Native American retention: factors, programs and practices contributing to the completion of a four-year degree by Native American students in higher education Interdisciplinary Studies

Valerie Nirschl-Coats

Follow this and additional works at: http://digscholarship.unco.edu/urj
Part of the Education Commons, and the Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons

Recommended Citation
Nirschl-Coats, Valerie (2013) "Native American retention: factors, programs and practices contributing to the completion of a four-year degree by Native American students in higher education Interdisciplinary Studies," Ursidae: The Undergraduate Research Journal at the University of Northern Colorado: Vol. 3 : No. 1 , Article 5.
Available at: http://digscholarship.unco.edu/urj/vol3/iss1/5
Native American retention: factors, programs and practices contributing to the completion of a four-year degree by Native American students in higher education
Interdisciplinary Studies
Presenter(s): Nirschl-Coats, Valerie
Faculty Sponsor(s): Franklin, Elizabeth

This study examines the factors that contribute to the completion of a four-year degree among Native American students at a mid-size university in the Southwestern United States. In the United States Native American retention in higher education is at a low. Programs and practices have been implemented among universities to improve retention rates, but nonetheless retention rates are still minimal. Research in the field indicates that the factors contributing to Native American retention include familial support, support from faculty and staff, institutional commitment, and connections to homeland and culture. However, the research does not seem to show factors in relation to specific institutions. This qualitative study will focus on the experiences of six to twenty Native American students. These students will be interviewed to determine the factors that they regard as motives why Native Americans at this specific institution do or do not complete a four-year degree. Along with qualitative research this research will also be a program review in which the researcher will look at the University of Northern Colorado, Fort Lewis College, the University of Colorado at Boulder, the University of Colorado at Denver, Colorado State University, Duke University, and Baylor University. These programs will be evaluated through each individual program’s website. Based on the program reviews and the responses from the students we will conduct thematic analysis to find trends.