



WE ARE FIRST SYMPOSIUM

NAVIGATING THE FIRST GENERATION GRADUATE & POSTDOCTORAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE THROUGH COMMUNITY

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INTRODUCTION

- First generation students refer to students who are the first in their family to obtain a bachelor's degree.
- First generation graduate and postdoctoral students face many challenges and barriers.
- These challenges include, but are not limited to:
 - Barriers to financial resources
 - Imposter syndrome & mental health disparities
 - Frustration in navigating the hidden curriculum
- This symposium is a second rendition of the 2019 / *Am First* symposium organized by former PFTF Melissa Patiño-Vega and Destiny García.
- This symposium aims to continue building community with first generation graduate and postdoctoral students across UC Davis.



METHODS

- This half-day symposium event was held virtually through Zoom
- Five interactive workshops were organized and facilitated by students, faculty, and staff, many of whom self-identify as first generation
- Workshops consisted of presentations and discussions about various topics including family support, financial barriers, and strategies for mental health



WORKSHOP TOPICS & OBJECTIVES

WORKSHOP 1: EXPLAINING YOUR WORK TO FAMILY & LOVED ONES

- *Objective 1:* identify and discuss challenges in explaining your research to family and friends.
- *Objective 2:* identify and discuss strategies to effectively talk about the value of your work with family and share your academic passions with them.

WORKSHOP 2: EVERY PENNY COUNTS

- *Objective 1:* identify and discuss challenges in financial stability & funding your research.
- *Objective 2:* identify and discuss both strategies and resources to help finance necessities and your work.

WORKSHOP 3: DEVELOPING A BUDGET FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS

- *Objective:* identify various resources and steps involved in how financial resources are reviewed and allocated.

WORKSHOP 4: MENTAL HEALTH & IMPOSTER SYNDROME

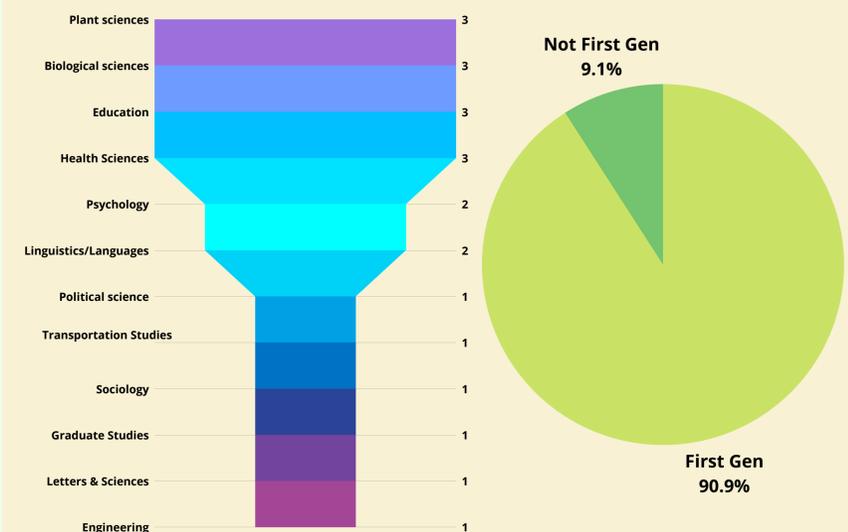
- *Objective 1:* identify and discuss challenges involving mental health struggles and dealing with imposter syndrome.
- *Objective 2:* Discuss strategies to cope with imposter syndrome and identify valuable resources for mental health.

WORKSHOP 5: DEMYSTIFYING GRAD SCHOOL Q&A PANEL: THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM

- *Objective:* discuss and share ways to navigate barriers and confusing parts of graduate school.



REGISTERED ATTENDEES



FEEDBACK

- Variety of PhD/MA students, undergrads, faculty, and staff attended
- Many attendees expressed positive feedback for:
 - Thoughtful/empowering discussions
 - Being able to connect with other first-gen folks
 - Bonding over common experiences
- Feedback for the future included:
 - More time for socializing
 - More time devoted to job search within and beyond academia

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Technology Support: Christopher Villanueva
Original Organizers: Destiny García & Melissa Patiño-Vega.

