



## The Restructuring Policy of Federal Universities and the Institution of Innovative Formative Models: UNIFESP in Analysis

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### ABSTRACT

In 2007, through Decree No. 6,096, the Program to Support the Restructuring and Expansion Plans of the Brazilian Federal Universities, known as REUNI, was instituted in Brazil. Its main objectives were to expand the higher education enrolments, raise the conclusion rates and reduce dropouts rates. Shortly before REUNI, the Universidade Federal de São Paulo (UNIFESP) had already started an expansion process and later joined the program, further expanding the number of courses, campuses and enrolments. Parallel to the undergraduate courses that traditionally offered, the university implemented new ones and with different academic training models, among them, the so-called Interdisciplinary Bachelor degree (BI). In view of this scenario, the article analyses the different UNIFESP academic training models in order to understand the extent to which they favor the rates of permanence and conclusion among their students. In order to do so, data related to enrollment, academic performance, dropout rate and academic success rate were analysed considering the different academic training models. The analysis shows that alternative models alone do not extend permanence and conclusion rates among the students and do not improve student academic achievement, not even in BI academic training model. Finally, it is emphasized the importance of knowing better the new students profile and their basic needs.

### KEYWORDS

Higher education. Expansion of higher education. Educational models.

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## A Política de Reestruturação das Universidades Federais e a Instituição de Modelos Formativos Inovadores: a UNIFESP em Análise

### RESUMO

No ano de 2007 foi instituído no Brasil, por meio do Decreto nº 6.096, o Programa de Apoio aos Planos de Reestruturação e Expansão das Universidades Federais brasileiras, conhecido como REUNI. Entre seus principais objetivos estavam os de expandir o número de vagas no ensino superior público, elevar as taxas de conclusão e diminuir a evasão dos cursos. Um pouco antes do REUNI, a Universidade Federal de São Paulo (UNIFESP) já tinha dado início a um processo de expansão e posteriormente aderiu ao programa, ampliando ainda mais o número de cursos, vagas e *campi*. Paralelamente aos cursos que tradicionalmente oferecia, a universidade implantou novos e com distintos modelos formativos, dentre eles, os chamados bacharelados interdisciplinares (BI). Tendo em vista esse panorama, este artigo analisa os diferentes modelos formativos da UNIFESP a fim de compreender em que medida favorecem a permanência e a conclusão de seus estudantes. Para tanto, foram analisados dados referentes à matrícula, coeficiente de rendimento, taxa de evasão e taxa de sucesso acadêmico nos diferentes modelos formativos. A análise mostra que modelos alternativos por si sós não ampliam a permanência e a conclusão e não melhoram os rendimentos acadêmicos dos estudantes, inclusive nos BI. Ao fim, recomenda-se conhecer melhor o perfil e atender de forma mais adequada às necessidades básicas dos novos estudantes.

### PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Educação superior. Expansão do ensino superior. Estudo de modelos.

## La Política de Reestructuración de las Universidades Federales y la Institución de Modelos Formativos Innovadores: la UNIFESP en Análisis

### RESUMEN

En el año 2007 fue instituido en Brasil, por medio del Decreto nº 6.096, el programa de Apoyo a los Planes de Reestructuración y Expansión de las Universidades Federales brasileñas, conocido como REUNI. Entre sus principales objetivos estaban los de expandir el número de plazas en la enseñanza superior pública, elevar las tasas de conclusión y disminuir la evasión de los cursos. Un poco antes de REUNI, la Universidad Federal de São Paulo (UNIFESP) ya había dado inicio a un proceso de expansión y posteriormente se adhirió al programa, ampliando aún más el número de cursos, vacantes y campus. Paralelamente a los cursos que tradicionalmente ofrecía, la universidad implantó nuevos y con distintos modelos formativos, entre ellos, los llamados bachilleres interdisciplinares (BI). En vista de este panorama, este artículo analiza los diferentes modelos formativos de la UNIFESP a fin de comprender en qué medida favorecen la permanencia y la conclusión de sus estudiantes. Para ello, se analizaron datos referentes a la matrícula, coeficiente de rendimiento, tasa de evasión y tasa de éxito académico en los diferentes modelos formativos. El análisis llevó a la conclusión de que modelos alternativos por sí solos no amplían la permanencia y la conclusión y no mejoran los rendimientos académicos de los estudiantes, incluso en los BI. Al final, se recomienda conocer mejor el perfil y atender de forma más adecuada las necesidades básicas de los nuevos estudiantes.

