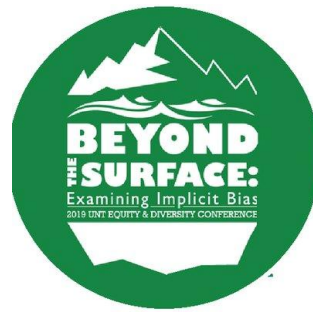# Redefined Cultural Relevance: the Afro-Latinx Experience

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Session Overview

- Learning Objectives

- Presenter Introduction/Background/Positionality

- Historical Context, Testimonial, Theoretical Framework, Recommendations

- Activity: Pair & Share
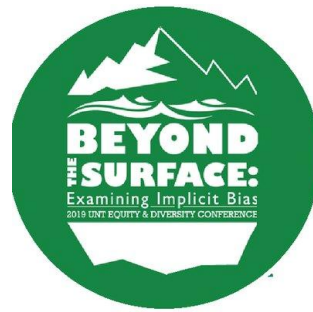
- Wrap Up/ Questions

Session Learning Objectives

- Through historical context and/or personal experience, participants will begin to analyze and understand the oppression those in the Afro-Latinx community experience.

- Participants will identify and share individual strengths through collaborative and critical dialogue.

- Participants will learn about techniques and tools to actualize practices promoting inclusion of the Afro-Latinx community in higher education spaces.

Presenter Background & Positionality

- Able-bodied, cisgender woman, Black, Latina, Spanish speaking

- Born and raised in Cali, Colombia until age 6

- Attended and graduated from Texas State University

- Rosa Clemente encounter

- Currently studying at University of North Texas

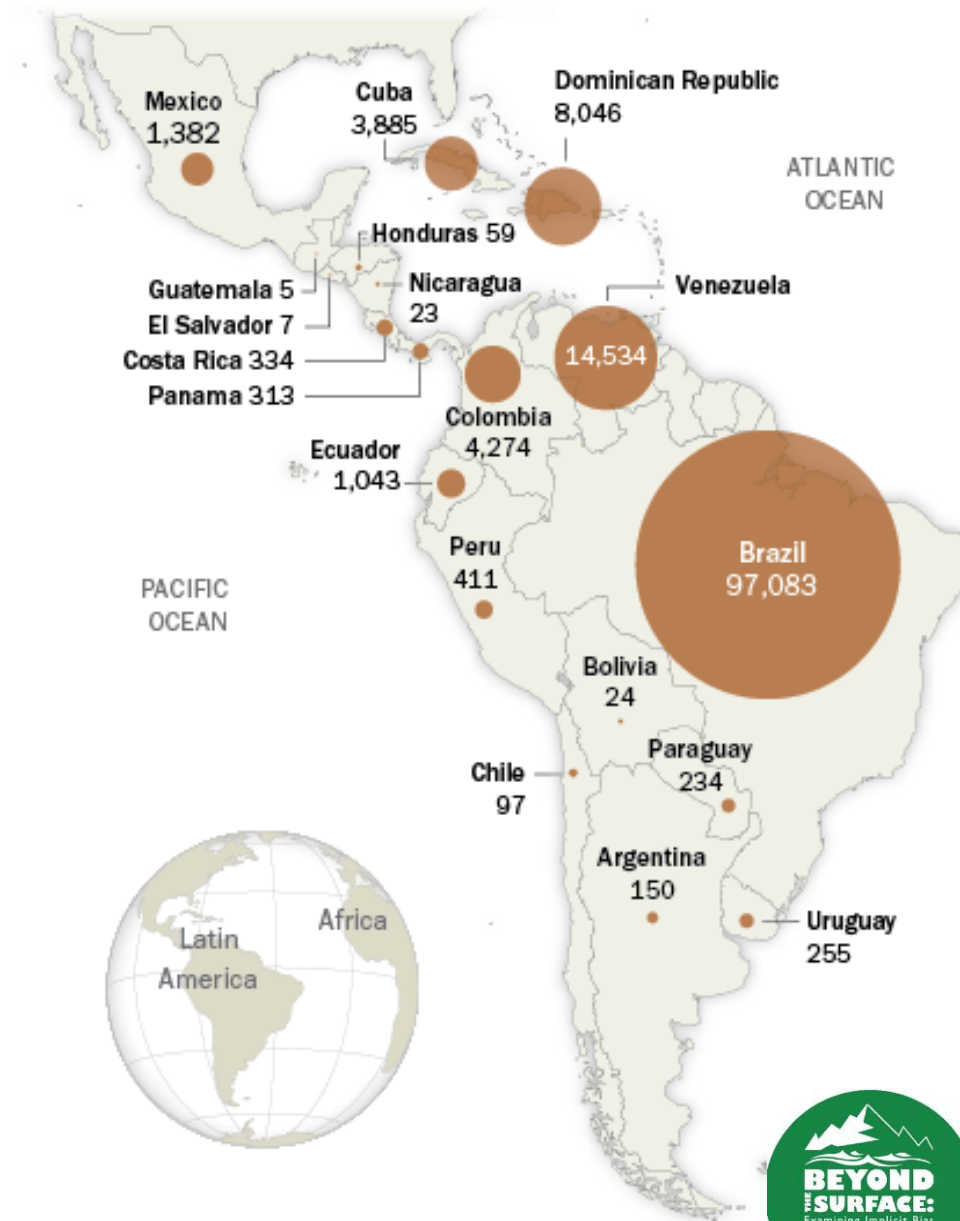- Reason for presentation & philosophical framework

