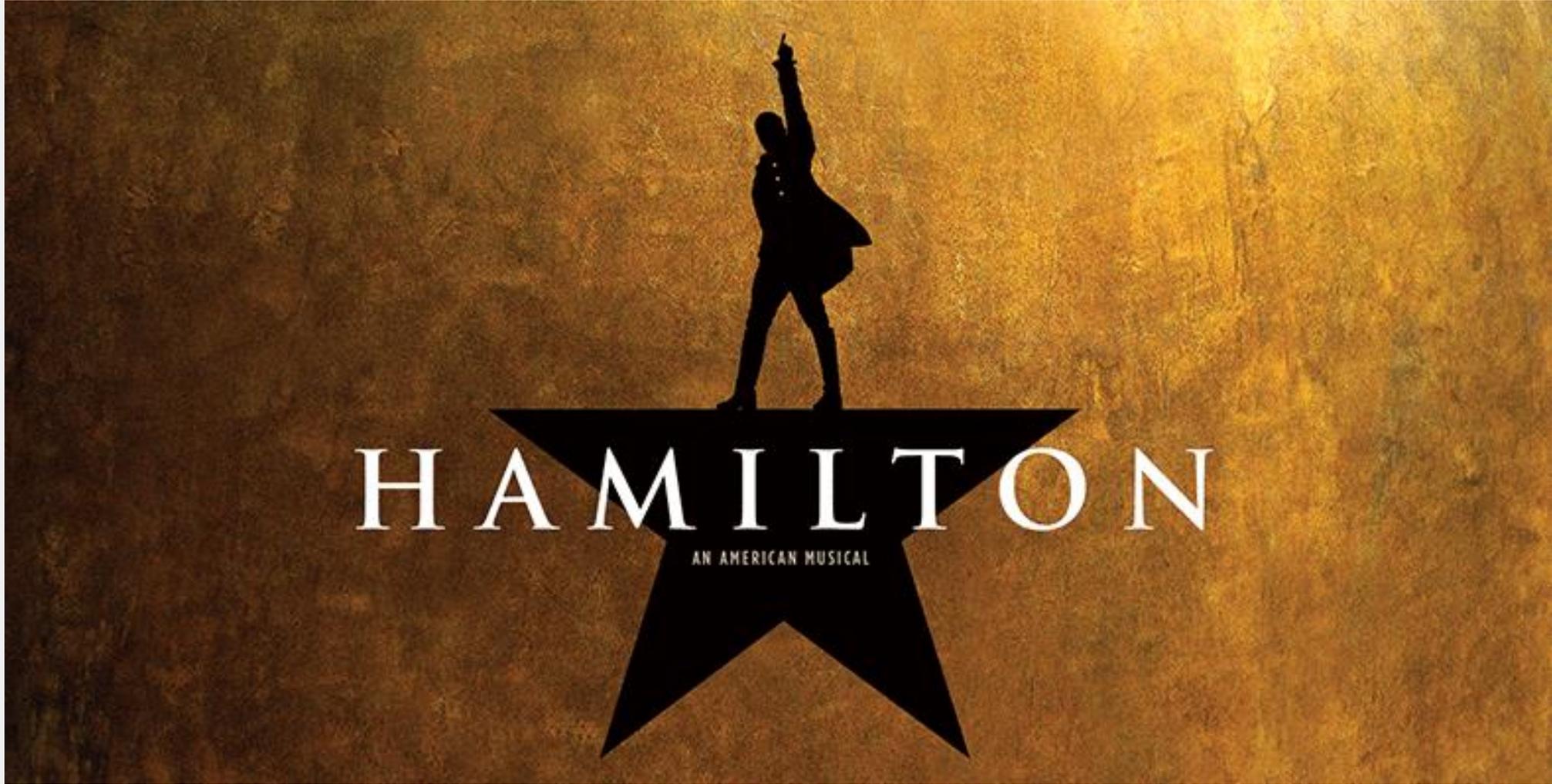


RISE UP!

**Viewing the Low-Income, First-Generation Student Experience
Through the Lens of “Hamilton: An American Musical”**

Overview

- First-generation and low-income defined
- Cultural Capital
- Cultural Mismatch
- Imposter Syndrome
- Othering
- Educationism
- What can we do?



HAMILTON

AN AMERICAN MUSICAL

“My name is Alexander Hamilton”

- Born in the West Indies
- Parents were very poor, uneducated
- Orphaned at a young age
- Self-educated
- Trained as a tradesman
- No “family name”

Arrogant

Scoundrel

Impoverished

Orphan

Bastard

Squalor

Immigrant

Poor

Penniless

Attitude

Who tells your story?

(Discussion)

“Fly above my station”

First-generation students (FGS)

- Parents do not have any postsecondary education experience (34 percent)
- Parents have not obtained a bachelor’s degree (28 percent)
 - Disagreement on definition and statistics
 - Understood that roughly one-third of students are first-generation

(National Center for Education Statistics, 2017)

“A legacy to protect”

Continuing-generation students (CGS)

- At least one parent has postsecondary experience/bachelor's degree
- Role models, guidance, support
- More likely to engage in extracurricular activities, graduate on time
- Represented by Aaron Burr