### PALABRAS CLAVE

Educación superior. Expansión de la educación superior. Modelos educativos.

## Introduction

According to MEC<sup>1</sup> data, the resumption of the expansion of federal public universities began in 2003, with the main objective of expanding the access and permanence of Brazilian youth in higher education. Following up on these actions, in 2007, Decree No. 6,096 was published, which established the Program to Support Restructuring and Expansion Plans of Federal Universities - REUNI. According to the Decree, the objectives cited above are reaffirmed:

The overall goal of the Program is to gradually increase the average completion rate of face-to-face undergraduate courses to ninety percent and the ratio of undergraduate students in face-to-face courses per teacher to eighteen at the end of five years from the beginning of each plan. (BRAZIL, 2007, Art.1º., Paragraph. 1)

Also, in accordance with the Decree, the Program should follow the following guidelines:

- I - reduction of evasion rates, occupation of idle vacancies and increase of entrance vacancies, especially in the night period;
- II - expansion of student mobility, with the implementation of curricular systems and systems of titles that allow the construction of training itineraries, through the use of credits and the circulation of students between institutions, courses and programs of higher education;
- III - revision of the academic structure, with reorganization of undergraduate courses and updating of teaching-learning methodologies, aiming at the constant elevation of quality;
- IV - diversification of undergraduate courses, preferably not aimed at early and specialized professionalization;
- V - expansion of inclusion policies and student assistance; and
- VI - articulation of graduation with post-graduation and higher education with basic education. (BRAZIL, 2007, Art.2).

Two objectives of the Program stand out: (1) the optimization of resources and the incentive to change the curricular structures of existing courses; and (2) the creation of courses that would make it possible to construct training itineraries through flexibilization of curricula, enabling student mobility within the university itself or in other institutions, and which preferably did not promote the early professionalization of students.

In order to have access to the necessary financial resources for the proposed changes, the university should present a restructuring plan approved by the institution's higher body, respecting university autonomy (BRAZIL, 2007, art.4). However, in art. 5, the Decree makes clear that the plans presented by universities should also be approved by the Ministry of Education (MEC) and only with this approval will the financial resources be released. In this sense, we can see that the REUNI was set up as a policy to induce previously established actions, placing even the university autonomy cited in the standard itself.

<sup>1</sup> Consultation held on Feb 02 2017 at <http://reuni.mec.gov.br>.

The second objective refers to the flexibilization of the curriculum through the creation of courses that allow the student to define his / her formative itinerary. As a way of responding to this purpose, the country has started offering courses called Interdisciplinary Bachelor's (IB), which provide basic initial training, not focused on professionalization and short duration, with intermediate qualification. According to Lima, Azevedo and Catani (2008), this model was strongly influenced by the Bologna process and also by the North American model, with an initial training in the College, already terminal, and later in the second level, vocational training or advanced studies at the Graduate School.

It is worth remembering that the dynamics installed in the federal public higher education system, from this expansion process, produced a diverse set of academic establishments, institutional formats and course models, with very different vocations and practices. UNIFESP, which until 2007 was characterized by its specialization in health, with a high level of academic production and a solid tradition in scientific research, sought to universalize its performance by opening itself to diverse areas of knowledge. In 2004, it began planning to expand the number of vacancies and undergraduate courses and received strong incentives from the federal government to organize training courses in an interdisciplinary way, stimulating curriculum flexibilization, student mobility between courses - and even between Brazilian and foreign institutions -, as well as broadening the socio-cultural and economic diversity of students. Its restructuring plan counted on the creation of new campuses and undergraduate courses, among them, courses of interdisciplinary character.

