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Hispanic-Serving Institutions

Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) are defined as any eligible higher education institution that "has an enrollment of undergraduate full-time equivalent students that is at least 25 percent Hispanic students at the end of the award year immediately preceding the date of application" (US Department of Education). The United States Department of Education offers three grants (Title V, Part A; Title V, Part B; and Title III) to assist with educational opportunities and build sustainable programs to improve learning at HSIs. HSIs enroll two-thirds of Hispanic college students, and these institutions range from private to public, four-year universities to two-year colleges (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities). Teaching writing at an HSI provides unique opportunities to analyze and promote diverse sociocultural contexts and perspectives. Many HSIs enroll first-generation college students with a range of socioeconomic and linguistic backgrounds and whose access to education has been limited by financial and sociocultural constraints and circumstances (Newman, 2007).

There are over 500 colleges and universities that meet the Higher Education Act of 1965 criteria for being defined as a "Hispanic-Serving Institution" (1965). Effective writing instruction at an HSI means developing pedagogies that value Hispanic (e.g., Chicanx, Mexican American, Latinx) cultural practices, histories, knowledges, and traditions. This might look like adopting culturally sustaining pedagogies (Paris & Alim, 2017). Beatrice Mendez Newman (2007) writes, "Compositionists at HSIs should have some understanding of how cultural and familial expectations shape the Hispanic student's classroom experience . . . [and] the compositionist at an HSI needs to learn to hear student voices and respond to the *message* rather than to what appears to be errors in writing"

(pp. 20, 25–26). Culturally responsive teaching (Hammond, 2014; Ladson-Billings, 1994) and funds of knowledge (Rodriguez, 2013; Vélez-Ibáñez & Greenberg, 1992) are educational frameworks frequently cited and used in multicultural environments, like HSIs. Both frameworks emphasize cultural and linguistic diversity as an *asset* and advocate for cultural and linguistic awareness.

These approaches to teaching often empower students to take ownership of their learning. This means establishing a student-centered environment where students feel a strong sense of belonging in the writing classroom and where their literacies are affirmed. Moreover, this usually involves confronting previous negative experiences in English classrooms. For some linguistically diverse students, the writing classroom has been an unsafe space, a site where their own languages have been critiqued, removed, and replaced by notions of *standardized English* reinforced through prescriptive approaches to grammar, writing assessment and grading, and unfair outcomes. In short, it has been a site of distress for many students at HSIs. Culturally responsive teaching intervenes and taps into cultural knowledge. This approach seeks to build curriculum around students' languages and lived experiences, thus flips traditional, mainstream education that is top-down or hierarchical. Culturally responsive teaching engages students in more meaningful ways and embraces cultural identities, which presents dynamic opportunities for teaching at HSIs.

The funds of knowledge concept is a powerful tool in HSI contexts, too. Funds of knowledge are "the historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual help, individual functioning and well-being" (Moll et al., 2001, p. 133). It works from the exigence that teaching and learning should be about knowing students' cultures and households. The more teachers know their students and their families and histories, and advantageously use social and cultural resources, the more engaged students will become and the more agency they will have in their learning. It challenges teachers to make connections between school and family, for example, a Chicanx student's caregiving responsibilities at home or religious beliefs or their relationship to regional and/or familial activities, like cooking or farming, and the knowledge that comes with these practices.

This approach to teaching bridges the gap between culture and making meaning in the writing classroom.

While many HSI teachers draw from innovative pedagogies and practices (e.g., culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogy), there remains an underrepresentation of perspectives and lack of critical engagement on what teaching writing looks like in HSIs in composition studies at large. Much like the previous chapters (see Two-Year Colleges and Historically Black Colleges and Universities), this chapter amplifies where teaching writing happens and calls for the field to listen to teacher-scholars at HSIs. The absence of HSI teacher-scholar perspectives in scholarship is surprising since Hispanic populations are the second largest demographic and one of the fastest-growing minority groups in the US. The silencing of native Spanish speakers in the US has a long, violent history (e.g., the English-only movement). As Michelle Hall Kells (2007) writes, "Linguistic terrorism insidiously silences students in the classroom, workers in the field, and voters at the poll" (pp. x-xi).

