

First-Generation College Student Success Today

Workshop Syllabus

Workshop Leaders

- José Villalba, Vice President and Special Advisor to the President, Wake Forest University
- Ryan Barone, Assistant Vice President for Student Success, Colorado State University

Goals

1. Workshop participants review state of the art theory and practice of “first-gen” student success given germane new enabling/constraining legislation/policy.
2. Senior leaders learn how to use first-generation student success initiatives to advance equitable student success *principally via institutional and cultural reform*.

Suggested Pre-work

- Teams review the proposed University of California System and in-place MIT grading policies, Curricular Analytics, UNL Dashboards, Student Experience Project, Chicago Roadmap 2.0 transfer success, and other *institutional reform initiatives*.
- Summit teams inventory institutional and cultural barriers rooted in social class (e.g., affordability, belonging and accessibility, transfer student experience, etc.).

Principal Workshop Activities

- Participants learn how to use primarily academic policy and practice form to reduce barriers to equitable student success *that are especially beneficial for first-gens*.
- Participants explore leadership strategies for effective framing first-gen initiatives.

Key Takeaways

- Plans to use First-Gen Student Success Initiatives for institutional/cultural reform.
- Behind-the-scenes discussion of do’s and don’ts for framing first-gen initiatives.

Essential Literature

- Longwell-Grice & Longwell-Grice, eds. (2021), *At the Intersection: Understanding and Supporting First-Generation Students* (Stylus).
- Dandaneau, ed. (2026), *The Equity-Excellence Imperative in Action* (Hopkins Press).
- Danandean, “Stop Labelling Students ‘First-Gen’” (*Inside Higher Education* 2025).