

Reviewer comment-2

The manuscript is important for the scientific community & relevant, particularly in higher education research and student success studies. It highlights the evolving and often unrecognized role of faculty as both academic and life case managers addressing critical "capital gaps" faced by first-generation and low income students. Its identification of academic and life case management as distinct yet intertwined roles, along with practical recommendations, offers valuable insights for institutions aiming to improve student retention and equity. It calls for further research and institutional recognition of faculty's expanded role, making a significant contribution to discussions on faculty workload, student support, and higher education equity.

The current title, "Faculty as Student Case Managers," is suitable as it concisely captures the central theme of the manuscript—faculty taking on roles beyond traditional teaching to manage students' academic and life challenges. Respectfully, an alternative title that might more explicitly reflect the focus on capital gaps and the dual nature of faculty roles could be: "Bridging Capital Gaps: Faculty as Academic and Life Case Managers for First-Generation Students"

The abstract is clear and outlines the main purpose of the study—exploring faculty as student case managers addressing capital gaps for first-generation and low-income students. However, it could be more comprehensive by briefly mentioning the methodology (collaborative autoethnography). Suggested improvements: Include a brief statement about using collaborative autoethnography as the research method. Note the emergence of two distinct faculty roles: academic case management (ACM) and life case management (LCM). Consider highlighting key findings about faculty challenges and the expanded role. Mention recommendations for supporting faculty in these roles.

The English quality of the article is suitable for scholarly communication. The writing is clear, well-organized, and appropriately formal for an academic audience.

The manuscript's sections are well structured and mostly appropriate for the topic and scholarly standards. Some minor revisions to condense some literature-heavy areas, enhance clarity, and improve flow are highlighted below for each section.

Abstract: The abstract introduces the purpose well, but it could be improved by briefly mentioning methodology and highlighting key findings and recommendations for a more comprehensive overview. Introduction: The introduction thoroughly addresses prior research and sets the stage well for the study, but could be condensed slightly to improve focus on the research gap and rationale for this study. Literature Review: The literature

review is comprehensive and well cited, but somewhat dense. Consider summarizing key points more succinctly to maintain reader engagement.

Methodology: The methodology provides an explanation of data collection, analysis, and the researchers' backgrounds, enhancing credibility. Including IRB approval details adds rigor.

Discussion: The discussion provides a succinct overview of challenges and faculty experiences. **Recommendations:** The recommendations help faculty and institutions understand and respond to expanded roles.

Limitations: The mention of future research directions adds helpful context for building on this work. **Comments:** It ends with a thought provoking question about future institutional responsibilities, making it impactful.

The references are generally proper, relevant, and reflect a good range of foundational and recent scholarship related to first-generation students, capital theory, case management, and faculty roles. Many citations date from the last few years (2020-2025), which demonstrates engagement with current research trends. Seminal works, such as Bourdieu (1984/2021) on capital and key studies on first-generation student experiences and social capital, are appropriately included.

I enjoyed reading this manuscript and connecting with it through my past research with First Generation Adult Learners. It offers a valuable and timely exploration of the expanding role of faculty as student case managers, addressing both academic and life-related capital gaps faced by first-generation and low-income students. Its use of collaborative autoethnography provides authentic, nuanced insights grounded in faculty lived experiences across disciplines. The clear distinction between academic case management (ACM) and life case management (LCM) enriches understanding of faculty challenges and informs practical recommendations. The manuscript makes a meaningful contribution to conversations about faculty workload, student success, and institutional support, and it highlights critical areas for future research and policy attention.