

Indigenous presence in higher education: UFFS' Indigenous program (PIN)

La presencia indígena en la educación superior: el programa indígena (PIN) de la UFFS

A presença indígena na educação superior: o programa indígena (PIN) da UFFS

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ABSTRACT:

This paper analyzes the admission and permanence of indigenous students at the Universidade Federal da Fronteira Sul (UFFS), both made possible through a specific institutional action called the Program for the Access and Permanence of Indigenous Peoples (PIN). The promotion of a differentiated admission for indigenous people in universities aims, first of all, at reducing the scenario of exclusion to which these peoples have been historically thrown. Universities have been acting in a less conservative perspective, trying to get closer and closer to marginalized groups deprived of fundamental rights such as education. Thus, the presence of these groups in Brazilian public higher education is not seen only as a compensatory measure, but especially as an affirmative action. It is under this perspective that this text is presented as an account of the experience of the implementation of the Program, in the period between 2015 and 2019, from indicators of undergraduate and graduate studies.

RESUMEN:

Este texto realiza un análisis del ingreso y permanencia de estudiantes indígenas en la Universidade Federal da Fronteira Sul (UFFS, Brasil), ambos posibilitados por una acción institucional específica, denominada Programa de Acceso y Permanencia de los Pueblos Indígenas (PIN). La promoción de un ingreso diferenciado para los indígenas en las universidades tiene como objetivo, en primer lugar, reducir la exclusión sufrida por estos pueblos a lo largo de la historia. Las universidades han actuado desde una perspectiva menos conservadora, buscando aproximarse cada vez más a los grupos marginados y destituidos de derechos tan fundamentales como la educación. Así, la presencia de estos grupos en la educación superior pública brasileña no es vista solamente como una medida compensatoria, sino, especialmente, como una acción afirmativa. Es bajo esta perspectiva que este texto se presenta como un relato de la experiencia de implementación del Programa, en el período comprendido entre 2015 y 2019, a partir de indicadores de la graduación y postgrado.

RESUMO:

Este texto analisa o ingresso e a permanência de estudantes indígenas na Universidade Federal da Fronteira Sul (UFFS), ambos viabilizados por meio de uma ação institucional específica, denominada Programa de Acesso e Permanência dos Povos Indígenas (PIN). A promoção de um ingresso diferenciado para os indígenas nas universidades tem como objetivo, em primeiro lugar, a redução do cenário de exclusão a que esses povos foram historicamente lançados. As universidades têm atuado em uma perspectiva menos conservadora, procurando se aproximar cada vez mais dos grupos marginalizados e destituídos de direitos tão fundamentais quanto a educação. Assim, a presença desses grupos na educação superior pública brasileira não é vista somente como uma medida compensatória, senão especialmente enquanto uma ação afirmativa. É sob essa perspectiva que este texto se apresenta como um relato da experiência da implementação do Programa, no período entre 2015 e 2019, a partir de indicadores da graduação e da pós-graduação.

1. Introduction

The Brazilian Constitution foresees, to everyone, the right to public education and guarantees the principle of equality to all citizens. However, this is still an intention to be achieved, especially when it also comes to consider indigenous peoples. In face of this challenge, Brazil mobilized multiple efforts to democratize the access to higher education and to ensure conditions of permanency in both undergraduate and postgraduate courses. To this end, in recent decades, the government has invested in policies that have materialized, promoting federal public higher education's expansion and interiorization, with the creation of new universities and new courses in specific territories.

In relation to undergraduate courses' access, one of the central issues still focuses on the great difficulty of fully fulfilling the objective of democratizing education. In fact, it is not enough to just increase the number of vacancies in order to materialize a true and effective education democratization policy. It is necessary to implement forms and mechanisms of access to the Brazilian educational system different from those historically consolidated. Even today, it can be noted that factors such as social class, gender, race/ethnicity make it impossible the access to public universities. For a democratic reform of the university to really be effective, it is essential to pay attention to minorities excluded from the access education's process over the years. In this sense, it is worth mentioning that affirmative actions in higher education have sought to promote a greater integration to the population's different segments, both in university and in society and, consequently, prevent and even reduce existing discrimination.

The current inclusive policies have allowed several groups, including indigenous peoples, to have access to higher education. Such measures, in addition to providing different forms of access to the university, have also shown a greater concern for the permanence of all students and their academic performance. Indigenous peoples' presence in the university implies much more than just acceptance and coexistence with a different audience. It also involves understanding and interacting with other worlds, social organization and human existence's conceptions or visions, including in its relationship with nature. This presence not only modifies the institutional organization, but also the temporal one, of which the curriculum refers. In this sense, it is not simply a question of making indigenous adapt to the university, but making the university also adapt to the cultural dynamics that indigenous presence inscribes in the university community's space and time. That is, it takes something more than just including indigenous people in the university: it is necessary to go beyond the "recognition and promotion of differentiated values and worldviews. It is not, therefore, a question of social inclusion only, but of the construction of another university" (Peres, 2007, p. 43).

