

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

---

Sixth Annual National Conference, POCPWI

People of Color in Predominantly White  
Institutions

---

October 2001

# The Recruitment and Retention of Students of Color at Private Institutions

Anthony Cortese

*Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Southern Methodist University*

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/pocpw16>



Part of the [Race, Ethnicity and Post-Colonial Studies Commons](#)

---

Cortese, Anthony, "The Recruitment and Retention of Students of Color at Private Institutions" (2001). *Sixth Annual National Conference, POCPWI*. 26.

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/pocpw16/26>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the People of Color in Predominantly White Institutions at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Sixth Annual National Conference, POCPWI by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

# **The Recruitment and Retention of Students of Color at Private Institutions**

## **Abstract**

*This session presents a longitudinal study of recruitment and retention of students of color at a predominantly white university in the American Southwest. The institution was able to increase minority student enrollment 14 percent in fewer than ten years. This was accomplished through the careful development, implementation and evaluation of a policy designed to recruit and retain minority students. The specifics of this policy and how it may be used as a model for other predominantly white institutions are discussed.*

## **Anthony Cortese, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Southern Methodist University

This paper presents a longitudinal study of recruitment and retention of students of color at a predominantly white private university in the American Southwest. The institution was able to increase minority student enrollment 14 percent (from 8 percent in 1989 to 22 percent in 1998) in less than ten years. This was done through the careful development, implementation and evaluation of policy designed to recruit and retain minority students. There is focus on the specifics of this policy and how it may be used as a model for other predominantly white institutions.

In order to create a greater positive campus climate of diversity, policy was implemented to provide institutionalized programs, organizations and assistance for students of color. The university also sought to build diversity ties with the local urban community.

Another strategy was the exclusive use of some admissions staff for recruiting students of color. There is special focus on the challenges facing students of color in private institutions.

One of the programs created to support the recruitment and retention of minority students was an interdisciplinary ethnic studies program. It has three major objectives: (1) to provide business and academic training that would enable students to effectively compete for positions in business, marketing, advertising, government as well as other fields in an increasingly diverse global job market; (2) to provide the scientific theories, methods and concepts needed to effectively understand ethnic and race relations and address ethnic conflict; and (3) to provide a better understanding of the relationship between self and society in reference to self-identity, group-identity, language and spirituality. The program represents an integration of courses from sociology, economics, history, anthropology, psychology, political science and Spanish and was designed to attract majority students as well as students of color. Students are also able to earn academic credit for internships in business, non-profit organizations, government and correctional facilities. There is also focus on admissions requirements and the evaluation of students of color. Moreover, the issue of the recruitment and retention of faculty and staff of color as role models for students of color is examined. The presentation concludes with

implications for policy on the recruitment and retention of students of color.

### **Presenter**

Anthony Cortese is Associate Professor of Sociology at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. His major areas of research and teaching are ethnic and race relations, social problems and social theory. Cortese is the author of "Provocateur: Images of Women and Minorities in Advertising" (Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), "Ethnic Ethics: The Restructuring of Moral Theory" (State University of New York Press, 1990) and "Walls and Bridges: Social Ethics and Public Policy" (forthcoming) which challenges the myth of social and moral progress.

Cortese has also published over 35 scholarly articles and book chapters since receiving his doctorate from the University of Notre Dame at the age of 25. He is a 2001 SMU HOPE honoree - an award given to faculty who positively touch the lives of students both in and out of the classroom. Cortese has served as a Visiting Fulbright Fellow to Japan (1990-91). He has taught maximum-security inmates at the Pontiac Correctional Center in Illinois.

Cortese has served as Director of Ethnic Studies and Director of Mexican American Studies at SMU. He has also worked on the Mayor of Dallas' Hispanic Advisory Committee, the United Methodist Consortium for Hispanic Education and on the Boards of Directors of SMU Catholic Campus Ministries and U.S.A. "Film Festival." Cortese is currently serving his second term on the SMU Faculty Senate as a member of the University's Admissions Council.