Kells calls on rhetoric and composition to establish effective mentoring programs for Latinx students and suggests graduate program reform: "We need graduate programs reimagined and revisioned for the kind of work we are doing in HSIs" (2007, p. ix). Newman (2007) adds that traditional training inadequately addresses the "impact of many Hispanic students' sociocultural, socioeconomic, and ethnolinguistic makeup on performance in the writing class" (p. 17). As a field, we need more multi- and transcultural theory and praxis, more multi- and translingual frameworks, more crossdisciplinarity, more decolonial approaches to composition, and more attention to race and language. And of course, in the writing classroom, we need to listen to marginalized students' histories and literacies. Newman writes, "New understandings, new pedagogies, and specialized training in rhetoric and composition are necessary to keep both faculty and students at HSIs from becoming casualties in the contact zone of the college composition classroom" (2007, p. 17).

INTERVIEWS

In this chapter, I sit down and talk with Ginny Crisco, Beatrice Mendez Newman, Steven J. Corbett, and Cody Hoover about

teaching writing at different HSIs: California State University, Fresno; the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley; Texas A&M University, Kingsville; and Clovis Community College. Crisco talks about teaching at a four-year university in central California, and she explains how she draws on culturally sustaining pedagogies and practices, as well as the funds of knowledge concept, to help frame her writing class. Crisco also reminds us of the pedagogical innovation and research that happens at teaching-intensive institutions. Newman shares her experiences teaching at one of the largest HSIs in the nation, serving 30,000 students—90% Hispanic students—on the border of Texas and Mexico. She discusses common misconceptions about HSIs, how students are "marked" in "pejorative ways," and describes how she integrates students' linguistic identities through her teaching. Corbett offers his first-year writing assignment sequence and talks about his approach to teaching near Corpus Christi in southern Texas. He challenges teachers to be "careful in assuming who our students are, what they know, what they do, and what their home life is like." Hoover shares his experiences at an HSI two-year college, and he encourages institutions to reconsider their aims and missions: "We need to do more reflection about what that [HSI] designation means, and also if it means anything to our students."

Shane to Ginny Crisco: Do you mind talking about teaching at California State University, Fresno, a public Hispanic-Serving Institution with about 25,000 students? [Episode 62: 01:07–03:39]

> Fresno State is part of the California State University system, and it's one of 23 campuses. It's one of the larger campuses in the system. So, often we're looked at from other campuses as a kind of a model. We have a very diverse student population. In fact, White students are the minority at Fresno State. Hispanics, like Latinx students, are the majority. Most of them are local. We do get some from other areas such as the Bay Area or Southern California. It is very rewarding to work at Fresno State. The students I work with is one of the most rewarding pieces of working at Fresno State because those students, and this is a huge generalization because there is a lot of diversity in our

Latinx student population, but the most rewarding experiences are those students who have really come from very poor backgrounds, who don't speak English as their first language, whose parents work and work and work, and are not educated themselves. They come to college because they see hope for the future.

Seeing that diversity and supporting students is one of the great things about working here . . . I work with teachers a lot now and help teachers think about the ways that they can cultivate culturally sustaining pedagogies in their classrooms . . . and that's really a term from education. But it's this idea, like if you've ever read Moll and Gonzalez, about accessing our students' funds of knowledge and building on that and using that as a resource in our classrooms. Our field has been talking about that for a long time. I'm not sure that we always do that, but we want to do that and that's a good thing.

Shane to Ginny Crisco: What does it look like to embrace culturally sustaining pedagogies or what practices help foster students' success among diverse student populations in your local context? [Episode 62: 03:40–08:08]

What people have been talking about for a long time is to incorporate a diverse reading list, pulling together readings from scholars of color or writers of color and women. To me, that's a very basic one. I think one of the ways, particularly in our first-year writing program, but also in the work that I do with teachers, is I've been really trying to think about the idea of how we integrate code meshing and how we make that something part of our pedagogy and how to support new teachers in making that happen. I think it's more challenging in secondary institutions because of the state standards that they have to follow. Administration doesn't quite understand all those different things.

