



I AM FIRST MENTEE HANDBOOK



Welcome Letter

Dear Mentees,

Welcome to the I Am First Program! We are so excited to have you join our community of first-generation college students here at Cal Poly Pomona. Starting college is a big step, and we want you to know that you don't have to take this journey alone.

The I Am First Program was created to support first-generation students like you—students who are the first in their families to pursue a college degree. We recognize the courage, determination, and hard work it takes to get here, and we are committed to helping you thrive both academically and personally.

Through this program, you'll be connected with a mentor who understands what it's like to be first-gen. They are here to share their experiences, answer your questions, and encourage you as you navigate challenges and celebrate milestones. Together, you'll build skills, confidence, and a strong sense of belonging on campus.

Our program is rooted in Cal Poly Pomona's philosophy of "Become by Doing." Just as our university values hands-on learning, I Am First emphasizes action, mentorship, and community. You'll not only learn from classes but also from real experiences, relationships, and opportunities that will shape your journey.

This handbook highlights important resources and tools to support you as you get started. Think of it as your guide to making the most of your time at CPP, and remember you have a community here that believes in you and is ready to cheer you on every step of the way.

We are so glad you are here—and we can't wait to see everything you will accomplish.

Go Broncos!

Sincerely,

Dr. Dora Lee

Assistant Vice President of Academic Engagement & Success
Office of Student Success



Program Contact Information

Professional Staff:



Dr. Dora Lee

Director of Academic Support and Learning Services

Ph: (909) 869-3289

Email: doralee@cpp.edu

SSB Bldg. 121, East, 1st Floor Orange Counter

Office Location & Hours:

Student Services Building (SSB) Bldg. 121, East, 1st Floor Orange Counter

Website:

<https://www.cpp.edu/studentssuccess/oss/i-am-first/index.shtml>

Social Media:

Instagram: @iamfirstcpp

About the Program

First-Generation Student Definition:

1. A student with neither of their natural or adoptive parents received a baccalaureate degree
2. A student who, prior to the age of 18, regularly resided with and received support from only one parent and whose supporting parent did not receive a baccalaureate degree
3. An individual who, prior to the age of 18, did not reside with or receive support from a natural or adoptive parent

Our Goals:

1. Create a visibility campaign for first-generation students, faculty, and staff community at Cal Poly Pomona.
2. Create access and equity for First Generation College Students (FGCS) through faculty/staff mentorships.

Your Role as a Mentee:

Being a mentee means being open to growth, guidance, and new experiences. Your mentor is here to support you, but your journey is yours on your own!

- Be open to learning & feedback
- Set goals (big or small!)
- Meet with your mentor regularly
- Ask questions (about anything!)
- Follow through on what you commit to
- Reflect, grow, and celebrate your progress

Commitment:

- One year commitment
- Attend ONE mandatory Mentee Onboarding
- Attend the program events
- At least one meeting per semester
- Commit to completing an assessment at the end of the year

Communication Etiquette

These tips encourage professionalism, respect, and confidence, especially helpful for first-time college students learning how to build mentoring relationships.

- Say “Hi [Name]” in emails or texts
- Be polite and to the point
- Confirm or reschedule meetings early
- Send a quick thank-you after check-ins
- The first meetings will be scheduled by the mentors.

Sample Message:

Hey [Mentor's Name],

I hope you're doing well! I wanted to see if you're free to meet this week, maybe Thursday or Friday? I'd love to get your advice on choosing classes.

Thanks!

– [Your Name]

Topics to Talk About with Your Mentor

Consider these Key conversation topics to support your academic, personal, and career development.

- How to manage time or study smarter
- Choosing classes or exploring majors
- Finding campus resources
- Handling stress, homesickness, or transitions
- Career goals, internships, or networking

Prompts to Track Your Journey

Take a moment to reflect on your growth throughout the semester. Tracking your wins, challenges, and goals can help you stay focused, motivated, and aware of your progress.

- What are three things I'm proud of this month?
- What is one challenge I overcame?
- What is one goal I have for next time?

My Mentorship Notes & Goals

Date: _____

Topic/Focus: _____

Key Takeaways:

Goals Discussed:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Target Date to Complete: _____

Action Steps: (Next Time I will...)

- _____
- _____
- _____

Reflection: (One thing I learned or appreciated during this check-in...)

Campus Resources

Academic Support:

Bronco Advising Center (BAC)

The Bronco Advising Center (BAC) at Cal Poly Pomona serves as the university's central academic advising center, accessible to all students. It provides comprehensive support, including guidance on using academic planning tools, answering general advising questions, assisting with registration, and offering advice on financial aid and student account services. Think of it as your go-to resource for all advising needs.

Location: Building 121, Floor 1 (Blue Counter)

Website: <https://www.cpp.edu/studentsuccess/bronco-advising-center/>

Email: bac@cpp.edu

Phone Number: (909) 869-2600

The McNair Scholars Program

The McNair Scholars Program is dedicated to preparing eligible undergraduate students for successful doctoral studies by providing a robust framework of support and development. The program fosters student achievement through a variety of initiatives, including hands-on research opportunities, personalized faculty mentorship, and a diverse array of skill-building workshops. With a primary focus on increasing the representation of first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented students in PhD programs, the McNair Scholars Program aims to broaden access to advanced academic careers. By cultivating a diverse pipeline of future scholars, the program plays a vital role in enriching the academic community and enhancing diversity among faculty at higher education institutions across the nation.

