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THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE PODCAST:
CONNECTING STUDENT SERVICES FOR COLLEGE SUCCESS

by

LUCILA SANCHEZ

A Master's Capstone submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts,

The City University of New York

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The College Experience Podcast: Connecting Student Services for College Success

by

Lucila Sanchez

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in satisfaction of the capstone project requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

Date

Deborah L. Vietze, Ph.D.
Capstone Project Advisor

Date

Elizabeth Macaulay
Executive Officer

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

ABSTRACT

The College Experience Podcast: Connecting Student Services for College Success

by

Lucila Sanchez

Advisor: Deborah L. Vietze, Ph.D.

Use this link to access the podcast: <https://archive.org/details/thecollegeexperiencepodcast>

This MALS capstone project has two purposes. The project explores what is known about a podcast for college students, informing them how to negotiate a college education successfully. The author developed a podcast using the information presented to support student development by increasing knowledge about available college services and resources. The podcast's goal is to assist students in becoming aware of how to access and use these services effectively. Students typically do not understand why they need these resources, do not know how to manage their time, or access essential services that support college success. This capstone reviews the literature on promoting student college success. The capstone also presents the podcast content and the methods used to develop and evaluate the podcast.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There were many times that I thought I could never finish this project. I started graduate school unsure if I could be an academic again or relearn how to write with confidence. From the first semester at the Graduate Center, I met various people who believed in my writing more than I did. Thank you to all the professors, classmates, and writing center staff who helped me push through impostor syndrome and believe in myself as an academic.

This capstone project would not have been possible without the support of my colleagues and students at ASAP LaGuardia. Thank you for your participation and feedback, multiple check-ins, and help with many important and minor details. A special thanks to Madelyn Nieves, Daniel Velardo, Nicole Pellegrino, Esther Rosa, and Ajay Lal for allowing me to interview you and providing me with such insight in each episode.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part One

The College Experience Podcast: Connecting Student Services for College Success

Statement of Problem.....	1
Introduction.....	2
Rationale.....	2
Literature Review.....	3
Podcasts as a Way to Encourage Student Participation.....	7

Part Two

Capstone White Paper: Narrative Description

Description of the Capstone Project.....	11
Evaluation.....	16
Continuation of the Project.....	19
References.....	21
Appendix A: Student Affairs Division at LaGuardia Community College.....	27
Appendix B: Survey to Collect Data for Podcast.....	29
Appendix C: Screenshot of Podcast Episode 1 Cover.....	33
Appendix D: Podcast Summary Table.....	34
Appendix E: Podcast Evaluation Form.....	36

DIGITAL MANIFEST

- I. Capstone Whitepaper (PDF)
- II. Streaming mp3 files of the podcast can be accessed at the following link:
<https://archive.org/details/thecollegeexperiencepodcast>

A NOTE ON TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

The software “Audacity” was used to record the podcast. Audacity is a free and open-source digital audio editor and recording application software, available for windows, MacOS, Linux, and other Unix-like operating systems. Audacity worked well for two reasons. The first is the ease of use in recording, and secondly, I could record and edit in the same program. I edited each episode right after I finished recording it. The website manual.audacityteam.org was instrumental in figuring out how to edit the podcast properly. I purchased lapel microphones from amazon.com. I purchased the song for the podcast from a digital production marketplace, beatstars.com. This website allows music producers to license and sell beats. The bell sound from freesound.org was imported into the podcast to indicate the next segment in the podcast.

Statement of the Problem

A critical factor in whether students who begin college will persist and thrive is the extent to which they participate in supportive educational activities. Research has demonstrated that participation in educational support systems contributes to student learning, personal development, persistence, and graduation (McCormick, Kinzie, & Gonyea, 2013; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Offices of Student Services provide support to undergraduate students. However, the specific service, along with how they function, vary from campus to campus. Typical support services in universities are academic advising, career planning, tutoring center, mental health support, financial aid office, and enrollment management like registrar or registration offices. Additionally, some universities offer offices that may fill basic needs like child care, food pantry, and disabilities services. Veterans' office, international students' office, and special programs may also be available to qualifying students. A substantial body of research has explored the content, quality, and effectiveness of these student support services (Hwang, & Choi, 2019). Ultimately, the student services effectiveness results are mixed and may not apply to a large urban university serving many first-generation college students from underrepresented groups in the United States. Students do not always have the social network or family members with college experience to help them navigate the college environment. Many students are not aware that these services exist or are under the impression that using the services will be time-consuming or costly.

