THE FIRST GENERATION JUGGLING ACT

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• What are some of the roles our students perform on a daily basis?
• What are some of the responsibilities that come with these roles?

How does being a first-generation student have an effect on juggling these roles and responsibilities?
According to the US Department of Education – Federal TRIO programs, first-generation college student is defined as:

a. an individual both of whose parents did not complete a baccalaureate degree; or

b. in the case of any individual who regularly resided with and received support from only one parent, an individual whose only such parent did not complete a baccalaureate degree.
Percentage distribution of children under age 18, by child’s race/ethnicity and parents’ highest level of educational attainment: 2015

1 Total includes races/ethnicities not reported separately.
2 Includes parents who completed high school through equivalency programs, such as a GED program.

NOTE: Includes only children under age 18 who resided with at least one of their parents (including an adoptive or stepparent). Parents' highest level of educational attainment is the highest level of education attained by any parent residing in the same household as the child. Parents include adoptive and stepparents but exclude parents not residing in the same household as their child. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

IDENTIFIED BARRIERS FOR FIRST-GEN STUDENTS

• More likely to be non-traditional, married, working, have children, minority backgrounds
• May lack resources afforded to non-first-gen students
  • Finances (many first-gen students are also low-income)
  • Information (no one with prior college experience to guide them)
• College readiness / Less academically prepared
  e.g. focus has been on working rather than studying (Petty, 2014)
COMPARING FIRST-GENERATION AND CONTINUING-GENERATION STUDENTS AND DEGREE ATTAINMENT

FIGURE 5.
College generation status of spring 2002 high school sophomores with subsequent postsecondary enrollment, by timing of first postsecondary enrollment and educational attainment as of 2012: 2012

Timing of first postsecondary enrollment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Within 3 months of high school completion</th>
<th>Between 4 and 12 months following high school completion</th>
<th>13+ months following high school completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-generation college students</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing-generation college students</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Educational attainment as of 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Some post-secondary enrollment¹</th>
<th>Undergraduate certificate</th>
<th>Associate's degree</th>
<th>Bachelor's degree²</th>
<th>Master's degree or higher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-generation college students</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing-generation college students</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Some postsecondary enrollment, but no postsecondary credential.
² Includes those whose highest level of education is a postbaccalaureate certificate.

NOTE: First-generation college students are students whose parents do not have any postsecondary education experience. Continuing-generation college students are students who have at least one parent who had some postsecondary education experience. Continuing-generation students whose parents had some postsecondary education but did not have a bachelor’s degree are excluded from this figure. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

GRADUATION RATES OF STUDENT WITH RISK FACTORS

Figure 2. HLRC June Issue 2014. Author's analysis of Beginning Postsecondary Student (BPS) data for all first time postsecondary students, 2003-04, by 2009 (six years).

Swail (2014)
PERCEIVED BARRIERS FOR FIRST-GEN STUDENTS

• Esteem needs
• Social integration
  • Typically operate between two cultures - home and higher education
• Self-efficacy
OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS
WHAT CAN YOU DO

• Create a relationship of trust and understanding (Sickles, 2004)
  • How?
    • Appreciative Advising (Bloom et al., 2013)
    • Difference-Education Intervention (Stephens et al., 2015)
**APPRECIATIVE ADVISING**

**Disarm**
- Make a positive first impression with the student, build rapport, and create a safe, welcoming space.

**Discover**
- Ask positive open-ended questions that help advisers learn about students' strengths, skills, and abilities.

**Dream**
- Inquire about students' hopes and dreams for their futures.

**Design**
- Co-create a plan for making their dreams a reality.

**Deliver**
- The student delivers on the plan created during the Design phase and the adviser is available to encourage and support students.

**Don't Settle**
- Advisers and students alike need to set their own internal bars of expectations high.

OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS
WHAT CAN YOU DO

• Encourage FG students to set goals
  • Identify motivators
    • Extrinsic
      • Can be used to motivate those who lack interest in college
    • Intrinsic
      • Great for integrating students into the college environment
OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS
WHAT CAN YOU DO

• Be knowledgeable of campus resources to support FG students’ needs
CAMPUS EXAMPLES

• The University of California system
  • Connecting first-gen students to first-gen faculty

• Vassar College
  • Matching low-income students with mentors and College provides financial assistance

• Virginia Commonwealth University
  • Identifying at-risk and reaching out to them individually

• Brown University
  • First-generation student network
  • “I’m First” online community
REFERENCES

Balemian & Feng (2013) First generation students: College aspirations, preparedness and challenges. Presentation at the College Board AP Annual Conference, Las Vegas, NV


Q9: INDICATE YOUR LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:
ANSWERED: 189
SKIPPED: 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (5)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Weighted Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am committed to being a lifelong learner.</td>
<td>1.06%</td>
<td>0.53%</td>
<td>3.70%</td>
<td>36.51%</td>
<td>58.20%</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I am committed to earning a degree.</td>
<td>1.06%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.53%</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>84.13%</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I attend all of my classes.</td>
<td>1.06%</td>
<td>2.12%</td>
<td>6.35%</td>
<td>22.75%</td>
<td>67.72%</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>4.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. College is preparing me for a better job.</td>
<td>1.06%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
<td>21.16%</td>
<td>73.02%</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>4.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I have a commitment to self-development and personal growth.</td>
<td>1.06%</td>
<td>0.53%</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
<td>33.86%</td>
<td>59.79%</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>4.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I have a strong desire to get good grades.</td>
<td>1.06%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>3.70%</td>
<td>28.04%</td>
<td>67.20%</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. At the moment.</td>
<td>1.06%</td>
<td>0.53%</td>
<td>7.41%</td>
<td>32.80%</td>
<td>58.20%</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>4.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Project SUCCESS
Online Assets survey for incoming participants.