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**Imposter Syndrome: Navigating as a First-Generation College Student**

Jessica Michelle Hamm

A Capstone Project for the Bachelor of Science in Human Development & Family Science

### **Introduction**

The focal topic of this capstone project is navigating imposter syndrome among first-generation college students. Imposter syndrome is an internal experience in which you believe you are less capable than others judge you to be. It is a mental state in which you doubt your own talents/abilities. In a community jeopardized by an influx of what is called imposter syndrome, there exist students who are high achieving yet fail to recognize their success as being earned or deserved. Imposter syndrome describes an individual who is high achieving yet fails to recognize their success as being earned, but instead attributes it to external factors such as networking, luck, timing, lowering standards, and their charm (Holden, et al., 2021). A focus on imposter syndrome for this demographic is crucial since many students will go to tremendous measures to conceal their imposter syndrome, which can hinder their future achievement. Imposter syndrome can inhibit achievement by causing individuals to go to great efforts to conceal it. This can lead to tiredness and a lack of clarity for academic or professional endeavors. Research has found first-generation college students are also more likely to experience imposter syndrome than other students, and since their families do not have a full understanding of the demands of higher education, they may not benefit from strong family emotional support (Holden, et al., 2021). In academia, students from underrepresented or minority groups are most susceptible to the effects of imposter syndrome, so more research and learning is needed because imposter syndrome can affect us at every level, from graduate school to the professional occupations. I will present an online one-hour workshop titled "All About Imposter Syndrome: First Generation Students", sponsored by TRIO student support services, in which I will address what impostor syndrome is, identify symptoms/indicators, and what imposter syndrome support resources are available. The ultimate purpose of addressing imposter syndrome tactics is to

reduce student symptoms and thereby assist first-generation students in better understanding feelings such as perfectionism, stress, and self-doubt. Finally, understanding about and addressing support systems will assist students in seeking assistance both within and outside of the classroom. All first-generation college students from all socioeconomic backgrounds who are enrolled in the CSUMB college support program (TRIO, EOP, CAMP, etc.) are eligible to attend the workshop.

### **Needs Statement**

The demographic being focused on is first-generation college students who experience imposter syndrome. Students who are first in their family to attend college are known as first-generation college students. Being the first in a family to attend college can cause a lot of worry, anxiety, and pressure, leaving students wondering if they will be able to finish a four-year degree. Imposter syndrome affects many first-generation students, according to psychological studies (Farias et al, 2023). Imposter syndrome creates a cognitive and emotional viewpoint that increases first-generation students' experiences of self-doubt, stress responses, and a lack of confidence in their ability to perform well on academic assignments. The first item to be covered will be what imposter syndrome is; this will assist students to learn more about imposter syndrome as well as possible indicators (stress, perfectionism, etc.). The second topic will cover the signs of imposter syndrome in college students and how to cope with it. The final topic will be about imposter syndrome support services (both on and off campus).

First-generation college students are students whose parents did not earn a degree from a four-year college or university. At CSUMB more than 53% of students are first-generation students (Undergraduate Enrollment, 2023), while 46.5% of college students in California are first-generation (Hamilton, 2023). Students in this group are considered to be at a disadvantage

compared to the next generation of students due to a lack of cultural and social capital that is passed down from generation to generation (Payne, 2023). Compared to other students, first-generation college students face issues such as low college preparation, financial stability, and self-esteem. It can be difficult for first-generation college students to navigate the academic system because it can seem daunting and complicated.

For learning outcome one, I will talk more about imposter syndrome and provide details/examples on what it looks like. For many first-generation students who have worked hard to get to college, impostor syndrome can be a significant barrier to success. These students are more likely to be from low-income homes, to be racial/ethnic minorities, and to rely on grants, scholarships, and loans. Furthermore, first-generation students may suffer academically as a result of working part-time or full-time while in college (Gibbons et al, 2019). The research on overcoming impostor syndrome among first-generation students is significant because it will allow students to relate their experiences with self-doubt, lack of confidence, and the need for additional emotional support. This will allow them to concentrate on shared experiences, success tactics, and, as a result, developing their own support systems. Clance and Imes (1978) first identified imposter syndrome in a study of high-achieving women in academia, which included undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty members, which explains how self-declared intellectual impostors fear that some significant person will eventually discover that they are indeed intellectual impostors (Clance & Imes, 1978). A lack of self-confidence as a result of impostor syndrome creates tension, which students try to ease by striving for perfection and working longer and harder, which can eventually lead to burnout. Imposter syndrome has been proven to be a predictor of mental health issues in college students, including anxiety, sadness, psychological discomfort, and low confidence in their own intelligence (Peteet et al.,

2015). Gender stereotypes, familial expectations, and specific personality qualities are thought to contribute to imposter syndrome. More research is needed to explore the connections between imposter syndrome, perfection, and stress, as well as how they may differ or be comparable across first-generation college students. My capstone workshop is designed to help students understand more about the background to the concept of imposter syndrome and its possible causes.