Historical Context

- Latin Americans of significant African ancestry
  - Represented by 25% of U.S. population (2016)

- Race and blackness in Latin America in relevance to colorism
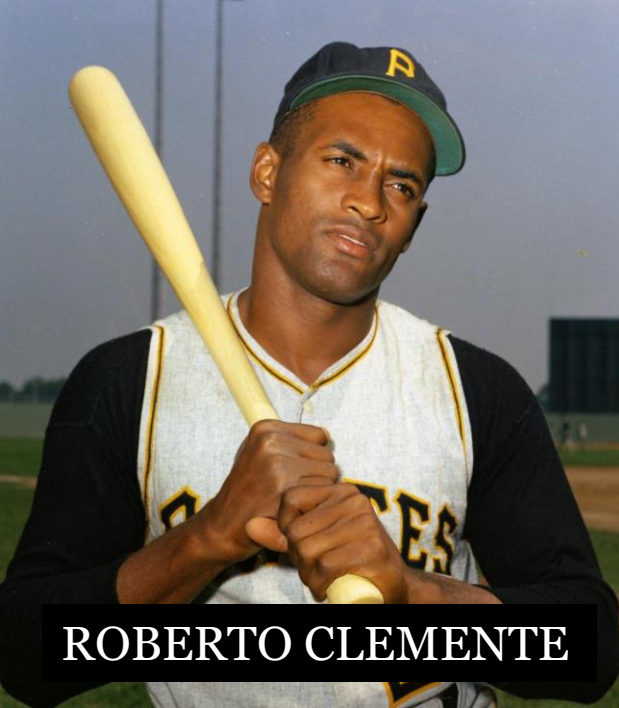
- Combined race/ethnicity questions

Afro-descendants in Latin America

In thousands

Mexico 1,382
Cuba 3,885
Dominican Republic 8,046
Honduras 59
Guatemala 5
El Salvador 7
Costa Rica 334
Panama 313
Nicaragua 23
Venezuela 14,534
Colombia 4,274
Ecuador 1,043
Peru 411
Brazil 97,083
Bolivia 24
Paraguay 234
Chile 97
Argentina 150
Uruguay 255

