

Proactively Meeting the Needs of First-Year, First-Generation College Students

*Presented by OHIO's Angela Lash and Katie Thomson
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Needs and Characteristics of First-Generation College Students

- **FGS are more likely to:**
 - » Be women with children
 - » Belong to minority groups
 - » Have lower socioeconomic backgrounds
 - » Work more than 20 hours per week
 - » Live off-campus
 - » Enroll in 2 year colleges
 - » Delay post-secondary enrollment
 - » Experience interrupted enrollment
 - » Enroll part time
- **Lack of Academic Preparedness**
- **Lower Aspirations**
- **Reasons for Degree are More Practical**
- **Lower Academic Self-Efficacy**
- **Lower Levels of Academic and Social Integration**
- **Less likely to feel a sense of belonging**
- **Lower levels of cultural capital related to higher education**
 - » Parents less able to offer support and assistance
 - » Less understanding of Higher Ed and Institutional Jargon
 - » More difficulty navigating the processes of college campuses
 - » Unaware of the level of rigor they will face
 - » Unfamiliar with expectations of professors
 - » Don't know or understand the value of out of class involvement
 - » Cultural capital has a higher impact on FGS than CGS

Ways to Meet the Needs of First-Gen College Students

- **Strategies suggested by Engle and Tinto, 2008**
 - » Focus on the first year, structured experience
 - » Monitor Student Progress
 - » Provide Additional Support, Focus on Academic Support
 - » Increase Student Engagement
 - » Create a Culture of Success
 - » Active and Intrusive Approach to Advising
- **Utilize Appreciative and Proactive Advising to bolster self-efficacy, heighten aspirations, increase cultural capital, and encourage student engagement**
- **Practical Approaches at Ohio University**
 - » **Educate the Campus Community about FGS**
 - * FGS identified in central advising center
 - * Educate staff/faculty about needs of FGS at departmental meetings
 - * Share first-gen reports and stats with campus community
 - * Build a FGS web presence
 - » **Checkout Session at Orientation**
 - * Invite FGS students and parents
 - * Opportunity to meet FGS advisor, ask final questions, discuss campus resources, meet other FGS and their families
 - » **Communication**
 - * Weekly email communication sent to students and parents
 - * Topics include resources, deadlines, strategies for success and engagement
 - » **At-Risk Monitoring and Intervention**
 - * Identify at-risk FGS through use of MAP-Works
 - * Reach out proactively via text as students complete surveys
 - * Follow up about academic, social, and emotional concerns
 - » **Tutoring Services**
 - * Provide financial support for free tutoring services for all first-year FGS
 - * Starting spring 2015 we will include all undergraduate, Athens campus FGS
 - » **Midterm Grade Collection and Intervention**
 - * Celebrate grades of B or higher via email
 - * Intervene via email, text, and phone regarding grades of C- or lower
 - » **Student Organization**
 - * We Are First was created in Fall 2014
 - * Strive to support OHIO FGS before and after they arrive to campus, create a community of FGS at OHIO, and promote academic excellence
 - » **Programmatic Goals**
 - * First-Generation Seminar Course
 - * Faculty/Staff Mentoring Program
 - * Leadership Awards
 - * Scholarship Program

Resources

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