



Undergraduate Research Scholars' Reflection: What we Learned about Florida Post-Secondary Curriculum



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Abstract

This poster session will showcase what three undergraduate students learned during their year-long Research Apprenticeship. The students learned introductory research skills, including writing a literature review and how to collect and code qualitative data. In addition, students learned how to perform content analysis and run preliminary descriptive statistics. These students are part of the FSU Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROOP) which provides high-achieving students an opportunity to explore their interest in research. Preliminary results of the research project will also be presented.

Background

Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) are higher education institutions with an undergraduate student population of at least 25 percent of students who identify as Hispanic. HSIs create opportunities for Hispanic students from differing economic levels to have an appropriate environment to pursue higher education. These HSIs offer Hispanic students the opportunity to grow at an institution that makes them feel represented. In addition to having Hispanic leaders and faculty representation, students should also have to the opportunity to see themselves in the curriculum. This is an area for great potential improvement among HSIs, as research shows that only 3% of all courses offered at HSIs are ethnorelative-centered the Hispanic culture instead of being Eurocentric (Cole 2011). Furthermore, a multiple case study in California HSIs, determined that school curriculums were one of four major topics that HSIs needed to actively consider, and that culturally relevant curriculum must respond to student demographics (Garcia et al. 2019).

Materials and Methods

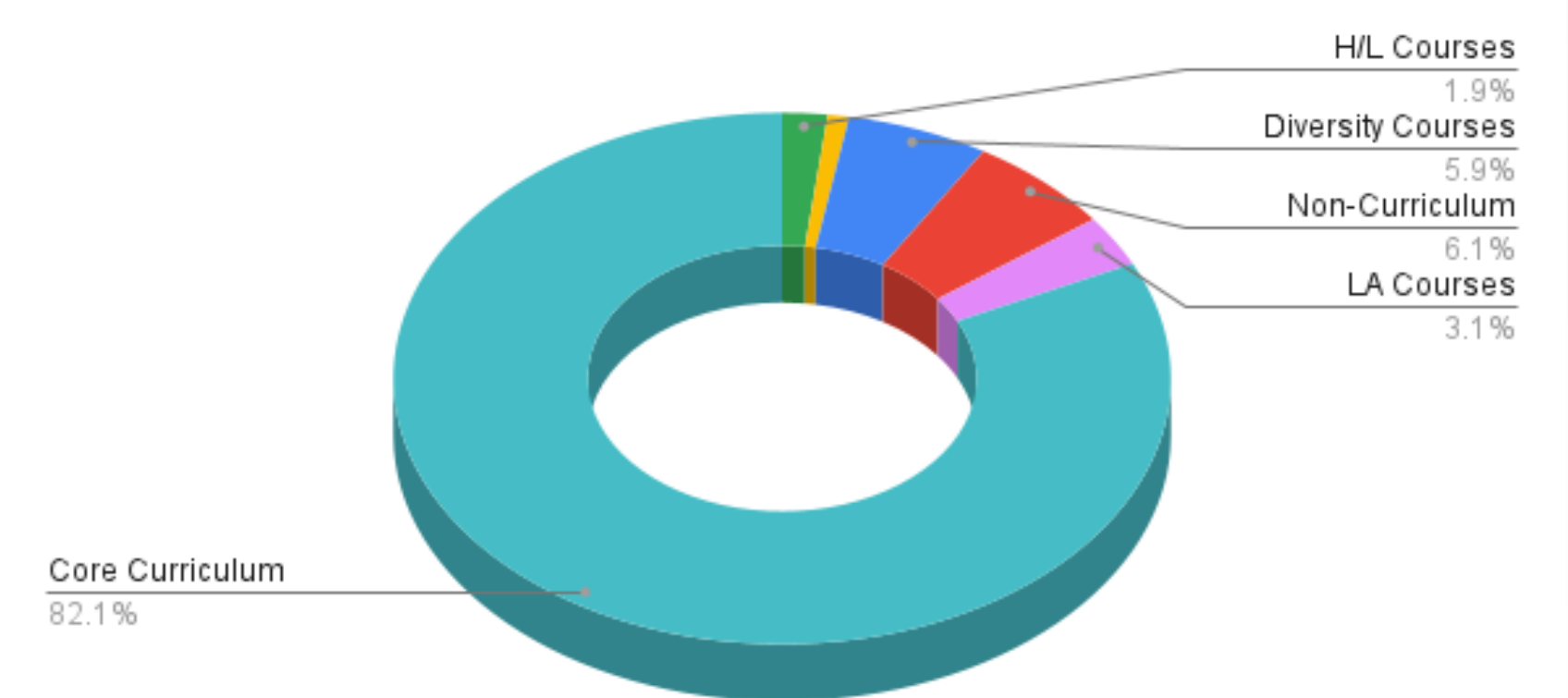
- Content analysis of the undergraduate course catalogs (2022-2023) from the twelve public institutions of the State University System of Florida. Formulate categories to place courses into. These categories are as follows:
 - “Hispanic/Latinx Course” - courses that centralized an aspect of Hispanic/ Latinx culture,
 - “African-American Course”- or courses that centralized an aspect of African -American culture/history,
 - “Diversity Course”, - courses that frame/center a minority/marginalized population in the U.S. or subgroup (Focus on sexual, racial, religious, and class inequalities in U.S. context),
 - “Non-Curriculum Course”- Courses that are not core curriculum courses but instead are offered as “additional” courses for those who wish to take them; ie DIS and Internships
 - “LA-Course” (Language Acquisition) - Courses whose curriculum contained methods to improve on language accretion
- Based on further analysis, we identified subgroups for courses under the main 5 categories described above. We have classified these as "Signature Courses" since they provide a more nuanced understanding of specific populations of interest.
 - Afro-Latino** - courses that discuss the experiences of black members of the Hispanic/Latinx population
 - Indigenous** - courses that acknowledge native or indigenous populations within diverse communities
 - Caribbean** - courses that recognize the multicultural identity of the Caribbean region including Spanish, English, and French influences
 - ESOL/TESOL** - courses which focus on teaching English as a second language or provided instruction on how to teach English as a second language
 - Disability** – courses that acknowledge the culture of physical and intellectual disabilities
- Biweekly meetings focused on discussing codes and ensuring intercoder reliability. Coders were able to ask questions regarding courses which could be coded in multiple ways. These conversations were helpful in refining and finalizing our codes and ensured all coders were applying the coding strategy in the same fashion.
- Summed the total number of courses in a set department, the number of courses that we had categorized within each of the 5 major labels, and calculated the percentage out of the total amount of courses throughout the university system. The remaining percentage, after all 5 major labels had been allotted for, was noted as the percentage of “Core Curriculum”.

