

New Faces: Latinos in North Carolina

A curriculum-based media project about the Latino community's cultural & economic contributions to North Carolina.

UNIT 2 **LATINO YOUTH**

Module 2: Access to Education

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Unit 2 Module 2 Objectives:

1. Identify and critically reflect on the factors that affect young people's experiences in school, in particular the factors that affect the experience of Latino youth.
2. Explore current legislative proposals and activism related to access to higher education for undocumented youth and reflect on the tone of the debate surrounding this issue.

Unit 2 Module 2 Framing Questions:

1. What opportunities does higher education afford us?
2. What barriers often stand in the way of our access to higher education?

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Unit 2 / Module 2 / Lesson 1

Unique Education Issues Facing Latino Youth

Objective

Learners will be able to identify and critically reflect on the factors that affect young people's experiences in school, in particular the factors that affect the experience of Latino youth.

Framing Question

How do students' families, ethnicities, economic realities, immigration status, and other factors over which they have no control affect their experiences and performance in school?

Backgrounder

Some children and teenagers want to finish high school but cannot because of circumstances such as their families' economic situations, parents reliability as care takers, responsibility for younger siblings, and myriad other reasons. One particular segment of young people for whom finishing school can be a challenge is the children of migrant farm workers. Some agricultural workers are migrant farm workers, people who move from place to place following the harvest and other work that changes with the seasons. In North Carolina and in other parts of the United States many of these migrant farm workers are Latinos. Some of these workers are single men, but some workers have families. The constant movement of the family and low wages often make it difficult for the children of migrant farm workers to finish their education. Sometimes these youth must quit school and begin working in order to help provide for their families.

Latino young people, whether they are children of migrant farm workers or not, are overrepresented in terms of drop outs and low performance on standardized tests in North Carolina. There are many issues that include economics, immigration status, English proficiency, parent involvement and many other factors that affect students' performance. Institutional factors and experiences within schools also affect outcomes for students. This lesson explores student perspectives on some of these issues.

Materials and Preparation Needed

1. TV and DVD player
2. Computer with Internet access and projector with speakers
3. New Faces DVD Film Clip: "Liliana's Story: Migrant Families and Education"
In this clip, we are introduced to the Luis family, and in particular their 14-year-old daughter Liliana. The members of the Luis family are Latino migrant workers who move between Texas and California to do field work. The mother and older children work in the fields, while the father works at the housing complex where all of the workers live. Liliana's older sisters all dropped out of school to work the fields and

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help the family. However, Liliana is determined to finish school. In this piece, we follow Liliana into her first day in 9th grade at a new high school in California.

4. *Hispanic/Latino Youth's Engagement with North Carolina Public Schools: Students' Perspectives*, by Elva Y. Valencia, Ph.D., and Marco A. Zarate. Article available under Unit 2 Lesson Plans on the New Faces website and available at http://www.thencshp.org/docs/NCSHP_surveys_feb2004.pdf

Lesson Outline

Introductory Writing Activity and Film Clip

1. Ask learners to free-write for 10 minutes on the following prompt: What were or what are some of the most challenging aspects of being in high school for you? Ask two to three learners who feel comfortable to share what they have written.
2. Introduce and show the clip "Liliana's Story: Migrant Families and Education."
3. Following the clip, have learners answer the following questions as a group:
 - What are some of the challenges that Liliana is facing?
 - How does her family's migration story shape her experience?
 - What is a migrant camp?
 - Describe why Liliana might be nervous about starting high school.
 - Why might it be difficult to start over at a new school when her family moves to another camp?
 - How might this constant moving affect the education of children of migrant workers?

Demonstrating Learning Using a Venn Diagram

1. Ask learners to think about how Liliana's experiences compare to their own first day of high school or middle school and to create a Venn diagram that shows the similarities and differences between their own and Liliana's situations.
2. Ask learners to share what common themes have been discovered between Liliana's new situation and their own. What did they learn about themselves or about children of migrant workers through this exercise?