UFFS specifically, since its creation project, has been concerned with developing teaching, research and extension considering the population's social, economic and cultural profile, without forgetting regional needs and demands. Thus, UFFS sought to develop its actions based on the understanding that the university is born from society and constitutes itself as a commonweal at the service, precisely, of society. This perception allowed, then, to think and elaborate a specific action, called Indigenous Peoples Access and Permanency Program (PIN), to ensure young indigenous people presence in the university space, also considering the permanency conditions until graduation and post-graduate studies' completion.

Since its implementation in 2010, UFFS has been committed to dialogue with the National Indian Foundation (Funai), the Federal Public Ministry (MPU), as well as with leaders and teachers of indigenous communities from the Mesoregion of the Mercosur's Great Frontier. Thus, it is about

KEYWORDS

Higher education;
indigenous;
admission;
permanence;
affirmative action
policies.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Educación
superior;
indígenas; ingreso;
permanencia;
políticas de
acciones
afirmativas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Educação superior;
indígenas;
ingresso;
permanência;
políticas de ações
afirmativas.

Recibido:
28/05/2020

Aceptado:
10/09/2021

addressing the issues surrounding the policies' creation for indigenous students' entry and permanency in the institution. In view of these demands, in 2012, the university instituted a commission specifically focused on the elaboration of indigenous institutional policy, which included the debate on access, permanence and involvement conditions for indigenous peoples in teaching, research and extension activities. That year, in order to know the experiences gathered by other institutions in the Southern region, the commission organized the "I Meeting on Diversity at UFFS: Policies for Indigenous Inclusion". In this event, we chose to invite two Brazilian universities, the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS) and the Maringa's State University (UEM/PR), which already had a trajectory in the access and permanence actions implementation for indigenous peoples in their undergraduate courses.

It is worth mentioning that an important decision taken by the commission mentioned recently concerned the indigenous communities' inclusion as protagonists in the entry and permanency policy elaboration at UFFS. At that time, they were represented by their chiefs, leaders, indigenous teachers and civil law and public government entities. In addition to considering this basic precept, the members of the committee also resorted to Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO), in which Brazil became a signatory only in 2003. According to Article 7, paragraph 1 of this Convention, it is noteworthy that it is pertinent to indigenous peoples, "participate in the development, implementation and evaluation of national and regional development program plans that can directly affect them" (ILO, 1989).

Regarding access to higher education's affirmative policies, some scholars point out that, even if indigenous peoples set out their demands for access to higher education, they did not even use to be included as participants in the elaboration of inclusive policies (Bergamaschi, Doebber, & Brito, 2018). In view of this, the commission complied with constitutional precepts ensuring people's participation in decisions on policies and projects focused on their realities. This, undoubtedly, was a novelty considering what historically used to happen to these populations, since, most of the time, the projects were only imposed by the Brazilian State.

Thus, the commission, composed mostly of teachers with research and projects related to indigenous themes, assisted by a team of university staff educational technicians, organized a schedule of meetings with these communities close to the campuses in the states of Brazil's southern region.

In the state of Parana, the debate took place at the UFFS Campus of Laranjeiras do Sul, in partnership with the UFFS Campus of the city of Realeza. At the time, Indigenous Lands (TI) representatives of Rio das Cobras (Nova Laranjeiras) and TI Boa Vista (Laranjeiras do Sul) participated. In the state of Santa Catarina, the meeting to discuss the draft took place in the city of Chapeco, where the university's central administration is located. In addition to the participation of the National Foundation of the Indigenous' (Funai) members also presented their contributions to representatives of the TI Condá, Toldo Chimbanguê, Toldo Pinhal and Xapeco. In the state of Rio Grande do Sul, two meetings took place. The first occurred at campus Erechim with representatives of the Indigenous Camp Saint Water, Toldo Guarani, Mato Preto, TI Nonoai and Votouro. The second meeting took place at Cerro Largo campus with the participation of Inhacora IT, Guarita and the Alvorecer community. It should be noted that, in these discussions, all meetings had the very active participation of members from Kaingang¹ and Guarani ethnic groups (UFFS, 2013a).

After this preliminary survey, the committee prepared a proposal and, before it was sent for the University Council's (CONSUNI) analysis, it was presented and discussed with leaders and indigenous teachers from the Indigenous Lands located in the region covered by UFFS. The completion of this process occurred with the publication of Resolution n° 33/2013 of CONSUNI, which instituted the Indigenous Peoples Access and Permanency Program (PIN) of UFFS.

