
- Most of the subjects are difficult:
 - below 5 on a rating scale from 1-10 (5);
 - between 5 & 7 (4);
 - an average of 8 & above (3)
- Liked the subjects b/s of the nature of the contents & their relevance (6)
 - Liked contents related to their personal life
- Liked the subjects b/s of the teachers (5)

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Findings: Curricular Experiences





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Findings: Curricular Experiences

“I think for me it’s really hard. Because, compared to my American friends that I have from high school & here, their parents can help them out and say, ‘Oh, yeah, I know how to do this. I remember how to do this from high school, college or yeah, this is Algebra. You do this, you do that. Or this is history.’ Like, they have a background. They have something to fall on, unlike Hispanics... Since it’s like, it’s something new. You kinda have to start from 0. Like, what you learned in high school. If you don’t keep that base, what you learned in high school which was *still* hard, there’s no way you can actually make it to college. Because you don’t have that someone to fall back if, especially, if you’re living at home... But for those that have parents that went to college, like, they’re kinda, somehow they’re just used to it. Like they *know*, they know what goes after 2 plus that, plus x, and...”

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Findings: Pedagogical Experiences

(Experiences about their teachers' methods of teaching)

- Interested more in hands-on experiences
 - observation (visual), experiments, practice
- Learn more by step-by-step procedures; examples;
- Learn less by just lectures (too much teachers' talk)
- Need lectures to be slow
- Need rubrics in assessment
- Need more small group discussions (8)

Findings: Pedagogical Experiences

Classroom participation

- Quiet, prefer to sit & listen others:

Why?

- Less confident in language skills

(Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004)

- Not sure of what to say (Rodriguez et al, 2000)

- Need more time in processing information

- My parents make decisions & I am used to listen & accept

- Prefer to talk with & ask the professor in a one to one setting



Findings: Co-Curricular Experiences

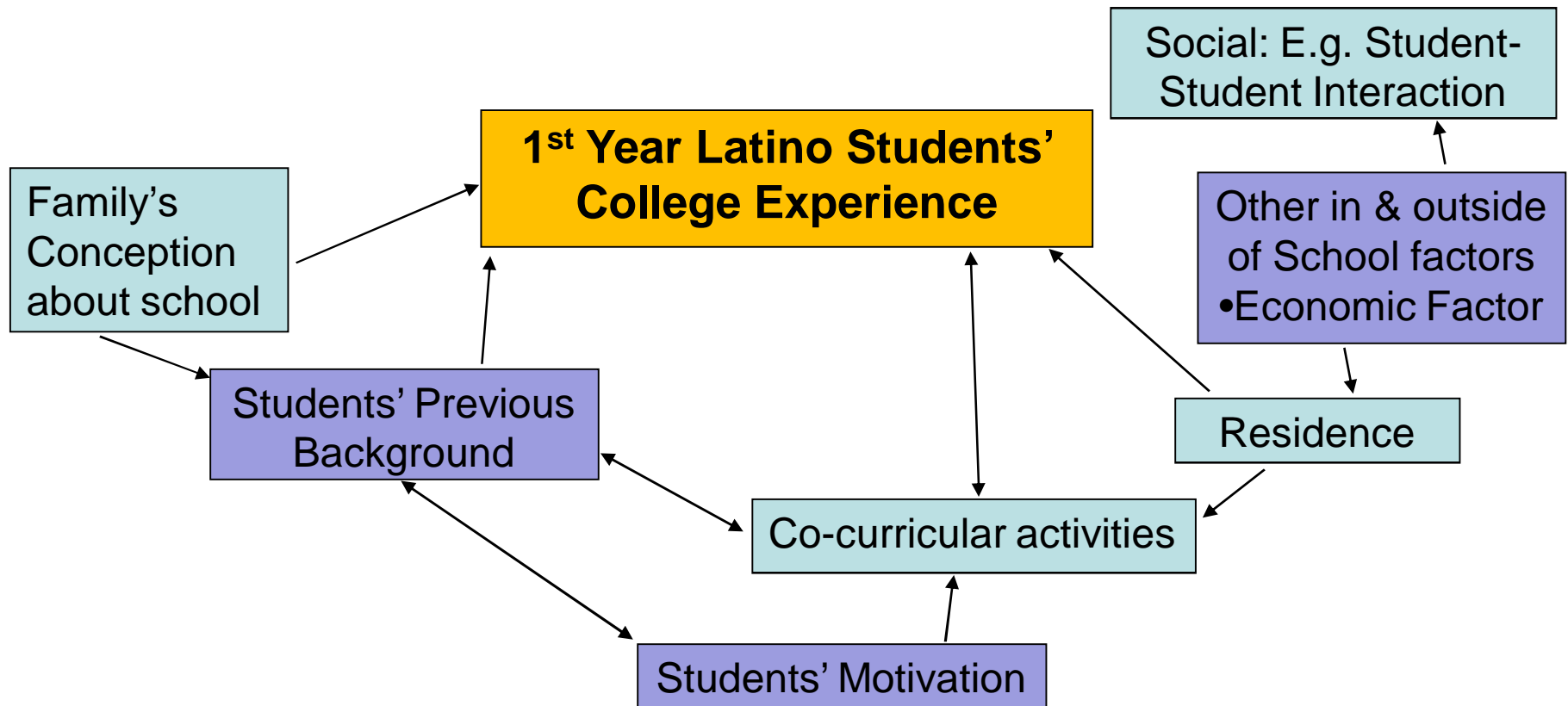
(What is their participation in clubs, events, sports...)