 . . . and also I think our field is really new at those pedagogies and what that looks like, even though there is

conversation about that and there's really good conversation about that, I think we're still thinking through how best to teach code meshing. So using model texts is one way of doing that, right? There are different kinds of code meshing. There is the code meshing that's more of a Black English approach, right? Where you're integrating Black English. But then there's also, what's really more common at the Hispanic-Serving Institution is the Spanglish or in our case Hmonglish, because we have a Hmong student population as well. Trying to find readings that model that kind of code meshing for different audiences because that's part of the issue.

Like Gloria Anzaldúa's "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" is an example of code meshing, but it's written for a White academic audience and you can kind of tell just by analyzing it. So I'm trying to find those readings that will model the ways that professional writers are doing that, and I'm trying to help students understand the idea of audience because audience is a very abstract term. Right? If you start thinking about audience, who's your audience? "Oh, it's everybody." That's the kind of the default with students. But once you start saying like, "Okay, well, what if your audience was your friends. Are you going to speak this formal language?" Then . . . in that kind of language teaching, trying to, first of all, talk about power dynamics of language.

Second, talking about the choices that we have, right? So even just saying something like, "What's the difference between a formal tone and an informal tone?" To sort of help students see that there are choices as far as that goes when they shape their sentences and their language and do those kinds of things. Then, helping teachers to think about the way that they respond. This is something that Asao B. Inoue brought to our writing program. He did research with some graduate students several years back when he was here, and part of what they found was that the students who were second-language speakers, or that spoke English

as another language, they got more comments about their language. We might say like, "Oh, well, that makes sense because maybe they're still learning how to speak English in a formal way." But his point was to say maybe we need to look into that because maybe we're targeting those students too much. Maybe we are not making a space for diversity in our language practices. That's one of the things that I've continued to do even after he left: Let's look at the ways that we are encouraging our students, supporting them, helping them to use the variety of language practices that they have in their lives. Part of first-year writing is getting students ready for the rest of the university. But it's also cultivating public intellectuals.

Shane to Ginny Crisco: You have taught at Fresno State for fifteen years. Is there anything that sticks out to you about teaching there? What has surprised you the most about teaching at a Hispanic-Serving Institution? [Episode 62: 16:24–22:11]

> I think one of the things that has surprised me, and one of the things that I continue to talk to my junior colleagues about, is that there is a lot of opportunity for innovation at the California State Universities. I mean, we are a teaching institution, we're not a Research I (R1). So you kind of think like, well, it's the Research I universities that really have the opportunities for innovation because people have course releases and they're expected to publish. There are more resources often because there are more opportunities for grants or different kinds of fellowships and those kinds of things. But in fact, we have a lot of administrators on campus who are open to our ideas, who will listen to us, who want to innovate, who want what's best for our students, and who are really grateful for our work.

> It doesn't always happen right away. Sometimes it takes a long time for it to happen, but if we continue to persist . . . for example, one of the things that we have been working on since I came in fifteen years ago is trying to create

a writing across the curriculum (WAC) program . . . the CSU has a graduate writing assessment requirement. They call it the GWAR requirement. It means that when you graduate, either with a bachelor's degree or a master's degree, that you have to demonstrate proficiency in writing. And the way that we do that, and the way that many CSUs have done it, is through a deficit model. Which is, you take a test and if you don't pass it, then you can take the test again. And if you don't pass it then, you have to take a course. So that's really saying, "Hey, we got to remediate you." We are trying to move into a writing in the disciplines (WID) approach where students are learning about their literacy practices in different disciplines. But professors, and often it's lecturers who teach those courses, need to have guidance on best practices in writing instruction. Particularly language instruction, too.

