

First Scholars Terms and Definitions

FIRST SCHOLARS ECOSYSTEM

Expert Guidance

A hallmark of the First Scholars experience, Expert Guidance consists of customized support provided by the First Scholars team across the life of the First Scholars Initiative, tailored to the specific needs of an institution with the purpose of maximizing progress towards goal attainment.

First Scholars Foundational Structures

Comprises four fundamental elements of First Scholars that support optimum success in implementing Student-centered and Institution-focused Actionable Outcomes. These foundational structures consist of: steering committees, working groups, institutional mapping, and scaling.

First Scholars Integrated Framework

Evidence-based solutions integrated into a comprehensive framework that higher education institutions can utilize to propel institution-wide systemic transformation and confidently scale holistic student support across the academic career of first-generation students.

First Scholars Network

A community of First Scholars institutional partners committed to transforming the higher education landscape through systemic, scalable approaches that elevate potential and advance outcomes for first-generation students today and in the future.

First Scholars Onboarding

Hands-on preparation for participation in the First Scholars Network that occurs after the Participation Agreement and Institutional Commitments forms are submitted. Institutions receive more in-depth instruction on

completing the Insights Tool, participating in data submission, and engaging in the First Scholars Learning Hub.

Institution-focused Actionable Outcomes

Institution-focused actionable outcomes allow higher education institutions to propel networked, systemic transformation by evaluating institutional structures, policies, and procedures, and by networking existing resources, improving data sharing, strengthening communication, and being strategic in scaling programmatic resources for first-generation student populations. First Scholars employs a combination of existing institutional resources and Expert Guidance to shape success trajectories and support the systemic shifts that transform institutional support for first-generation students.

Student-centered Actionable Outcomes

The student-centered aspect of the First Scholars Integrated Framework includes evidence-based strategies that are holistic in nature, focused on scalability, and encourage cross-institutional networked collaboration. These approaches consider the multi-faceted student identity across the educational experience from an asset-based lens and produce students who feel a greater sense of belonging, are more engaged in the campus community, and are eager to contribute in multiple ways post-completion.

Tailored Resources

A network of scholars, higher education professionals, and association partners who provide expertise in a variety of content-related areas that align institutional needs with goals.

RESOURCES & ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Expert Guidance Hours

Weekly virtual opportunities for First Scholars partners to engage with the Expert Guidance Team to ask questions, work through barriers to progress, and gain information about a specific topical area.

First Scholars Network Learning Hub

A digital space for First Scholars institutions to access curated resources, articles, and online learning, as well as institution-specific reports and opportunities for peer-to-peer communication and collaboration.

First Scholars Solutions and Toolkits

Pre-packaged, turn-key approaches for implementing a program or service. Toolkits cover a wide variety of topics and are structured to accommodate multiple deployment methods.

First Scholars Virtual Monthly Cohort Workshops

Designed to bring cohort members together to promote progress towards Student-centered and Institution-focused Actionable Outcomes goals.

Guiding Documents

Part of First Scholars Solutions, Guiding Documents detail each of the four Foundational Structures and provide in-depth guidance on structuring and implementing these pieces at the institution. Additional guiding documents will be provided as the initiative evolves.

Institutional Readiness Assessment

An assessment designed to provide vital information that will determine your institution's readiness to engage in the First Scholars Network.

Insights Tool

Completed shortly after onboarding, this inventory is intentionally designed to understand how an institution programmatically serves first-generation students and how systemically prepared the institution is to advance efforts to further support first-generation students.

Student Success in Higher Education Conference (SSHE)

The annual NASPA Conferences on Student Success in Higher Education convenes the student success-focused community to engage in important professional development, exchange innovative ideas, and network with peers.

FIRST SCHOLARS COMMITMENT DOCUMENTS

Data Sharing Agreement (DSA)

Contract developed by ASA Research that outlines what, when, and how institutional data will be shared and protected.

Institutional Commitment Form

Onboarding document in which the institutional representative accepts cohort placement and agrees to participate in all components of the First Scholars Network.

Participation Agreement

Contractual agreement between NASPA, First Scholars, and the institution detailing each party's responsibilities within the initiative. The Participation Agreement is sent to the institution's senior leader confirming their agreement to participate in the First Scholars Network.