Introduction

This paper presents my capstone project, “The College Experience” podcast. First, I provide a review of literature that discusses the necessary parameters for college success. I then draw from the literature on college success, student engagement, student services, to create the podcast as an educational resource. I also describe the methods I used to develop the podcast. This includes a discussion of methods, challenges, and the content of the podcasts. Lastly, I present the approach used to evaluate the project and discuss plans for the continuation of the podcast series.

The Rationale for the Development of an Educational Support Podcast

Colleges must find a way to integrate these services more holistically. Piloting new concepts through technology that create more meaningful and impactful interactions may be a way forward. This paper describes developing a podcast that provides educational support to first-generation college degree seekers. Using a podcast to offer student service support is not a typical method used for this purpose. The podcast developed for this project explores literature review on the use of podcasts for educational use. This capstone project presents the literature on student support for college success. The podcast provides information and encouragement to help students understand why they can access student affairs services. The podcast’s goal is to increase student awareness of how these services may enhance their success in college and after graduation.

The podcast was also designed to support students in the largest urban university in the world, the City University of New York (CUNY). CUNY identifies student body diversity as one of its greatest strengths. Every student affairs division provides services and programs to enhance

student learning and development (Student Affairs, n.d.). Most students attending an undergraduate college at CUNY are commuter students. Research by Regalado and Smale (2018) describes commuter students as usually first-generation college students who may be from immigrant or low-income households. Commuter students often need to work full-time to support educational goals. Working full-time is one of the reasons that commuter students do not know about or effectively use available educational services and resources. The podcast will help provide convenient access to educational services because many students listen to podcasts while commuting.

The United States is a nation of podcast listeners. Edison Research (2014) reports that a quarter of United States citizens, or 68 million persons, listen to podcasts regularly. Of those who listen to a podcast regularly, fifteen percent share that they listened to a podcast within the last month. The largest segment of podcast listeners, 44 percent, are millennials, emerging adults between 18 and 34 years of age.

Literature Review

The Importance of Student Engagement

Student engagement does not happen the same way for all students. Increased student engagement can positively impact student success, including grade point average (GPA), year-to-year retention rate, and graduation rate (Regalado & Smale 2018). The National Survey of Student Engagement (2017) defines student engagement as:

... the amount of time and effort students spend on academics and how the institution deploys its resources to provide students with opportunities to participate in activities that decades of research studies show are linked to student learning (NSSE, 2017).

Student engagement has a longer-term social impact. Student engagement can have a profound influence on students and society that goes beyond learning specific curriculum content. (Zyngier, 2008). Active citizenship, student ability to live successfully in the world and a strong sense of self (Zepke, Leach, and Butler, 2010) are just a few examples of student engagement's influence. Ultimately, academic growth and personal growth are inter-related outcomes of higher education (Mercer, 2007).

Student Services as Support for College Success: What Information Do Students Need?

Student services describe the divisions or departments that provide services and student support in higher education. (NASPA, 2102) The American Council on Education Committee on Problems and Plans in Education (1937) supports that a fundamental purpose of higher education is to preserve, transmit, and enrich critical elements of culture such as scholarship, research, creative imagination, and human experience. Student affairs offices and activities have addressed this challenge in many ways, highlighting different problem areas depending on current needs. At the beginning of the 20th-century student, student service positions relieved the academic faculty of disciplinary problems (American Council on Education Committee on Problems and Plans in Education, 1937). The primary purpose of student affairs at the time was a commitment to developing the whole student as a unique individual bolstered by the support of the institution (American Council on Education Committee on Problems and Plans in Education, 1937). CUNY's current mission of student affairs (Student Affairs, n.d.) is:

to support student academic achievement and persistence to graduation; to provide opportunities for career development: to enhance student intellectual, aesthetic, and social growth: to facilitate critical thinking skills: and to promote civic responsibility.