Imposter syndrome is frequently viewed as an educational obstacle because it can be a vicious loop that actively affects one's advancement in their school or work. Imposter syndrome has been well documented in higher education and has been observed among a wide range of student groups, including non-traditional students, ethnic minority students, and first-generation students. Prior research has proven that stress and perfectionism are potential causes of imposter syndrome, and that imposter syndrome is more common in people who are the first in their family to outperform norms (Holden et al., 2021). Such things may contribute to depression and low self-esteem. Imposter syndrome was explicitly explored as a potential predictor of first-generation status, psychological well-being, and ethnic identity. The results revealed that low psychological well-being and low ethnic identity are predictors of Imposter syndrome (Peteet et al., 2015). Imposter syndrome has the potential to drain students' confidence and negatively impair student well-being, as well as make you feel unworthy or ashamed of acknowledgment for your success.

In learning outcome two, I'll go into further detail on stress, perfectionism, and self-doubt as imposter syndrome signs and indicators. Imposter syndrome is characterized by stress, a sense of perfectionism, and low self-esteem. Several studies, including Bradbury and Mather (2009) and Stephens, Fryberg, Markus, Johnson, and Covarrubius (2012), highlight the need for

additional research on effective practices for college adjustment or how first-generation students adjust to these issues. Understanding what imposter syndrome is and how it affects first-generation students is critical in my capstone project because facing imposter syndrome will help students continue to grow and prosper. One of the most important sources of reassurance when dealing with imposter syndrome is understanding how many other students are going through the same thing. College can be demanding and fast-paced, making it easy to get alienated from one's own needs. Imposter syndrome symptoms can influence how we think, feel, and act. Lack of information is a big hurdle for first-generation students. More frequently than not, first-generation students are unable to acquire concrete information about college from their parents, which they regard as a barrier to attending and finishing college. Other research (Bui, 2002; Collier & Morgan, 2007) emphasizes this lack of information for first-generation students, which has an impact on their entire college planning process and continues after they reach college. Accessing information about college may help reduce symptoms of imposter syndrome. This might resemble a pre-college instructional document to help you prepare/learn more about college, similar to a "things I wish I had known" list. This would enable students to learn more about campus resources, how to manage their academics, and much more. My capstone workshop aims to help students successfully articulate their points of view and personal experiences so that they are better prepared to deal with imposter syndrome.

In learning outcome three, I will share information about on campus and off campus resources that are helpful for navigating imposter syndrome. Students' success may be improved by aiding first-generation college students in overcoming perceived barriers, getting access to resources, and managing ambiguity between the two as they prepare for and complete their education. The majority of first-generation college student research focuses on current college

students and their academic success. Mentors who are helpful and supportive, for example, appear to boost college achievement (Gibbons et al., 2019). My capstone's goal is to assist students in seeking helpful, encouraging supervision in order to challenge common but erroneous thinking. Career counseling and other student support programs may raise students' awareness of the personal change process by having them identify minor shifts in their identity or major transitions in their lives that may have affected them in the past (Gibbons et al., 2019). By seeking peer mentorship, students can be reminded of their own growth and the information they have to contribute. Finally, this effort seeks to acknowledge that no one is perfect. We must do well enough and enjoy all successes, no matter how modest.

Resources that assist students experiencing imposter syndrome can be extremely useful. Student support programs may help by providing more information about campus support services and understanding college culture, as advocated by Collier and Morgan (2007), as well as encouraging students to develop personal support networks outside of family relationships and finances. I will present two on-campus resources: Student Affairs and Enrollment Services and the Center for Student Success. Student Affairs includes a variety of departments, activities, and services that make CSUMB stand out. This is beneficial because of the emphasis on academic performance, health and wellbeing, student leadership, civic involvement, accessible and high-quality student support services, and personal growth and development for students. The Center for Advising, Career, and Student Success would be beneficial to students because it provides equitable, culturally appropriate academic, career, and student success advising to assist CSUMB undergraduates in meeting their educational objectives and preparing for success beyond graduation. Receiving proper mentoring, seeking the help of experts, and embarking on appropriate psychotherapies may be worthy avenues to pursue in this prevalent syndrome



(Chrousos, et al., 2020). In terms of off-campus resources, I will discuss options such as talking with friends and family, as well as 24/7 support services. Individuals experiencing impostor syndrome often perceive themselves to be the “only one” having these feelings, resulting in even greater isolation (Bravata, et al., 2020). Additionally, I will provide students with links to websites that help them learn more about impostor syndrome. My capstone workshop is designed to provide first-generation college students with both on campus and outside services to help them relieve feelings of impostor syndrome.

First-generation college students face many issues as they enter college, including lack of self-esteem, college adjustment, and family support. As a result, first-generation students may be more vulnerable to impostor syndrome because they lack support when faced with problems or triumphs, leading to doubts about their ability. Furthermore, they may be concerned that their colleagues would perceive them as fraudulent. Consequently, I will present an online one-hour class titled "All About Imposter Syndrome: First Generation Students" sponsored by the TRIO student support services program at CSUMB in Seaside, California.

