



LEHIGH
UNIVERSITY



Center for
**STUDENT
ACCESS &
SUCCESS**

Supporting F1RST+ Students

Center for Student Access and Success

Student Access and Success

The mission of the Center for Student Access and Success is to expand access to the university for all underrepresented groups with a focus on first generation and lower-income students and to create and infrastructure and university wide strategic initiatives, which enables students to have an enriching and successful Lehigh University experience.



Who Are F1RST+?



- **F1RST+ Students**

- First Generation
- low income
- underrepresented minority groups



The University has recognized the need to support our F1RST+ Students through the creation of the Center for Student Access and Success

***Definition of a First-Generation College Student**

A first-generation college student is a student whose parents or guardian did not complete a four-year college degree.

We internally expand that definition, recognizing the need for support for students.

F1RST+ Students at Lehigh University

- Over the years the percentage of F1RST+ students admitted to Lehigh has steadily increased
 - *The incoming class this year (2018-2019) the rate of first-gen students is at approximately 17%.
Currently we have close to 800 first generation students at Lehigh*
- The University has recognized the need to support our First Generation and underrepresented student populations as signatory on the American Talent Initiative commitment.

Support Organizations and Clubs on Campus

Mentor Collective

- Provides a mentor for all first year students
- Mentors help students adjust starting in the summer through phone, text, email conversations about their school experiences
- Matched based on completed survey and reported data
- First year launch for Graduate Students Fall 2020



MENTOR
COLLECTIVE

LUSSI

Lehigh University Student Scholars Institute

- Academic Success Strategies
- Career Awareness and Development
- Community Building
- Health & Wellness
- Financial Literacy
- Year-long Development Program
- Pre-orientation summer experience
- Student Guides
- Faculty & Staff Mentors
- Bi-weekly meetings
- Year 2-4 Support



PASSPORT to SUCCESS



- Partnership with Office of International Affairs
- Awareness of opportunities
- Workshops & skill building activities
- Free passport
- Short and long term planning
- Coaching
- Access to scholarship and grants supporting high impact experiences

High Impact Experiences

- Internships/Externships
- Leadership experiences
- Student/Faculty research
- Study abroad/Global experiences
- Community service/Service learning



Alpha Alpha Alpha First Generation Honor Society



- Recognize academic achievements of first-generation college students, create enthusiasm for scholarship
- Promote leadership
- Provide support networks for first-generation Students
- Strives to give back to the community
- Faculty, staff and the alumni engagement within the Lehigh community and local community as a whole by service and leadership.

CONNECTIONS & RELATIONSHIPS

- F1RST+ Fan Club
- F1RST Student Organization
- Themed-based Residential Living
- Posse and the Posse Plus Retreat
- F1RST Family Graduation Celebration



Faculty Engagement and Support of the F1RST+ students

Common Issue

- “The Impostor Syndrome”
- Earn lower GPAs and take fewer academic credit hours
- Feeling ashamed of asking for help from professors or having a difficult time communicating with professors.

Solution of Support

- Encourage study groups and attending tutoring sessions
- Share personal experiences about first year classes and tips that helped
- Encourage connecting during office hours
- High Impact Learning experiences

Common Issue

- Less likely to participate in on campus clubs and events
- Identify other students as colleagues rather than friends
- Report higher rates of isolation and discrimination
- Perceive faculty as “distant” or unconcerned with them as individuals
- “Lehigh look-away”

Solution of Support

- Encourage students to attend on-campus events
- Share networking opportunities with faculty, staff, and/or upperclassmen in respective department.
- Create a safe place for students to share any concern of discrimination or bias experienced
- Many of the programs you suggest will have an impact on all 3 of these areas
 - if they’re more involved socially through academic or cultural programs, they’ll feel more connected socially etc....
- encourage the students to do the volunteer things on campus, including within your departments or associated to your departments

Common Issue

- Less likely to do a study abroad program because of lack of financial resources or a lack of awareness of available programs
- Less likely to do an unpaid summer internships because of loss of income generate through a summer employment

Solution of Support

- Share resources regarding opportunities and possible funding
- Connect students with upper level students who have completed these programs or opportunities
- Encourage students to visit the career center and/or utilize resources such as Handshake to find internship opportunities
- Fellowship Advising
- Encouraging students to go to networking events

Getting Involved



- Admissions Efforts
- OFYE Efforts
- Scholarship and other special program support
- LUSSI Program mentor
- Passport to Success mentor
- High Impact Experience offerings
- Participation in campus activities
- Sharing your concerns, needs for support with respective areas
 - Reaching out to areas like Center for Student Access and Success

General Tips

- See students as having a wealth of Assets, not coming with a lot of deficits
- Avoid making assumptions
 - lead with connection building
 - open ended questions
 - "Tell me about yourself"
 - "How can I help you in this situation or in general?"
- Avoid "talking down" to students
- Get to know your students and identify their needs without always asking directly
- Be informative, share what you know and direct them to someone who CAN provide that information that you are not aware of.
- Offer them yourself as someone then can reach out to
- Be genuinely curious, caring, open
- Check in with students about their needs. Make sure to follow up even if the student does not mention it again.

Vignettes

Martha is starting to feel overwhelmed with her course load. She was confident about taking a high level calculus class because she always did well in her math classes. She is afraid to ask for help because she feels that her classmates are not having the same challenges.

Salomon has shared that his family is having a hard time adjusting to him moving across country for college. He is starting to feel guilty for attending Lehigh because it is far from his family and is considering transferring to a school closer to home where he can commute.

Paul has just received the news that his older sister has been in a car accident and is in critical condition. He wants to be able to go back home and be there with his mother and younger brother, but does not have the financial means to do so.

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Student Access and Success

HOW CAN
WE HELP
YOU?



<https://diversityandinclusion.lehigh.edu/studentsuccess>

Center email address: inlusas@lehigh.edu

Instagram: @Lehigh_sas

Twitter: @Lehigh_SAS