 . . . I think it's good to provide support for students as far as giving them classes and resources, but I think sometimes we might get a little paternalistic and think, "Oh, you got to take a lot of classes in order for you to be up to par or whatever." That's just as dangerous and damaging to students as well. We really need to be mindful about how we support students and what kind of requirements we put on them. I mean, this is really coming out of universal design for learning (UDL), too. One of the things that UDL says is, okay, well students with disabilities, they get accommodations, right? . . . but what the UDL folks have found is that some of the modifications or the approaches that universal design for learning takes actually work for a lot of different people, including second-language learners, including high-performing students. Their research, while not integrated with culturally sustaining pedagogies, really focuses on this idea that all learners that come into the classroom are diverse. So we need to be aware of those diversities . . .

We can't just say, "Oh, we need to load them up with more classes." Instead, we need to have those targeted interventions

that are not just good for our most vulnerable students but can also be good for all students.

Shane to Beatrice Mendez Newman: You teach at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, which is a research university that has multiple campuses in the southernmost part of Texas. Student enrollment is around 30,000, and 90% of students are Hispanic. UT Rio Grande Valley is the second or third largest HSI in the nation. Can you talk about your institutional context and your approach to teaching writing? [Episode 41: 01:22–06:11]

> I would say that we focus a lot on the power of literacy. We have a program that is made up of a lot of different lecturers . . . even the first-year writing coordinator is a lecturer. We have what I would consider a constructed pedagogy that I'm going to define by inclusion, access, and innovation because of the lecturers. They are not traditional rhet/comp specialists with that huge background that goes all the way back to Aristotle . . . they basically have to invent the pedagogy, which I think is a good thing. So there's a lot of idiosyncrasy but I'm using that in a very positive way. It allows each lecturer to participate from where they're coming from in terms of getting students to recognize their literacy, and what they can do with it.

> The first-year writing coordinator draws heavily on the work of Chip Heath and Dan Heath, specifically their ideas about the power of moments. He's been using that to drive the way he talks to the lecturers . . . he likes the idea of stickiness and gravity, so he uses those terms a lot to try to define what goes on in the classroom. While some of those things are accidental, he wants us to try to figure out, "Well, what is it that happened? What led up to those moments of learning, and moments of connectivity, and moments of empowerment of literacy?" He talks a lot about that.

> My personal pedagogy is driven by the concept and construct of space. Going all the way back to the idea of third space. I try to create a situation in the face-to-face classroom

and online where students can find their voices. I am deeply influenced by Steven Johnson's *Where Good Ideas Come From* . . . I'm trying to get students to recognize how they can use their cultural background and make a difference and find their voice . . . I start with narrative like a school memoir. They go back and talk about how they learn and what conscious decisions they make when learning?

We also use a lot of film in my class because it's a great way to analyze text that is not traditional. As they would put it, "a dull and boring book." So, we have analyzed *Dead Poets Society* and *The Ron Clark Story*. You know, how can you create change in yourselves in order to create change . . . in the world? We also do a lot of revision. Everything that they do, whether it's a discussion board or an essay, we revise. I draw heavily on James Paul Gee and his ideas about discourse and literacy. It is not just knowing how to read and write, but knowing how to use your abilities in order to make things happen—the agency that you have with literacy.

Shane to Beatrice Mendez Newman: How do you integrate your students' rich cultural, racial, and linguistic histories and identities through your teaching? How do you resist traditional standards and norms associated with language/writing in order to foster linguistic diversity? [Episode 41: 07:16–12:39]

That is the most salient characteristic that our students come to this university with. I mean, if you were to enter the space of one of our classrooms, you would notice that everybody, just about everybody, is Hispanic. We're not 100% Hispanic, but the reality in the classroom is that almost everybody is. That's the first thing. People who come from other states that have been in more traditional classrooms, that's one of the things they say . . . and then, the other thing is most of our students come from our area, so the four-county area that is the Rio Grande Valley. Because of the way that second-language learning is handled in Texas, many of them have been marked throughout their school careers in some very pejorative ways.

You know, LEP [Limited English Proficiency] is a term that's used nationally. It is in our actual state documents. LEP sounds like such a negative term: *Limited English Proficiency*. Also, ESL students, and EL or English learners. They've been marked in this way. They come to the university and they've got that sense of deficiency because of the way that they are tested. The first thing that we discover is we have to make sure that they don't feel that way. We give them opportunities to use their language in creative ways. That their language is not a deficiency. That it is nothing but a positive because of the great things that happen in your brain when you have multiple languages.

