

The Routh First-Generation Center: Advancing First-Generation Student Success at Texas A&M University

*Office for Student Success
Leticia Palomin, Ph.D., Director*

GOALS OF THE DAY



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY®

Increase
Awareness

Highlight the unique challenges and experiences faced by first-generation college students, fostering a deeper understanding within the campus community.

Understand
Student Data

Explore key metrics that help track the success of first-generation students, enabling us to identify areas for improvement and growth.

Gain Knowledge
of Support
Systems

Dive into the current resources and support services tailored for first-generation students, ensuring they are aware of the assistance available to them.

Strategies for
Impact

Discuss actionable strategies aimed at enhancing the success of first-generation students at Texas A&M, encouraging collaboration and innovation among faculty, staff, and peers.

National First-Gen Statistics



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY®

24% First-generation students graduate at a rate of 24% versus 59% for continuing-generation students.

54% There are 8.2 million first-generation undergraduate students; 54% of all undergraduate in the U.S.

72% By 2031, 72% of jobs in the U.S. will require postsecondary education or training.

65% Of students at Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) are first-generation

62% Of students who are veterans are first-generation students

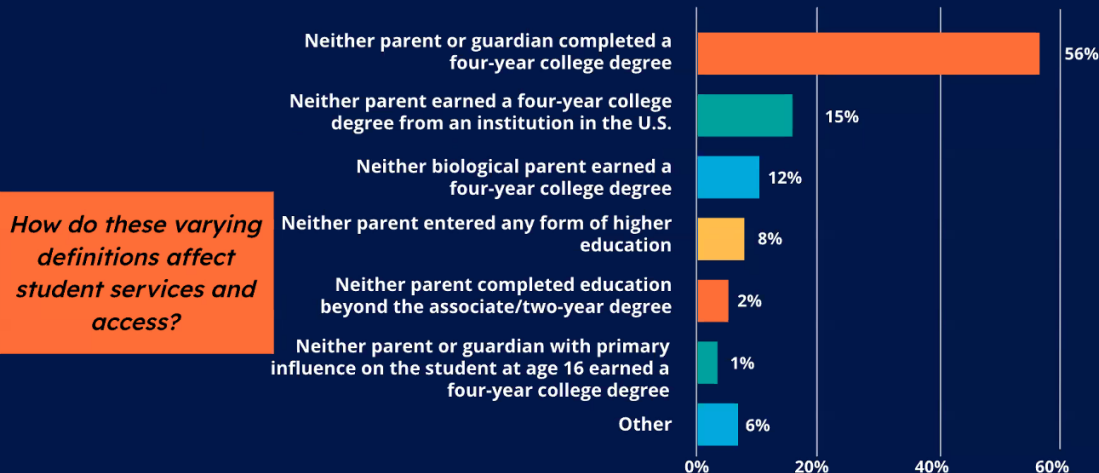


Defining First-Generation | TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

National First-Generation Definitions

TAMU First-Generation Definition

Defining First-generation: Four-year Landscape Analysis



Source: 2018 Landscape Report: <https://firstgen.naspa.org/2018-landscape-analysis>



A first-generation college student (neither parent has earned a bachelor's degree).

GOALS AND CURRENT METRICS FOR STUDENT RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES*

1. Increase First-Year Retention Rates

Goal: From 92% to **95%**

Target Breakdown:

- All Students: 94.4%
- First-Generation Students: **90.6%**

2. Increase Four-Year Graduation Rates

Goal: From 56% to **65%**

Target Breakdown:

- All Students: 63.2%
- First-Generation Students: **55.9%**

3. Increase Six-Year Graduation Rates

Goal: From 82% to **85%**

Target Breakdown:

- All Students: 83.9%
- First-Generation Students: **74.7%**

1. Increase TR First-Year Retention Rates

Goal: From 92% to **95%**

Target Breakdown:

- All Students: 96.8%
- First-Generation Students: **95.2%**

2. Increase TR Four-Year Graduation Rates

Goal: From 56% to **65%**

Target Breakdown:

- All Students: 85.5%
- First-Generation Students: **83.6%**

3. Increase TR Six-Year Graduation Rates

Goal: From 82% to **85%**

Target Breakdown:

- All Students: 90.1%
- First-Generation Students: **88.1%**

*Applies to: All first-time-in-college (FTIC) students, full-time, across all locations except Qatar.