In this sense, this article aims to understand how UNIFESP appropriated these guidelines in its daily life and if this restructuring met the objectives presented by the Expansion Decree (BRASIL, 2007) to provide greater access, permanence and completion in higher education, with quality, and promote student mobility within and outside the university.

For this, the article is organized in two parts, besides the final considerations. In the first, it discusses the restructuring policy of Brazilian federal universities from REUNI. In the second, UNIFESP's history will be briefly discussed, as it helps to understand the changes made, as well as the impacts it has had on an institutional structure constituted years ago and which, through restructuring, has been affected by organizational and cultural changes. In addition, this article examines the training models in the various University Units (UU) of UNIFESP - which are its Schools and Institutes - in order to understand how the institution reinterprets and makes it possible to respond to the demands through existing conditions. Institutional data regarding admission, income, completion, and dropout rates after university restructuring are discussed to complement the analysis. Finally, we present the final considerations regarding the proposed problem.

## REUNI: Between Access to Minorities and Obedience to the Market

Since the 1990s, the federal government has promoted policies to expand higher education with the purpose of responding to the qualification of professional personnel necessary for the new phase of contemporary socioeconomic development, marked by the globalization of relations of production and consumption. Silva and Castro (2014) point out that these measures have focused mainly on the expansion of private education, the use of distance education, and the restructuring and creation of federal public universities. In the case of the public ones, the trend of "modernization" was stimulated even with regard to administrative models, not just pedagogical ones, in order to guarantee greater efficiency and effectiveness to the public "services" rendered. The logic of economic rationalization marks the expansion of federal universities, since the central and explicit intention of the government was to make the most of the resources already available in the system. As mentioned previously, this policy was operationalized through REUNI, established as of Decree No. 6,096 / 2007 (BRAZIL, 2007), as part of the National Education Plan (PNE), approved by the government of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003) -2010).

The program was instituted through the induction of federal public universities to accept management contracts with the Ministry of Education and Science (MEC), which imposed a series of milestones and goals to be fulfilled, linking them to the release of public funds necessary for its operation. It is noted that the REUNI adopted management techniques specific to the private sector by conditioning the financing to the fulfillment of previously established goals in the contracts between the universities and the MEC.

In this way, as already pointed out, the university autonomy provided for in the Decree is questionable, since it refers almost to whether or not it adheres to the Program, with the expansion or not of resources for the maintenance of institutions.

It is important to note that Decree No. 6,096 / 2007, when dealing with the restructuring and expansion of federal public universities, did not mention the model of institutional development that defines the essence of the work of universities in Brazil, according to art. 207 of the Federal Constitution (BRASIL, 1988), that is, the inseparability between teaching, research and extension. This essence refers to the purpose of the University not only as responsible for technical development and preparation for different professions, but as guarantor of a general and critical formation and carrying a cultural tradition, socially valued. In addition, underpinning the principle of inseparability, there is a common understanding that the university is the essential locus of knowledge production and diffusion and responsible for proposing relevant issues in and out of national borders, dealing with them in different theoretical and scientific perspectives. However, as Léda and Mancebo (2009) emphasize, it seems that REUNI only privileged undergraduate education:

Without mincing words: the desired expansion is financed only for teaching, following lessons from the World Bank (1994), which condemn the predominance of research universities (humboldtianas) - a reality that never existed in the education system Brazilian higher education – and also proposed the universities (!!!) of education (that would take care of the education or the neoprofessional formation), more appropriate to the countries with chronic public deficit. (p.55).

However, it is not denied that REUNI has also brought significant gains to the grassroots. As recalled by Pachane and Vitorino (2015),

Obtaining vacancies in public universities represented, for many, an achievement, since most of the Brazilian population never imagined in this space. Thus, REUNI is understood as an achievement of the popular strata, including the encouragement of evening courses that it promoted. According to Tonegutti and Martinez (2009, p. 1), "for many years we have struggled to expand the supply of vacancies in Public Universities, and therefore this is not a point of disagreement." (p.447).