Overall, student affairs aim to ensure student growth and development during the academic experience. (NASPA, 2102)

Student affairs services have become more diverse as student needs have varied dramatically by age, ethnicity, academic, social, and financial background (Falluca, 2007). Student affairs divisions are under pressure to improve student success and demonstrate the effectiveness of programs and contributions to student outcomes (Ludvik, Henning & Roberts, 2016). Typical student affairs services include enrollment, financial aid, counseling, student health, career services, recreational sports, and student activities. They may also include campus services such as transportation, security, childcare, and student academic support. For example, the CUNY LaGuardia Community College student affairs division offers all of these and many more services (See Appendix A for a complete list).

Bridging the Gap Between Disadvantage and Success for Students

Many urban college students tend to be commuters who are low-income or first-generation students. Low-income, first-generation students disproportionately come from ethnic and racial minority backgrounds with lower college participation rates (Engle & Tinto, 2008). Students also tend to be more likely to have multiple obligations outside the college. In some instances, students may take care of family members and work, limiting their full participation in the college experience. This student demographic usually enrolls in a part-time schedule (less than 12 credits) each semester as they balance multiple obligations. Taking fewer classes frequently leads to a student who may take a semester off or stop attending college altogether as family circumstances demand more student time. The circumstances, as mentioned earlier, negatively affect the chances of success in higher education for this population (Engle & Tinto, 2008). Additionally, these students also tend to lack critical study and time management skills

and experience more difficulty navigating the bureaucratic aspects of academic life due to their lack of exposure to college (Engle & Tinto, 2008). Due to these circumstances, the average student faces at an urban public university, traditional methods of educating about student support services fail to succeed. Students may not have the time or skills needed to browse through and fully understand a college or university website. Students may also not take the time to read the flyers posted around campus, especially if they have to rush to and from school to fulfill their work and family responsibilities.

Regalado and Smale (2015a) interviewed commuter students for a study about the use of public transportation. The study showed that the majority of students wanted to use the commute time for schoolwork. The students cited that doing schoolwork during the commute was difficult with the realities of crowded buses and subway cars. Using headphones and placing the listening device (usually a cellphone) in a pocket or backpack is a way that students can try to use commute time productively. Taking account of the lived experience of students has enabled college instructors, staff, and administrators to orient students towards the services and resources that best meet their needs.

Podcasts as a Way to Encourage Student Participation

Use of a Digital Method to Provide Student Services

Podcasts offer a unique ability to share stories and information. Podcasts are on-demand audio that a listener can download and play while commuting or exercising or, given the right equipment, showering. Podcasts are a convenient way to receive information on the go and also provide an engaging storytelling experience. Alex Blumberg, the founder of Gimlet Media, affirms three reasons why people listen to podcasts. Podcasts offer a rare sense of intimacy, the

ability to multitask effectively, and the power of great stories (Ark, V. A. 2018). Podcasts are one of the most intimate forms of media because listeners continually build images of the story in their minds. Podcasts provide the flexibility that college students need, especially those in transit. Listeners do not have to abide by a specific time slot, one week, the show may run 23 minutes, and the next, it might be 35 minutes. Audio learning and storytelling provide brain-stimulating and addictive effects on the brain.

The current generation of youth has grown up with digital technology in gaming, social media, shopping, and information resources. Recent surveys of college use of technology reveal that undergraduate students own more computing devices than the population as a whole, and they use their devices extensively and view them as crucial to their academic success (Brooks, 2016). Using digital services can increase commuter student engagement with their institution. (Kretovics, 2015; Yearwood & Jones, 2012).

There is a digital divide between income groups in the United States. The gap between students who have access to smartphones and the internet and those who do not is wide (Rainie, 2017). Access to the internet decreases along with household income. Only 64 percent of those with household incomes of less than \$30,000 a year owned a smartphone in 2016 compared to families above this income threshold (Rainie, 2017). This inequality may create a barrier to using digital services for some students. Students who do not have access to the internet can use free Wi-Fi at school or public establishments as an alternative. Students can also use school computers because podcasts can be listened to from virtually anywhere with Internet access. Students can download podcast episodes when they have access to the internet and listen to them at different times with or without internet access.

People are listening to fascinating kinds of podcasts. One would expect genres like sports, news, and technology to be popular, but they are all educational. According to a teacher interviewed in Education Week (Mamma, 2017), podcasts are valuable and significant because they allow people to slow down. Podcasts are a little bit more down-to-earth and centered, enabling students to listen and reflect and digest the content. Learning through listening is enjoyable and less tedious than reading. Educational podcasts are appealing and may encourage students who do not like reading. It may be helpful to students who struggle with reading through mental impairments.