According to the Resolution, the UFFS' PIN is guided by the democratic values promotion, respect for both the difference and socioeconomic and ethnic-racial diversity, through the adoption of a policy to expand the access to undergraduate and postgraduate courses, without neglecting the culture stimulation, teaching, research, extension and permanency at the University. In this sense, the program remained linked to the Undergraduate Policy Directorate, which specifically defines actions aimed at indigenous students' entry

and permanency in undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Under the program's terms, it also foresaw the formation of commissions responsible for monitoring and qualifying within the campuses and the Institution (UFFS, 2013b).

The promotion for indigenous peoples' differentiated entry for universities aims, first, to reduce the exclusion scenario in which these peoples have historically been launched. Universities have acted in a less conservative perspective, seeking to get closer and closer to groups marginalized and devoid of rights so fundamental as education. Thus, these groups' presence in Brazil's public higher education is not only seen as a compensatory measure, but especially as an affirmative action.

As it will be possible to perceive soon after, the analysis presented here focuses on the five-year experience prospect of a policy aimed at indigenous peoples entry and permanency in the university. However, it is not a question of chronologically analyzing the facts, but of presenting elements that allow us to visualize the scenario in which the PIN came to be consolidated. For this, we chose to use the notes of the program's policy, the evaluation report carried out after two years of measures' implementation and the histories of every newcomer through the specific selection process. This text, which was produced from the perspective of those who were part of the committee for the program's preparation and monitoring, also aims to present the actions related to admission and permanence, as well as the results obtained, and the challenges experienced by both the institution and indigenous students.

2. Indigenous presence at UFFS

First, it is important to situate the presence of indigenous peoples in the regional context of UFFS and the relevance that basic and higher education have been assuming in these communities. In the Mesoregion of Mercosur Great Frontier, there is the presence of 31 Indigenous Lands (TI), which are predominantly of Kaingang and Guarani ethnic groups and are concentrated in some specific areas, not being distributed through long territorial extensions. These communities' real conditions are quite diverse. According to IBGE data from 2010 reveal that there are around 54,052 indigenous people living in the South region (Funai, 2010). Data from the 2019 School Census show that there are 22,435 indigenous people attending basic education in the three southern states. This means that around 42% of the population attends basic education.

According to the most recent data made available by the Higher Education Census, conducted by the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research (INEP [<https://www.gov.br/inep/pt-br/>]), in 2018, 57,706 indigenous people attended Brazilian higher education, with 3,151 among them studying at universities in the south region (BRASIL, 2018a). It is worth noting that most TI in the states of RS, SC and PR have schools that offer at least basic education. Many of them already have or, if not, are in the process of implementing high school.

It is also worth noting that the data related to the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB) of schools located in these indigenous lands present low indicators especially in large-scale educational research. Thus, from these findings, in addition to the historical aspects, of social and economic vulnerabilities, it is possible to perceive the great difficulty faced by these TI students in the entry, permanency and successful insertion in the university's context. These conditions indicate that it is essential to recognize the need for specific public policies capable of contributing for this population effective inclusion and, at the same time, for the construction of more democratic and plural social and cultural relations. These data, moreover, are very useful to understand concrete situations, dialogue, promote adjustments and propose advances.

Since the 1990s, indigenous peoples began to fight for access to education. This is especially because they understood that it was through it that one could transform a society and strengthen its community, culture and tradition. In part, this struggle resulted in the insertion of indigenous students in both basic and higher education. In fact, it was perceived the need to train indigenous teachers who could work in their respective origin communities and, thus, guarantee the constitutional requirements of a bilingual education, differentiated

and regulated by the subsequent legal system, which includes the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB, 1996) and the National Curriculum Reference for Indigenous Schools (Rcnei, 1998) (Rodrigues, Novak, & Faustino, 2016).

Years later, at the meetings held at UFFS, TI leaders and teachers reported that indigenous youth and adults were also interested in attending higher education. This interest urged the institution to consider a specific program capable of meeting such demands. It was because of this that the University created the PIN with the intention of promoting, as it was said before, social and ethnic inclusion, in addition to seeking alternatives that would enable indigenous peoples' access and permanency in undergraduate and postgraduate programs, as well as their involvement in teaching, research and extension activities.