ATLANTIC OCEAN

PACIFIC OCEAN

Africa
Latin America
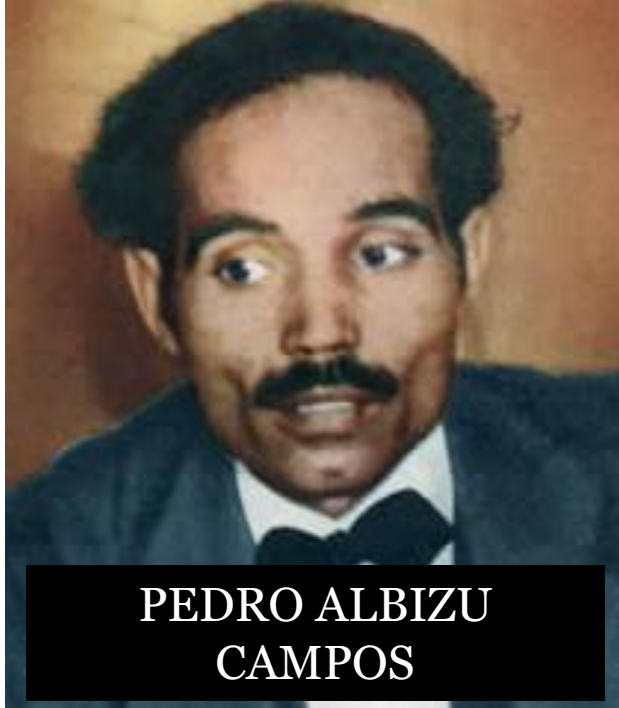
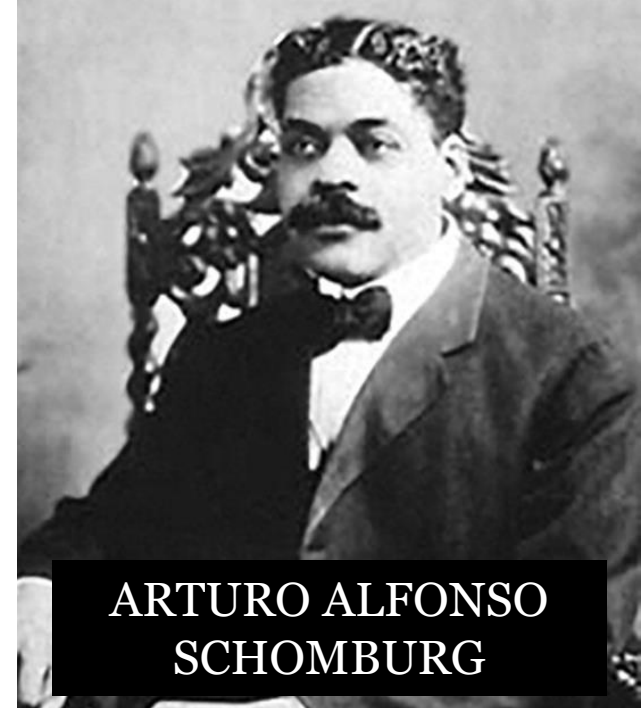Note: Estimates for the Dominican Republic include the term "in

ROBERTO CLEMENTE

PEDRO ALBIZU CAMPOS

FELIPE LUCIANO

ARTURO ALFONSO SCHOMBURG
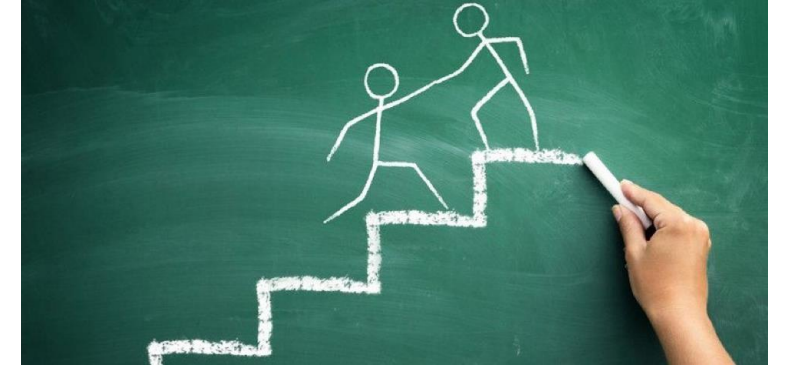
#BlackLatinxHistory