However, the permanence of these students in the university is a challenge for several factors. According to the authors,

By opening more vacancies in Higher Education, the REUNI provided opportunities for low-income students to enter university. However, most of these students still have difficulties to keep themselves financially until the end of the course. In addition to the financial question, often the profile of the new student who arrives at the university banks is extremely different from the elitist profile, to which the teachers were accustomed ... This new student, usually coming from a deficient Basic Education, only with great difficulty to follow up the studies, eventually increasing the rates of avoidance that REUNI intended to reduce ... (PACHANE and VITORINO, p.448).

By means of these analyzes, the training models in force at UNIFESP after the expansion of the number of UUs and courses, as well as with the reformulations made in the Pedagogical Course Projects (PPC) of the existing graduations, are discussed below. It is also sought to understand, with such changes, the meaning of the changes in view of the trajectories traversed by their students.

## UNIFESP: Institutional Organization and Formative Models

Created by the Paulista Medical School (EPM), founded in 1933, UNIFESP is now made up of six campuses and seven UU - there are two UUs in São Paulo, EPM and 'Escola Paulista de Enfermagem' (EPE). The institution offers 51 undergraduate and one distance learning courses in different areas of knowledge and is located in the municipalities of São Paulo, Santos, Diadema, Guarulhos, São José dos Campos and Osasco. UNIFESP's multicampus model consolidated its own design, in which geographical distribution was a predominant factor for the establishment of different areas of knowledge, promoting a kind of academic fragmentation within the institution.

Although the institutional expansion has observed the principles of interdisciplinarity, in the scope of the great areas of knowledge, mobility and curricular flexibility in the projects of its Schools and Institutes and of its courses, it is possible to identify particularities in the way they have gained a body in academic everyday life and in their curricular organization.

Since the expansion, two distinct training models can be observed that have been consolidating in UNIFESP's graduations: the 'professionalizing' model and the 'interdisciplinary baccalaureate'. In the vocational model, in turn, it is possible to distinguish the courses in three other variations, which present trajectories 1) traditional with basic training cycle, 2) integrated by a basic training cycle and 3) integrated by axes and modules.

Traditional vocational training courses with a basic training cycle rely on an inflexible training model, based on a vertical curriculum that allows students little autonomy to choose their training course, since the trajectory to be followed is almost entirely defined from the beginning until the end of the course. At the beginning, the student undergoes a basic training cycle, attending Curricular Units (UC) that deal with areas and themes common to several courses of the campus, however, attends these UC only with colleagues entering the same career. Subsequently, he enrolls in a specific training unit, present only in the curricular matrix of his course, and has the option to make elective UC, offered by his course or possibly by other courses / departments of the UU where he is installed.

It is observed that there is almost no curricular flexibility or transit of students by UC and activities promoted by these courses, even if located in the same School or Institute (UU). If we consider the percentage of hours of electives and complementary activities present in the matrices, students have between 2% and 16% of the course hours. In addition, there are more 'endogenous' organizations in the way of understanding and exercising interdisciplinarity. They are, for example, activities within the undergraduate course itself that deal with common themes or professional scenarios, concomitantly, or established in frontiers of different sub-areas of knowledge, offering students some possibility of reflection on more complex problems, considering the different theoretical, methodological and topic specificities underlying the subareas of knowledge.

However, in general, these courses - traditional professionals with a basic training cycle - are characterized by the fragmentation between the areas, which are highly linked to the development of research and postgraduate activities, permeated by a concept of excellence derived from the recognized production for which departments are responsible. They suffer the impact of a departmental structure, since the UCs present in both the basic and the specific cycle are "prorated" among the different departments, disfavoring the integrated planning of activities, methods and contents and their evaluation.

The courses classified as professionalising integrated by a basic cycle of formation are those that offer to the students, from the entrance, more of a possibility of professional formation, but in specific area of knowledge. There is, in a first part of the course (in the first or first two years), a basic cycle common to the end of which the student chooses one of the

possible trajectories of academic formation - in the case of the Degree in Sciences, for example, the student he chooses to specialize in Physics, Biology, Chemistry or Mathematics, and in the courses of the School of Philosophy, Letters and Human Sciences, he chooses, for example, between bachelor and licensed degrees.