The Use of Podcasts in Education

Higher Education institutions in the United States are using podcasts extensively. Most students are familiar with downloading audio files and possess their own audio player devices, thus making it easy to adopt this learning method. Podcasts are relatively easy for teachers, staff, and administrators to create. Educators can do so with audio recorders and commonly available free software. There will be a need for training those who do not have former knowledge of producing sound recordings to create a compelling listening experience (Nataatmadja & Dyson, 2008). Difficulties should be minimal once an instructor or administrator is proficient in these skills.

Research on podcast use in education has focused on three categories (McGarr, 2009):

1. Simulating face-to-face lectures
2. Providing supplementary information to accompany a lecture
3. Creative use where the students are the content creators

Using podcasts as complementary can be done in one of two ways. Podcasts can provide a summary of the lecture, which can lead to passively receiving the information. Podcasts can also be used as supplementary material to help expand the understanding and give students an alternative perspective on previously delivered content or facilitate a further and more in-depth exploration of topics. The final and currently least frequently use of podcasts mentioned in education is creative. Students become more engaged in learning by creating knowledge rather than merely receiving it. The student must have a deep knowledge of the subject matter to construct a suitable podcast successfully. Therefore, this type of use challenges students to examine the material they have been exposed to previously critically. When used in this way, students can become knowledge creators rather than merely knowledge receivers (McGarr, 2009).

“The College Experience” podcast is a digital recording project focused on student life and how to connect to college services and resources of City University of New York. This podcast explores various topics concerning college student life. This capstone project was thought to be a creative way to tackle the subject of student engagement in college. I decided to pursue this capstone project for two reasons: (1) My professional background in student affairs as a college advisor led me to encounter the problems students experienced in college; and (2) Because I wanted to create a way to connect the scholarship known about student success to student’s actual success in college.

Creating the Podcast

I created an anonymous survey through Google forms by drawing on the experience of advising college students to research student interests and needs for support. I emailed the voluntary survey to about 300 ASAP LaGuardia students. Most of the students surveyed were part of my own advisement caseload at the college. The survey asked students about several topics (1) Their podcast listening habits (2) Whether they would be interested in a podcast about college, (3) What college topics they were interested in learning about, and (4) What would they name the podcast. There was also a section for additional comments (See Appendix B for a copy of the survey).

There were 106 anonymous responses collected, a 35% response rate which is fairly respectable for this population. The majority of respondents, 69 percent, listened to podcasts already. Students listen on average, 75 percent, to 20-30-minute podcast episodes.

Students also responded to their podcast listening habits and desire to have a podcast about college life. Few students (under 3%) reported that they already listened to a podcast about college life. One student identified TED Talks, and the others listened to the “College Life”

podcast. Half of the students agreed that they wanted to listen to a podcast about college life. “The College Experience” became the podcast's title because it was the survey's top, 42% response. Some additional comments and suggestions were to keep the podcast simple, keeping it “real”, to be yourself, and to have college students as guests.

Eighty-six percent of the students surveyed were interested in learning how to stay motivated in school. Due to the overwhelming interest in motivation, I decided to end all interviews by asking guests how they stay motivated. The intention was that no matter what episode students listened to, there would be talk about motivation. The five topics with the most votes were: (1) Food Nutrition, (2) Social Justice, (3) Mental Health, (4) Habits and Organization, (5) Major and Career Selection. There was also a keen interest in the topic of financial aid. Financial aid is such a technical and complex topic that I decided not to include it in the first five episodes. It would be a good future topic for the podcast.

College Students as an Audience

This project aimed to empower students to learn why it is crucial to access student support services. The aim was to increase student awareness of how services can enhance their success in college and after graduation. The podcast addressed social and emotional topics (such as maintaining a healthy lifestyle, avoiding burnout, and addressing lack of motivation) and administrative (setting deadlines, how to effectively speak to professors, and career selection). Each podcast episode included an interview with an expert in the field who discussed the week's topic and shared their personal and professional experiences. The episodes began with an activity that requires minimal effort and ended with a service or resource available on campus. The target population for the podcast is undergraduate students in the College University of New York (CUNY) public university system. Most students in CUNY are commuters. Research by

Regalado and Smale (2018) supports that commuter students are more likely to be first-generation college attendees, come from a low-income household, or immigrants, or need to work full-time to support their educational goals. These are a few possible reasons that could impede students from knowing or effectively using their college's available services and resources. The goal is to transmit the information to the students in an accessible way. The podcast is an attempt to do so.

