

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2020-1062

TITLE: Resolution Supporting the Creation of a First-Generation Living Learning Community in the Murphree Area

AUTHORS: First-Generation Affairs Cabinet Director Daniel Badell, First-Generation Caucus Chair Kevin Marti, and Senator Aaron Armando Arriaga

SPONSORS: Assistant Director of the Office of Academic Support Dekendrick Murray, Senator Suzanna Barna, Senator Michael Greenwald, Chairman David Kays, Chairman Franco Luis, Latinx Caucus Chair Kevin Trejos, Internal Affairs Chairwoman Gabriela Hernandez, and Student Body President Trevor Pope

WHEREAS, the Department of Education defines a first-generation student as: an individual, neither of whose parents completed a baccalaureate degree or an individual who, prior to the age of 18, regularly resided with and received support from only one parent and whose supporting parent did not complete a baccalaureate degree or an individual who, prior to the age of 18, did not regularly reside with or receive support from a natural or adoptive parent [1]; and,

WHEREAS, 56% of undergraduates nationally are first-generation students [2]; and,

WHEREAS, nationally, 41% of African-American students and 61% of Latinx students belong to this demographic. These numbers constitute the statistic that most first-generation students come from underrepresented minorities and are therefore subject to a higher degree of difficulty in transferring into the college environment [3]; and,

WHEREAS, 90% of low-income first-generation students do not graduate on time due to a lack of academic community which provides influential relationships that lead to a support system of mentors with shared experiences [4]; and,

WHEREAS, around to 20%-22% of undergraduate students at the University of Florida are first-generation students, which approximates 7000-8000 students [5]; and,

WHEREAS, a Living Learning Community gives students access to programs, speakers, and activities that are designed to support the interests and needs of students in a focused area, allowing those students to build a sense of community which serves as a pillar in academic success [6]; and,

WHEREAS, the PROMISE program at the University of Florida offers first-generation students the privileges of a Living Learning Community only in the Summer B term in the Murphree Area [7]; and,

WHEREAS, other living learning communities have been created for underrepresented students like the Black Living Learning Community in Graham Hall [8]; and,

WHEREAS, in the state of Florida, the only university that permanently implemented a first-generation Living Learning Community is the University of Central Florida. Additionally, other universities across the nation have also implemented similar housing communities for first-generation students, such as the University of Iowa, the University of Michigan, and the University of Louisville. Thus, Living Learning Communities make their campus a more welcoming environment for first-generation students [9]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida does not have a year-long first-generation Living Learning Community; and

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Government Senate recognizes the need for the University of Florida's Housing Department to create a Living Learning Community for First-Generation Students in the Fall and Spring semesters in the Murphree Area.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to President W. Kent Fuchs, Assistant Director of the Office of Academic Support Dekendrick Murray, Student Body President Trevor Pope, Senior Director of Housing Tina Kuhlengel Horvath, Coordinator for Living Learning Initiatives Kimone Simmon, Director of the Office of Academic Support Dr. Angeleah Browdy, Assistant Director of Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars Erica Aguiar, Senior Director of the Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars Dr. Leslie Pendleton

[1] <https://sites.uw.edu/uwmcnair/program-description/mcnair-eligibility/definitions/>

[2] <https://firstgen.naspa.org/research-and-policy/national-data-fact-sheets-on-first-generation-college-students/national-data-fact-sheets>

[3] <https://pnpi.org/first-generation-students/>

[4] <https://eab.com/insights/daily-briefing/student-success/90-of-low-income-first-generation-college-students-dont-graduate-on-time/>

[5] University of Florida Office of Academic Support

[6] <https://residents.housing.ufl.edu/academic-initiatives/llc/>

[7] <https://oas.ua.ufl.edu/uf-promise/about-promise/>

[8] <https://residents.housing.ufl.edu/academic-initiatives/llc/black-cultural/>

[9] <https://www.housing.ucf.edu/choices/llc/#century>