Further Exploring Latino Students Perspectives on Education

1. Ask learners to read or share with other learners the information from the study *Hispanic/Latino Youths Engagement with North Carolina Public Schools: Students' Perspectives*, which garnered input of N.C. Latino students about their experiences in school.
2. Discuss the concerns and opinions of the Latino students that were collected in the survey. Ask students to identify some of the needs of the Latino students and also to note the variation in responses within this group of students.

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3. How do the experiences of the students compare with the experiences of the learners in the class?

Writing Assignment

1. Ask learners to write a comparative essay based on the content of their Venn diagram or on a comparison between their experience and the experiences outlined in the article.
2. Share these essays and discuss.

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Unit 2 / Module 2 / Lesson 2 The Dream of Higher Education

Objectives

1. Learners will reflect on issues that affect access to higher education for young people, with a particular emphasis on the struggles of Latino youth, many of whom are from immigrant families.
2. Learners will also discuss differing public perspectives on undocumented immigrants' access to higher education.

Framing Questions

1. What opportunities does higher education afford us?
2. What barriers often stand in the way of our access to higher education?
3. What are some specific barriers to getting a college degree for undocumented students?

Backgrounder

As we learned in Unit 1 of this curriculum, approximately 45% of Latinos in North Carolina are undocumented immigrants. The majority of these immigrants have come to North Carolina in search of a better life for their families, and some have brought their children with them. These children share with their parents the stigma of being undocumented, but did not themselves make the choice to come to the U.S. Some of these young people have lived in North Carolina for many years and are enrolled in our public schools, pursuing the dream of better opportunities that their parents imagined. However, if these children want to pursue higher education after graduating they face many obstacles.

Eligibility for Admission

In North Carolina undocumented students may be eligible for admission to North Carolina public universities. The following is the policy regarding undocumented students from the UNC Policy Manual 700.1.4[G]:

“Undocumented aliens are eligible to be considered for admission as undergraduates at UNC constituent institutions based on their individual qualifications with limitations as set out below:

- An undocumented alien may be considered for admission only if he or she graduated from high school in the United States.
- Undocumented aliens may not receive state or federal financial aid in the form of a grant or a loan.
- An undocumented alien may not be considered a North Carolina resident for tuition purposes; all undocumented aliens must be charged out-of-state tuition.

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- All undocumented aliens, whether or not they abide in North Carolina or graduated from a North Carolina high school, will be considered out of state for purposes of calculating the 18% cap on out-of-state freshmen pursuant to Policy 700.1.3.
- When considering whether or not to admit an undocumented alien into a specific program of study, constituent institutions should take into account that federal law prohibits the states from granting professional licenses to undocumented aliens.

In addition to North Carolina universities, undocumented youth may be interested in attending community colleges in the state. Access to community college for undocumented students has seemed to be in a perpetual state of flux for the last several years. However the following is the status of access to community college for undocumented students as of September 2009:

The State Board of Community Colleges approved an admissions policy on Sept 18, 2009 that would allow undocumented immigrants to attend North Carolina community colleges. The Board voted 16 to one to admit undocumented immigrants if they meet the following requirements:

- Must be a graduate of a U.S. high school
- Must pay out-of-state tuition, totaling \$7,700 per academic year
- May not displace a North Carolina or U.S. resident from a class or program

The policy must now go through the administrative rules process as outlined in North Carolina Administrative Code, Title 23. That process usually takes 6 to 12 months. Until the new policy becomes law, the current admissions standard of not admitting undocumented immigrants, which went into effective May 2008, remains in place.”¹

For updates on this process please see: <http://www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/>

Costs

When you take into account the price difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition as shown below for 2009-2010 for UNC Wilmington, it is easy to see how costs can become a barrier to education even for qualified undocumented students:

UNCW Cost Per Year²

	In-State	Out-of-State
Tuition & Fees	\$4,711	\$15,593
Room & Board	\$6,988	\$6,988
Books & Supplies	\$934	\$934

¹ Press release, Sept. 18, 2009, from the NC Board of Community Colleges. Available at http://www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/News_Releases/September%2009%20State%20Board%20of%20Community%20Colleges%20Press%20Release.pdf

² Source: UNCW 2009-10 Undergraduate Catalog, available at <http://www.uncw.edu/catalogue/undergraduate/>. Some costs are averages.

