



semester, Latino students were accumulating on average 1.5 credits less than their White classmates. This may not sound like an alarming difference but at the end of three years of the study, Latino students had earned almost 8 fewer credits than White students. This amounts to the equivalent of being almost three classes behind, a difference that likely continues to grow over time. What this finding tells us is that Latino students are at risk of graduating later and possibly accumulating more debt than their White counterparts. More concerning is that previous research has shown that taking longer to complete a degree makes it more and more difficult for students to persist over time, ultimately [endangering their chances of graduating](#).

UNO Latino students playing to their strengths

The encouraging detail to all this is that we found one factor that mitigated this effect for Latino students. Remember earlier when we mentioned differences between students in how they changed over time? There is one measure in our data that predicts better outcomes, namely plans to help family members with household duties, childcare, language interpretation and transportation while in college but only among the Latino students. The figures below illustrate what we found. **Specifically, Latino students who reported planning to help their families had higher enrollment rates over time and more earned credits as well.**

Why might this be the case? In all honesty, we don't know. However, we do have a few clues in the data. One hint is that the students in our sample who expected to help their families out while in college also reported feeling closer to their families, and that's not all. Those students who said they felt closer to their families were also more likely to tell us that their parents and relatives wanted them to graduate from college too. **It turns out that feeling that your family really wants you to succeed in college predicts more**