Scripting and Recruiting Guests

As a podcast listener, I had a good idea of the format I wanted for the podcast. I knew I wanted an interview-style podcast with a different guest each week. I aspired to create an experience for students where they would get various guests who had some expertise in each topic, including a student. I wanted to start the podcast with an action that students can practice immediately with minimal effort to grab their attention. I wanted to end the podcast with a campus resource that students could use for more information, receive a service, or continue the conversation.

The first episode of “The College Experience” podcast is about how nutrition contributes to academic success. Madelyn Nieves has a Bachelor of Science degree in Nutrition and Dietetics from CUNY Brooklyn College. Madelyn is a graduate student at the CUNY School of Public Health and Health Policy, pursuing her Master in Public Health degree in Public Health Nutrition. Madelyn is working on her graduate school thesis about nutrition, food justice, and its effect on college students. She is an academic advisor at ASAP LaGuardia, where she conducts numerous workshops for students on varying public health topics, including nutrition education. In the episode, she dives into the importance of eating breakfast, brain health food, and the convenience of meal prepping. Madelyn discusses food access in CUNY schools, like using the

free microwaves on the college campus, consuming free food at campus events, and the availability of Single Stop office on campus, where students can be screened for SNAP benefits and access the food pantry (See Appendix C for a screenshot of the podcast cover for episode one).

The second episode of “The College Experience” breaks down Social Justice. Daniel Velardo has a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Stonybrook College and a Master of Arts degree in Modern History from King College London in London, England. Daniel worked as an academic advisor at ASAP LaGuardia, where he was part of the Diversity and Inclusion committee for the college. Daniel now works on special projects for a media company. He is passionate and writes about activism and how learning about the past can prevent history from repeating itself. In the episode, he dives into the importance of studying history, the power of being social accomplices, and ways to get involved in activism that leads to systemic changes. Daniel encourages students to get involved on campus to start creating their social capital- including groups like the Black Male Initiative and the LGBTQIA Safe Zone.

The third episode of “The College Experience” is on understanding mental health. Nicole Pellegrino is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor. Nicole received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and her Master of Science degree in Mental Health Counseling from CUNY Baruch College. Nicole is the Engagement Specialist at ASAP LaGuardia, who helps connect students to additional support services with resources and referrals and conducts holistic health workshops for ASAP students. In the episode, she talks about becoming more self-aware, why everyone can benefit from counseling, and the importance of mental self-care. Nicole also talks about how gratitude can positively impact our mental health. She also reminds students to visit

their campus Wellness Center, where they can meet with a counselor one-on-one or in a group setting, even if they do not have health insurance.

The fourth episode of “The College Experience” is on organization and the importance of habit keeping and routines. Esther Rosa has a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Development, both from Binghamton University. She also received her Master of Social Work degree from CUNY Hunter College. Esther is an adjunct professor in the Education and Language Acquisition Department at LaGuardia Community College. She is also an ASAP academic advisor, where she runs workshops for students on time management and organization. In the episode, she talks about how staying organized looks different for everyone, the importance of keeping a planner, and ways to connect with your professor. Esther urges students to go to their professor’s office hours, even if it’s just to introduce themselves and share their interests. She also reminds students that tutoring is available and accessible on all CUNY campuses.

The fifth episode of The College Experience is on college majors and career selection. Ajay Lall received his Associate of Arts degree in Political Science from CUNY LaGuardia Community College. He graduated this year with his Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice from CUNY John Jay College. Ajay has worked as a peer career mentor at ASAP LaGuardia for all four years of his undergrad career. He runs career workshops on building a resume, cover letter, linked in account, and conducts mock interviews. Ajay also provides one on one career counseling and exploration for students. In this episode, he stresses the importance of networking, how to build self-confidence during the interview process and how your challenges should not stop you from continuing your education. Ajay encourages all students to attend the

career office on their college campus, where students can receive support towards their career goals no matter their work experience.