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Miscellaneous Costs	\$2,431	\$2,431
TOTAL COST PER YEAR	\$ 15,064	\$ 25,946

Proper Preparation

Another barrier for some Latino young people, particularly those who have moved to the United States from another country or who are Limited English Proficient is the completion of the minimum requirements to access a 4-year college or university. The following are the minimum requirements for the UNC system:

- Completed Minimum Course Requirements
- Academic Rigor & Coursework
 - Difficulty of coursework completed including advanced, honors, AP, IB, and dual enrollment
 - Grades, grade point average, and class rank (if provided)
 - Increasing strength of schedule
- Competitive standardized Test Scores
 - SAT
 - ACT with writing
- Intangible Items
 - Two short essay questions
 - Extracurricular/leadership activities and civic engagement
 - Guidance counselor or core academic teacher recommendation

The following minimum requirements for entry into a UNC-system university are mandated by the University of North Carolina's Board of Governors and required of ALL United States applicants. Meeting minimum requirements does not guarantee admission to UNCW.

- 4 units of English
- 2 units of the same foreign language
 - American Sign Language (ASL) fulfills this requirement
- 4 units of mathematics
 - including algebra I, geometry, algebra II, and at least one unit of a higher-level math for which algebra II is the prerequisite
- 2 units of social studies
 - including at least one unit of United States History
- 3 units of science
 - including at least one unit of a life or biological science, at least one unit of a physical science, and at least one unit of a course with a laboratory portion

Most first-year applicants who are successful in gaining admission to UNCW will go beyond these requirements.

For immigrant students who come to the United States in middle or high school, their Limited English proficiency, as well as confusion about which of their credits from their

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international high school may count, may mean that they cannot advance through the above series of classes, leaving them unprepared to apply to a four-year college.

Controversial Topic

The admission of undocumented youth into universities and community colleges is a controversial subject over which citizens and political leaders are divided. Some argue that it is in the best interest of our communities and economy to allow high-performing students to pursue higher education no matter their immigration status. These immigrant advocates argue that education leads to better jobs and greater contributions to society. Opponents argue that allowing undocumented students to enter the university rewards people for breaking the nation's immigration laws and therefore should not be allowed. In the past there has been legislation put forth both in the N.C. General Assembly and in the United States Congress that would allow undocumented students who have lived in the U.S. for certain periods of time to be eligible for in-state tuition and, in some cases, for the opportunity to become permanent residents and then citizens. Again, this is controversial legislation and is just one debate in the larger national conversation around immigration reform.

In the next two activities, learners will be introduced to the debate about access to higher education, will learn the details of the previously proposed legislation on this issue, and will themselves be asked to state an opinion.

When discussing a controversial topic, it is essential to create an atmosphere in which all learners feel safe and un-attacked and in which learners can respectfully express their opinions and explore new perspectives and understandings. It is important to set ground rules when discussing sensitive topics.

For more information on setting the stage for controversial topics see this article from *Teaching Tolerance*. <http://www.tolerance.org/teach/activities/activity.jsp?ar=761&pa=2>

Materials and Preparation Needed

1. New Faces DVD film clip "Off to College? Immigrant Students and Life After High School." This clip includes interviews with several individuals who are knowledgeable about the issue of access to higher education for undocumented immigrants. The people interviewed include attorneys, advocates, legislators, and undocumented students, eager to enroll in a college or university.
2. TV and DVD player
3. Computer with Internet access and projector with speakers

Lesson Outline

Introduction

1. Ask learners to think about the possibility of going to college. Encourage them to think about some of the following:

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- How much does it cost to go to college?
 - What courses must you have completed and what other things do you need to do in order to attend community college or university?
 - Be sure to point out the difference in price between in-state and out-of-state tuition and the difference between public and private college tuition. (See the information about UNCW in the background section above.)
2. Discuss some of the hurdles that all students face when they are preparing to go to college.