Our Commitment

To empower first-generation students on their journey from admission to graduation!

Who are our Students?

22% (FTIC) students identify as first-generation.

36% of FTIC first-generation students are recipients of the Regents' Scholarship.

Our Approach

- What students already bring to the college environment
- Validating student experiences in-and-outside of the classroom

Pillars of Excellence

- College Transitions
- Academic Experiences
- Campus Engagement
- Graduation

Our Strategies

- Identify key Institutional leadership members
- Increase awareness of first-generation student experiences among campus stakeholders
- Identify cross-campus partnerships
- Distribution of data

OUR STORY AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2019

Established unit in the Office for Student Success

2020

Secured 2.6 million endowment

Designated First-Gen Forward Institution

National landscape Analysis of First-Gen Initiatives

2021

Manage the Regents' Scholars Program

Established Coordination Committee

2025

Pilot First-Generation Summer Bridge Program

One-Time Payment- Housing Waiver Fee

Orientation – Advising & Faculty Panel Session

First-Gen Family Guide

2022

TAMU's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), with an emphasis in first-generation students.

New Student Conference, First-Gen Session

First-Gen Orientation

2023

Pilot First-Gen High-Impact Practice Program

2024

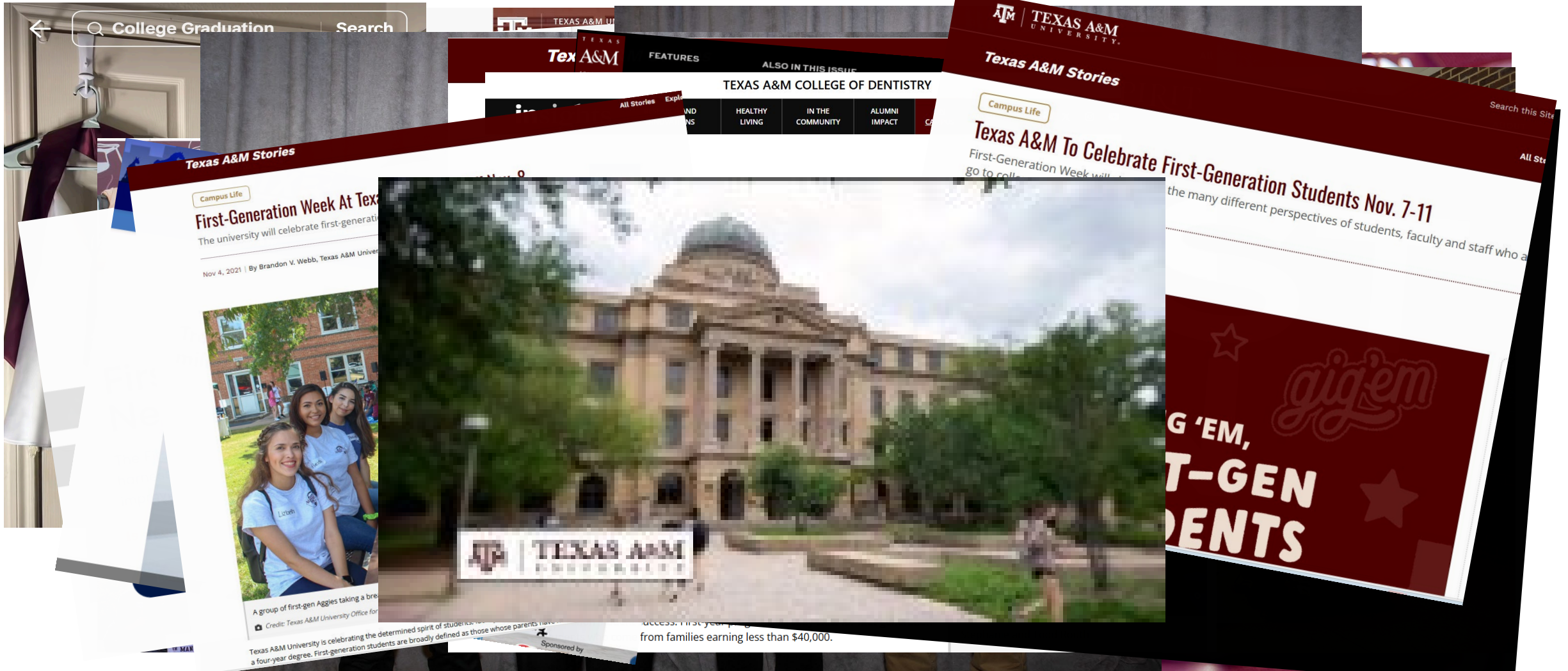
First-Gen High-Impact Practice Certification Process

