



# Helping First-Generation College Bound Students: An Intervention

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Sat Mar 22  
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# Goal/Objectives

Goal: School counselors will be able to assist prospective first-generation college-bound students prior to college entrance.

Objectives-Participants will:

- ✓ Be aware of the counseling implications
- ✓ Be aware of the tools and materials to implement a small group intervention strategy



# Counseling Implications

- Three major parts of the model:
  - Career awareness(Who Am I? self-awareness)
  - Establish education and career goals (Where Am I Going?/Academic Development and Career Management)
  - Gather, understand and apply information to reach ones education and career goal (How Am I Going to Get There?/ Academic Development and Career Management)
- In some systems they are the primary source of information, counselors play a powerful role in establishing a student's confidence in the process



# First Generation Defined

- **First-generation college-bound** [students whose parents did not go to or graduate from college]; Students whose parents did not attend college

[Center for Student Opportunity - Opportunity Scholars](#)

[Prospective First-Generation College Students: Meeting Their Needs ...](#)



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# Characteristics of First Generation Students

- Tend to be from low income families (Nunez & Cuccaro-Alamin, 1998)
- Are more likely to represent an ethnic minority (Lohfink & Paulsen, 2005)
- Take fewer advanced math or AP courses (Warburton, Bugarin, Nunex, & Carroll, 2001)
- Report lower perceived family support for college-going (York-Anderson & Bowman, 1991)
- Earn lower first semester GPA once in college (Warburton, Bugarin, Nunex, & Carroll, 2001)
- While in college have problems with time management and understanding assignments (Collier & Morgan, 2008)
- Are more likely to drop out of college (Nunez & Cuccaro-Alamin, 1998)





# Academic Planning

- First-generation students seem to differ in academic preparation.
  - 14% of prospective first-generation students took algebra in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, compared to 33% of students with college graduate parents. (Horn and Nunez 2000); prevented these students from taking higher level math courses
  - First-generation students usually have lower SAT scores, lower GPA, and lower performance in the first year of college (Riehl, 1994)
  - Self-efficacy is an issue for most first-generation students (beliefs about their abilities)



# Enrichment and Extracurricula

- Low-income students who participated in community service and had successful leadership experience in high school were more likely to show academic progress at the college level  
(Strage, 1999; Ting, 1998)



# College & Career Exploration

- First-generation college students perceive the college experience differently than other college-bound students.
  - First-generation students see college education as a means to a good job (Brooks-Terry, 1988)
  - First-generation students want to stay close to home; therefore, they do not always select the college that meets their needs (Inman and Mayes, 1999)





# College & Career Assessment

- Outcome expectations can hinder good decision-making and is especially evident in career choices
- Students view the information shared with all students not useful for them (Chapman, O'Brien, and DeMasi 1987)



# Affordability (Financial Aid)

- Low-income, minority, and first-generation students are especially likely to lack specific types of “college knowledge.” They often do not understand the steps necessary to prepare for higher education which include knowing about how to finance a college education. (Vargas, 2004)
- Low-income , African –American, and Latino families are less informed about financial aid: They tend to overestimate the cost of tuition and underestimate the available aid (A Shared Agenda, 2004)



# Admission Process

- Prospective first-generation college students face the daunting task of applying to college without the assistance of parental experience.
  - Less likely to choose high school programs of study with their parents (Horn and Nunez 2000)
  - Less support from their families for attending college (York-Anderson and Bowman 1991)
- Underserved students have less access to the Internet, an important tool for exploring college opportunities (A Shared Agenda)



# Transition

- Preparation for college life while still in high school seems to make a difference for these students.
  - First-generation students are more likely to leave college altogether than other students, usually for reasons other than academic (Brooks-Terry, 1988)
  - Students perceived adapting to the stresses of the college environment as more difficult than for other students (McGregor et al., 1991)



# Conclusions

- Provide information translated into knowledge and skills:
  - Educational and career decision-making
  - College admissions
  - College applications
  - Financial aid
  - Dual enrollment opportunities
  - College life
- Provide continuous support or identify supportive means





# To identify First Generation College-Bound Students

- Allow students to self-identify: let students react to the program from a flyer announcing the program and, decide for themselves, if they would like to participate in the program or if you know that the student is a “first-timer”, invite them to participate or take referrals from teachers who are familiar with the students family background.



# Small group characteristics:

This group will be task oriented and structured with a time limit and will consist of specific or selected students whose parent have never attended a postsecondary institution.

- 10 students (consider multiple groups if needed)
- 10 sessions
- 1 hours or class period; period times will vary
- Homogeneous with the same or similar needs/problems
- Utilization of Gacollege411 as the primary tool for information



# 10 Sessions

1. Introduction/Pre-Evaluation
2. Career Planning
3. Review of Coursework
4. College Admissions
5. Admissions Testing
6. College Applications
7. Financial Aid
8. HOPE Program
9. Dual Enrollment
10. College Life/Post-Evaluation



# Review of the literature...

## First-Generation College Students: A Literature Review

By  
Carmen Tym  
Robin McMillion  
Sandra Berone  
Jeff Webster

November 2004

Research and Analytical Services

**TG**

Google for a copy.  
(22 pages)