Film Clip

1. Introduce the clip "Off to College? Immigrant Students and Life After High School." Summarize the background information above and then give students more specific information about the clip. As we saw in the clip from the film *Escuela*, some young people want to go to school but can't because of family circumstances. In this clip we see how some young people want to go to college or university, but cannot because of their status as undocumented immigrants. Tell students that they will need to listen to the arguments made by several people about whether undocumented students should be allowed to go to college and pay in-state tuition. Learners should take notes on the arguments that interviewees put forth.
2. Show the clip. Ask learners to identify which people featured in this video believe that undocumented immigrant students should have access to college and university. Ask students to recall the arguments that the different interviewees used to express their support for undocumented youth to be able to attend college. List the following people on the board:
 - The students: Luis, Felix, and Maribel
 - Kenneth Hatcher
 - Marisol Jimenez McGee
 - Rick Glazier
 - Edward James Olmos
4. Ask learners to review their notes and share the arguments made by each of these individuals. How do the interviewees support their claim that undocumented students should be able to attend college at in-state prices? List the arguments made by each on the board.
5. Ask learners to reflect on these arguments. Were any of the stories or arguments in the film particularly persuasive? Were their feelings about this issue altered?
6. Conclude by informing students that they will have a chance to learn more about this issue in a subsequent lesson.

NOTE: Again, remember that this may be an emotionally charged topic for some students, especially if there are students in the class who may themselves be

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undocumented immigrants. Never ask a student to share his or her immigration status. It is essential to remind students to state any argument respectfully.

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Unit 2 / Module 2 / Lesson 3

Changing Laws and Educational Opportunities for Immigrant Youth

Objectives

1. Learners will be able to summarize arguments for and against legislation that would allow undocumented immigrants to pay in-state tuition at North Carolina colleges.
2. Learners will explore current legislative proposals and activism related to access to higher education for undocumented youth and will reflect on the tone of the debate surrounding this issue.

Framing Questions

1. Why is allowing undocumented young people access to higher education such a controversial proposal?
2. What are the legislative proposals that have been put forth regarding undocumented young people and access to higher education?

Backgrounder

Every year 50,000 to 60,000 immigrant students who have grown up in the United States attended school in this country and who have graduated from high school are blocked by their immigration status from pursuing their dreams of a college education. Current North Carolina policy allows undocumented students to be admitted to universities, but it does not allow them to pay in-state tuition rates. In turn, college is too expensive for most of them to afford. According to the law as it is today, undocumented students must pay out-of-state tuition, which is much higher than in-state tuition.

A few years ago some representatives to the North Carolina state legislature proposed a new law, House Bill 1183, which would have allowed undocumented children to qualify for in-state tuition if they have spent at least 4 years in North Carolina schools, graduated high school, qualified for academic admittance to college, received that college academic admittance on their own merit, and agreed to file a petition or affidavit seeking United States citizenship as soon as the law and timeframe allowed them to do so.

In this lesson students will learn more about what happened when this legislation was introduced. They will learn about updated current proposals related to undocumented young people. They will continue to explore support for and opposition to proposals that would let undocumented students have access to higher education.

As with many lessons in this curriculum, we suggest setting ground rules for the class period in which this lesson will be carried out. This is a controversial topic and one that may be extremely personal for many students.