### **Theory**

During the college years (approximately ages 18 to 25), students must complete a series of developmental activities as they separate from their families and construct their own identities and lives. This period is known as emerging adulthood. Arnett's theory about emerging adulthood examines development from the late teen years to the twenties, with a concentration on the ages 18 to 25. According to Arnett, it is a fixed discovery and transformation known as "identity formation." Identity formation requires the exploration of many life options and the gradual progression to selecting and implementing decisions (Arnett, 2000). Erik Erickson

(1950, 1968) explains that industrialized societies offer for a longer period of adolescence in which to explore one's individuality. If adolescence is defined as the period between the ages of 10 and 18, and emerging adulthood as the period between the ages of 18 and 25, the majority of identity discovery occurs in emerging adulthood rather than adolescence. During emerging adulthood, many young people receive the level of education and training that will serve as the foundation for their earnings and occupational achievements for the rest of their adult lives (Arnett, 2000).

Arnett's theory of emerging adulthood is relevant to my capstone project because college students frequently began to develop the characteristics required for self-sufficiency, adult roles and responsibilities, and obtaining a level of education and training that establishes the groundwork for work in the adult years. Furthermore, college students experiencing imposter syndrome are frequently more willing to test out new possibilities because they are concerned about how their personal identity, skills, and experiences do not always match up with how others perceive them. Students experiment with many options that will prepare them for different types of future work as they progress through their education. College students often change majors multiple times, especially during the first two years, as they experiment with potential career paths and then abandon them and pursue other paths (Arnett, 2000). Imposter syndrome can have a long-term impact on a student's perception of themselves, hindering academic aspirations and progress. As a result, my workshop will cover what impostor syndrome is, potential indications of imposter syndrome, and resources for further support.

### **Consideration of Diversity**

My capstones project involved students from CSUMB's College support programs. College Support Programs (CSP) offers academic support services to underrepresented

undergraduate students who want to stay in college and graduate. I'll be hosting a one-day, one-hour online workshop for first-generation college students called "All About Imposter Syndrome: First Generation Students". CSUMB's enrollment fast facts (headcounts) for the fall semester 2023 show that the university is 46% Latino, 29% white, 9% Asian American, 8% Two or More Races, 3% African American, 1% Native American, and 1% Pacific Islander. Additionally, 61% of students are female, 39% are male, and less than 1% are nonbinary. Underrepresented groups include 19% adult students, 48% first-generation, 50% underrepresented minorities (URM), and 29% low-income. My target audience is diverse in terms of cultural background and other characteristics (for example, a range of gender identities, ethnicities, educational levels, and social classes). For my participants, I expect all students to be first-generation and enrolled in a college support program. Additionally, I expect all students to be hispanic given CSUMB is a hispanic serving institute (HSI). The typical age range for CSUMB is 18-21, I expect some students to be in that age range, however, I also expect students to not be in that age range given my focus is on students from college support programs. Participants in the workshop that I'll be hosting are expected to be fluent enough in English to understand the material offered; thus, those who don't speak English may be excluded. The workshop materials promote multicultural awareness and inclusiveness because the resources and information may be accessed and implemented by any and all students interested in learning more about imposter syndrome. Furthermore, the resources of TRIO SSS, Student Affairs and Enrollment Services, and the Center for Student Success help students from diverse backgrounds, allowing for further support.

### **Learning Outcomes**

I designed a one-hour workshop to teach CSUMB first-generation college students about impostor syndrome, identify symptoms/indicators, and what impostor syndrome support services are available. The workshop had three learning outcomes.

1. First-generation college students will be able to identify what impostor syndrome is.
2. First-generation college students will be able to identify 3 signs (or indicators) associated with impostor syndrome.
3. First-generation college students will be able to identify 3 on and off campus resources to help them with feelings of impostor syndrome.

### **Method**

#### **Location and Participants**

This capstone project on navigating impostor syndrome among first-generation college students was conducted at California State University, Monterey Bay in Seaside, California. The location was a hybrid, in the Business Building (bldg 12), room 224 and the workshop lasted an hour (12pm-1pm). There were a total of 12 first-generation students who attended the workshop. The participants were recruited using a Google form that allowed them to RSVP for the session and confirm their attendance either online or in person. All of the participants in this workshop were first-generation college students. Of the participants, 92% identified as Hispanic/Latino (n = 11), while 8.3% identified as White (n = 1). Among the 12 respondents, 100% identified as female (n=12), and 0% as male (n=0).

#### **Procedures And Materials**

Using Google Slides, I began my workshop by welcoming all the in-person and zoom students who joined me for my workshop today. I then began by introducing myself (name and background), future educational goals, and my personal connection to this workshop and imposter syndrome. I then shared some background information on my workshop and how it relates to my capstone project. After my introduction, I then began diving into lesson one or learning outcome 1. I began discussing what imposter syndrome is, what it can look like, and the impacts it has. I then asked students to raise their hands if they have experienced imposter, for which, everyone (in-person or zoom) has raised their hands. After learning more about what imposter syndrome is, I began to move forward with lesson two which consisted of signs/indicators of imposter syndrome.