In the case of these courses, there is more autonomy for the student to choose their training course, since the definition of the professional trajectory is delayed, more or less, to the middle of the course. In the basic training cycle, UCs are frequented by colleagues who may or may not opt for the same career in the future, and in the specific training some fixed UCs present in the curricular matrix of a given course may be offered as electives for students from other courses. With this, there is greater flexibility in curricular and student transit through various courses or training possibilities. If the percentage of hours of elective and complementary activities present in the matrices of these courses is considered, students will choose from 5% to more than 50% of their course hours. Even so, the professionals integrated by a basic training cycle suffer from the persistent fragmentation between areas, and with the departmental organization that legitimizes it, which undermines the integrated planning of activities, methods and contents and their evaluation.

In relation to the interdisciplinary work, it is more evident in this model, both for the relations that are promoted between UC or subareas of knowledge in the curricular matrices specific to the courses, and in integrated initiatives, like the trajectory in 'Classical Studies', offered recently in the EFLCH, which brings together professors and UC from the Departments of Philosophy, Literature, History and History of Art, valuing the competences and the joint work of teachers, the different possibilities of elective academic trajectory of students duly enrolled in UNIFESP - USA - and approaches a very common model in International Higher Education: Minor - which is ultimately the achievement of elective credits in an area or subarea of knowledge during graduation, beyond those required in the Major, and which add qualifications to the graduation area chosen by the student.

With regard to the courses categorized as professionalising integrated by axes and modules, they are based on the coexistence between the students who entered different careers as a way to promote interdisciplinarity. The students begin their trajectories attending several UC and common modules, organized in axes, which favors the integrated planning between teachers of several areas of knowledge and discussions about methods, contents and their evaluation. Along the trajectory, the number of UC and common modules are gradually reduced, giving more and more space to the UC and specific modules of the course chosen at the entrance. This reveals a great concern with the interprofessional training and the interdisciplinary approach of the problems, although the profession has been defined a priori for the students, when of its entrance in UNIFESP. The professionalization is more specifically delineated the closer the student reaches the end of his formative itinerary.

However, there is no great curricular flexibility between these courses, when compared to other UNIFESP courses. Many matrices predict a low percentage of hours for UC electives and complementary activities (varying between 5% and 19% of the total matrix



load), which seems to reveal a relatively low degree of student autonomy for the definition of a course of study and training. It should also be considered that the offer of elective UC is usually restricted to the scope of the courses (elective course), not allowing circulation by other graduations or campuses (free electives), although these organizational forms are foreseen in the various PPCs.

The second type of training model implemented at the university is called Interdisciplinary Bachelor Degree (BI). This model is present at the Institute of Science and Technology (ICT) of the São José dos Campos campus and at the Institute of the Sea, located in the Baixada Santista. Unlike the vocational model, IB allows students broader possibilities of training itineraries. According to Leo and Teixeira (2015),

The training itineraries can be understood as a study route for continuing education, that is, the description of the training courses that a student can take in an educational institution, enabling their qualification for the purpose of pursuing studies or insertion in the world of work and professional practice. The itineraries must be organized in an intentional and systematic way, structuring educational offerings that enable the student to have a cohesive and continuous formation trajectory, vertically or horizontally. (p.6846).

In UNIFESP, BI offers a general education in large areas of knowledge, and only in the second cycle of studies can students graduate in a specific profession if they choose to continue at the undergraduate level. In the institution, the courses that make up this second cycle are called 'specific training courses'. But BI graduates can also go directly to graduate school.

The BI proposal has been placed at UNIFESP as an alternative to early super-specialization, which sometimes does not provide conditions for graduates to deal with the complex contemporary reality. In this modality, the curricular matrices contain an expressive number of elective UCs and complementary activities - between 40% and 80% of the total course time load -, being, therefore, of great curricular flexibility, conferring a high degree of autonomy to the students. to the definition of its academic trajectory.

The coexistence between the students is intense throughout the trajectory in any BI offered. It is worth mentioning that, although they are under a single department, one of the main challenges of BI is the teamwork among interdisciplinary UC professors, since in addition to highly qualified researchers, they are also very specialized.

