

Welcome new members and returning members!

Good morning and welcome to the First-Generation College Student Advising Community! My name is Brittany Hoover and I am the Chair for the First-Gen. A.C. We are a community of volunteers who are using our interests and talents to support First-Gen. students across the country and globally. By creating and maintaining an active steering committee who are working on projects in research, community building, best practices and communications as a group. We are excited to continue working on our goals for this year which include:

- **Send quarterly emails to the FGAC/TRIO List Servs and blast a newsletter three times a year.**
- **Create and manage a Facebook group for the FGAC– including relevant posts, videos and articles pertaining to First-gen matters. We are also interested in growing our audience on the Facebook page. Currently we have over 200 members since November 2018.**
- **Send a survey through Qualtrics to gauge interests and needs of advisors who work with First Gen Students. This has been completed and the data is being reviewed by our Vice Chair and Research Committee to then bring to the NACADA Annual Conference October 2019.**
- **Finally, our goal is to generate dialogue and ideas for continued growth through presentations, publications, research and participation in professional development relating to First-Gen students.**

A huge **thank you** to our [steering committee members from 2018-2019](#): Vice Chair– Quentin Alexander, Sub committee Chairs– Whitley Johnson, Tracey Glaessgen, Brian Keiser, Tevin Byers, Leah Frierson and Shannon Sousa. And to our general steering committee members: Laura Lee, Jill Putman, Maggie Rohling, Angie Allred, Juanita Cross, Kerri Caine, Wanda Reyes– Dawes, Darryl Cherry, Kristen Stradt-Johnson, Ashley Msikinya and Danielle Vokal.

First-Gen Communications Updates

Facebook Page

Join the **NACADA First Generation Student Advising Community Facebook Page** [here](#). Please contribute through discussions, videos, article and event posts, or feel free to create a Chat group and have conversations with other first-generation academic advisors and current students on a topic of interest. This page could also be a great networking tool to enhance your professional development. We will also post committee updates and/or surveys/polls and encourage your responses to help share knowledge and grow awareness on first-gen topics.

We Need Your Feedback!

We want our messages and information to all members of the NACADA First Gen Advising Community to matter. Please take this [short communications survey](#) so we can get your feedback on important and relevant content and news ideas to share and how we should distribute that information to our members. **Respond by 5 p.m. on Monday, July 22nd.**

Summer 2019



Brittany Hoover, Chair
University of Florida

First-Gen Steering Committee Highlights

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First-Gen and Not Knowing It

By Wanda I. Reyes-Dawes

From humble beginnings and mostly from a one-parent working household, I worked hard to do well with my academics. In sophomore year of high school, I visited my guidance counselor to share that I was interested in becoming a flight attendant and wanted guidance. Unbeknownst to me, the guidance counselor who most likely had a ratio of 1:1,000+ students, simply told me, "You do not meet the height requirements." This crushed me, as the guidance counselor did not even suggest other possible avenues within the travel industry. I walked home feeling my dream was taken away from me and I didn't know what to do.

After getting my bearings back on, I graduated from the inner city high school with an excellent academic record...still not knowing my next step. I pursued a full-time job, as I did not wish to burden my parents with college expenses; I had three younger siblings. While working full-time, I applied, with the help of others, to the community college in my hometown. I attended on a part-time basis, sometimes one course per semester and at other times two; it all depended on my financial situation. I declared my major in Business Management because I had an interest in owning my own business one day. During that time, I was doing great with my courses, but had minimal interaction with fellow students or staff at the college.

One day, after class, I was walking through the college lobby. It was at this time that a counselor saw me and simply asked, "Are you ok, do you need directions?" The counselor asked me to join her in her office. After meeting with the counselor for a few minutes and learning about resources on campus I could benefit from, for the first time, I felt welcomed and connected. At this point, I realized I was actually what the college community referred to as a first-generation student and I did not know what that meant. Although I had been confident about my abilities to be a great student, I had not found the confidence of being an integral part of my college experience beyond the classroom. The acquisition of this new knowledge opened up a whole new world for me and as life would have it, many years later I became a passionate college counselor and even was in the position to hire the same counselor that had helped me when I was in the community college.

I was a first-generation student who didn't know it. Now I help other first-generation students because I know what it feels like not to know.

Upcoming Newsletter

Look for **our first Newsletter in August 2019** to kick-off the Fall semester! It will feature the "FGAC Spotlight," which includes a committee member or academic advisor working on a First Generation Advising initiative, presentation, article, publication, or research project. The "FGAC Resources/Best Practices" section including research on the first-gen student/advising community, articles

and news about tips and nuances to engage with this population. Finally, the "FGAC Involvement/Benefits" section will provide feedback on how we are growing the first-gen student advising community, including survey results, general promotion of topics, events, conference attendance, resources, and more. **The Newsletter will blast three times during the academic year, including August, January and May.**



Wanda Reyes-Dawes
Manchester Community
College

"At this point, I realized I was actually what the college community referred to as a first-generation student and I did not know what that meant."

Visit the [NACADA First-Generation Student Advising webpage](#) for updated news and resources.