Validation Theory (1994) by Laura I. Rendón
https://laurarendonnet.files.wordpress.com/2018/08/emj-issue.pdf

Background
- The environments of most colleges are **not designed with the identities and experiences of Black and Indigenous students, students of color (BIPOC), and first-generation low-income (FGLI) students in mind**; thus, these students **experience college differently** than white, upper-middle-class students. BIPOC/FGLI students have worked extremely hard to get to college, but when they arrive, they may experience impostor syndrome and be unaware of the resources available that may help them succeed.
- **Students reported that validation from a person inside or outside the college community was often the game-changer for seeing themselves as capable of success.**
- Draws on the book *Women's Ways of Knowing*, which discussed how the affirmation of female peers helped women see that, like men, they too were knowledgeable, experienced individuals

Validation Theory
- The **cold, fast-paced, competitive, hyper-rigorous** classrooms at many colleges reinforce FGLI/BIPOC students' feelings that they are not capable of success
- **"validation is an enabling, confirming and supportive process initiated by in- and out-of-class agents that fosters academic and interpersonal development"**

Elements of Validation
- **Necessity of Institutional Outreach**
- **All Institutional Interactions Should Validate Students**
- **Validation is a Prerequisite for Learning**
- **Validation Can Occur Inside and Outside of Class**
- **Validation Must Happen Early and Consistently—Check in Often**

Ways to Validate Students
- **Academic Validation**
  - Invite BIPOC/FGLI guest speakers to campus/class
  - Incorporate the voices of BIPOC/FGLI individuals into your course, whether that be through the students themselves or through the readings/lecture material
  - Give students positive and constructive feedback on assignments
  - Call students' attention to institutional supports (peer tutors, study groups, library resources)
  - Make yourself available for office hours at multiple times throughout the week/in accessible locations
  - Allow students' interests to direct the discussion
  - Let students lead the class

- **Interpersonal Validation**
  - Learn students' names and pronouns and use them
  - Get to know your students' personal, non-academic interests
  - Set up opportunities for students to see each other (and thus, themselves) as valuable knowledge-producers through group work, study groups, peer review, etc.
  - Try to meet face-to-face (or screen-to-screen) with each student