- Mostly in LSU (9)
- Salsa club (3)
- Inter-mural volleyball (3)
- BSU (4)
- Soccer (4)

Challenges to Participation:

- ❖ Need time to participate
 - Overwhelmed with many requirements, meetings (6)
 - Working part-time (6)
 - Living off campus (7)
- ❖ My parents don't understand its need (2)

Co-curricular Experiences





Findings: Co-Curricular Experiences

“I did start like the Salsa club, but then, like I got so busy. And I think I **got busy** because of where **I’m working**.”

“I’m only a member of LSU right now... And I joined the Black Student Union... I was going to do soccer cause that’s what I did in high school. But, I was kind of **afraid that I wouldn’t be able to handle** like, doing a sport and then college and then homework and all that stuff.”

“Right now it’s **harder, off-campus** b/s I don’t drive. So, I’m kinda stuck onto like, if my parents can come pick me up or the trolley... So, it’s like you **can’t really participate**. So it’s not like there’s certain things that are later at night; and it’s like, ‘oh, well, the trolley doesn’t pass at that time so I guess I can’t stay’.”



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Findings: Social Experiences

(Their interaction with other students, campus community...)

- Every person on campus greets you; I feel welcome.
- Good; could be better but I am quiet.
- Interacted more with other Latino students (6)
- Interacted more with Non-Latino Students (2)
- Felt comfortable with any student group (5)
- Interacted with only my classmates; live off campus & have no chance of meeting other students.
- I don't start conversation when I meet new people.
- It was very difficult to communicate & approach other groups of students at the beginning.

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Findings: Cultural Experiences

(To what extent their previous cultural background helps/hinders their current college experience)

- Have not encountered cultural difference (4)
- Didn't feel comfortable at the beginning but learned about others' norms in 'Race & Ethnic Identity' class
- Presence of diverse cultures on campus broaden my understanding & engagement of others' cultures
- Mexican culture is more reserved, always "stand back & let other people handle the situation". This contributed to my quietness.
- White/American students seem to be more distant & less expressive in sharing personal experiences.



Findings: Cultural Experiences

“For me, sometimes when my parents speak, they’ll bring out a point & sometimes you know, I expected to respond back. I think that kind of goes with why I don’t speak very much in class. And, especially like... for my dad, like **if he says something to me, I’m not really expected to say something back.** Because that’s kind of like **disrespectful.**” (Female student)



