



# FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE CELEBRATION

## EVENT PLANNING TIMELINE

### Early Spring

#### Foundation, Strategy, and Alignment

**Goal: Establish a strong, inclusive planning structure and align celebration efforts with institutional priorities and data.**

- Convene a cross-campus planning committee (staff, faculty, students).
  - If returning: Review past FGCC events, outcomes, and lessons learned.
  - If new: Identify goals, capacity, and priorities for your first celebration.
- Set shared goals, themes, and measures of success for the year.
- Assign clear roles (coordination, logistics, communications, student engagement).
- Prioritize inclusive programming that:
  - Centers first-generation students' intersectional identities.
  - Includes graduate and professional students, where applicable.
  - Supports faculty and staff learning and engagement.
- Creates connections among students, staff, and faculty.
- Engage key partners early (TRIO programs, Institutional Research, campus services, community partners).
- Use available data—or baseline estimates—to inform planning and strategy.
- Identify opportunities for senior leader visibility and support.
- Outline a multi-channel communications approach (email, social media, campus or local media).
- Reference the "101 Ways to Celebrate on Nov. 8" blog for scalable ideas at any experience level.

### April/MAY

#### SECURE EXTERNAL FUNDING

**Goal: Ensure financial sustainability and resource support.**

- Apply for the First-Generation College Celebration Grant Opportunity
  - Application opens in April; deadline in July.
- Invite prospective funders to campus to learn about first-generation student success efforts.
- Identify aligned partnership opportunities.
- Engage the development office or foundation early to:
  - Support funder conversations.
  - Explore sustainable funding models.

#### DETAIL CELEBRATION DAY ACTIVITIES

**Goal: Translate strategy into actionable programming.**

- Map planned activities: Day-of events, Week-long celebrations, or Month-long initiatives
- Align FGCC activities with other campus events and observances.
- Submit events to the campus-wide calendar to increase visibility.
- Develop a promotional plan that includes:
  - Digital ads and email marketing.
  - Printed materials for orientation packets.
- Design a student-centered event organized by and for first-gen students, with faculty/staff support
- Begin identifying speakers, facilitators, and moderators.

### JUNE

### JULY

#### BUILD SOCIAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGN MOMENTUM

**Goal: Establish a consistent, visible communications cadence.**

- Partner with Marketing & Communications or Strategic Communications offices.
- Develop a shared editorial calendar leading up to Celebration Day.
- Identify:
  - Key institutional and student social media accounts.
  - Frequently used and campaign-specific hashtags.
  - Opportunities for social media takeovers.
- Plan and timeline the creation of content, including:
  - Testimonials, Student, staff, and faculty spotlights
  - Social-ready graphics and shareables
- Share detailed plans with the President's or Chancellor's Office and request leadership participation (email, video, or social post).
- Review the Media Kit on the Celebration Day page for templates and examples.
- Last chance to apply for the First-generation College Celebration Day Grant

### AUGUST

#### STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

**Goal: Center student leadership and ownership.**

- Engage students as they return to campus in event planning, marketing, outreach, and event execution
- Partner with student organizations and affinity groups.
- Identify and support student ambassadors or volunteers.
- Offer leadership recognition, stipends, or service hours when possible.

### SEPTEMBER

#### ORDER COLLATERAL & PRINT MATERIALS

**Goal: Ensure strong branding and physical presence on campus.**

- Finalize event branding for digital and physical spaces.
- Use templates and examples from the Media Kit.
- Order and produce:
  - Posters, flyers, banners or table signage
  - Giveaways or branded materials (as budget allows)
- Identify signage placement locations and secure necessary approvals.
- Confirm timelines for printing and delivery to avoid delays.

### OCTOBER

#### REVIEW PLANS & TIMELINE OF EVENTS

**Goal: Confirm readiness and alignment across partners.**

- Re-convene the planning committee to review logistics and event flow.
- Finalize a detailed timeline that includes:
  - Event descriptions
  - Locations
  - Develop a contingency plan for weather, technology, or staffing issues\
  - Promotion methods (email, social, outreach)
- Share finalized plans with campus partners and contributors including marketing the events across campus

### NOVEMBER

#### CELEBRATE AND RECORD

**Goal: Honor the first-generation community and capture the moment.**

- Celebrate the culmination of months of planning!
- Record snippets of Celebration Day and save them including video, photos, quotes, and reflections.

### DECEMBER

#### REFLECT AND DEBRIEF

- While the plans and events are still fresh in your memory, conduct a debriefing session with all of the members of the planning committee, (including students).
- Create a space for next year's planning materials, and include the feedback in a document that you can reference next February.