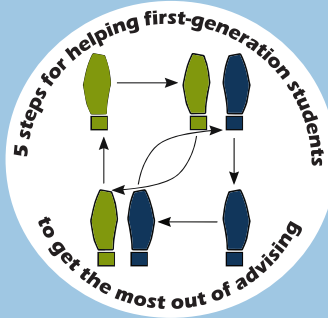
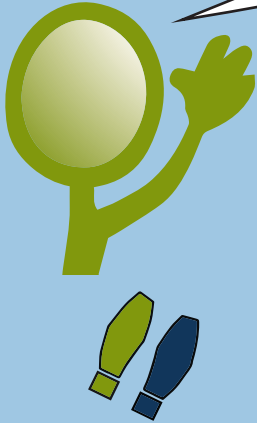


Advising First-Generation Students

We are thrilled you are an Ichabod! Welcome to Washburn, we are excited and value the knowledge and experience that you are bringing here!



1st
gen.

1: Empower and Connect with your advisees.

- Explain the purpose of advising and discuss their role and your role as their partner in planning. Empower them to take the lead, but remind them you'll be there to help along the way.
- Provide your contact information and establish expectations regarding scheduling meetings. Ensure students know where else to turn for advising help (i.e. their minor advisor, advising center).
- Students benefit when they feel understood by their advisor so take time to actively listen to the student.



2: Nurture meaningful relationships.

- Communicate with advisees often with timely reminders of resources (e.g. tutoring and counseling) and deadlines important for their success.
- Consider using multiple methods of communication (i.e. emails, texts, chats, and virtual meetings).
- Ponder sharing appropriate parts of your life to create common ground.
- Help connect the student to others on campus who can help including faculty, staff, and other students.



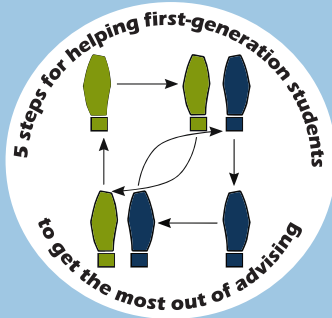
3: Help students learn the culture of the institution

- Provide access to language and tools for success, and then encourage their use in a meaningful way.
- Provide insight into the hidden curriculum of higher education by deciphering institutional jargon. Hidden curriculum includes both formal and informal social rules of a university campus. Be ready to answer questions about established rules of academia you may take for granted, such as: What is a credit hour? How do I read a syllabus? What should I call my professor? What are office hours?
- In particular, many students have a hard time navigating financial aid. Consider helping to facilitate communication between the student and the financial aid office via email, phone, or in person to get this process moving and to communicate a sense of trust for those working in this office.
- Discuss differences in rigor between high school and college level courses.
- Ensure students understand that faculty may have differing expectations. Provide advisees guidance regarding how to reach out to faculty members (e.g. using proper honorifics in emails, ensuring clarity in communicating needs, and the importance of office hours, etc.) in an effort to normalize these interactions.
- Help students feel confident in active class participation by communicating the importance of attending class, asking questions, and engaging in discussions, including different methods of engagement that may best fit their comfort levels.



Advising First-Generation Students

**1st
gen.**



4: Encourage on-campus engagement.

- Students benefit from positive relationships with peers. Research suggests that peer mentorship is perhaps most meaningful.
- Connect a new student to a more senior student in your discipline who has similar interests to be a buddy.
- Consider ways to create cohorts of students in your discipline who move through the program at the same pace and build in opportunities for formal and informal networking.
- Encourage them to make connections with We Are F1rst, the on campus organization that helps first generation scholars navigate the campus experience.
- Ensure awareness of other student interest groups on campus, such as a club for their major/minor, the Nakama Anime Club, or the Black Student Union.



5: Work with students to create a multi-year academic plan.

- Explain the purpose of core and general education courses, as well as how to progress from 100 to 400 level courses in their major and minor programs.
- Show students how to read their degree audit as well as how to navigate Navigate.
- Encourage students to take WU101-First Generation and English 101 in their first year. Discuss whether EN 103 Academic Reading and Research is a good option.
- In addition to regular advising discussions (e.g. take EN101 during their first year, take math placement test, etc.) clarify other registration considerations with the student.
- Ask students about their career and life goals and tailor their academic plan to that end. Appreciate that while some students have fully articulated goals, many students may not. Help the student set goals for their time at Washburn and after Washburn and check in with them regularly on their progress toward those goals.
- First-generation students may be less familiar with the names of academic disciplines (Anthropology... what's that?). Help them navigate important or interesting general education courses.
- Encourage students to explore minors they may have not considered.



A Checklist to Guide Meetings with your First-Generation Students

Before your meeting:

- Review student's progress in the major
- Review other pertinent information (first day questionnaires, discussion posts, etc.)

During meeting: Check in

- Ask about how are things going in general.
- Ask about their goals for the meeting.
- ** LISTEN to what they tell you **

Take action

- If they have a specific concern, work through it with them as well as you can
- If their concern is one that you can't address directly, figure out who can. Whenever possible, walk the student to the person or office that can help them.
- Finish either with a solution or a concrete plan to work toward a solution

After meeting:

- Make notes about the meeting accomplishments, using whichever method is used in your program (e.g. Navigate, Degree Works, or personal files)
- Email students with a quick recap, and invite them to contact you if they have other concerns.

This Resource Guide is funded by the Title III Strengthening Institutions Grant and sponsored by the Center for Teaching Excellence and Learning.