All of the guests had first-hand experience working with college students one-on-one. Each guest also had experience creating and facilitating workshops on the topics that I interviewed them on. Each guest helped narrow down the action item and campus resource for the episode they were on. Guest submitted a short biography to use as an introduction. All the guests had a rundown of the episode for reference but did not have the questions in advance. As host, I wanted the episodes to have more of a casual feel (See Appendix D for the podcast summary table).

Recording and Editing

I had no experience with recording or editing before this podcast. I had to conduct a lot of research into the technicalities of creating a podcast. Ultimately, the software “Audacity” was used to record the podcast. Audacity is a free and open-source digital audio editor and recording application software, available for windows, MacOS, Linux, and other Unix-like operating systems. I purchased lapel microphones from amazon.com. Audacity was relatively easy to use for a novice. The first episode recorded was the nutrition episode with Madelyn. It took a few takes to get the final results for the nutrition episode. I recorded the remaining four episodes in consecutive weeks.

Audacity worked well for two reasons. The first is the ease of use in recording, and secondly, I could record and can record and edit in the same program. I edited each episode right after I finished recording it. The website manual.audacityteam.org was instrumental in figuring out how to edit the podcast properly. I purchased the song for the podcast from a digital production marketplace, beatstars.com. This website allows music producers to license and sell

beats. The bell sound from freesound.org was imported into the podcast to indicate the next segment in the podcast.

Evaluation

I invited 100 students to voluntarily attend a streaming session for any of five episodes of “The College Experience” podcast on the LaGuardia campus. I told all students that it was voluntary and that they were listening to a podcast about college life but didn’t specify the topic. A total of 40 students attended, but the number of students per session varied. The session with the least number of students was five (episode three), and the one with the largest number of students was 12 (episode two). For episode one, 10 students were present; for episode four, 7 students were present and for episode five, 6 students were present. Each student received an evaluation form at the beginning of the session. The evaluation asked students about several categories (1) Their podcast listening habits (2) Their opinions on the style and flow of the podcast, (3) Their interest on the topic of the episode they listened to, and (4) What they would like to see in the future form the podcast. (See Appendix E for a copy of the evaluation).

I informed everyone that their answers were for research purposes only and would not affect them in any way. Then I introduced the podcast and the episode that they were about to listen to. After streaming the episode in its entirety, I asked students to fill out the valuation form. It was an anonymous evaluation form without any identifying questions. Some students voiced their opinions while filling out the survey so I asked them to include that in the evaluation form. When students were done completing the evaluation, they could drop off the form at the front of the classroom and were able to leave. Although, I allotted for 45 minutes per session, none of them were longer than 30 minutes.

Findings

The best part about making the podcast was getting students' feedback. It was moving listening to them talk about what they learned and how they would apply it to their life. A little over half (23) of the students were podcast listeners, and 36 students were interested in listening to a podcast about college. Most students were interested in all five topics. By far, the episode that got the most positive reactions was the mental health episode. The interest in the mental health episode is not surprising as it was the most requested episode in the initial survey. After I finished streaming each podcast, I asked students to comment if they wished but stated that it was unnecessary. One or two students always mentioned something brief like it was good or I did not know that. At the end of the mental health podcast episode, several students had comments. It turned into a group discussion. Students shared what they learned as well as some personal battles and triumphs with each other. The feedback for the mental health episode also had the most written feedback out of all the episodes. Most students took notes on the feedback form while the episode was streaming. I noticed some of them take pictures of the form before handing it in to me. This podcast episode also elicited the most requests for a continuation or series for the topic of mental health. Students seem to want to dig deeper into mental health and learn about more tools available to them.

Another key finding is that almost all the students wanted the concepts to be more tangible. The most common feedback was, how exactly do I do it? Students asked for step-by-step guide. In the nutrition episode, we suggested eating breakfast every day, which seemed to be impactful. However, many comments were asking for more examples of healthy breakfasts. Students noted learning some tools in the organization episode but wanted even more if they did

not work. It felt like students wanted a substitute before even trying the suggested options. A few students also wanted information on statistics, especially in the mental health episode.