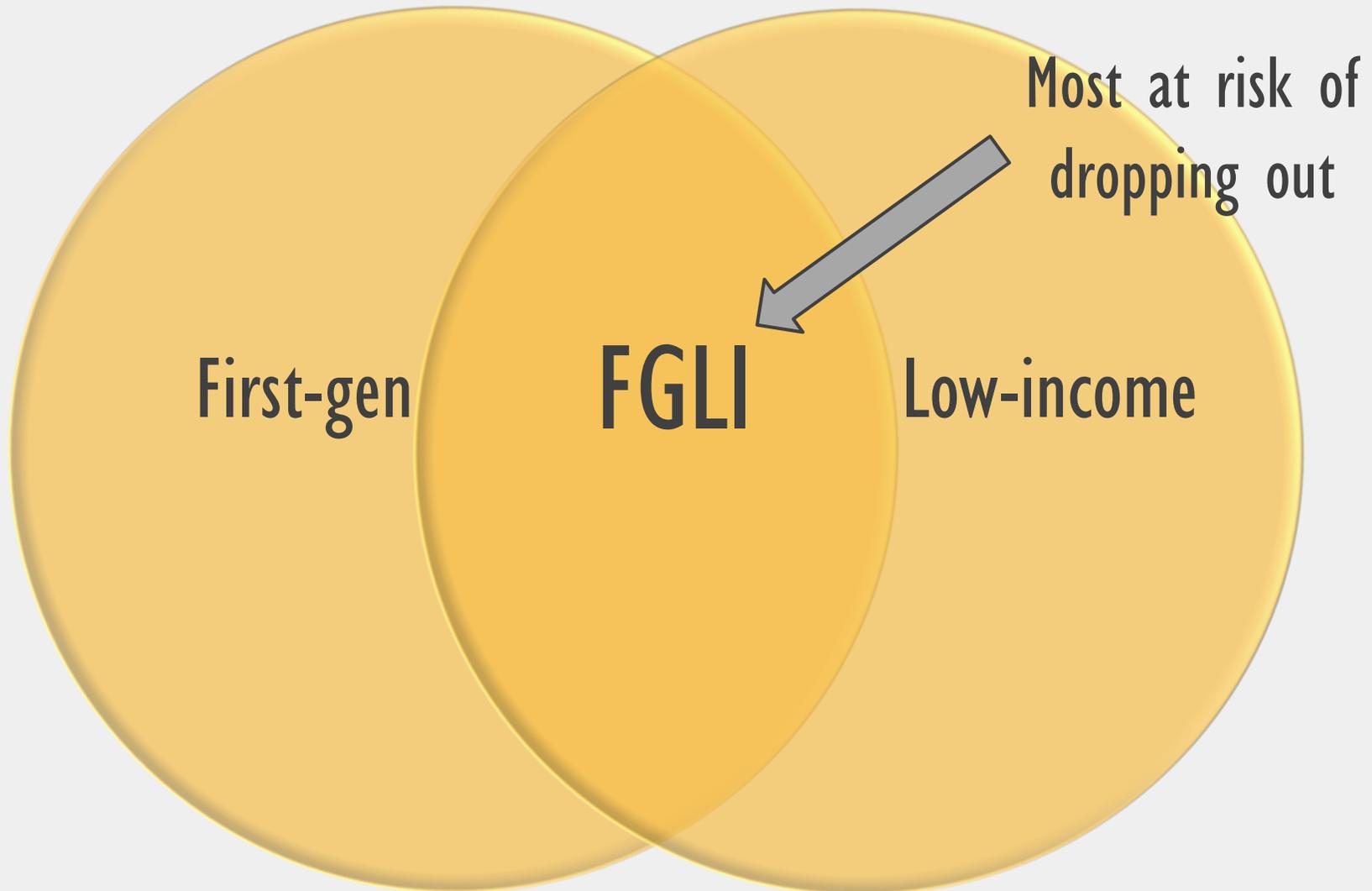
“Don’t have a dollar to my name”

Low-income students

- Pell Grant-eligible (32 percent)
- Received free and reduced lunch, SNAP, WIC, bankruptcy, unemployment
- Large families with only one income
- Restricts and/or dictates involvement, Greek life, enrollment, socializing, etc.

(The College Board, 2017)

Large population are first-generation and low-income (FGLI)



“Lot of brains, but no polish”

Cultural Capital

- Familiarity with the dominant culture, ability to use “educated” language
- “Do you know who to ask and how to ask?”
- Colleges and universities assume a certain level of cultural capital
- Cultural capital is “What you know,” social capital is “Who you know”
- Hidden curriculum

(Bourdieu, 1986)

Challenges and Barriers

(Discussion)

How they perceive you:

The FGLI experience

“Washington on your side”

Cultural Mismatch

- University culture rewards/promotes independent norms
- FGS and working-class students come from interdependent backgrounds
- Disparity can reduce academic performance and success
- Mentors/collaborative learning can enhance experiences

(Stephens, Fryberg, Markus, Johnson, & Covarrubias, 2012)

“Talk less, smile more”

Imposter Syndrome

- Feeling of being a fraud, not belonging, “taking someone else’s spot”
- Can negatively affect academic performance
- Withdrawal from social circles/obligations

“Another immigrant coming up”

Othering

- Drawing attention to differences to maintain power status
- Pointing out deficiencies, shortcomings
- “Smells like new money, dresses like fake royalty”
- “You’re nothing without Washington behind you”

“Looked at me like I’m stupid”

Educationism

- Highly educated people (HEP) hold more negative attitudes toward less educated people (LEP)
- LEP are seen as blameworthy & responsible for their position
- HEP have “warmer” feelings toward other HEP
- LEP do not perceive themselves more positively than HEP

(Kuppens, Spears, Manstead, Spruyt, & Easterbrook, 2017)

**Smashing every expectation:
What can we do?
(Discussion)**

“Rise up!”

- More inclusive programming/activities
- Free or inexpensive events, clubs, groups, etc.
- Awareness of language use (“I’m broke.”)
- Training for first-gen, low-income student needs and support
- Understanding and empathy for non-participation
- Open dialogue about these and other issues

If you don't know, now you know.