Location: Building 8, Room 306

Website: <https://www.cpp.edu/mcnair/>

Email: mcnair@cpp.edu

Phone Number: (909) 869 – 3381

Male Success initiatives (MSI)

The Male Success Initiative Program (MSI) is designed to support and empower male students, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds. The program offers a range of resources and services aimed at enhancing academic achievement, personal development, and overall success. Key components include mentorship opportunities, academic support, career planning, and workshops focused on leadership and personal growth. By addressing the unique challenges faced by male students and providing tailored

support, the program aims to improve retention rates and foster a more inclusive and successful educational experience.

Location: Building 95, Room 409

Website: <https://www.cpp.edu/msi/>

Email: msi@cpp.edu

Phone Number: N/A

Maximizing Engineering Potential (MEP)/ Women in Science and Engineering Program (WiSE)

The Maximizing Engineering Potential (MEP) program was created to support underrepresented minority, women, low-income, and first-generation engineering students for successful careers and leadership roles. By providing targeted support and resources, MEP equips students with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate lifelong intellectual, socio-ethical, and career challenges. MEP's mission is to cultivate a diverse cohort of engineers who are not only capable professionals but also visionary leaders ready to make a meaningful impact in their fields and communities.

Location: Building 9, Room 153

Website: <https://www.cpp.edu/engineering/mep/>

Email: mep@cpp.edu

Phone Number: (909) 869-2482

Renaissance Scholars (RS)

The Renaissance Scholars (RS) program supports the success of current and former foster youth at Cal Poly Pomona, across both undergraduate and graduate levels. The program provides a comprehensive range of services designed to foster academic and personal growth. These include enrichment activities, workshops, mentoring, tutoring, academic advising and coaching, success seminars, priority registration, and year-round housing. Additionally, RS offers financial assistance and community-building activities to create a supportive network. Through these extensive resources, the Renaissance Scholars program aims to ensure that foster youth have the tools and support needed to thrive academically and personally.

Location: Building 94, Floor 121

Website: <https://www.cpp.edu/ssep/renaissance-scholars/>

Email: renscholars@cpp.edu

Phone Number: (909) 869-3169

Reading, Advising, & Mentoring Program (RAMP)

The Reading, Advising, & Mentoring Program (RAMP) provides comprehensive academic and personal support to students, ensuring their success at Cal Poly Pomona and facilitating timely graduation. RAMP's core services encompass targeted reading tutorials, personalized academic and career advising, and peer mentoring. These services are designed to enhance students' reading and study strategies, foster personal development, and build professional skills. By offering tailored support and guidance, RAMP empowers students to overcome challenges, achieve their academic goals, and prepare for their future careers, thereby contributing to their overall success and satisfaction at the university.

Location: Building 15 (Library), Room 2919

Website: <https://www.cpp.edu/ramp/>

Email: ramp@cpp.edu

Phone Number(s): (909)-869-4349

Career Services:

Career Center

The Career Center is an invaluable resource for students, offering career exploration and professional development to enhance college-to-career readiness. Notably, the Career Center features a dedicated affinity page for first-generation students. This page provides tailored resources designed to support and advise first-generation students, including information on career-related organizations, career advice, on-campus resources, and general student support. You'll find a range of materials such as website links, videos, resources, and blogs to help guide your journey.

Location: Build 97, Room 128

Website: <https://careercenter.cpp.edu/channels/first-generation/>

Email: career@cpp.edu

Phone Number: (909) 869-2342

Wellness & Health:

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

The mission of Counseling and Psychological Services at Cal Poly Pomona is to advance student success by promoting community wellness, removing psychological barriers, facilitating self-awareness, and cultivating the personal strengths of Cal Poly Pomona students through culturally relevant mental health services designed to transform their personal, social, and academic lives. Counseling and Psychological Services is accredited by the International Accreditation of Counseling Services.

Location: Building 66, Floor 1, Room 116

Website: <https://www.cpp.edu/caps/>

Email: caps@cpp.edu

Phone Number: (909) 869-3220

CARE Center

The Care Center serves as the cornerstone of support for students experiencing distress or facing significant challenges. It plays a crucial role in connecting students with a comprehensive network of resources, both within the campus and in the surrounding community. In addition to offering immediate assistance during crises, the Care Center provides compassionate advocacy to navigate complex situations and ensures that students' basic needs are met through its dedicated services.

Location: Building 9, Floor 1

Website: <https://www.cpp.edu/broncoscarecenter/>

Email: carecenter@cpp.edu

Phone Number: (909) 869-5071

Cultural Centers:

Centers for Transformation, Retention, Equity and Empowerment (TREE)

TREE supports Cal Poly Pomona's vibrant and diverse community through six unique Cultural and Identity Centers. Each center is dedicated to fostering an environment of empowerment, inclusivity, and justice, while celebrating the rich tapestry of our students' identities. The mission is to champion diversity and authenticity, providing resources and support that enhance the academic and personal experiences of our students. These centers include Asian and Pacific Islander Student Center, Black Resource Center, Cesar E. Chavez Center for Higher Education, Native American Student Center, Pride Center and Womxn's Resource Center. From cultural enrichment and advocacy to community building and mentorship, these centers play a crucial role in promoting understanding and connection across campus.

Location: Building 26 (Old Stables)

Website: <https://www.cpp.edu/tree/>

Email: osl@cpp.edu

Phone Number: (909)-869-3601