The other thing is that, again because of the fact that the kids come mostly from this area, family is a priority. That is a Hispanic given. Your family is there. It's nonnegotiable. You never say, "Well, here's what I have to do with my family or for my family. Here's what I have to do for school." If there's a clash, family always supersedes. Because it's a commuter campus, many of the students live with their family . . . family is really involved. That creates a lot of trauma and a lot of drama as well. A lot of the kids have jobs . . . and interestingly, a lot of our students have spouses. They are married. I had an 18-year-old freshman in a class and she had two children. They were all living with her family. There's a real integrated sense of family . . . then there's also the "crossings." I've had students who've said, "I came by myself as a teenager. I left my family in Mexico because I wanted the opportunities in America." That is amazing. Twelve-year-olds or 13-year-olds. They left their family. The bravery is just amazing.

Some of them are not citizens, they've written stories of acquiring citizenship or helping family members acquire citizenship. I think the most harrowing story I've read is a boy who wrote about his family, what you see on TV, crossing in the dark. Then, the issues that he faced when he had to decide, "Do I tell the school that I am illegal and lose my scholarship, what do I do?" You know, that sort of thing is

just a given in our classes. As English professors, we see the students much more closely than like an engineering class or a history class where there's 250 people in the class. So that means they feel really comfortable and safe, safe in a good way, in our classes.

Being bilingual or translingual, whatever word you want to use, multilingual, is a definite positive. It creates hybrid language possibilities that you don't have if you're a monolingual speaker of English. I resist "error" hunting. I teach a lot of prospective teachers and graduate students that is not the way to approach language learning or literacy. You don't focus on that. I resist traditional standards in the sense that it exacerbates the deficiency model. I don't like that. We value our students' backgrounds tremendously.

Shane to Beatrice Mendez Newman: What are some commonplace misconceptions about teaching at an HSI? How would you train and develop instructors to teach writing at an HSI? [Episode 41: 12:55–16:53]

Oh my, I discovered this when I started going to conferences. They're like, "Your students all speak Spanish? They write in Spanish?" I want to say that's probably the most common misconception, that students speak Spanish *only* and cannot speak English. Or when they speak English, they speak it incompetently. That's a huge misconception. And that they write in Spanish . . . I mean, they might integrate words here or there when they're appropriate for the context . . . but very, very few. So the other misconception is that everybody is an ESL student. Well, you know, they're not. I mean, some kids actually don't speak Spanish, and they talk about that, "Yeah, I'm Hispanic, but I just never really learned Spanish for whatever reason."

[To train instructors] I would start with a background in traditional ESL theory, where you learn great stuff about interlanguages and about . . . how everybody who is learning a second language is not all in the same spot at that point. That it's a transition. I would also depart from ESL

theory to explain that the concept of translingualism is really innovative because it doesn't see the traditional trajectory from L1 to the target language, L2. Instead, translingualism allows for a merging of rhetorics and constructs from the two languages to create a new way of presenting yourself rhetorically and your literacy.

So that would be one thing, you know, use the traditional discussions of ESL with the big names like [Rosalie] Porter and [Stephen] Krashen. I would also point out that "error" is a good thing. A must read in classes like this one is Bartholomae's "The Study of Error." I think everybody should read that. Error is a way of showing what you know, not of showing what you don't know.

I would spend some time on funds of knowledge, especially if you are dealing with a population of students that so richly depends on their background and culture to understand and shape their perception of the world. Also, the idea that literacy is multifaceted. Deborah Brandt's idea of the way that literacy is kind of like a commodity that we use, the economies of literacy. The sense that every single student has so many stories to tell. Students, many times, come to our institutions thinking that they don't have stories to tell . . . I actually had a high school teacher say, "My students can't do those prompts on the mandated exams because they've never had any *experiences*." I was like, "What?" They come with these ideas, so we have to understand that they have so many stories to tell. Then, we shape the spaces that they are in physically or pedagogically to encourage them to feel good about their contributions to the community of learners—and the contributions that they're making toward their own development as users and agents of language.