Preliminary Results

The data and results shown are preliminary based on the SUS institution general bulletins coded to date. As of the printing of this poster nine SUS institution general bulletins have been coded. Based on these nine SUS institutions of Florida just under 2% of courses center the Hispanic/Latinx community, history, and culture. Courses centering African American studies contribute 0.9% and general Diversity courses contribute 5% to the curriculum of the nine SUS institutions coded to date.

Category	Percentage
H/L Courses	1.87
AA Courses	0.89
Diversity Courses	5.90
Non-Curriculum	6.12
LA Courses	3.10
Core Curriculum	82.12

Course Categories by Percentage



Reflection - Lauren

The project has given incredible hands-on experience to sociological theories and concepts such as intersectionality. This unique experience has developed my sociological eye and imagination while also providing an understanding of various research tools. Through this experience, I have familiarized myself with data organization tools such as Google Sheets, and the reference management software Zotero. We used Google Sheets to record and organize all of our data as well as other Google features like Docs and Drive to easily access all of our shared research materials.

Our biweekly meetings significantly developed my understanding of the project and the general category of diversity. Each team members' background contributed something incredibly unique to the project and created a well-rounded definition of each category we were looking into. I found the all-Latinx team to be extremely powerful in our work as we could often relate to each others' experiences and feel represented in every aspect of our project. However, this project demonstrated how diversity exists in a Floridian university space. It was always really exciting to see diverse classes in any major, especially Hispanic/Latinx courses.

Reflection - Marcus

This research project has assisted me in changing my view on research. Initially, I thought of research as a steep cliffside that I was nervous about attempting to climb. However, through the help of my mentor and partners, I have been able to adjust accordingly and scale that metaphorical cliffside with confidence. My mentor has provided me with tools I will use as I pursue higher education, such as Zotero, a citation management software, and the ability to identify valid peer-reviewed journal articles within different databases. My partners treated me comfortably, respectfully, and as an equal, making full use of any input, thus giving me the confidence to express my thoughts freely.

The project itself has been exciting and thought-provoking. As I looked into more peer-reviewed articles, I found multiple claims that resonated with me and made me proud that this was the project I got to delve into. Also, developing an understanding of humanities, which I had no prior knowledge of, has been enlightening and prodded my curiosity in a way that I am excited to continue exploring. Overall, this research project has been both intellectually informative and spiritually moving.

Reflection - Leo

This yearlong project has given me more than just qualities one can reiterate: resilience, commitment, and time management skills. Although eager to start on a project whose mission I knew had a propounding impact, I felt like I needed to figure out how I'd be able to assist my groupmates and mentor. As the weeks passed, my outlook on the project shifted. This project has challenged me in ways I don't believe any other project could have. It's contested me to deal with adversity, doubt, and perceptions.

One of my favorite aspects was being able to "visualize" the data. Being able to formulate percentages for our labels was simultaneously exciting and painful to finally see. Having to code the courses into their respective areas, I was only partially aware of the extreme lack of Hispanic/Latinx inclusion within courses in the State of Florida. This deficiency of courses goes beyond just a course offering in a catalog; it shows the need for Hispanic/Latinx representation within the University system in the state of Florida. A representation that leads to an unmeasurable amount of pride and the potential for countless success stories.

Acknowledgements

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Data

The data for this project was pulled from the published general bulletins for the 12 State University System of Florida Institutions for the academic year 2022-2023. These general bulletins were downloaded from each institution's websites.



	TOTAL	Number of H/L	Number of AA	Number of Diversity	Number of Non-Curriculum	Number of LA	Number of Core Curriculum
FAMU	3407	27	53	71	169	86	3001
FAU	2558	42	14	247	344	85	1826
FGCU							
FIU	5895	168	59	234	206	157	4827
Florida Poly	763	13	1	34	11	65	639
FSU	3892	52	26	326	353	131	3004
New College	963	19	2	65	0	65	812
UCF	3525	84	36	303	192	115	2795
UF							
UNF	2243	35	13	97	128	68	2584
USF							
UWF							