First-Generation Initiatives
Strategic Plan 2020-2021
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Mission:

To increase retention and graduation rates of first-generation students by building community, serving as advocates, providing education on the first-generation experience, influencing University policies and practices to be more inclusive of the first-generation identity, and developing meaningful programs and University initiatives that support first generation students.

Values:

Leadership- First Generation students are resilient. They have overcome many obstacles to be in and stay in college therefore, they are leaders.

Empowerment- First Generation students are paving the road for younger siblings, parents, friends, and future families. A college degree is life changing and there is pride in being the first to take this step forward.

Community-First Generation students are not alone. There is a large community of people who identify with them and/or want to see first generation students succeed. They are united in their experiences.

Collaboration- First Generation students have intersecting identities that shape their experience. To best support them through their University journey, collaboration with other University programs and services is essential.

Advocacy- First Generation students have unique experiences and intersecting identities. University policies, practices, and programs should be created with first generation students in mind. The goal is to increase education, awareness, and visibility of first-generation students.

Goals and Objectives (sub-bullets):

In alignment with University strategic planning, First Generation Initiatives overarching goal is to increase student engagement and improve equitable retention, graduation rates, and career success for first-generation students. The work of this office is data informed and utilizes best practices for first-generation students. All additional goals listed point back to this larger overarching goal.

1. To provide first generation students with information and resources that will help them successfully navigate their college experience and attain their goals after graduation.
   - Address first-generation student needs: Navigating college, communicating with family/friends, financial literacy, graduate school, career success, academic excellence, etc.
   - Initiate Leadership Program Learning Community to identify student needs, instill academic confidence, empower first-year, first generation students, and establish a sense of community.

- Collaborate with other departments and programs to create programming to support first-gen students.
- Develop, execute, and evaluate meaningful programs in-person and online based on student needs.
- Determine needs for FY20/21 and beyond.

2. To provide first-generation students with a community that honors and validates their identities and fosters greater student success and sense of belonging at MSU Denver.
   - Provide opportunities and programming for students to explore and affirm their first-generation and intersecting identities.
   - Increase first-generation student sense of belonging and sense of community at MSU Denver.
   - Instill pride in students for their first-generation identity.
   - Provide opportunities for students to engage and build community both online and in-person.

3. To identify support, resources, and staffing to support the First-Gen's mission and purpose at MSU Denver.
   - Hire, train, and supervise graduate student and undergraduate student staff.
   - Develop, utilize, and refine student staff training materials and first-gen policy and procedure manual.
   - Identify and work to secure funding for additional staff positions, graduate assistant positions, office space including First Gen Center, and permanent funding to support the program in FY20/21 and beyond.
   - Research and create permanent name for First Generation Initiatives programming.

4. To educate the campus community on first generation student experience.
   - Utilize first generation student data and first-gen best practices research to inform policy, practices, and programs.
   - Advocate for inclusive policies, programs, and practices that support first generation students and their intersecting identities.
   - Establish and maintain traditions and an inclusive and supportive culture celebrating and honoring the identity of first-generation students.
   - Provide trainings for faculty, staff, and student staff on how to best support first-gen students.
   - Establish and convene Roadrunners First Advisory Council to develop a first-gen needs assessment to be disseminated campus wide.