Shane to Steven J. Corbett: Do you mind talking about Texas A&M University, Kingsville, and how your institutional context shapes your approach to teaching? [Episode 58: 01:02–04:14]

We're down here in South Texas, we're very close to Corpus Christi, which is a beach/resort town. We're about a half

hour south of that. You know what's really interesting is I had listened to Beatrice Mendez Newman . . . and I just thought we had some interesting similarities. Now, we're not quite as far south as they are, and you see that, I think, in the student population that we have. So where they're about 90% Hispanic, we're more about 70%. Even still, we're the fifth largest Hispanic-Serving Institution in the country, so it's very interesting. We're technically an R1 university, even though we're a smaller school of about 8,000 students. We have such a heavy agriculture school, such heavy engineering down here . . . I want to get back to what Professor Newman was talking about that really struck me when I heard her talking about it in terms of our context and students . . .

I very much assumed, "Wow, there's going to be a lot of bilingual students. There's going to be a lot of students that are speaking Spanish and maybe struggling with their English because they don't speak it at home and all these kinds of things." But what's really interesting, and it parallels with what Dr. Newman was saying, "No, that's not actually the case here." Similar to the case with her institution. I run a writing center with twenty tutors and technically, right this moment, I only have one bilingual tutor. I have eighteen Hispanic tutors, but only one that's actually a bilingual tutor.

I think you got to be careful and I think you'll hear this theme running through the things I talk about, we have to be careful in assuming who our students are, what they know, what they do, and what their home life is like. There's so many variables that go into a person's identity. You can't just look at somebody and start making assumptions about who they are.

Shane to Steven J. Corbett: So I'm interested in hearing more about the kinds of texts or assignments you use in your writing classes and how they complement your larger pedagogical goals or aims and support the multiplicity of identities in your classes. [Episode 58: 04:15–10:42]

Students will actually start with a syllabus analysis. So they're coming at the genre of the syllabus in a way that they've never maybe quite done before. They're going to go in there and they're going to read it, but then they're also going to do a couple of other readings. They're going to read an old Donald Murray piece talking about process. They're going to read a Rachel Toor talking about the habits of writers and . . . how it's not easy for anybody to write. Then, this sounds odd, but they're going to research me. They're going to Google "Steven J. Corbett and writing," and they're going to be like, "Who is this? Who is this person?" They're going to write a brief paper. I make sure they understand that whatever they write, they get full credit for as long as they do it. They get full credit for it.

I use a portfolio system, actually a guaranteed B system. I'm doing a lot of stuff early on to try to make them feel comfortable, make them feel like, "Hey, okay, this might not be my typical English course where I've struggled in the past and I wasn't getting a lot of support." So they find out a lot about me. After that, the first thing we do is a peer review activity, right, where they literally just pull up their papers, either hard copy or on the screen, and we just bounce from chair to chair, or from screen to screen if it's virtual, and they read every single paper that everybody else wrote. They don't give *any* comments. I talk about this in terms of just reading. "You're reading, you're listening to each other." But in the meantime, "What are you really doing? Oh, you're judging . . . and hopefully, you're absorbing strategies, right?" You're listening to what everybody else has to offer. You're looking at their titles, you're looking at their intros, you're looking at all these different things, and you're saying, "Hey, okay, if I didn't do it the first time, if I didn't make the moves that I thought would be great the first time, could I do it in a subsequent draft?"

Then we go into an assignment where they write about their major. The whole course, this freshman composition course, is about, "Why are you here? What are you

interested in majoring in? What do you want to pursue? What do you know about it?" Let's just see if we can't figure some of that out together, right? They're writing a paper about their major, why they're interested in it, why they want to do it, what's interesting about it to them, and that's a short assignment . . . they're actually going to exchange the short assignments that they wrote about their majors, they're going to read each other's papers, and then they're going to write a comparative paper about that, about their major and their point of view on it and compare it and contrast it against these other folks. Now, because we're in a portfolio system, they've got the entire term to try to produce the best paper that they can do.