In order to include youth that historically were outside the university space, the program ensures that indigenous students entry in undergraduate courses happens in three ways: I - ENEM /SiSU; II - Exclusive Indigenous Selection Process, with 2 (two) supplementary vacancies per course; III - Special Selection Process to meet specific demands, through project approval by CONSUNI. Except those courses in which the University did not have autonomy in the offer of supplementary vacancies. It is still foreseen that the vacancies available in the Exclusive Selection Process that were not occupied could be the object of indigenous students' internal transfer and return of indigenous student-abandonment through the publication of a specific notice. The resolution also established the reservation of two vacancies in each of the *lato sensu* and *stricto sensu* graduate courses offered to self-declared indigenous candidates and classified in the selection process (UFFS, 2013b).

In addition to the proposals regarding admission, the program also provides for actions that seek to ensure indigenous students permanency at UFFS. Among them, it is worth mentioning academic support; attention to student's political-social background; promotion of education in the ethnic-racial relations of students and civil servants in university life's different areas; signing of agreements and partnerships with federal, state and municipal public agencies; financial support through scholarships and grants; physical space provision of permanent reference, intended for orientation, monitoring, development of pedagogical activities and socialization of indigenous students; provision of monitoring for this specific audience (UFFS, 2013b).

In order to conduct selection processes and monitor permanency actions, according to the program's indications, a General Commission (CG) and a Local Commission (CL) are established on each campus of the university. These committees are composed of indigenous students representatives, the Graduation's Pro-Rector, the Extension and Culture's Pro-Rector, the Research and Graduate Studies' Pro-Rector, the Student Affairs Pro-Rector, the Funai's Regional Coordination, the education's technical-administrative, the faculty and the Center for Pedagogical Support (NAP).

Following these deliberations, the program began operating in 2014, when the first Indigenous Exclusive Selection Process was held, with admission in 2015. As foreseen in the resolution, evaluations take place every two years, the first of which occurred in 2017 and the second is scheduled for 2020.

3. Graduation and postgraduation indicators analysis

This item presents data related to admission, permanency, performance and resources of indigenous students at the University, in the scope of undergraduate and postgraduate studies, related to the operation period of the PIN. The resolution establishes that notices of the selection processes must require, at the time of registration, the ethnicity belonging manifestation, which can be proven through one of the following documents: declaration of the National Indian Foundation (Funai) and/or the cacicado or other indigenous representative body; Administrative Registration of Indian Birth (RANI); personal declaration of belonging to an indigenous group (UFFS, 2013b).

Regarding the entry via the National High School Exam (ENEM), in which there is a reservation of one vacancy per course for self-declared indigenous candidates, a total of about 40 vacancies are offered in

Table 1 - self-declared indigenous students who have joined via ENEM/SiSU since 2014

CAMPUS	JOINING 2014	JOINING 2015	JOINING 2016	JOINING 2017	JOINING 2018	JOINING 2019	TOTAL STUDENTS WITH ACTIVE ENROLLMENT (ON 15/04/2020)
Cerro Largo	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Chapecó	4	1	1	5	6	7	8
Erechim	1	0	0	2	1	2	3
Laranjeiras do Sul	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Passo Fundo	0	0	0	2	1	2	5
Realeza	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	7	1	1	8	9	12	18

Source: Academic Management System - SGA/UFFS. Data collected on 04/15/2020

each selection process. Regarding the occupation of these vacancies, data recorded in Table 1 indicate the enrolled number per campus since 2014 - the year the program was implemented - and the total number of active enrollments currently active.

From the data recorded in Table 1, from the outset, it is possible to observe the existence of a low number of entries through the ENEM over the period. Considering the number of vacancies available (one per course), it can be observed that the resulting number of enrollments is not very expressive. This is partly due to the fact that the entry policy, in the period studied, is not yet well known among indigenous populations. On the other hand, these results are also related to indigenous students' participation and performance in the ENEM, in addition to the low expectations associated with performance.

Regarding permanence, it was observed, during six years, that from the 43 new newcomers, only 18 remained with active enrollment. It is noted, an evasion rate around 58%. Of the 7 students who joined in 2014, only 1 is with active enrollment. This is an indigenous man who joined the Cerro Largo Campus. Of the 6 who joined in 2015, also only 1, on Campus Erechim, is with active enrollment. The only student who joined Campus Chapeco in 2016 dropped out of the university in the course's first semester. Of the 8 students who joined in 2017, only 2 remain in Chapeco and 2 in Passo Fundo. In relation to 2018, there are 3 students who continue studying in Chapeco and 1 in Passo Fundo. And, of the 12 students who joined in 2019, 8 remain with active enrollment, 3 of them follow in Chapecó, 2 in Erechim, 1 in Laranjeiras do Sul, 2 in Passo Fundo. In this case, it is necessary to point out the need for a closer look at students who enter through ENEM/SiSU, because they are in small numbers and dispersed between the courses and the campuses, they end up remaining invisible and, therefore, little assisted by permanency actions.

