

20 - 22 March 2026

Lisbon , Portugal

# Understanding the Experiences that Empower Nontraditional Students During and Beyond their Community College Journey

**Alejandro Garza , Dr. Mayra L. Fuentes , Mr. Jesus Gonzalez Hernandez**

*Tarrant County College  
NW Campus, the United States*

## **Abstract**

The objective of this presentation is to disseminate the findings from a longitudinal qualitative study of students who participated in events organized by the TCC-NW Spanish department. This study was conducted by the TCC-NW faculty members from Fall 2022 through the current semester.

The subjects of this study consist of TCC students from a diverse population that include older, first generation, dual credit high school, veterans, commuters and working students. Our students face unique challenges to stay engaged, complete their degree and transfer to a four-year institution. The Spanish department has been working diligently and collaborating with other disciplines, college offices, student organizations, and universities to enhance and facilitate their success during their college experience and beyond. The aim of this study is to collect our students' perspectives after participating in these college events. This will enable us to have a deeper understanding of how these events have contributed to the students' academic success. It is important for faculty and administrators to understand the experiences that have empowered students to stay engaged, complete their degree, transfer and join the workforce.

**Keywords:** Community; Empower; Engagement; Non-Traditional Students; Success