

HEAL 2023-24 Fellowship Project: The First Gen Faculty- Staff Initiative

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The Initiative

The First Gen Faculty Initiative is a volunteer student success initiative among Montclair faculty, staff, and administrators who are themselves First Generation college graduates who hope to improve the sense of belonging, efficacy, and retention and graduation rates among First Gen Montclair State University students.

^We use an intentionally broadly inclusive definition of First Gen - someone whose primary caretakers when they were children did not graduate with a bachelor's degree; definitions of First Gen vary, particularly at institutions where this criteria is used to award aid.

Context



Montclair

Approximately 48% of incoming Montclair students identify as First Gen students.

Nationally

Nationally, First Gen students are 16% less likely to graduate than non-First Gen students with equal parental income. Addressing this need helps “future-proof” the campus

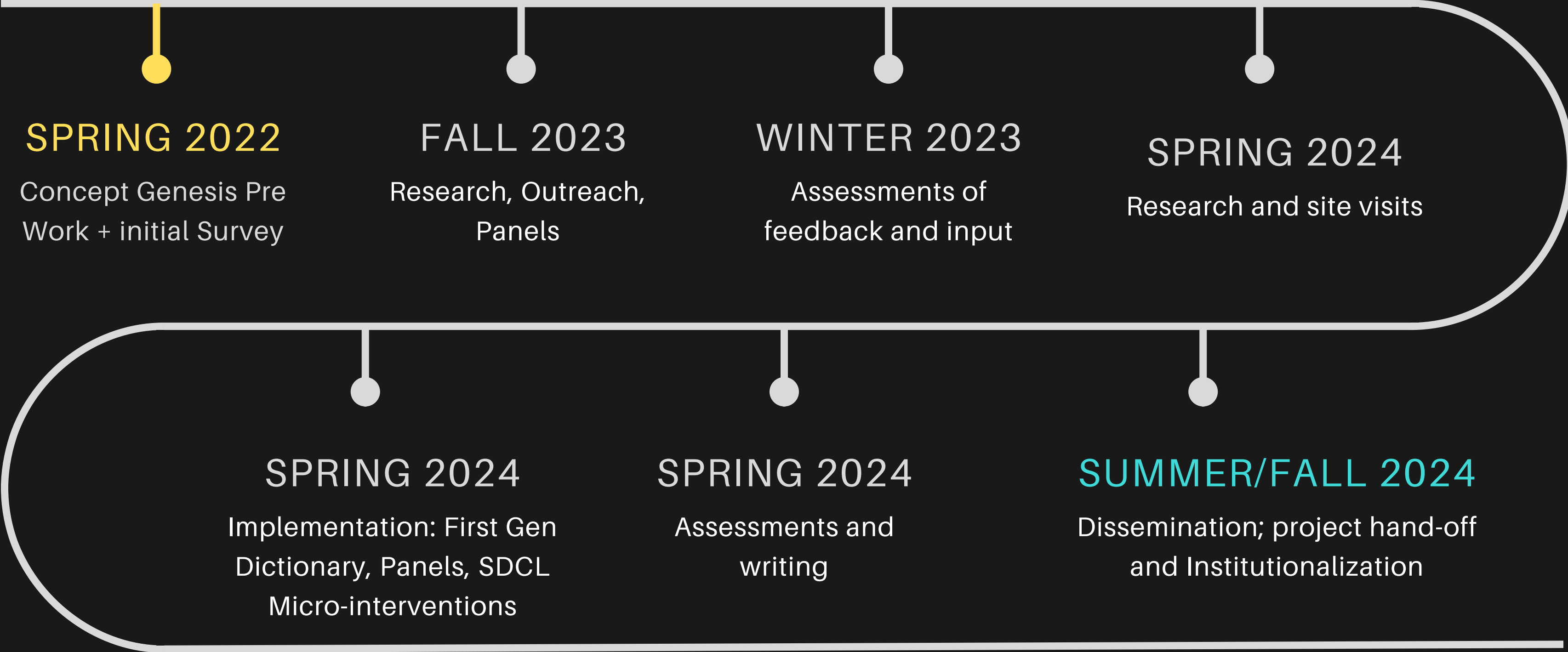
Mission and Value-driven

It is part of Montclair’s mission to serve students for whom a college education can transform their individual lives, their family experience, and their communities.