MIRIAM JIMENEZ ROMAN

Student Participant

Delia

- Texas A&M – Commerce

- Spanish & Sociology double major; minor in Latin American Studies

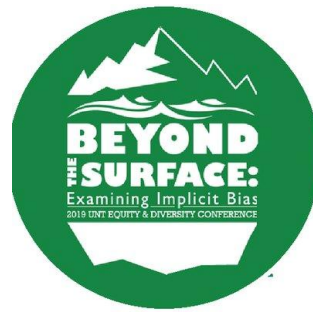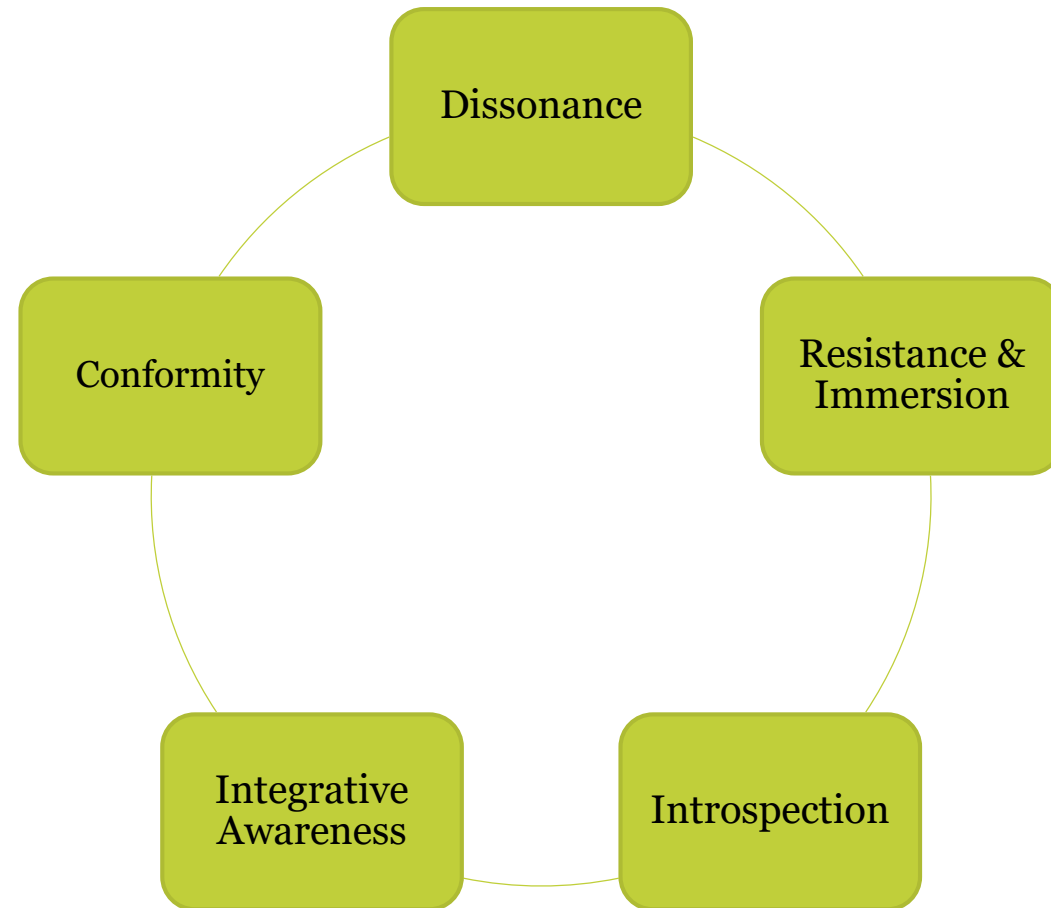- Panamanian

- Race: Black

- Ethnicity: Latina/Hispanic

Delia Shares...

Racial and Cultural Identity Development Model
Sue & Sue (1990,1999,2003)

Racial and Cultural Identity Development Model cont.

