What Does A First-Generation College Student Look Like?

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FGCS FACTS

• Term “First Generation College Student” was coined in 1979 by Fuji Adachi.

• Adachi applied the term to students who did not have at least one parent with a bachelor’s degree.

• First-generation students make up about 40% of the U.S. college population.

• Students are likely to be from low-income backgrounds and minority groups.

• “First-gens are diverse in myriad ways and span socio-economic classes, international, domestic, religions, races and ethnicities, sexual orientations, etc.”
• “It's really a different cultural experience when someone who's a first-generation student comes to college. They're not just entering a school; they're entering an academic, cultural environment that often has a lot of unspoken rules and sets of cultural mores” (Hopkins).

• “I want to know what I don’t know I need to know.”
FGCS NEEDS

• Stronger academic skills
  • Reading Skills
• Better time management skills
  • Prioritization
• Stable family support system
  • Isolation
• Consistent financial support
  • Academic & Personal
• Solid self-care practices
  • Asking for help
FGCS BEST PRACTICES

• Consistent school and community involvement
  • To-Do Lists, Navigation Guides
• Simple Counseling Skills
  • Homesickness, Athletic Life, Family
• Mentor and tutor services
  • Transition into major coursework, Alumni talks
• Life skills workshops
  • Laundry, Healthy Eating, Hygiene
• Intrusive advising
  • Contact advisees, 15 to Finish, Check emails
First Generation College Student FAQ page

- Example: https://coe.k-state.edu/walk-in-my-shoes/first-generation/
- Example: https://www.brown.edu/campus-life/support/first-generation-students/faq-0
- Example: https://www.chapman.edu/students/academic-resources/first-generation/index.aspx
- Example: https://college.harvard.edu/admissions/hear-our-students/first-generation-students

Earnest, Kathleen. 2015. *Experiences of First Generation College Students at a Rural University on the Southern Plains as Told through Stories, Drawings, and Found Poetry*. Oklahoma State University.


