



**Graduate Professional Assistant (First-Gen Initiatives)
First-Gen+ Center**

Serving the first-generation community at Mason, including students who are first-gen and undocumented, have refugee status, and those who have families with limited income.

UNIVERSITY LIFE:

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS

Mission:

University Life cares for the whole student by promoting inclusive well-being and fostering lifelong learning – preparing ethical leaders for the world.

Values:

TOGETHER, we achieve our mission through an unwavering commitment to our **values**:

Inclusion and Equity

We are committed to cultivating an environment of engagement, connection, and belonging that is respectful and fair for everyone.

Leadership for Positive Change

We are committed to cultivating leaders who critically examine and understand the potential impact of their decisions and act ethically.

Well-Being

We are committed to cultivating an environment of understanding and fulfillment of both individual and community well-being that promotes purpose, vitality, engagement, and resilience.

Collaborative Community

We are committed to cultivating a supportive network of colleagues that shares ideas, learns and creates together, and develops authentic connections.

Strategic Transformation

We are committed to dynamic action in creating meaningful solutions to anticipate and meet the needs of an ever-changing community.

Function:

The Graduate Professional Assistant for the First-Gen+ Center (working with First-Gen Initiatives) position includes completion of administrative tasks and ongoing enhancement of student-centered programs and initiatives for the development, affirmation, and support of students who are first-generation. This position will take place during the 2022-23 academic year and reports to the Assistant Director of First-Generation Student Support and the Assistant Director of the Student Transition Empowerment Program.

The position portfolio for the Graduate Assistant for First-Gen Initiatives working with students who identify as a first-generation college student, based upon George Mason University's definition. The position will be focused on three (3) main areas: large scale programming, data management, and committee-based work & outreach. Special projects include First-Gen Week, the First-Gen Peer Mentoring Program and the Student Transition Empowerment Program (STEP). This role is unique in nature as this student will be focused on campus-wide first-gen initiatives in the fall and will pivot to a more specialized portfolio of support STEP during the spring semester.

Learning Outcomes

The Graduate Professional Assistant will...

- Develop an understanding of the unique needs of first-generation and undocumented college students and obtain experience supporting the needs of first-generation and undocumented college students.
- Gain competency in supervision, leadership, risk management/accountability.
- Gain experience working with a diverse body of students, staff, and faculty.
- Expand upon knowledge of planning effective student-centered events and programs
- Learn and apply methods of assessment, including knowledge of the assessment cycle and the development and evaluation of outcomes.

Required Skills/Qualifications:

- *Must be enrolled in one of George Mason University's Graduate Programs (not provisional admission)*
- *Must be reliable, responsible, self-motivated, confident, sincere, flexible, dedicated, and considerate.*
- *Must possess strong written and verbal communication skills*
- *Must take initiative and utilize creative thinking skills to coordinate programs and initiatives and consider multiple issues, needs, possibilities, etc.*
- *Must have an ability to relate to people from diverse backgrounds.*
- *Must exhibit exceptional professionalism and a strong work ethic.*
- *Must be available and accessible for the time commitment involved.*

Position Responsibilities:

FALL 2022

Large Scale Programming

- Plan and implement First-Gen Week (second week of November).
- Plan and support campus-wide first-gen programming and initiatives throughout the academic year.

First-Gen Peer Mentoring Program

- Provide support with recruiting, screening, and matching peer mentors with program participants
- Help monitor the relationship between peer mentors and their mentees

- Assist with general supervision of mentors including monthly mentor meetings and monthly 1:1 mentor check-ins (more frequently as needed)
- Support the coordination, marketing and execution of programs, events and activities for program
- Support ongoing data collection and assessment related to programmatic and student learning outcomes

Committee Based Work

- Serve as an active participant in the First-generation Working Group
- Serve on committees within the department that may include but are not limited to: Search Committees and others as time in schedule permits.

Spring 2023

Student Transition Empowerment Program (STEP) *summer bridge for first-gen students*

Logistical/Program Preparation

- Work in collaboration with other summer staff members and First-Gen+ Center professional staff in:
 - Programming components of the summer program, to include: planning field trips (including designating tasks), monitoring/tracking spending and expenses, facilitating activities
 - Educational components of the summer program, to include creating an academic calendar, keeping track of student's academic progress during the program (to include creation of spreadsheet to log assignment and exam grades), implementation of cultural competency training for staff and student participants
 - Logistical components of the program, to include monitoring and tracking spending, maintaining academic spreadsheet, and coordinating special study halls as needed
- Aid in the recruitment and selection of STEP 2023 cohort

Staff Support

- Recruit, train and supervise STEP 2023 staff
- Provide support, mentorship, and supervision to student staff members Meet individually with STEP Mentors (at least once a month during fall and spring semesters and at least once per week during summer program)
- In collaboration with supervisor, develop sanction structure for staff members who do not follow program rules/policies or do not meet program/position expectations
- Mediate conflicts that might arise between summer staff members, as well as staff members and students
- Support student staff in conflict resolution and modeling positive leadership
- Evaluate performance of all student staff throughout the program
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Additional Responsibilities

- Attend and participate in recurring staff meetings; report on progress made towards the First-generation Peer Mentoring Program initiative.
- Meet weekly for an hour with supervisor to update on projects, ask questions, and talk through ideas.
- Participate in developmental trainings and staff onboarding preparations as advised by supervisor.
- Attend student staff retreats, trainings, and meetings organized by First-Gen+ Center staff.
- Represent the First-Gen+ Center and George Mason University in positive ways on social and other media, and exhibit good judgement and a positive public presence professionally.
- Serve as a present, positive, and supportive role model.
- Other duties as assigned by supervisor related to position or needed by the First-Gen+ Center.

Time Commitments: (Contract Dates: August 15 – May 24th)

The Graduate Professional Assistant position is designed for a 20 hour per week work commitment.

This position has the option to be extended through the end of summer 2023. Please note: Summer staff members are NOT ALLOWED to have another employment position or enroll in courses during summer training dates, summer program dates, or post-program clean-up/staff day.

Compensation (Fall 2022 – Spring 2023)

- The Graduate Professional Assistant position will consist of the following compensation package:
 - GPA stipend, \$17,640 will be paid on the 1st and 16th of the month for the duration of employment contract period.
 - Tuition grant up to 6 graduate credits at the in-state rate, not to exceed \$4,800.00 per semester.

To apply:

To apply for this position, please do so by 11:59pm on May 1st, 2023

By Submitting a letter of interest, resume, and three professional references by **(11:59PM on May 1st, 2023)** via handshake or by submitting the requested information to:

First-Gen+ Center
firstgen@gmu.edu