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Materials and Preparation Needed

1. New Faces DVD Clip “Legislation About Immigrant Access to Higher Education.”
This clip includes additional interviews that explain a proposal for a North Carolina law that would allow certain undocumented immigrants students the opportunity to pay in-state tuition to state colleges and universities. Other interviewees discuss their opinions about this bill and relate their own experiences with immigration and North Carolina's immigrant community.
2. TV and DVD player
3. Computer with Internet access and projector with speakers
4. Copies of the handout *Paying For College: The Debate Over In-State Tuition For Undocumented Students* for each student, available under Unit 2 on the Lesson Plans page of the *New Faces* website.
5. Note cards cut out for College Costs Icebreaker. See attached sheet.

Lesson Outline

College Costs Icebreaker

1. Mix up the college-costs note cards that you have cut out and put them in a bowl or other container. There should be 16 note cards.
2. Ask 16 learners to each draw one card each.
3. Tell the students that 8 of the note cards describe one particular cost of attending college at UNC Chapel Hill (for example, “The cost of one year of in-state tuition”), and the other 8 note cards have the matching prices in dollars.
4. Students are to walk around the room trying to find the person who they think has the match to their card.
5. Give students several minutes to make their matches.
6. Ask the pairs of students to share the information on their cards. Confirm whether they have correctly matched the item to the cost.
7. After all items and costs have been correctly matched, have a short discussion about what new information learners gleaned from this exercise. The following are some suggested questions:
 - Were you surprised by any of the costs?
 - Why is out-of-state tuition so much higher than in-state tuition?
 - What are some ways that students cover these expenses?
 - What does this exercise tell us about who is likely to have access to higher education?

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View Film Clip

1. Transition to the film clip by giving students an overview of the limitations on access to higher education that undocumented students experience. You may want to share the summary of the film clip outlined above in the Materials sections.
2. Watch the clip “Legislation About Immigrant Access to Higher Education”
3. Direct a class discussion about the topics addressed in the clip. The following are suggested discussion questions:
 - Can you summarize the proposed law that was discussed in the clip? What would the law have allowed?
 - Recall what Marisol Jimenez says about the response that her organization, El Pueblo, Inc., received after they helped to present the proposal for the new law. What were some of the responses they received after proposing this legislation?
 - Why do you think people would threaten those who proposed the law?
 - How do these threats make you feel?

Exploring the Arguments

1. Distribute the handout *Paying For College: The Debate Over In-State Tuition For Undocumented Students*.
2. Ask students to read the handout. As they read, write the following questions on the board:
 - What are the two kinds of tuition at UNC system schools?
 - Currently which tuition must undocumented immigrants pay if they want to go to college?
 - What are two of the arguments for allowing undocumented immigrants to pay in-state tuition?
 - What are two of the arguments against allowing undocumented immigrants to pay in-state tuition?
 - Which of the arguments do you find make the most sense to you? Why?

Possible Extension, Homework, or Assessment

1. Have learners further investigate the subject of immigrant access to higher education. Learners should look for websites where they can read more about proposed legislation, public opinion, and research on this issue.
2. Learners should write a persuasive essay, arguing either for or against passage of a law that would allow undocumented students to have access to in-state tuition benefits. Learners would need to give reasons to support their argument for or against the bill based on their experience with the video clips, class discussion, handouts, and their own Internet research. Learners must give at least 4 reasons to support their positions.

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College Costs Icebreaker Note Cards³

What is the cost of one year of In-state tuition at UNC Chapel Hill?	\$4,066
What is the cost of one year of out of state tuition at UNC Chapel Hill?	\$21,954
What are the student fees at UNC Chapel Hill for one academic year?	\$1,856

³ Information for 2010-2011 school year from http://studentaid.unc.edu/studentaid/cost/ssa_ug_general.html

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What are the average rooming (rent) costs for a student at UNC Chapel Hill for one year?	\$5,408
What is the cost for food for a student attending UNC Chapel Hill for one year?	\$3,420
What is the cost of books and supplies for one student for one academic year at UNC Chapel?	\$1,028

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What are the local transportation costs for one year for a student at UNC Chapel Hill?	\$878
What are the estimated personal expenses for a student for one year at UNC Chapel Hill?	\$1284