In the second lesson, or learning outcome two, I taught students more about the indications and symptoms of imposter syndrome. The signs and indicators I showed students included stress, self-doubt, and perfectionism. In addition, I also showed students the following causes for each sign/indicator: stress can lead to trouble sleeping, muscle tensions, fatigue, and headaches/dizziness, self-doubt can lead to low self esteem, lack of motivation, insecurity, lack of self-worth, poor school or social performance, and perfectionism can lead to low-mood, anxiety, burnout, and decreased productivity.

In the third lesson, or learning outcome three, I taught students about on- and off-campus resources for overcoming and navigating imposter syndrome. During this lesson, I talked more about what each on-campus resource has to offer while also receiving more assistance with off-campus options. On-campus resources included the CSUMB Center for Student Success, Transfer Student Success Center, CSUMB Student Affairs and Enrollment Services, El Centro, and CSUMB college support programs. Off-campus options included the 988 Suicide and Crisis

Lifeline, useful imposter syndrome websites, talking with friends and family, and practicing self-care (journaling, going outside, etc.). Each Google slide containing a resource had a QR code that allowed students to quickly access the resource's webpage, which included contact information, additional information, and so on. In addition, I prepared and printed handouts (see appendix A) for each student that included all of the materials indicated in my workshop for them to take home and save for future use.

After students learned more about imposter syndrome, signs/indicators, and off-campus and on-campus resources, I presented a reminder slide with positive affirmations and reminders for dealing with imposter syndrome, as well as a quote slide about overcoming obstacles. Finally, students were given a post-google form assessment. This Google form includes a confirmation of workshop attendance, as well as questions about imposter syndrome, signs/indicators, and the resources supplied. I took some time to address any questions the students had before calling my workshop to an end.

### **Results**

Learning outcome 1 was that first-generation college students will be able to identify what imposter syndrome is. The assessment method was a post Google form that could only be accessed through the presentation. The post form included 12 questions about demographics, impostor syndrome learning outcome assessments, consent to share answers for my study, and questions/comments/concerns. Students were able to access the post-workshop Google form immediately and had until the end of the day to complete it. The question for learning outcome 1 was, "What is imposter syndrome?" and consisted of a brief paragraph text that allowed students to type out their answers. The assessment had a maximum of 12 points and a score resulting in lower than 90% would indicate the learning outcome was not not fully met. I went over all of the

students' responses on the Google Form. Based on the presentation, all 12 students were able to type up an answer to what imposter syndrome is. hence this learning outcome was fully met. See table 1 for the students' responses.

Learning outcome 2 was that First-generation college students will be able to identify signs (or indicators) associated with imposter syndrome. The assessment question for learning outcome 2 was: "What are 3 signs/indicators of imposter syndrome?" It also included a small paragraph text that allowed pupils to type out their responses. Students were asked to offer a response based on either the slides (students had access to the slides whilst doing the assessment) or the facts I discussed during the workshop. I reviewed all of the students' responses on the Google Form. All 12 students were able to type a solution to the question about what signs (or indicators) are related to imposter syndrome, resulting in a 100% pass rate. Every student passed learning outcome 2, indicating that this learning outcome was fully met. See table 2 for their responses.

The final learning outcome was that first-generation college students will be able to identify on and off campus resources to help them with feelings of imposter syndrome. For learning outcome 3, the assessment questions included "Name 3 on-campus resources you feel would be most helpful for you" and "Name 3 off-campus resources you feel would be most helpful for you" These questions allowed students to demonstrate their understanding of the on-campus and off-campus resources discussed in my presentation, as well as determine which one would be most useful to them personally. These questions included a small paragraph text that allowed students to type out their responses. After examining the student responses regarding on-campus resources, 11 out of 12 (91.6%) were able to provide 3 or more resources. One student provided an off-campus resource for the on-campus, resulting in an inability to pass

learning outcome 3 since they did not specifically provide an on-campus CSUMB resource. After reviewing the student responses to off-campus resources, 12 of the 12 students listed were able to provide an off-campus resource, resulting in a 100% pass rate. Each student had responded to the question about off-campus resources linked to my presentation, as well as which one would be most valuable to them. Over 90% of students passed the third learning outcome, indicating that it was fully met. See table 3 for their responses.

### **Discussion**

The focus of this capstone project is navigating imposter syndrome among first-generation college students. I believe that the provided materials are what made this project effective. Many students showed interest in the on- and off-campus resources and asked follow-up questions about specific services. Additionally, there was a question titled "What is your personal experience with imposter syndrome?" in the post-assessment Google Form that encouraged students to think more deeply and make a connection to the presentation (see appendix D). Students were able to write in a secure environment and discuss how they are coping with imposter syndrome in response to this matter. For this project, all three learning objectives were fully met and I believed I was successful in raising awareness and providing guidance and techniques for dealing with imposter syndrome. In order to demonstrate this, the replies from students to the post-Google form were reviewed in order to determine which resources—both on and off campus—will be most beneficial. Additionally, their understanding of the signs and indicators of impostor syndrome was evaluated. This was also demonstrated when I made, printed, and gave each student a handout that contained all of the materials marked with QR codes from my workshop. This made all the materials available to the students at all



times. In response to numerous requests from students, I was also able to share the slides (see appendix B), giving them access to the tools and content so they could use them themselves or share them with others. An additional factor contributing to the success of this project was a student's conversation with me following my presentation, which allowed us to further discuss resources and imposter syndrome in general. Ultimately, the success of this project may be attributed to the community that it fostered.

