The School of General Studies (GS) serves a community of approximately 2,388 students from nontraditional backgrounds as well as traditionally-aged students enrolled in nontraditional joint degree programs, in partnership with outside institutions (List College of the Jewish Theological Seminary, Sciences Po-France, and the City University of Hong Kong).

**GS is home to the largest percentage of first generation students and Pell recipients in the Ivy League.**

Approximately **33% of the GS student body of 1,968 are first generation** students (excluding Joint/Dual Degree Programs).

**17% of first generation students are international students; 11% are permanent residents.**

Approximately **44% of GS student body is low-income** (defined by Pell eligibility).

**18% of GS students are low-income and first generation.**

**GS is home to the largest student veteran population in the Ivy League**

- **24% of the GS student body.**
  
  43% of the veteran students at GS are first generation;
  
  66% of veteran students are low-income;
  
  32% of veterans are first generation and low-income.

**GS is home to the largest percentage of international undergraduate students at Columbia—23%**

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**First Generation Definition:**
Students who are the first generation in their family to attend college and obtain an undergraduate degree.

**Low-Income Definition:**
Any student who is Pell eligible. The majority of Pell Grants are awarded to students from families who make less than $30,000 per year. Some grants are awarded to students from families who make between $30,000-60,000 per year.
Given the unique backgrounds of our students, the GS Dean of Students Office (GS-DOS) takes a holistic approach to academic success, wellness, community engagement, and personal and professional development by eradicating silos between academic advising, academic support programming and student life and community programs—that is, GS-DOS is guided by the principle that all student engagement is either explicitly or implicitly holistic advising and, thus, we foster a culture in which each unit is fully integrated. GS programming that helps students develop and support life skills include:

**The Academic Resource Center (ARC) Jumpstart Series**: preceding new student orientation, the program is designed to help build academic skills in context, so that students can begin studies with a clear understanding of academic expectations. Columbia faculty participates.

**University Studies**: A 10-week, mandatory course for all first-term students with a syllabus that covers: a comprehensive review of the University; active learning and study skills development: mindset and resilience; faculty engagement; time management; stress reduction; academic integrity and community standards; long-term planning strategies; and student wellness. A representative of Counseling & Psychological Services (CPS) contributes to this course.

**Peer tutoring and coaching**: the GS Academic Resource Center is certified by the College Reading and Learning Association and provides traditional one-on-one tutoring (by appointment or walk-in basis), study groups, reading and argument coaching, test taking and study skills, and triage and troubleshooting sessions.

**Graduate and professional school coaching**: multi-session program to develop concrete deliverables such as timelines, personal statements, standardized test prep schedules, and graduate program research.

**GS Speaks**: a program designed to promote students speaking in public more often, more skillfully, and with greater confidence, in a variety of academic and professional settings.

**ARC Resource Library/Toolkit for Success**: The ARC Resource Library is full of short, candid answers to commonly asked questions. As a welcome gift to new students, we provide electronic copies of our full library via a 4GB flash drive distributed at Orientation. Electronic copies are also available via the ARC website, and print copies are available in the Dean of Students Office and the ARC Tutoring Center.

**Peer Advising**: GS Peer Advisors are students trained and employed by GS DOS who wish to provide support and advice about the opportunities and challenges students face at Columbia. Peer advisors are available to discuss academics, campus resources, personal concerns, and the transition to GS.