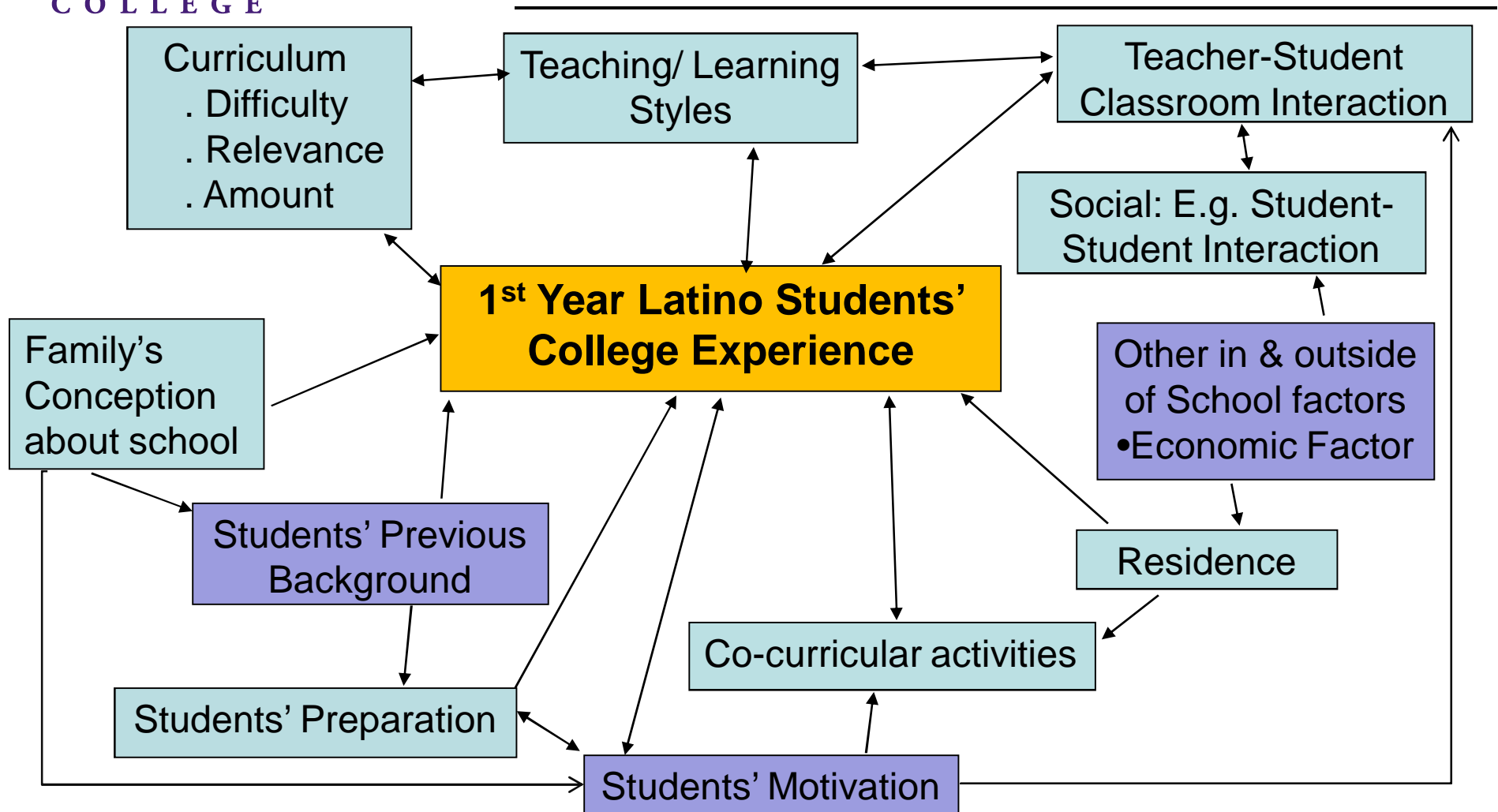
Findings: Challenges

(With what kinds of problems do they usually struggle)

- “B/s I do not have papers, I am just goanna finish school & go to ‘*work*’, or go back to Mexico; I feel careless due to this problem”.
- Financial problem (Rodriguez et al, 2000) to live on campus
- My parents want me to be at home.
- Difference in workload from high school.
- I would do much better if I did not have to work.
- 1st generation; me & my parents didn’t know anything & were overwhelmed first (Fry, 2002).
- Difficulty balancing social & study time (Hurtado, Carter & Spuler, 1994, 1996).



Summary: 1st Year Latino Students' Experience at Goshen College





Discussion Question

- What do you see in your institutions? What is your experience?
- What possible mechanisms do you think will minimize the students' challenges?

Thank You