As I reflect on my project, there are a few limitations and challenges my workshop encountered. To begin, my first limitation was how my workshop was offered in just one day. This could have been a limitation because potential students who wanted to attend may have had scheduling constraints. I also presented a lot of material in one day, so having my workshop on different days would have helped students comprehend imposter syndrome better. For instance, I could have presented three lessons on three different days. A second limitation was the way I discussed imposter syndrome. To enhance better student understanding, I may have added graphs or images indicating low and high levels of imposter syndrome. A student suggested, after my workshop, that I include the various stages of imposter syndrome (mild, severe, etc.) to help other students understand how they can vary from one another. Next, I would have liked to include more hands-on activities for the students, such as exercises or possibly breakout rooms, to encourage learning. It might have encouraged peer interaction and given students a chance to engage with other students going with imposter syndrome to include breakout rooms or activities. Activities in the breakout rooms might have also enabled us to convene as a group to debate the topics covered there, thus promoting stronger relationships amongst peers. Finally, I would have added a pre-google test to measure students' understanding of imposter syndrome prior to the workshop. I could have more accurately assessed students' comprehension of

imposter syndromes, signs and indications, and on/off resources before and after my workshop if I had created a pre-Google test. As for a challenge, as previously stated, my workshop was held for one day, thus resulting in a lot of information being thrown at students. As a result, I was unable to cover as much ground as I would have liked to, including Arnett's idea of emerging adulthood, particular instances of imposter syndrome in particular contexts, imposter syndrome in the workplace, etc.

As for future directions, In order to provide this research on imposter syndrome to students from all educational levels, my future objectives include broadening and expanding it. This workshop did not address non-first-generation students who might also be dealing with imposter syndrome because it was restricted to first-generation students alone. In terms of future directions, I would like to make an imposter syndrome dedicated to all students. I would have also liked to incorporate my theory on Arnett's theory about emerging adulthood for students to learn about, as well as relate it to my imposter syndrome material. As impostor syndrome can manifest in relation to events, employment, education, and other aspects of life, I aim to conduct further research on its effects and offer strategies for overcoming them. I hope that no student will have to struggle alone to overcome imposter syndrome because my materials were made available to students and CSUMB support services. Instead, I hope that students will have access to all the tools and resources they need to succeed academically.

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**Table #1:****Learning outcome #1**

"What is imposter syndrome?"

Participant #1	Feel like you don't belong to a certain group
Participant #2	Imposter syndrome is when you don't feel worthy or deserving of the position you are in
Participant #3	Like feeling you don't belong there
Participant #4	Imposter syndrome is the feeling of not having the sufficient skills to overcome the obstacles in life.
Participant #5	The inability to see and accept your own success
Participant #6	The feeling of doubt and anxiety that you will not do well although you have everything to do to succeed.
Participant #7	The inability to believe that one's success is deserved or achieved as a result of one's own effort or skills.
Participant #8	Imposter syndrome is the feeling of poor confidence that a person has when she/he is reaching higher goals.
Participant #9	Feeling you don't belong or believe in yourself to where you're at in life when it comes to you career or life goals. Especially feeling more of that pressure as a first generation with higher expectations.
Participant #10	The feeling of being anxious and not experiencing success internally. This is happening all while presenting high performance in external ways.
Participant #11	Imposter syndrome is a feeling people feel out of place and a mental state in which you doubt your abilities.
Participant #12	A state in mind that makes you believe that

	you are less capable of achieving something or doubting your own abilities.
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**Table #2****Learning outcome #2**

“What are some signs/indicators of imposter syndrome?”

Participant #1	Stress, anxiety
Participant #2	Feeling anxious, depressed and worthless
Participant #3	Anxious
Participant #4	Self doubt, stress, and procrastination.
Participant #5	Fear of failure, low self-esteem
Participant #6	Doubting yourself, stress, muscle fatigue
Participant #7	Perfectionism, low self-esteem/ lack of confidence, anxiety
Participant #8	Signs are anxiety, stress, poor self-confidence.
Participant #9	Overstressed, more self doubt, and overthinking.
Participant #10	Fear of failure, depression, and fear of success
Participant #11	Stress leads to trouble sleeping, and fatigue. Self-Doubt, and Perfectionism.
Participant #12	Stress, low self esteem, lack of motivation, and perfectionism

**Table #3****Learning outcome #3**

“What on-campus resource(s) do you feel would be most helpful for you?”