First Gen Faculty-Staff Initiative

Project Timelines

HEAL FELLOWSHIP FALL 2023- SPRING 2024 →



Initiative Components



Programming

Bringing First Gen Faculty and Staff together with students to lift the curtain on the hidden curriculum, increase a sense of belonging and provide mentorship

The First Gen Dictionary

A crowdsourced document available to all to help lift the curtain on the hidden curriculum

Mentorship

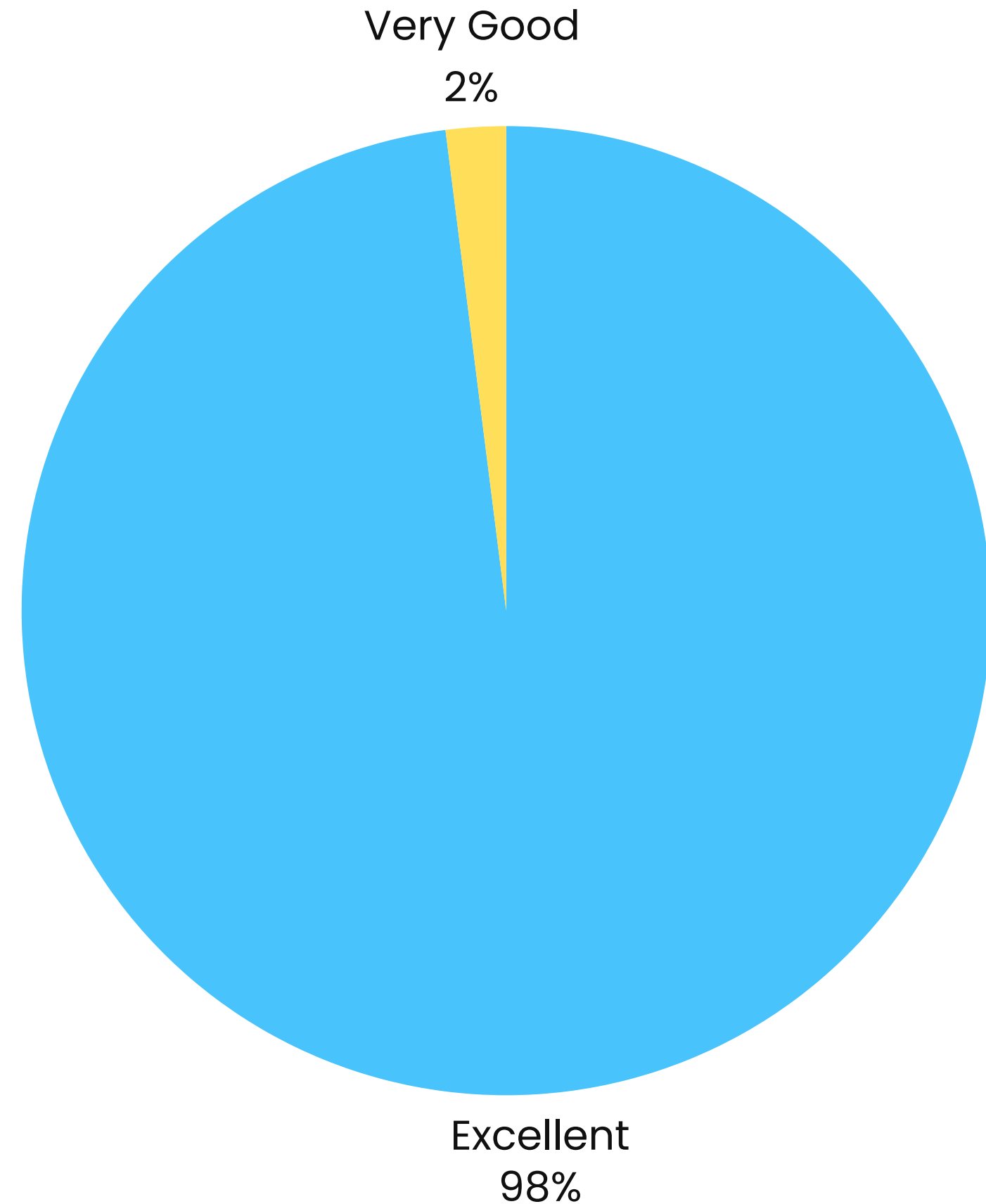
Mentorship will include one-on-one and small group faculty and staff mentoring of First Gen students as well as near-peer mentoring opportunities.

Microinterventions

Student Development and Campus Life and some academic units have embarked on initiatives to test data-informed microinterventions, trying different strategies to connect with First Gen students

Assessments

Panels are universally
viewed as highly valuable
(but we have a self-
selected audience..)



**Tips on how to
succeed
financially and
how to network as
a 1st gen student**

Attending a panel with
leaders in education
who were also first-
gen students like me
was really inspiring.

It was encouraging
to see people from
similar backgrounds
as me in high
positions

Listening to the
college journey
stories of the
panelists

The meaning of
"Imposter Syndrome"
and how to deal with
it.

**Talking
about
imposter
syndrome.**


The advice from the
panelists. I will
definitely be utilizing
my time better and
focus on networking.

As someone who is also a
first-gen student, I often
feel out of place in my
master's program and
thinks about dropping out
of the program. Their
stories and advice gave me
the push I needed to keep
going.

**Assessment:
What Did You Find Most Valuable About the Panel?**



Campus Partners

- Office of the Provost - Academic Affairs
 - Deans/Faculty/Staff of Colleges/College advisors
 - Office of Student Belonging (Jonnine DeLoatch) + First Gen Office + Orientation Staff
 - Admissions
 - Institutional Research
 - Student Development and Campus Life
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