Sue & Sue (1990,1999,2003)

Conformity	Dissonance	Resistance & Immersion	Introspection	Integrative Awareness
Strong preference for dominant race Strong negative attuite toward self, their group, and other minority groups Neutral	Individual encounters information that contradicts their cultural beliefs or values Reexamination often takes place after some experience has occurred	Individual completely embraces minority culture and rejects dominant culture Person is inspired to find out more about their culture forming a stronger connection to their group	Involving a deeper understanding of the racial/ethnic group to which they belong to Individual begins to move towards greater independence and autonomy	Achieving a balance and sense of security Individual now reaches out to minority groups to gain understanding of experiences and expresses support for all oppressed people

Structural Inequalities Work Against Marginalized Students

- History of exclusion, discrimination, and racism

- Unequal schooling

- Unequal school financing

- Segregated schools

- Poverty

Despite Obstacles Many Students Excel in Education

- Overcome obstacles

- Push themselves to complete college

- Employ strategies of resistance

- Become survivors

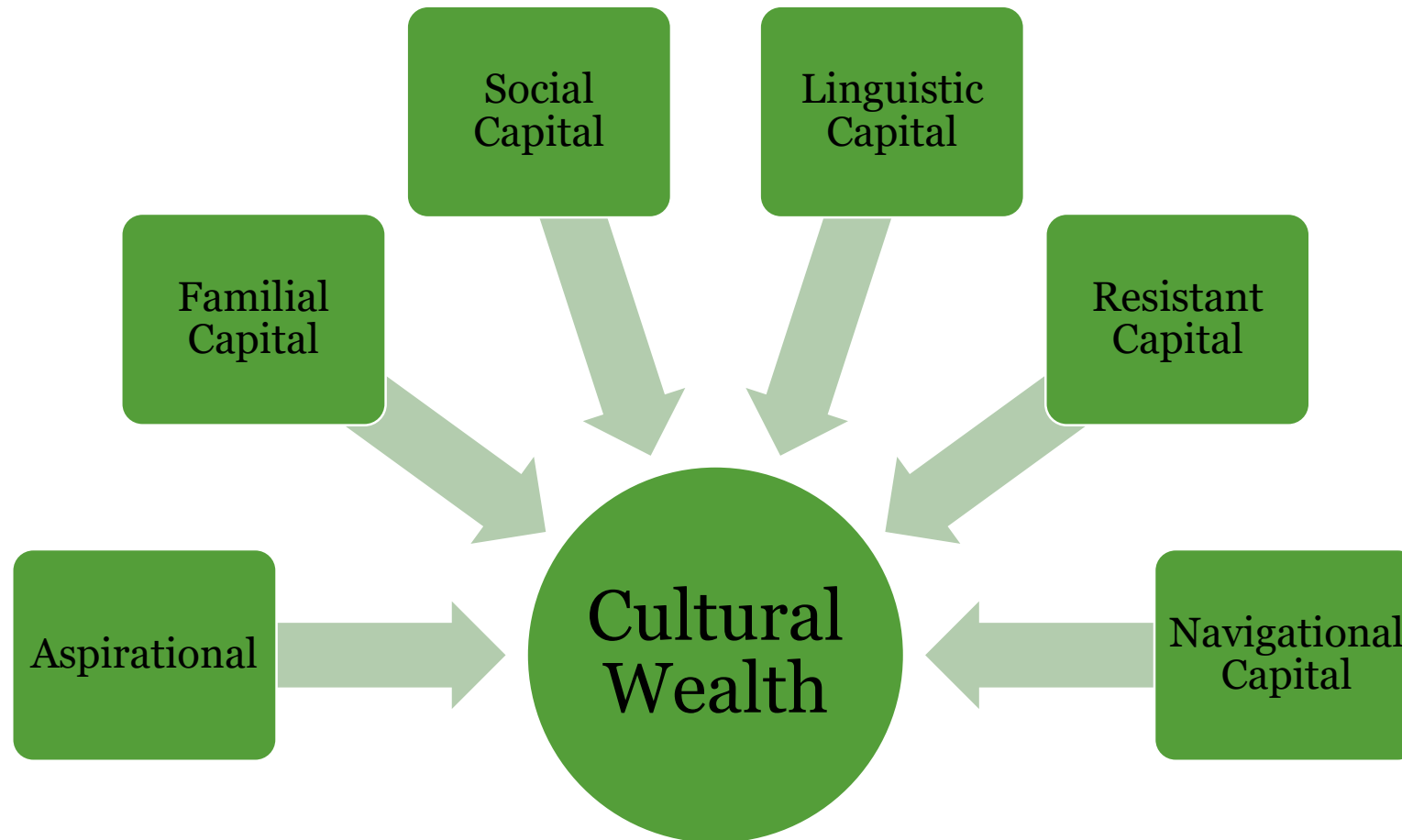- Employ largely unacknowledged assets and community cultural wealth to succeed against the odds