Participant #1	Trio, el centro
Participant #2	EOP has been very helpful to me in dealing with my imposter syndrome
Participant #3	The activities to help reduce anxiety
Participant #4	I think the resources that most help is college support programs
Participant #5	The transfer student success center as I am pretty comfortable with that center already
Participant #6	Csumb college support success CSUMB center for student success
Participant #7	Transfer Success Students center due to the fact that most transfer students do feel this or experience this at some point.
Participant #8	Being part of the EOP helps me to be connected with the school community.
Participant #9	El Center and College Support Programs.
Participant #10	All of them seemed very helpful, especially the transfer student success center.
Participant #11	Center for Student Success and CSUMB Student Affairs and Enrollment Services and El Centro.
Participant #12	The College Support Programs would be the most helpful for me, along with Student Success.



**Learning outcome #3**

“What off-campus resource(s) do you feel would be most helpful for you?”

Participant #1	988 phone line
Participant #2	Hiking and meditation help me
Participant #3	I feel that having somewhere to call is really beneficial because it would be easily accessible for me.
Participant #4	I think the resource off campus would be psychology today.
Participant #5	Calling in the 988 hotline
Participant #6	Psychology today and Molly Ho studio
Participant #7	I loved the Molly Ho Studio website because it was specific and more relatable than the others, in my opinion.
Participant #8	I think that the outside resources for me are my family and outdoor activities such hiking, riding my bike or spending some time on the beach.
Participant #9	Going to the gym more, being active outdoors more, writing a journal, and connecting with the Bible more with God.
Participant #10	Psychology today seemed the most helpful.
Participant #11	988 Lifeline and maybe Meditation/Yoga
Participant #12	Spending time in nature, doing yoga, and doing things that make me happy might be the most helpful things to do for me.


Appendix


Appendix A:

*Workshop Slides*

All About Imposter Syndrome:  
**First Generation Students**

By: Jessica Hamm  
TRIO SSS Student



 Table of **contents**

<b>01</b>	What Is Imposter Syndrome?	<b>02</b>	Signs & Indicators of Imposter Syndrome
<b>03</b>	Resources for Imposter Syndrome	<b>04</b>	Conclusion + Google Form

**01**

## Imposter Syndrome


What is imposter syndrome?

### Understanding **Imposter Syndrome**

- Imposter syndrome is an internal experience in which you believe you are less capable than others judge you to be.
- It is a mental state in which you doubt your own talents/abilities.
- Imposter syndrome creates a cognitive and emotional viewpoint that increases first-generation students' experiences of self-doubt, stress responses, and a lack of confidence in their ability to perform well on academic assignments.

(NASPA, 2023)





**02**

# Imposter Syndrome

Signs and Indicators

## What Are Some **Signs & Indicators**?

 <p><b>Stress</b></p> <p>Stress can lead to trouble sleeping, muscle tensions, fatigue, and headaches/dizziness.</p>	 <p><b>Self-Doubt</b></p> <p>Self-Doubt can lead to low self esteem, lack of motivation, insecurity, lack of self-worth, and poor school or social performance.</p>	 <p><b>Perfectionism</b></p> <p>Perfectionism can lead to low-mood, anxiety, burnout, and decreased productivity.</p>
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# 03

## Imposter Syndrome

On- Campus Resources

## CSUMB College Support Programs

College Support Programs offers academic support services to underrepresented undergraduate students who want to stay in college and graduate.

CSP programs:

- College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP)
- Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)
- Guardian Scholars (GS)
- TRIO Student Support Services (SSS)
- TRIO Student Support Services STEM-HS
- Undocu-Success



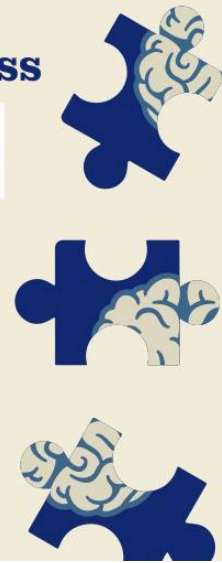
## CSUMB Center for **Student Success**



The Center for Student Success works with all undergraduate students, regardless of their academic standing.

Services include:

- Time management
- Student success workshops and advising
- Getting connected to resources
- Reducing test anxiety and stress
- Improving note-taking and study strategies
- Goal setting



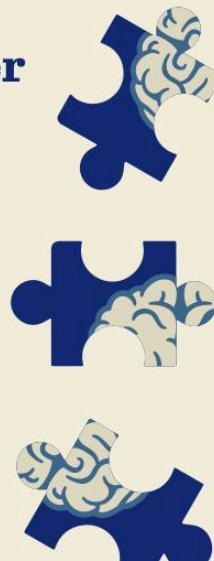
## **Transfer Student Success Center**



The Transfer Student Success Center helps students navigate the academic and cultural landscape of CSUMB. In conjunction with campus partners, the TSSC connects students with success services to help them succeed academically, professionally, and personally.

Services include:

- Identify challenges
- Set goals
- Navigate CSUMB systems
- Make connections
- Develop strategies for academic success
- And more!



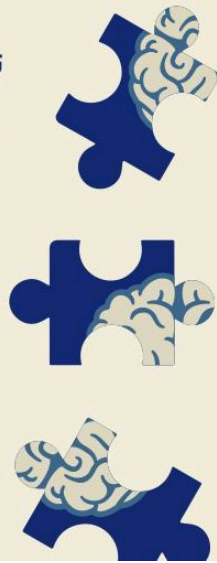
## CSUMB **Student Affairs and Enrollment Services**



Student Affairs and Enrollment Services prioritize academic performance, health and wellbeing, student leadership, civic involvement, convenient and high-quality student support, and personal growth and development.