 . . . so everything up to this point has been practiced for, it's been getting them comfortable with me, getting comfortable with your peer group members, so that they can really try to write the best stuff they've ever written . . . and then of course, since they're doing an e-portfolio, they're doing lots of reflections and reflective writing on their processes and everything that got them to be able to produce these things that they've produced, including a final conclusion . . . lots and tons and tons of writing, Shane, and then their final conclusion to their digital e-portfolio book and what it took to get there and all the processes and everything . . . and then they tell me what grade they believe they earned for the course.

Shane to Cody Hoover: Clovis Community College is an HSI in central California. Can you talk more about your approach to teaching writing? What are some values or practices that help you build a community of learners in the two-year college writing classroom? [Episode 52: 02:00–05:29]

I'll talk a little bit about Clovis Community College. It's a newer community college. It was established fully as a college in 2015 . . . they say we have 13,000 students now, but I think that's between all the extension campuses and dual enrollment and things like that. So it's a pretty small

campus—we have three buildings on campus. We're teaching a lot of students and enrollment is always going up. It's small, which is good for building a community of learners. Having a small campus really helps with that. A lot of the students in my classes are taking other classes with each other just because the way their schedules work out.

 . . . I do a lot of group work and projects in class. I guess my philosophy, in general, I'm trying to train them and give them a set of tools to question and problematize their identities and their communities. So that not only can they share them within the classroom community, but they can then actually point to issues that exist within those communities or with identities that they bring to the classroom. Overall, that's the culture I'm trying to instill in the classroom.

We're talking about HSIs . . . I'm not going to have this *specific issue* that has to do with the Latinx community in my class as part of the theme that we're working with or whatever. That is artificial to me and also doesn't invite students to really share their actual experiences because you're giving it to them already or telling them, "This is what it is." Because for me, I'm half Latinx, so my experience growing up is way different than other people's experiences. So it's interesting, because I've been in a lot of classes as a student where it's like, "Come on guys, you all have this experience." But most people don't. Giving students a set of tools to think through different issues that they're bringing or different problems that they're bringing to the table, that's my approach.

Shane to Cody Hoover: You've taught at various HSIs: Fresno State, UC Riverside, Moreno Valley College, Fresno City College, West Hills College Lemoore, and now Clovis Community College. How have these contexts helped shape your teaching? [Episode 52: 11:28–15:28]

I guess first maybe we can talk a little bit about the context of HSIs because I feel a lot of schools in California, almost

all of them, would be an HSI. I was poking around and reading about it a little bit. I was reading their bylaws and I was just curious about like what does it actually take to be designated as an HSI? Apparently only 25% of your student population needs to be Hispanic and that can be full-time or part-time students. I think it really just depends on if the college actually wants to apply for the HSI designation, apparently you just do that and have to have that certain percentage of students who are Hispanic and then you pay the yearly dues or whatever.

There's a lot of federal grants that colleges can get through being designated as an HSI. It seems like a very top-down thing. It's something that maybe administrators are concerned about. I'm generally cynical about this stuff . . . it seems like a marketing thing or just something admin care about to get grant money. I don't know, because on like a student or faculty level, I feel there isn't anything that's really different.

Maybe those of us who teach at these institutions, especially in somewhere like California or Texas or something like that, maybe we need to do more reflection about what that designation means, and also if it means anything to our students. Because for me, someone who was a student and a teacher at only these kinds of institutions, it isn't something that I've thought much about or has even really been anything I've been aware of. So doing a little bit of reading or research about it was the most I've ever learned about it. It is weird to think about that it has to meet that 25% threshold *only*. I feel it's like a line in a brochure or something like that, especially in California, I feel there's a large tendency for different institutions to do this where it's like, "Oh, we're an HSI. That checks off our diversity box. So we're all good because we have this one thing that we can cling on." I think, especially in California, which is such a liberal state, you have to think about how much of a neo-liberal state it is, how it constantly is continuing these different modes of oppression of non-white students, or students of color.

