



Center for
Academic
Learning Support

December 2025

F1RST
Program



First-Gen Newsletter



Howdy Aggies!

As the semester comes to a close and with finals approaching, this newsletter includes tips, strategies, and reminders to help you stay organized, manage stress, and finish the semester strong.

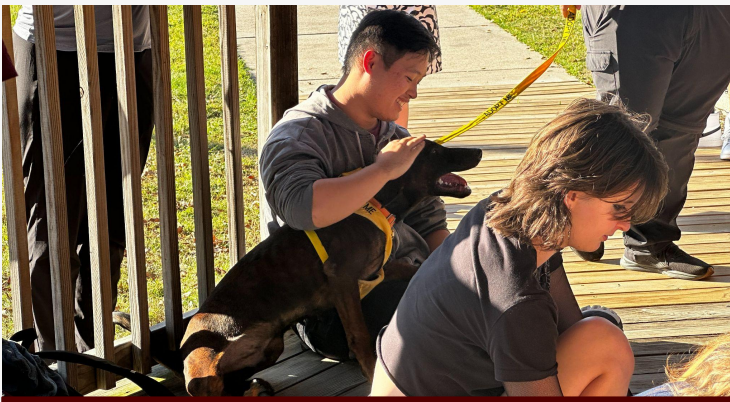
Keep reading to learn more about the last Coffee Connections event of the semester, the first-gen spotlight of the month, strategies for finals, and a special event for graduating first-gen students!

In This Newsletter:

- Strategies for Finals
- First-Gen Spotlight
- Coffee Connections Recap
- Graduation Event

Don't Miss This!

Turn to page 3 to learn how a first-gen student is making waves through volunteerism, research, and community engagement.



Wellness Support

- Counseling Services
- TELUS App
- Relaxation Room
- 1973 Center
- Rec Center

These resources are available to help relieve stress, relax, and prevent burnout!



How to Prepare for Finals

Preparing for finals starts with planning ahead and staying organized.

1. Know when your finals are scheduled. This can be found in your syllabus or by searching "TAMUG final exam schedule."
2. Create a study schedule that breaks material into manageable sections.
3. Use active study strategies, attend tutoring sessions, and go to office hours to clarify questions and strengthen understanding.
4. Prioritize rest by maintaining consistent sleep, staying hydrated, and taking short breaks to prevent burnout.
5. Celebrate when you complete finals!



Helpful Tips

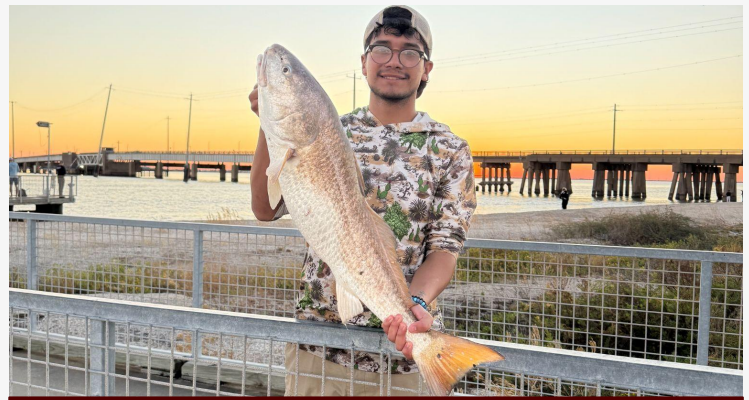
- Reward yourself for accomplishments
- Enter exams and study periods in a calendar or planner
- Eat, drink, and sleep consistently

First-Gen Spotlight: Jason Gonzalez

My name is Jason Gonzalez, and I am a dedicated Marine Biology student at Texas A&M University at Galveston, passionate about ocean science, education, and research. I am interested in elasmobranchs, striving to deepen my understanding of their biology and anatomy while exploring innovative strategies to support shark conservation and population recovery.

Currently, I serve as a Community Leader, supporting residential life by mentoring students and providing after-hours assistance to ensure a safe and welcoming campus environment.

Academically, I serve as an undergraduate volunteer in Dr. Wells' Shark Ecology and Fisheries Science Lab, working under the guidance of graduate student Taryn Hood. Our research focuses on age and growth analysis of Atlantic stingrays through vertebral examination. I am also a second-year member of the eNGAGE Gulf Scholars Program, where I am developing a research poster that explores the human impacts on blacktip shark size and abundance, combining ecological data with conservation insights.



Where it all started

My professional journey began at the Jack K. Williams Library, where I served as a front desk assistant, supporting students and staff with resource access. In the summer of 2025, I joined Texas A&M Sea Camp as an instructor, teaching marine biology to young learners through hands-on activities, dissections, and field trips that fostered curiosity and environmental awareness.



Want to be featured in a First-Gen Spotlight?

Students interested in being featured may submit a few short paragraphs about themselves, their achievements at TAMUG, and what being a first-generation student means to them.

If interested, submit photos and a bio to:
firstgen@tamug.edu



December Coffee Connections

On Wednesday, December 3, students gathered for the last Coffee Connections event of the semester. The featured guest was Danny Roe, Director of Student Assistance Services. This engaging session brought students together through conversations over coffee and hot cocoa.

The Coffee Connections series will continue in the spring 2026 semester. Stay tuned for event information and guest announcements!

First-Gen Graduation Celebration

The F1RST Program will be hosting a graduation celebration to honor first-generation fall 2025 graduates. This come-and-go event will feature cupcakes, a photo booth, and more. This event is free and open to the campus community.

Event Details:

First-Gen Graduation Celebration

Friday, December 19

3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

ASEC 102 Business Lounge

Contact Us

“First-Generation” refers to students who are the first in their families to attend college, meaning that neither parent has completed a bachelor’s degree. The Center for Academic Learning Support provides year-round support services to first-gen students, including professional and peer coaching, academic and social events, lounge spaces, and more. Support provided by the CALS office is open to any student located in Galveston. Students wishing to learn more or connect with the first-gen community are encouraged to reach out.

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