Debunking Deficit-Based Perspectives

- What cultural tools do Afro-Latinx students employ to succeed in college?

- What assets do they possess?

- What are their ways of knowing?

Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth

Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth

Aspirational

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

Familial

- Model of strength & determination of family
- Benefit from guidance, respect, testimonies and education

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Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth cont.

Social

- Form peer networks
- Form study groups
- Peer evaluation

Linguistic

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

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Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth continued

Resistant

- Resist stereotypes, combat and overcome microaggressions

- Overcome hardships such as poverty and lack of guidance and resources

Navigational

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

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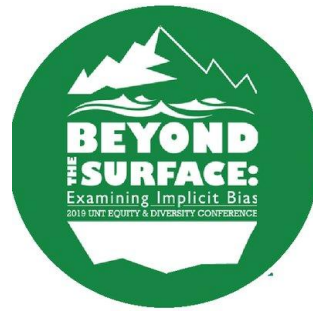
[What does educational excellence look like in a Global Society?](#)

It Is Time to Shatter the Dominant Deficit-Based Framework

- Deficit-based thinking pathologizes, stereotypes, and marginalizes students (i.e., at risk, marginalized, culturally deprived)

- Based on grand narrative that parents and communities do not value education and that low-income families are inferior

- Theories and models with deficit-based assumptions are not aligned with the experience, strengths, and culture of underserved student populations
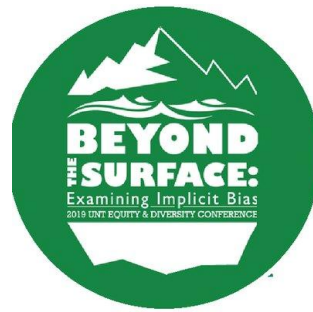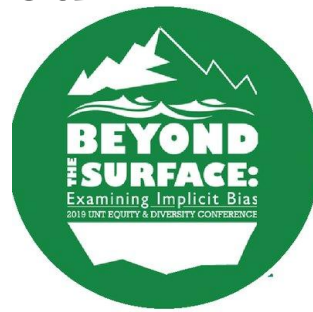
How Can We Help Our Students?

- **Aspirational Capital:** Provide Afro-Latinx students opportunities to explore and pursue beyond clerical careers. Focus on new pedagogic and programs to deepen inquiry, meaning, and purpose. Strive away from engaging in colorism when seeking to increase Latinx representation

- **Familial Capital:** Host presentations and invite speakers that identify as Afro-Latinx during Black History Month/ Hispanic Heritage Month programming.

- **Social Capital:.** Encourage Afro-Latinx students to start a new organization that will represent their identity and increase their presence around campu
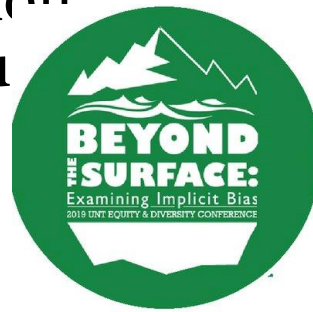
How Can We Help Our Students? (continued)

- **Linguistic Capital:** Provide adequate bilingual and multicultural education through programming practices

- **Resistant Capital:** Provide trainings to prepare Afro-Latinx students to solve challenging issues regarding equitable health, education, and other social obstacles

- **Navigational Capital:** How do we help students navigate our institutions? Interactions with teachers/faculty? Interactions with student-support staff? Their peers? Focus on ways to address cultural aspects of the transition to college

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Activity

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