Among the principles underlying BI guidelines (BRAZIL, 2010) is the enhancement of mobility and interinstitutional exchange. At UNIFESP, this has not happened so far. The university has different difficulties to establish this process of exchange, such as: funding for student stay; process of taking advantage of studies for the specific training courses (CFE); number of places available; time of institutional bureaucracy; distance between the UU and the institutions, among others. That is, paradoxically, it is the lack of support, especially financial and human resources, of the MEC itself, the main inducer of BI, which has made difficult the implementation of this new training model in the university.

Synthetically, it can be said that UNIFESP has the following training models and their respective rates of success and avoidance<sup>2</sup> by UU:

**Table 1.** Types of training models, rates of academic success and avoidance, by UU

Formative model		University Unit	Academic Success Rate	Dropout Rate
Professional	With a basic training cycle	School of Philosophy, Letters and Human Sciences (EFLCH)	31%	31%
		Paulista Medical School (EPM)/ Paulista Nursing School (EPE)	79%	- 15%
		Institute of Environmental, Chemical and Pharmaceutical Sciences (ICAQF)	22%	32%
	Integrated by axes and modules	Institute of Health and Society (ISS)	45%	18%
		Paulista School of Politics, Economy and Business (EPPEN)	14%	25%
Interdisciplinary Bachelor		Institute of Science and Technology (ICT)	27%	25%
		Institute of the Sea (IMar)	21%	22%

Source: Authors, PPC research (available at: <https://www.UNIFESP.br/reitoria/prograd/pro-reitoria-de-graduacao/cursos/projetos-pedagogicos>) and indicators generated by the University (available at: <http://www.UNIFESP.br/reitoria/indicadores/graduacao>).

From the data consolidated in Table 1, it is first necessary to make some observations. The courses belonging to the Paulista Medicine School (EPM) and the Nursing School (EPE) are socially well-recognized, mostly well-established due to the time of existence, and, with this, they tend to present high success rates, as well as a surplus or an inverted rate of evasion. It is worth mentioning that the courses have historically received several transfers ex officio and bring these new students to the conclusion, which contributed to the surplus found. The courses present in the other Schools and Institutes still lack the same social recognition, since they were opened more recently, between the years of 2007 and 2015. This "youth" of the UU impacts on the result of the success and evasion rates, which vary respectively between 14% and 45%, and 18% and 32%.

When comparing only the courses installed in the UU created after the expansion process of UNIFESP, it can be observed that, even among those who rely on similar training models, there are quite different rates of success and avoidance. Thus, the same training model does not seem to guarantee equivalent results between the different courses and does not stand as a guarantee of obtaining low drop-out rates.

<sup>2</sup> Success rates were calculated by dividing the sum of all graduates and the sum of all students entering the undergraduate courses that make up the Schools and Institutes listed in the table. The dropout rates were calculated by the division between (the sum of the entrants, extracted the sum of the graduates and the total number of students enrolled in the year 2017) and the sum of the entrants.

Taking the coefficients of income (CR)<sup>3</sup> and the specific dropout rates of some courses as an example, this situation is even more evident. To do so, Table 2 shows the data of the ten courses that had the highest average CR in 2017.

**Table 2.** Examples of courses by number of enrollments, CR and dropout in the year 2017

Course	Enrolled 2017	Dropouts (%)	Medium CR
Psychology - Integral	250	7.98	7.934
Medicine – Integral	757	0.79	7.879
Letters – Portuguese and Spanish (graduate) - Evening	19	Not informed	7.851
Social Service - Evening	186	11.41	7.416
Environmental Engineering - Night	96	4.17	7.395
Materials Engineering - Integral	186	0.86	7.342
Physiotherapy - Integral	214	7.82	7.337
Letters – Portuguese and English (graduate) - Night	19	Not informed	7.319
Phono audiology - Integral	156	4.00	7.312
Biological Sciences / medical modality - Integral	127	3.09	7.258

Source: Authors, data obtained upon request to ProGrad / UNIFESP

From what can be seen in terms of the formative model, the Medicine, Speech-Language Pathology and Biological Sciences / medical modality courses are organized from a traditional vocational model with a basic training cycle. The Literature course is also classified as a vocational model integrated by a basic training cycle. The Psychology, Social Work and Physiotherapy courses have adopted the professional model integrated by axes and modules and the courses of Environmental Engineering and Materials Engineering are post-baccalaureate interdisciplinary and follow the characteristics of the professional model.

