

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Jennifer Jean Reeves for the degree of Master of Science in College Student Services Administration presented on May 4, 2006.

Title: The First Year Experience and Persistence of Native American Students at One Predominantly White Four Year Institution.

Abstract approved:

Rich Shintaku

The purpose of this study was to explore, from current Native American and Alaskan Native undergraduate students, what their experiences were as first year college students on the Oregon State University campus. In addition, it was important to learn how these experiences contributed to their success, satisfaction or dissatisfaction, and overall quality of life during that first year. To answer these questions a mixed method research approach was used that included an online survey sent only to current, undergraduate, Native students and personal interviews with current, undergraduate, Native students. The online survey and personal interviews gave students an opportunity to disclose the types of experiences and challenges, campus involvement, and overall satisfaction they have had at OSU. Native students identified time management, financial costs, class/educational work, and missing family as major challenges during their first year on campus. Additionally, students identified positive relationships with faculty and/or advisors, having financial resources from tribal governments, the ability to be involved with student groups, and having a Longhouse as reasons for their success during their first year. As a result of these findings institutions can develop and provide intentional and appropriate programming and services to assist Native American and Alaskan Native students during their first year of college.

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The First Year Experience and Persistence of Native American Students at one
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by
Jennifer Jean Reeves

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APPROVED:

Major Professor, representing College Student Services Administration

Dean of the College of Education

Dean of the Graduate School

I understand that my thesis will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

Jennifer Jean Reeves, Author

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