Another finding was that students wanted to hear from other successful people about the topics discussed. One comment said, have someone who is good at networking. Students also want to hear from people who have overcome difficult situations. One comment even said, have someone messy and who is now more organized. It seems like students want to see someone whom they relate to complete tasks successfully. The majority of students wanted to hear from other students. Even though there were various requests for field professionals, students mostly wanted to hear from successful students. I would guess that students are looking for a role model and reassurance that they can be successful. Overall, most students seemed to enjoy the podcast. The majority of students, 39 out of 40, said they would recommend the episode to a friend. Students believed that by recommending the episode, a friend would learn something new.

Challenges

I almost did not create the podcast because of the complexities of recording and editing a podcast. Technically speaking, finding the space was also a challenge. Eventually, the podcast was recorded at my job since all the guests work with me. Purchasing better quality microphones would have made the podcast sound quality better. Better audio quality was the number one suggested way to improve the podcast in the evaluations.

Continuation of Project

As an undergraduate, I was a New York City commuter student. Now, as I pursue my master's degree, I also commute to school. I know first-hand what the hustle in NYC is like while working and commuting to school. It may not be easy to participate fully in the college experience. I have been an academic advisor for college students for over eight years, previously

in a community-based organization and currently in a community college. I have advised a mix of students, including students who dorm, community college students, four-year university students, and vocational school students. In my line of work, I get to see the challenges that students from marginalized backgrounds face. Currently, I advise over 150 students in the Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) program at CUNY LaGuardia Community College. My job is to help students develop by providing them academic advice and helping them navigate the various college-related issue that they may encounter.

Engagement is a vital component of the work in the ASAP program. We continuously attempt to have students engage with ASAP, the institution, professors, and other students. We take into consideration that outside-of-school factors can significantly impact their schooling. When I told my director about the podcast, he thought it would be good to use it for our students. The advisors in the program often run workshops on various topics (including all of the issues discussed in this project). We will advertise it on our website, social media, and email and text blast. There are so many more topics to explore. The project will continue as we get feedback from the students on what they would like to hear. Continuous feedback from students will make the podcast more student-centered. We could even allow students to be content creators. Students can recruit, co-host, or edit specific episodes.

The College Experience podcast is a digital recording project that supports college students with connections to student's services and resources. The active participation of college students is crucial to academic success. This capstone project is my tribute to the hundreds of students I served had and the hundreds more that I will.

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Appendix A: Student Affairs Division at LaGuardia Community College

Applying to LaGuardia
· Admission Office
· International Student Services
· Student Welcome Center
Registration Services
· Registrar
· Testing Office
· Academic Advising
Financial Resources
· Student Financial Services
· Foundation Scholarship
· Single Stop
· Emergency Assistance
Support Services
· Tutoring Services
· Office of Student Disability
· Veteran Services
· Early Childhood Learning Center
Success Planning
· Career & Professional Development
· Transfer Services
Wellness Services
· Health Services
· Wellness Center
· Fitness Center
Student & Campus Life
· New Student Orientation
· Student Clubs
· Honors Programs
· Phi Theta Kappa
· Delta Phi Honor Society
· Commencement
Diversity & Inclusion
· CREAR Futuros
· Black Male Empowerment Cooperative
· LGBTQIA
· Women's Center
Leadership Opportunities
· Peer Programs

· College
· Senate
· Student Government Association
· President's Society

Appendix B: Survey to Collect Data for Podcast

College Podcast Survey

College Podcast Survey

I am creating a podcast (episodic series of digital audio files which can be downloaded or streamed to listen) for my Grad School Final Project. I want it to be on all types of college students- specifically in NYC. Please answer the questions below to help me create a podcast that helps me serve you and your fellow classmates the best. If you think I missed anything, feel free to let me know in the section allotted. Thank you for your participation!

* Required

1. How old are you? *

Mark only one oval.

- 17- 24 years old
- 25- 30 years old
- 30- 40 years old
- Over 40 years old

Listening to Podcasts

2. Do you listen to podcasts? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

3. On average, how often do you listen to podcasts? *

Mark only one oval.

- Every day
- Once a week
- Once a month
- Randomly

4. How long do you like your podcasts to be? *

Mark only one oval.

- Under 20 minutes
- 20- 30 minutes
- 30- 45 minutes
- Over an hour

5. Where do you listen to podcasts? *

Mark only one oval.