20th Anniversary of Regents' Scholarship Program

Aggie FIRSTS: A Culture of Excellence



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY®



Family & Student
Resource Guide

Aggie FIRSTS: Support Systems



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY

Campus Coordination

- College success teams
- Academic Resources
- Student Focus Groups
- Cross-Collaboration Partnerships
- System First-Gen Symposium

Health & Wellness

- Embedded Counselor
- College-specific events
- Student Assistance Services
- Student Success Committee
- Aggie Wellness Survey

Career Development

- Career Center
- High-Impact Practice
- Former FG Network
- Center for Teaching Excellence
- First-Gen Series
- Mentoring Program

Aggie FIRSTS: Support Systems



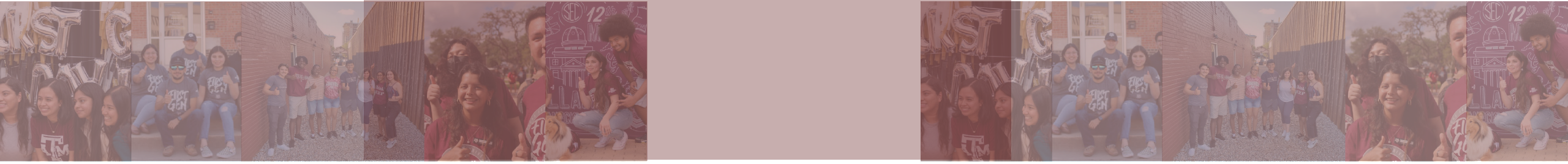
TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY

Leadership Development

- Orientation Counselor Program
- Student Ambassador Program
- On-campus employment
- Student Reps on committees
- First-Gen Symposium

Celebrating Milestones

- Ring Day Ceremony
- Graduation Ceremony
- First-Gen Week
- Staff and Faculty Awards
- FG Spotlight
- Graduation Stole
- Tri-Alpha Honor Society



Multipurpose Space



FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO THE FOLLOWING AMENITIES WHEN VISITING OUR CENTER

LOUNGE ROOM	ACADEMIC SUPPORT	STUDY HALL
Coffee Machine	Free Unlimited Printing	TV Monitor
Refrigerator	Computer Lab	White Boards
Water Station	School Supplies	Study Areas
Microwaves	Scantrons	Food Pantry
Vending Machines	TI-89 Calculators	Quiet Room

Dedicated Full-Time Staff

#CelebrateFirstGen

Celebrate National First-Generation College Celebration Day with us on November 8!

How can YOU make a difference?



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY®

Operate in an asset-based framework → How do my students contribute to my classroom?

First-generation is not a monolithic group → Recognize the differences

Understand college demands and expectations → Provide guidance or recommendations

Learn TAMU's traditions and culture → Create ways to introduce these experiences

Bridge their home and college environments → Co-exist between worlds

How can YOU make a difference?



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY

Demystify Campus Jargon

Break it down and use simple terms

- Aggie Traditions
- Offices, policies or procedures
- Learn their Names
- Be transparent
- Instructor Syllabi Message
- Arrive early or stay late, if schedule permits.

Make Yourself Visible

Build Trust

- Fishbowl discussions
- Allow students to help facilitate class
- Help-Seeking Behaviors → Relearn how to ask for help
- Invite guest speakers
(e.g., different fields, lived experiences, educational experiences)
- First-Gen Fridays → wear your FG Merch!
- Affirmations → “Good work” “Glad to see you this morning!”
- Instant Feedback → Check-ins, opportunities

Foster a Culture of Learning

Co-Constructors of Knowledge

Celebrate First-Generation Identity

To increase sense of belonging

Expand their Social Network

Create opportunities

- Connect them to other staff, faculty, or upperclassman
- Incorporate class assignment to visit the Center/college teams

The Routh First-Generation Center: Advancing First-Generation Student Success at Texas A&M University

Contact Us:



Location: 1st Floor Hotard Hall
(979) 458-6111



firstgen@tamu.edu



@TAMUFIRSTGEN

WE ARE YOUR ADVOCATES