Table 2 below shows data related to the Exclusive Selection Process, in which two additional vacancies are offered per course, except for those in which the university does not have the autonomy to offer supplementary vacancies (e.g., medicine and nursing). In this table, you can contemplate some information regarding registrations, approvals, enrollments made and active enrollments. The first edition took place at the end of 2014 with the students' admission in 2015 and, from there, each new year a new selection process was held. To apply for a position, the candidate registers and performs a written test, in which he must produce a dissertation essay, in addition to answering multiple choice questions involving Portuguese Language, Mathematics, History, Geography and Natural Sciences.

Table 2 - indigenous students who joined the exclusive selection process during the period of program (2014 to 2019)

YEAR OF THE SELECTION PROCESS / YEAR OF ENTRY	NUMBER OF CANDIDATES REGISTERED	NUMBER OF VACANCIES OFFERED	NUMBER OF SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES	NUMBER OF CANDIDATES ENROLLED	NUMBER OF GRADUATE STUDENTS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS WITH ACTIVE ENROLLMENT ON 15/04/2020
2014/2015	192	92	145	37	0	07
2015/2016	294	84	204	61	0	08
2016/2017	426	82	135	50	0	15
2017/2018	352	82	103	47	0	29
2018/2019	358	82	87	45	0	31

Source: Academic Management System - SGA/UFFS. Data collected on 04/15/2020

The evidence is drawn up by an institutional committee specifically set up for this purpose. To be classified, the candidate must demonstrate a minimum testing score of 30% in each category and score at least one question in each of the areas of knowledge. The number of vacancies offered varies according to the number of courses offered by the institution in each year. It is important to highlight that this selection process has been consolidated as the most important, because it is in it that we perceive a greater demand for indigenous peoples. It is also the way of entry best known to them.

In order to have a greater understanding of the magnitude of this process, a table is presented with this scenery and its development over the years.

The data in Table 2 show a significant number of applications in all the selection processes performed. This is largely due to both the intense work carried out by the local campus commissions campi with indigenous communities and the actions of indigenous students already inserted in the university. In this aspect, the program has advanced and it can even be sustained that it has achieved its goal.

As for the occupation of vacancies, there are still some challenges. Although candidates take the exams and are classified, a significant number of vacancies end up not being filled, even after several calls for registration. According to the analyses made by members of the committees, this is due to several factors, among which stand out communication difficulties, because many candidates are not aware that they were called to get registered. Another factor to be considered is the lack of Indigenous Lands near the campuses of Cerro Largo (RS) and Realeza (PR). This directly contributes to the vacancies offered in these campuses not being filled. In 2019, for example, in Cerro Largo there was no registration and, in Realeza, only 4 students were enrolled.

In addition to the occupation of vacancies' challenge, another factor that is even more worrying and challenging is these students' permanency in the university. For the purposes of analyzing academic performance, we analyzed students' histories who entered through the exclusive selection process in the years of 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019, since this was the form of entry with the highest number of students enrolled.

The information in Table 2 shows that, among students who entered in 2015, none of them completed the course after 10 semesters of admission to the university and only 19% remained with active enrollment. The 7 students who remain at the university have so far managed to accomplish between 30% and 76% of the course's curriculum. There is an expectation that at least 4 will be able to complete their degree, as they have already completed more than 50% of the course. It should be noted, moreover, that 9 students who attended the 1st semester failed by attendance in all CCR's enrolled and, finally, dropped out. Other students attended the following phases, but ended up dropping out in the 2nd, 3rd or 4th phase, because

they had failed all CCR's by frequency. Some attended university for 7, 8, 9 semesters, but, since they did not have enough academic achievement, they were giving up. There was also the case of 3 students who were admitted, but had no frequency.

Among the students who joined in 2016, 5 enrolled, but had no frequency; 8 (13%) are with active enrollment, have already attended 8 semesters and completed 5% to 56% of the course's curriculum. In this group, it is observed that the most failures occur because of grades. The other 48 dropped out, 18 dropped out at the end of the 1st semester, 8 at the end of the second semester and the others were giving up as the phases were following. In this group, it is observed that 90% of the failures usually occur by frequency.

Compared to 2017, the scenario is no different. Among the 50 students enrolled, 15 attended the 1st semester and failed in all CCR's exclusively by attendance, dropping out soon after. Another 11 students attended until the 2nd or 3rd semester, but failed all CCR's by frequency and then dropped out of their courses. As for active enrollment, a total of 15 students were perceived, and in 6 semesters they were able to accomplish between 8% and 44% of the course curriculum. It is noted that those who managed to achieve a smaller percentage, have more failures by frequency, while those who managed to reach more than 30% of the course, usually fail due to low grades. A student has his school enrollment suspended. The other eight, as the semesters progressed, also abandoned their courses.

