

Brief Introduction to the Bilingual College Prep Handbook

The *Bilingual College Preparation Program for Latino/a Youth* at Kenyon College was established in 2015 with the mission to empower Latino/a students to achieve at the highest levels in order to gain acceptance to, attend and graduate from institutions of higher learning. Envisioned by the Knox County Latino/a community, a college professor, four students enrolled in SPAN 380, and a local community partner, the program emerged as part of *Latinos in Rural America* (LiRA), a public humanities project that sought to broaden knowledge, engagement with and understanding of the Latino/a experience in rural Ohio. As a Community-Engaged Learning (CEL) course project, Kenyon students applied their academic research on education inequalities, the Latino/a Civil Rights Movement, and standardized testing strategies to develop and facilitate a sustainable partnership with the Salvation Army of Mount Vernon, Ohio. Using bilingual pedagogies inspired by the Kenyon Intensive Language Model (KILM), Kenyon students work weekly with 6th through 12th graders to improve their critical reading, math, vocabulary, science and test-taking skills in preparation for the SAT and ACT. The collaborative efforts of Kenyon administrators, faculty and students empower first-generation students and their families to successfully navigate the complicated college admissions process.

Not only a meaningful asset for the local community, this CEL project provided students with an opportunity to apply academic understandings of inequity to produce a local strategy for community mobilization. Over the course of the year, the program evolved into an official student organization entitled *KABLE: Kenyon Enables- A Bridge to the Community*. This experience has also served as a mechanism to further equip students with the professional experiences necessary for careers in bilingual education, non-for-profit collaboration and minority rights activism.

This handbook seeks to broaden the current scope of this project by providing a replicable framework for interested students, professors, administrators and community organizers. The

handbook is divided into four parts. The first focuses on the barriers that many Latinos/as face in their college application journey, and the tools that we used in courses to help students navigate this complicated process.

In the subsequent part, we detail the curriculum of our program, which encompasses the four subject areas that students are expected to master for the ACT and SAT: math, science, reading, and writing. Five lesson plans are provided at the end of each subject area section, as well as other resources accumulated over the development of this project that have successfully improved SAT and ACT scores of our students.

The third part of this handbook details college preparation workshops developed by Diane Kenealy, the Assistant Director of Admissions at Kenyon College. These bilingual facilitation guides and materials are designed for both parents and students to prepare them to write a personal essay, strategically craft Common Applications, and apply for financial aid regardless of legal status.

The fourth and final section of this manual provides a framework to establish a sustainable community partnership and train new student tutors. With the understanding that these three elements constitute the cornerstone of our successful implementation of KABLE at Kenyon College, our hope is that these resources will empower more administrators, students and community members to develop programs to meet the needs of first-generation, minority students around the country.

Sources:

Sturgis, Mary Raynor; Roman-Odio, Clara; and Kenealy, Diane, "Bilingual College Preparation Program for Latino/a Youth" (2016). LIRA Publications. Paper 1.

http://digital.kenyon.edu/lkca_pub/1