

## First Generation College Students: Navigating Higher Education

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<http://scalar.usc.edu/works/first-generation-college-student-/index>

### Aspirational Capital

Is the ability to maintain hope and dreams for the future in the face of real and perceived barriers. For FGCS the aspiration of education is a space of financial mobility despite barriers of inequality.

**Tip:** *Center yourself. Spend some time exploring what you've always dreamt of becoming. Grab some magazines or just a blank sheet of paper to create a vision board or map out your college journey. What experiences do you want to have? Will you study abroad? How about a summer internship? Maybe become a member of an organization? How about joining student senate? Maybe write for the school paper? Maybe start your own club? When you need help, do you know who to turn to?*

### Linguistic Capital

Is the ability for students to develop communication skills through various experiences. For students who act as an interpreter for members of their family as well as the culture being based in storytelling, linguistic capital may enhance a student's ability for "memorization, attention to detail, dramatic pauses, comedic timing, facial affect, vocal tone, volume, rhythm and rhyme." (p. 79)

**Tip:** *For all the times you've told the same story over again and so has your cousin, aunt, uncle, guardian or friend, yet you still want to hear it again and again. See that experience as an exchange of oral history or your ability to captivate an audience. That is a skill and don't you forget it! Harness your ability to pay attention to detail and have people hanging on your every word. Remember those skills as you present in class, engage in extra curricular activities, or when you are advocating for your needs. Use your voice!*

### Familial Capital

Is recognizing and utilizing extended family and community members to enhance social and personal human resources that will assist you as you navigate to and through college.

**Tip:** *Think about what makes your community yours and recreate it at your institution. Have you joined any student organizations? Is there a First Gen student group you can join? Have you connected with your roommate or floor mates? How about the Multicultural Center, Pride Center, or Women's Center? Did you participate in any pre-orientation programs? Have you gone to your professors office hours? How about grabbing a bite to eat with someone in your class to get to know them better? Remember you are not in this alone. There are people throughout your college career who will help you in your transition. BUILD YOUR COLLECTIVE!*

### Social Capital

Is the network of people and community resources that provide both emotional and advice on how to navigate institutions of oppression both within higher education and in the larger society

**Tip:** *Think back to your community at home. Who supported you through your K-12 experience? Which teachers, staff, community, and/or family members showed you that they cared? Are you still in contact with them? Have you found those types of people on campus? Seek them out! Connect with people who will help you on your educational journey.*

### **Navigational Capital**

Refers to a student's ability to navigate "social institutions", where "navigational capital empowers them to maneuver within unsupportive or hostile environments" (Yosso, 2005)

**Tip:** *Seek out your community. Make sure it is comprised of all those who care about you and will challenge and support you on your journey. Do not be scared to question your experiences. Create change if you feel uncomfortable. Find your safe spaces on campus and speak your truth!*

### **Resistance Capital**

Your resistance is passed down from generation to generation. It is the ability for marginalized populations to persist and resist in the face of oppression and opposition to become empowered. Your legacy of resistance will assist you as navigate your institution and create change in you community and campus community.

**Tip:** *How will you share your knowledge with your community? How will return to your community as a change agent? Recall the moments that got you here. How will you continue the legacy and lift as you climb?*