In relation to the 47 students who entered in 2018, 5 were enrolled, but had no attendance; 8 attended the 1st semester and gave up over the months. It is observed that the 8 of them failed in all CCR's by frequency. Another 5, as they advanced throughout the course, were successively failing and ended up giving up on the 3rd semester. Unlike previous years, in 2018, 29 students, or 61.7%, remained with active enrollment. It is believed that this advance occurred due to the creation of specific classes for indigenous peoples on Campus Chapeco. Given the high dropout rates in previous years, the Local PIN Commission from the Campus Chapeco organized a proposal according to which, from 2018 on, specific classes should be offered to indigenous students, with the aim of bringing them closer, strengthening and integrating them into academic life over the first two years. In this sense, it was also created the possibility that they would attend CCR's that contributed to work out the lack of content. The CCR's offered includes Instrumental Mathematics, Reading and Textual Production I and II, Southern Frontier's History, Law and Citizenship, Basic Informatics and Introduction to Social Thinking. This set of disciplines was chosen because they are part of the curriculum of all courses and are validated/used for the completion of the course by all indigenous peoples who attend the specific classes. Each semester, indigenous students attend 4 of these disciplines. Thus, if they are in the university during five days of the week, on the day they would not have classes they attend the specific monitoring for indigenous peoples, where they work intensely on reading, interpreting, writing and calculus' skills. Both CCR's and monitors are offered on the night shift. This proposal is developed only on Campus Chapeco, which has a greater number of indigenous students.

In relation to the 45 new students entering in 2019, 1 registered, but did not have frequency; 12 attended the first semester and then dropped out. Even if the standard is enrolled in the specific classes, it is observed that the vast majority failed in all CCR's by frequency; 1 is with enrollment suspended and 31 (68.8%) are active enrollment. In this group, 14 of them had approval in all CCR's courses, 6 were approved in most CCR's and the 2 or 3 failures that occurred were due to grades. It is also worth mentioning that in this group, even with active enrollment, there are students who failed in all CCR's by frequency. Despite being a proposal in execution only two years ago, the specific classes and monitoring for indigenous peoples have shown positive results.

Students highlight that, among the factors of permanency in the university, it is necessary to highlight the coexistence between them, because "one helps the other, they do not feel alone/abandoned and are less lonely". This strengthens the presence and permanence in the university.

Considering the 5 selection processes together, we notice, on the one hand, that there were a total of 240 enrollments and, in addition, that 90 of them remained active, that is, only about 37% of the students have

active enrollment. These records reveal the need for special attention to the insertion process of indigenous students in the context of the university, especially in the courses, regarding academic performance.

PIN committees have developed a work that seeks to enable the permanence of indigenous students in UFFS. Among the actions developed, it can be highlighted, for instance, that local companies have followed the registration process and, in some cases, have made contacts via telephone and social networks with the students, in order to ensure that they become aware of dates and documentation necessary to effectively enroll. In addition, the committees also act in the students' reception and in the monitoring of their insertion in undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Thus, the local commissions organize a specific reception, bringing together the indigenous students to integrate them with one another, to present them the university, to forward the preparation of cards necessary for entering the university restaurant and library, as well as to enable registration in the socio-economic aid and the Permanency Aid Program.

After providing information and general guidance, these committees still organize the provision of specific monitors to work on issues related to language, construction of basic concepts from different areas of knowledge, difficulties related to school pathways and unique sociocultural conditions. It also includes a series of orientation activities on studies' routine and organization. In this sense, it is both, the definition of a suitable place for indigenous students to meet as a space for the PIN with furniture, computer and internet access. It should be noted, moreover, that the committees seek to promote cultural activities and events related to indigenous themes. These meetings seek to give visibility to the indigenous presence in the university, enhance integration among indigenous students and strengthen the development of a plural culture in the institutional sphere.

Even so, it is still possible to realize that there is a certain lack of understanding and commitment to equity. Reports indicate the difficulties presented by teachers to understand students' specificities with different cultural histories, either in relation to the use of electronic tools (e-mails, social networks, digital platforms, among others), or in relation to linguistic and conceptual domain and/or students' social integration. The treatment given to all – without taking into account some students' specificities – makes the problem of student's lack of performance understood as a unique and exclusive problem of the student. In some situations, there is no differentiated look to understand different learning times. In this perspective, Lima (2007) points out that, by including indigenous peoples in universities,

university careers, disciplines must be rethought, new (and innovative) areas of research opened, curricular contents that have been taught and the test of how structures, which have become so bureaucratic and centralizing, can bear to put themselves at the service of historically and culturally differentiated living collectivities (Lima, 2007, p. 20).

