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Project Title: **The Effect of In-State Resident Tuition Eligibility on the College Enrollment of Undocumented Latino Students in Texas**

Increasing numbers of undocumented immigrant students in the United States have led to growing concerns about their educational outcomes. My dissertation will analyze the impact of in-state resident tuition legislation in Texas and other participating states on the college enrollment of Latino undocumented immigrant students. The higher education tuition policy, which essentially discounts the rate of public higher education tuition in Texas by approximately \$2,000 at the 2-year level and \$8,000 at the four-year level, is of particular interest in states with a high number of undocumented immigrants who do not qualify for federal financial aid, are primarily from Latin America, and many of who are college age. Texas is of particular interest since it 1) has the second largest state population of undocumented individuals in the country; 2) was the first state in the nation to pass this tuition policy in 2001; 3) has two cities within the state that implemented similar tuition policies at the community college level even before the state tuition bill; and 4) made undocumented students eligible for state financial aid, a component not present in most other states where the tuition benefit is available. Whether this tuition policy has been effective in increasing the college enrollment rates of undocumented high school students in Texas or the nation remains an empirical question.

Using natural experiment methods I will use a nationally-representative dataset of individuals, the Current Population Survey (CPS), to estimate the effect of this policy on the college enrollment rates of undocumented Latino students in Texas in comparison to states with similar Latino immigrant populations *without* the policy. In addition, I will also evaluate the enrollment effects on this population at the national level examining all states with an in-state resident tuition policy since 2001 in comparison to other states without the policy.

There have been no quantitative empirical studies to date on the effect of tuition policies on the college enrollment rates of undocumented students in general or by race and ethnicity, and there is limited information on the college access rates of the undocumented population in the United States. Latino students currently have the lowest college attainment rates of all race and ethnic groups in Texas and one of the lowest nationally. My dissertation will add to the literature on the achievement gap by providing evidence on public policies that may or may not affect the widening college access gap of both Latino and the primarily Latino undocumented immigrant population in the United States.