



The University of Vermont



# Strategies to Support Underrepresented Students

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# Introduction

- Bronx, NY to Burlington, VT
- First Generation College Student, From Limited Income
- Programs: SESP, TRIO/SSS, McNair Scholars Program
- Current TRIO/SSS Coordinator and Access and Success Coordinator for the Office of Diversity and Inclusion





# TRIO/SSS

- Mentoring
- Free printing services
- Early Class Registration
- Assistance with course selection
- Career Planning
- Goal-setting
- Technology lending
- Graduate School preparation
- Scholarship Opportunities



# Office of Diversity and Inclusion

- Foster an inclusive, welcoming, space for students
- Provide student support and encourage self-advocacy, motivation, and holistic student development
- Implement programming that supports acclimation to college, social integration, identity development, and student academic success
- Engage the greater community in dialogue around equity, social justice, oppression, and power and privilege



# Underrepresented Populations

- First-generation college students
- Students whose family income falls within U.S. Department of Education guidelines for limited income
- Students of Color at a predominantly White Institution
- ESL, Bilingual, Multilingual Students

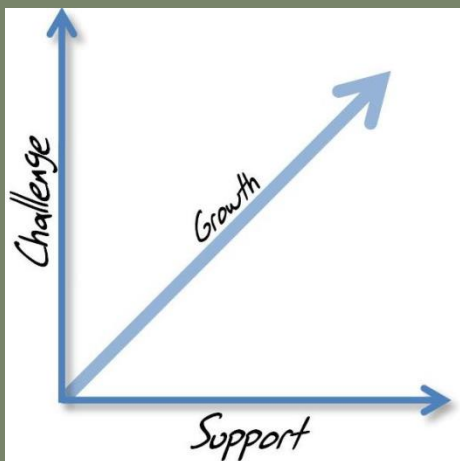






# Theoretical Framework

- ❖ Challenge and Support (Sanford, 1966)
- ❖ Matterings and marginality (Schlossberg, 1989)
  - Marginalization - the feeling that one is not fitting into a community or group
  - Marginalization neutralized by mattering





# Theoretical Framework II

## ❖ Three stages of Student Transition

(Tinto, 1993)

- separation (leaving their old home, school, friends)
- transition (navigating new and old experiences)
- incorporation (successful membership in their new environment/community)





# Challenges

- The literature on the first-generation identity highlights difficulty in acculturation to college. This challenge incorporated the lack of understanding the college language and inability to find resources. First generation students lacked guidance and preparation in comparison to their peers (Bui, 2002). Without proper guidance, students are less likely to successfully transition and persist (Gibbons & Borders, 2010).



# Challenges Cont.

- Literature on marginalized groups of color “Because most colleges are populated by a majority of white students, the cultures of the colleges are, understandably, geared more for those students.”
- As a result Students of Color at predominantly White institutions often struggle with isolation, and feelings of not belonging.



# Challenges Cont.

- Difficulty in transition to college (social, academic)
- Inadequate preparation
- Lack of familial support stemming from family members' inability to understand the collegiate context
- Familial Pressures





# Challenges Cont.

- Financial Limitations
- Isolation or Marginalization
- Culture Shock
- Unaware of campus resources, fear/inability to advocate for oneself
- Lack of Social and Cultural Capital



# Supportive Strategies

- Building relationships with students
- Embracing them into the larger UVM/EPSCoR community
- Personal connections, stories of your own experience (socially, financially, academically)
- Awareness of resources, getting students connected to other staff and faculty
- Promoting Diversity and Inclusion
- Safe Space
- Study Skills and Strategies



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Questions?





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