With this, it is essential that the courses develop initiatives capable of strengthening the dialogue between different knowledge, different histories and perspectives, precisely in order to be able to welcome and include the difference.

Another aspect that deserves to be highlighted around this discussion is the lack of knowledge of undergraduate courses about indigenous school education peculiarities, especially about the differentiated curriculum existing in most of basic education. Gersem Baniwa (2019), in criticizing the Quota Laws (n° 12,711/2012), especially in relation to the disputes between “blacks, browns and indigenous peoples” and the consequent distortions generated throughout the process, raises a very pertinent question, that is, reflecting on one of the obstacles that most prevent permanence of the indigenous in the university:

How can indigenous people who studied in a specific, bilingual, intercultural and differentiated school (differentiated curriculum) and who was literate in their mother tongue and has this as their first language can compete on an equal footing with other students, (...) who have studied in regular universal schools? (Baniwa, 2019, p. 176).

Thus, it is important not to disregard the fact that students also express their perceptions about the specific selection process and about the insertion in academic life. When asked about the insertion in the university, they manifest that they have not encountered difficulties in the selection process, but point out the existence of a set of obstacles that involve especially linguistic, cultural and social aspects. They point out that there is a great difficulty in following curricular components, as there is a lack of mastery of both the Portuguese language and previous knowledge. At times, these absences even make it impossible for students to follow teachers' reasoning. All this without forgetting the difficulties faced by each one in adapting to life and routine in the university, in the constitution of a study culture, because reading and systematic study are not part of their daily life or culture. Students do not fail to mark the lack of access and mastery in using the computer, internet, moodle platform and still report financial difficulties, with housing and transportation. They also highlight the difficulty of socialization in a very different cultural universe, which often translates into a feeling of loneliness. All these elements serve as discouragements and, finally, are the basis of the large number of abandonments.

Nevertheless, there are students that point out the importance of living with indigenous colleagues. It is a special element to soften loneliness, so that each one can feel better in the university environment, helping the other. On the other hand, although demonstrations of recognition of the institution's good reception are not rare, students experience a certain prejudice on the part of non-indigenous students. Thus, many claim a specific student housing, especially considering its cultural condition of group coexistence. Without this, suffering with the distance from the family and the community, added to the linguistic and cultural difficulties, converge in the consequent dropout. According to Amaral, an indigenous student lives a double belonging when entering this academic universe. The first is related to the fact that this subject begins to assume his academic identity in an environment full of contradictions, limits, resistances, denials and statements. The second relationship is related to ethnic community ties related to family and community expectations of their home community in relation to their permanence in this space (Amaral & Silveira, 2016).

There are students who refer to school's pre-trajectory, recognizing different characteristics of non-indigenous schools, either regarding formal requirements or study objectives and requirements. These students also highlighted the difficulties they encounter in choosing a particular course. They report that they do not have sufficient knowledge about the course they are choosing, for example, which subjects to be studied, which area of knowledge the course is linked to and which professional activities they could develop in the future. One student also pointed out that when he chose to attend Social Sciences - Bachelor's Degree, he imagined that he would do an undergraduate degree to act as a Social Worker.

These reports allow us to reflect on the need for a greater knowledge of indigenous students' profile of UFFS. There is no doubt that there are many and varied life stories, longings, expectations and dreams to be fulfilled. Knowing these profiles would help the university build a more plural environment, besides showing greater attention to the desires of these young university students who are not part of the idealized and desired "university standard". This information needs to be considered in order to develop an affirmative policy, because if access is differentiated, the actions to ensure permanency also need to be differentiated. Thus, despite the institutional limits, it is urgent that teaching, research and extension contemplate indigenous specificities in their projects so that, in fact, indigenous students are part of university life.

However, we must consider the great limit between the university and the traditional knowledge of these peoples, which preclude a more consistent progress of the affirmative policies and concrete dialogues between these subjects. Even if the knowledge acquired in the academy is incorporated into its way of life, the university does not recognize its culture and traditional knowledge as belonging to the scientific domain. This imposes itself as a limit to advances in public policies. The university needs to get prepared to understand the indigenous universe not only through legal pieces, such as Law nº 11,645/2008, but to make room for a knowledge exchange between academic knowledge and traditional knowledge accumulated over the centuries by indigenous populations (Durat, 2018).