- Podcast App on your Phone
- Podcast Website
- Watch it on Youtube
- Other: _____

6 Do you go to the accompanying website of any podcast? *

- Only when they direct me
- All the time
- I try to look for the name of a guest or product
- Never
- Didn't know podcasts had an accompanying website

Podcast Interests

7. Do you listen to podcast about college life? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- No, but I want to!

8. If you do, what's the name?

9. If these college related topics, which would you be interested in listening to?
(Check all that apply) *

Check all that apply.

- Food Nutrition
- Habits and Routines
- Staying Motivated
- Mental Health
- Sexual Health
- Social Justice
- Major and Career Selection
- Financial Aid

Other: _____

10. Help me name my podcast! Which name do you like best? (Check all that apply) *

Check all that apply.

- The College Podcast
- The Holistic College
- College Mastered
- Collegezilla
- Crunch Time College
- Half Time College
- None
- The Holistic College Experience
- The College Experience

Other: _____

11. Any suggestions that you may have, please let me know! *

Appendix C: Screenshot of Podcast Episode 1 Cover



Appendix D: Podcast Summary Table

“The College Experience” Podcast

Created and Hosted by Lucila Sanchez

All episodes were recorded and edited on the LaGuardia Community College Campus

Episode Number 1	
Name of Episode	You Eating Good or Nah? Nutrition for Academic Success
Episode Topic	Nutrition for college students
Featured Guest	Madelyn Nieves
Relevant Guest Background	Graduate student pursuing a Master in Public Health degree in Public Health Nutrition
Length of Episode	21 minutes and 39 seconds
Executive Tip	Eat breakfast every day
Campus Resource	Visit a Single Stop office at any CUNY school
Episode Number 2	
Name of Episode	Get Involved! Why Should We Care About Social Justice?
Episode Topic	Social justice for students
Featured Guest	Daniel Velardo
Relevant Guest Background	Member of the Diversity and Inclusion committee for the LaGuardia Community College
Length of Episode	19 minutes and 51 seconds
Executive Tip	Give someone a free ride in the train station with your unlimited MetroCard
Campus Resource	Join an organization on campus
Episode Number 3	
Name of Episode	Sanity in the City: A Conversation About Mental Health
Episode Topic	Mental health awareness
Featured Guest	Nicole Pellegrino
Relevant Guest Background	Licensed Mental Health Counselor
Length of Episode	22 minutes and 15 seconds
Executive Tip	Start your day with gratitude
Campus Resource	Visit the Wellness Center at your college
Episode Number 4	
Name of Episode	Cleaning Clutter: Managing your Time and Responsibilities
Episode Topic	Habits and Routines for Academics Success

Featured Guest	Esther Rosa
Guest Professional Background	College Professor at LaGuardia Community College
Length of Episode	24 minutes and 50 seconds
Executive Tip	Use a planner
Campus Resource	Attend your professor's office hours
Episode Number 5	
Name of Episode	Career Connect: Preparing for Life after Graduation
Episode Topic	Major and Career Selection
Featured Guest	Ajay Laal
Relevant Guest Background	Career Peer Mentor at LaGuardia Community College
Length of Episode	20 minutes and 50 seconds
Executive Tip	Ask for feedback
Campus Resource	Visit the Career Services Office on campus

Appendix E: Podcast Evaluation Form

The College Experience Podcast

Listening Habits

(Circle One)

1. Do you listen to podcasts?
Yes No
2. How often do you listen to podcasts?
Rarely Once a Month Once a Week Daily
3. How much time do you spend listening to podcasts in a day?
30 Minutes 1 hour 2 hours 3+ hours
4. Are you interested in listening to a podcast about college life?
Yes No

Style

(Circle One)

1. Was the episode that you listened to interesting to you?
Yes No
2. Was the topic relevant to your academic life?
Yes No
3. Was the topic relevant to your personal life?
Yes No
4. Was the episode easy to follow from segment to segment?
Yes No
5. Did you want to know more about the guest or anything that they mentioned?
Yes No

Future Planning

(Please answer as detailed as possible)

1. Would you like to see this episode developed into a part 2 or series?
2. What kind of guests do you think we should ask to join us in the future?
3. Is there an aspect of college that confuses you that we could explore on the podcast?
4. How can we improve the podcast?