Services include:

- Resources
- Programs/departments
- And more!



## **El Centro**



CSUMB's El Centro is as a primary hub and resource for Chicana/Latina student success, providing academic, social, and personal support in a welcoming environment that allows students to pursue their educational and personal goals.

Services include:

- Multicultural Programming and Wellness
- Diversity, Advocacy, and Outreach
- Academic Programs and Support Services
- Professional/Leadership Development and Mentorship
- Research, Career Services, and Graduate Studies






# 04

## Imposter Syndrome



Off- Campus Resources



### Off-Campus Resources: **Talking With Others**

Individuals experiencing impostor syndrome often perceive themselves to be the “only one” having these feelings, resulting in even greater isolation (Bravata, et a.l, 2020)

- **Talking with friends & family**
- **988 Lifeline**





## Off-Campus Resources: **Self-Care**

Self-care is essential for overcoming feelings of imposter syndrome. Here is a list of self-care activities that can be beneficial!

- **Journaling**
- **Practice positive self-talk**
- **Spend time in nature**
- **Meditation/yoga**
- **Doing things that make you happy!**



## Off-Campus Resources: **Imposter Syndrome Websites**

Having more resources can be useful! Here are some helpful links for more information on overcoming **imposter syndrome!**



- [Psychology Today - Imposter Syndrome](#)



- [McLean Hospital - Imposter Syndrome](#)



- [American Psychological Association - Imposter Syndrome](#)



- [Molly Ho Studio - Imposter Syndrome](#)



## Reminders

Don't try to overanalyze the situation.

Don't take yourself out of the game before you even have a chance to go into it.

*You are more ready than you realize.*

Don't let your doubt of "What if I can't do it?" hold you back.

– Molly Ho



## Conclusion

“Believe in yourself and all that you are. Know that there is something inside you that is greater than any obstacle.”

– **Christian D. Larson**



## Post Google **Form**



<https://tinyurl.com/JHammPF>

The slide features a light beige background with a large, faint puzzle piece graphic in the top left corner. A smaller puzzle piece with a brain illustration is positioned in the bottom left corner. The text 'Post Google Form' is centered at the top in a dark blue serif font. Below it is a square QR code with a blue and white pixelated pattern. At the bottom center, the URL 'https://tinyurl.com/JHammPF' is displayed in a dark blue sans-serif font.

# Thanks!

Do you have any questions?  
jhamm@csumb.edu

**TRIO**

- Klane@csumb.edu
- Deljimenez@csumb.edu
- AWesterlund@csumb.edu
- Npolat@csumb.edu

**Credits:** presentation slides by SlidesGo

The slide has a light beige background with several puzzle pieces scattered on the left side. Some puzzle pieces are solid blue, while others are white with a blue brain illustration. The text 'Thanks!' is written in a large, dark blue serif font. Below it, the text 'Do you have any questions?' and the email address 'jhamm@csumb.edu' are in a smaller, dark blue sans-serif font. The word 'TRIO' is in a bold, dark blue sans-serif font. Below 'TRIO' is a bulleted list of four email addresses in a dark blue sans-serif font. At the bottom left, the text 'Credits: presentation slides by SlidesGo' is in a small, dark blue sans-serif font.






**Appendix B:**

*Resource Handout*





**All About  
Imposter Syndrome:  
First Generation  
Students**


- Resource Handout -

**On-Campus:**

- **CSUMB College Support Programs** 
- **CSUMB Center for Student Success** 
- **Transfer Student Success Center** 
- **Student Affairs and Enrollment Services** 
- **El Centro** 

**Off-Campus:  
Imposter Syndrome Websites**

- **Psychology Today** 
- **American Psychological Association** 
- **Molly Ho Studio** 
- **McLean Hospital** 

**Appendix C:***Capstone Festival Slides*

# Imposter Syndrome: Navigating as a First-Generation Student

A Capstone Project for the Bachelor of Science in Human  
Development & Family Science

JESSICA MICHELLE HAMM

## Introduction

- **Imposter syndrome:** internal experience in which you believe you are less capable than others judge you to be.
- **Why was this topic my focus?**
  - As a first generation student I want to help others and spread awareness on the impacts of imposter syndrome.
- **Personal connection:**
  - Being first-generation and struggling with imposter syndrome throughout my college journey.



## Needs Statement

**Demographics:**


- ❖ First-Generation college students who experience imposter syndrome
- ❖ First-Generation college students who take part in college support programs

**Problem:**

- ❖ Many students will go to tremendous measures to conceal their imposter syndrome, which can hinder their future achievements

**Need:**

- ❖ The ultimate purpose of addressing imposter syndrome is to reduce student symptoms and thereby assist first-generation students in better understanding feelings such as perfectionism, stress, and self-doubt.