It should be noted, therefore, that the university has a long way to go regarding the articulations with the social context and indigenous culture, which is still little known. In general, the university focuses especially on the

Table 3 - indigenous students who entered postgraduate school during the duration of the Program

CAMPUS	COURSE	N° INDIGENOUS STUDENTS	YEAR OF ENTRY	IN PROGRESS	YEAR COMPLETION	ABANDONMENT IN
Cerro Largo	Master's degree in Environment and Sustainable Technologies	1	2016			2017
Cerro Largo	Master's degree in Development and Public Policy	1	2015			2017
Laranjeiras do Sul	Master's degree in Agroecology and Sustainable Rural Development	2	2015		2017	
		1	2018	X		
Chapeco	Master's degree in Education	1	2014		2016	
Chapeco	Master's degree in Linguistic Studies	1	2019			2019
Erechim	Professional Master's degree in Education	1	2019	X		

Source: Pro-Rectorcy of Research and Postgraduate. Data collected in March/2020

indigenous cultural and academic adaptation, but in many ways without a true and effective reciprocity. In this sense, it would be appropriate to know the dilemmas faced by schools located in indigenous lands, in order to get in touch with the specificities and, then, strengthen the most effective dialogue between TI and the university.

It can be affirmed that the PIN has provided, at least for undergraduate studies, an important measure on the learning to the extent that it has broadened the institutional understanding of teaching, learning, academic and scientific training processes challenges, for example.

In the post-graduation sphere, considering reservation of vacancies established, it is noticed that, until now, there is a small group of students participating.

The data indicate the entry of 8 indigenous students in post graduation programs offered on UFFS campuses, during the program duration. Among students who entered, there were 3 graduates, 2 in Laranjeiras do Sul and 1 in Chapeco; 2 with an ongoing formation process and 3 dropouts. Data indicate that, even in postgraduate school, indigenous peoples need a differentiated, closer action, by the course and the advisor.

In addition to the aspects addressed so far, it is worth remembering that in relation to the extension and culture, at the moment, there are no institutionalized projects that are developed in indigenous schools. This is an important gap and, before it, it is up to the institution and, more specifically, for the courses to foster and strengthen this instance not only as a means of bringing indigenous peoples closer together, but also as a source of knowledge about their history, language, cultural context – including indigenous knowledge. To the extent that these projects are not part of undergraduate courses routine, one can perceive how far the university remains from the indigenous reality.

4. Final considerations

The specific programs being implemented in universities take on a political dimension and contribute to the promotion of a group historically deprived of opportunities. Such programs are yearning for this group to achieve some degree of equality in social participation. In view of this, UFFS has sought to act positively and affirmatively to remove barriers of prejudice, ensuring equal opportunities, well-being and development both personal and social.

Inclusion of indigenous people in UFFS, through PIN, seeks to promote changes in the culture and thinking of the population, launching a new look to fight prejudice, discrimination, racial injustices and intolerance. It is known that the indigenous presence at UFFS still lacks studies and investments. Nevertheless, the initiative demonstrates that it is possible to promote indigenous inclusion in public higher education.

The experience and the reports that students themselves have made allows us to realize how much the university needs to advance in order to actually interact with indigenous culture. These students arrive at the university marked by stereotypes and with a certain discomfort to live in this new space. They feel the need to be understood and well received in the institution, not to suffer discrimination, to have their learning time respected; in short, not to feel excluded from the university environment. Thus, the PIN intends to meet the expectations of those with indigenous units, since education is one of the highest hopes of these communities, especially when institutions are installed close to indigenous territories.

In a first look, one can visualize a policy that is still in progress, but which still presents weaknesses in relation to the filling of vacancies and especially the indigenous students infrequency and evasion from courses. The actions of research and extension are also fragile. Nevertheless, it is necessary to emphasize that this policy has contributed to a greater indigenous presence in the institution. During the five years PIN operated, there were 108 indigenous students attending undergraduate courses and 2 in postgraduate courses.

Although with little existing research on the results and impacts of such initiatives, it is possible to identify that the implementation of these policies is rather complex. It requires a local, regional and even national debate. With this, it would be possible to easily identify weaknesses and define actions to be developed, so that in fact, one can count with indigenous peoples' presence in university seats, as well as with the reception of some of their demands and needs.

Finally, it is worth noting that in view of the recent implementation of this program, UFFS' academic community continues to understand the dynamics of indigenous presence in the institution, assessing in depth challenges and needs that emerged after the program's creation. However, the policy presented here remains one of the means of materializing the right to education, understood as a fundamental human right, which must be as universal as it is indispensable.

NOTES

¹ Kaingang ethnic group belongs to the Macro-Jê linguistic family and Guarani to the Tupi-Guarani trunk. Both inhabit the southern region about 3,000 years.

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