Maybe it's a cynical thing, but you could almost see that HSI designation is perhaps another tool of systemic oppression where it's like, "Well, we got the HSI thing, we're all good, that's all we need to do."

Shane to Cody Hoover: In what ways can HSIs better support students? [Episode 52: 15:29–18:26]

Maybe this is partly a community college situation, but being a student and also teaching at Fresno State and UC Riverside, which are four-year universities, there were definitely a lot more ethnic studies courses like Latinx culture and history. At Clovis Community College, we don't really have any of those courses. When I was thinking about this last night, I went back and looked through the catalog to make sure that I wasn't just talking out of my ass with this, but it's just a handful of courses, there's like a Latinx literature course and I think a class in sociology, but we don't have an ethnic studies department or specifically ethnic studies professors or anything like universities that are HSIs might have.

So I feel it's so much about running certain classes that will actually have enrollment, which is true everywhere, but our classes have to fulfill, most of the time, some other requirement, especially if students choose to transfer. From teaching and being a student at Fresno State and UCR, something I've learned is how important those courses are. Like I've been saying, I'm not even quite sure of how important the HSI label is as much as, is the institution fully supporting and funding these courses, like Latinx culture and history? It doesn't surprise me that Clovis Community College is an HSI because it fulfills 25% barrier or whatever, because of the funding we have and the courses that we offer to fulfill transfer requirements. We don't have any of those courses. That's a pretty big hole. I taught at Fresno City College, which has a long history of offering those courses. To answer your question, a lesson that I've learned is that I think it's most important to offer ethnic studies courses regularly.

DENOUEMENT

One responsibility all writing teachers have is to recognize and promote students' linguistic and cultural resources and identities. It is important to listen to students' past experiences with English and consider students' needs, which means inviting students to participate and examine their communities and identities. This work also happens when we disrupt Western rhetorical traditions, histories, and ways of thinking and making meaning. It means adopting culturally responsive and sustaining teaching practices and frameworks, such as funds of knowledge, that take an asset-based approach to education. How are teachers creating spaces that are equitable to a range of students? How are writing classes valuing multiculturalism and multilingualism? This, quite possibly, could require a reorientation of pedagogies to fully accommodate students' rich literacies in writing classrooms. It might mean embracing multimodal practices and assignments.

For more good work on teaching writing at HSIs and/or scholarship centering cultural literacies, I suggest reading *Bordered Writers: Latinx Identities and Literacy Practices at Hispanic-Serving Institutions* (Baca et al., 2019), *Community Literacies* en Confianza*: Learning from Bilingual After-School Programs* (Alvarez, 2017), *Teaching Writing with Latino/a Students: Lessons Learned at Hispanic-Serving Institutions* (Kirklighter et al., 2007), *Latino/a Discourses: On Language, Identity, and Literacy Education* (Kells et al., 2004), as well as the journal *Latinx Writing and Rhetoric Studies* from the NCTE/Latinx Caucus. I would also recommend Victor Villanueva's (1993) *Bootstraps: From an American Academic of Color*. *Bootstraps* is a narrative that critically explores the relationship between language and race, cultural biases and inequities, and English education. In addition to the aforementioned works, Iris D. Ruiz's (2016) *Reclaiming Composition for Chicano/as and Other Ethnic Minorities: A Critical History and Pedagogy* diverges from traditional composition histories, recovers excluded stories, and offers more inclusive pedagogies and practices for teaching writing.

As we continue to investigate our responsibilities as language instructors, here are some questions that might help guide us based on the interviews:

- What strategies are you using to support multilingual writers? How are you inviting students to play with/in languages and modalities to make meaning?
- How are you making visible students' linguistic and cultural resources, and how are you integrating these resources into your practices and curriculum? How does your teaching draw from students' cultural knowledge and communities?
- In what ways are you exploring connections between language, race, class, and identity? And how are you incorporating diverse perspectives?
- How are you addressing issues with monolingual ideologies and standardized English, or issues concerning immigration policies and discrimination?