Interdisciplinary baccalaureates, on the other hand, cannot guarantee the best CR, nor lower rate of evasion, as shown in Table 3:

**Table 3.** BI: Enrollments, CR and drop outs in the year 2017

Course	Enrollments 2017	Drop outs (%)	Médium CR
Interdisciplinary in Science and Technology of the Sea - Evening	322	16.35	4.848
Interdisciplinary in Science and Technology of the Sea - Night	311	23.72	4.762
Interdisciplinary in Science and Technology- Night	346	12.13	4.338
Interdisciplinary in Science and Technology - Integral	724	7.27	5.230

Source: Authors, data obtained upon request to ProGgrad / UNIFESP

<sup>3</sup> According to Unifesp's Pro-Rectorate (ProGrad) internal regulations, the CR is calculated at the end of each academic period, based on two indicators: 1) the final grade (Ni) of the student in each UC and 2) the hourly load (Hi) predicted for each CU. The CR is obtained by the following formula:

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Therefore, it can be observed that at UNIFESP, specific training models do not guarantee the students' good performance alone, nor their permanence in the courses. BIs, in particular, have CRs in the 4 and 5 bands and significant drop out rates, a situation that seems to require a more detailed analysis of the institution.

## Final Considerations

The expansion of public universities through REUNI has brought many benefits, providing access to a large contingent of the population that would most likely not have the opportunity for higher education without such an initiative. However, the data analyzed here reveal the need to promote the permanence of these students through measures involving financial support, infrastructure, expansion of the number of highly sought-after graduation courses, and a sufficient number of teachers prepared to comply curricular matrices and inclusive pedagogical projects. Alternative training models alone cannot solve such problems. Particularly, the expectations regarding the success of BI have not been confirmed until this moment in the case of UNIFESP.

In addition, with the expansion and reservation policies, the public university has lived in new times, receiving students with different profiles than historically attended until the end of the sec. XX, with the most prominent presence of young people coming from the popular classes, who have specific pedagogical and social needs to have guaranteed their right to stay and finish in higher courses with quality, as the REUNI project, at least rhetorically.

According to the MEC, the resources for student assistance and stay are transferred through the National Program of Student Assistance (PNAES), instituted in 2010 by Decree No. 7,234 (BRAZIL, 2010). Universities are obliged to use these resources in full for this purpose. However, the legal fragility in the way this assistance is maintained in the Federal Institutions, insofar as the PNAES is effective through a Decree, rendering it revocable by an isolated act of the executive power, leaving the annual allocation of the extremely vulnerable budget resources and making the program unfeasible real, and can generate catastrophic impacts for the permanence of students coming from public schools and low-income families.

In its website, UNIFESP informs that the value of the PNAES onlending by the MEC does not increase since 2016 and both the demands for aid and the value of services contracted, such as the university restaurant, have been growing year by year<sup>4</sup>. In addition, as recent reports in the mainstream media show, the resources destined to the costing of

<sup>4</sup> <https://dgi.unifesp.br/sites/comunicacao/index.php?c=Noticia&m=ler&cod=458fdc0545>, Access on: May 28th .2018.

federal universities have not been sufficient for the maintenance of their expenses<sup>5</sup>, a crisis still more densified with the entry into force of Constitutional Amendment no. 95 (BRAZIL, 1988), which freezes the budget of the Executive Branch until the year 2036.

Thus, in addition to the investment in alternative training models, whose results still need to be duly scrutinized, it is urgent to know and make feasible the new students arriving today at the public university and their basic needs, both formative and financial. Hence, it may be said that the public university is, in fact, fulfilling its role.

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