## Needs Statement Cont.

Being the first in a family to attend college can cause a lot of **worry, anxiety, and pressure**, leaving students wondering if they will be able to finish a four-year degree. (Farias et al, 2023).

CSUMB has more than **53%** first-generation students (Undergraduate Enrollment, 2023).


Imposter syndrome has been proven to be a predictor of **mental health issues** in college students as well as **low confidence** in their **own** intelligence (Peteet et al., 2015).



## Theory

Arnett's theory about **Emerging Adulthood**:

- During the college years (**approximately ages 18 to 25**), students must complete a series of developmental activities as they separate from their families and construct their own identities and lives.
- According to Arnett, it is a fixed discovery and transformation known as "identity formation."
  - ◆ **Identity formation** requires the exploration of many life options and the gradual progression to selecting and implementing decisions (Arnett, 2000).
- **How does this relate to my project?** students receive the level of education and training that will serve as the **foundation** for their earnings and occupational **achievements** for the rest of their **adult lives** (Arnett, 2000).



Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, PhD

## Project Learning Outcomes

- 1 First-generation college students will be able to identify what imposter syndrome is.
- 2 First-generation college students will be able to identify 3 signs (or indicators) associated with imposter syndrome.
- 3 First-generation college students will be able to identify 3 on and off campus resources to help them with feelings of imposter syndrome.

## Method (Location & Participants)

"All About Imposter Syndrome: First Generation Students"

**Location:**

- ❖ California State University, Monterey Bay in Seaside, California.
- ❖ The location was hybrid
  - > BIT (bldg 12), room 224
  - > Zoom
- ❖ The workshop lasted an hour (12pm-1pm) and was completed in just one day.

**Participants:**

- **100%** were first-generation students (n=12)
- **92%** identified as Hispanic/Latino (n = 11)
- **9%** identified as White (n = 1)
- **100%** identified as female (n=12), and **0%** as male (n=0)

**Consideration of Diversity:**

- CSUMB enrollment fast facts (headcounts) for the fall semester 2023 shows that the university is **46% Latino**.
- Underrepresented groups include **19% adult students, 50% underrepresented minorities (URM), and 29% low-income.**

## Method (Procedures & Materials)

"All About Imposter Syndrome: First Generation Students"

**1st Section:**

- ❖ What is imposter syndrome?
- ❖ Asked students to raise hand if they have experienced imposter syndrome

**2nd Section:**

- ❖ Signs/indicators of imposter syndrome: **stress, perfectionism, self-doubt**
- ❖ Provided information on what stress, perfectionism, and self about can lead to.

**3rd Section:**

- ❖ **CSUMB on-campus resources:**
  - > TRIO
  - > TSSC
  - > El Centro
- ❖ **Off campus informational resources:**
  - > Websites
  - > Talking with others
  - > Self-care



## Assessment Results for LO 1

“First-generation college students will be able to identify what imposter syndrome is”

What is imposter syndrome? \*

Long answer text

### **Results:**

- 12 out of the 12 students listed were able to provide an answer to what imposter syndrome is, resulting in a **100% pass rate**.
- All students passed learning outcome 1, hence this learning outcome was **fully met**.

## Assessment Results for LO 2

“First-generation college students will be able to identify signs (or indicators) associated with imposter syndrome”

What are some signs/indicators of imposter syndrome? \*

Long answer text

### **Results:**

- 12 out of the 12 students were able to provide an answer to the question about what signs (or indicators) are related with imposter syndrome, resulting in a **100% pass rate**.
- Every student passed learning outcome 2, indicating that this learning outcome was **fully met**.

## Assessment Results for LO 3

“First-generation college students will be able to identify on and off campus resources to help them with feelings of imposter syndrome”

What on-campus resource(s) do you feel would be most helpful for you? \*

Long answer text

What off-campus resource(s) do you feel would be most helpful for you? \*

Long answer text

**Results:**

- **student responses regarding on-campus resources:** 11 out of 12 (92%) were able to provide an answer.
- **student responses to off-campus resources:** 12 of the 12 students listed were able to provide an off-campus resource, resulting in a **100% pass rate**.
- Over 90% of students passed the third learning outcome, indicating that it was **fully met**.

## Discussion

### (Success, Challenges & Limitations)

"All About Imposter Syndrome: First Generation Students"

**Successes:**

- ❖ Materials Provided
- ❖ Student Interest/connection
- ❖ LO 1, 2, 3 were fully met

**Challenges:**

- ❖ One-day workshop

**Limitations:**

- ❖ Discussing imposter syndrome
- ❖ Activities/breakout rooms
- ❖ Pre-Google test

## Discussion (Changes & Future Directions)

### **Broaden and expand Imposter Syndrome Research**

- Made available to all CSUMB students
- Host workshop on various days
- **Imposter syndrome in relation to events such as:** employment, experiences, and other aspects of life

## Student Experience of Imposter Syndrome

*“Being a first generation college student I experience imposter syndrome feeling like I can’t achieve my academic goals”*



**Appendix D:**

*Imposter Syndrome Personal Experience Question*

What's your personal experience with imposter syndrome?

Long answer text

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