

# Building My Professional Identity



# **BUILDING MY PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY**

COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS  
STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM



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## Welcome!

At the College of Health Professions (COHP) UTRGV, our mission is to “be the leading institution of excellence in health and human services, education, health care, and research, producing highly skilled practitioners, educators, and researchers through high-quality educational programs, meaningful experiential learning opportunities and the development of scientific and intellectual inquiry for the promotion of health equity in the Rio Grande Valley and beyond.” As a student in our College, your academic, professional, and personal success is key to our mission.

The modules introduce you to professionalism, the soft skills individuals should possess to distinguish themselves as professionals who conduct themselves with “responsibility, integrity, accountability, and excellence.” The following modules will introduce you to the values and characteristics that define a UTRGV student in general and a health professional in particular. They will also provide you with information about UTRGV resources that are available to ensure your success.

We have organized all information into three units. They are Unit 1, Academic Foundations, Unit 2, Skills Towards Professionalism, and Getting Ready for A Career. Unit 3,

Explore Your Career Readiness, and Unit 4, Professional Development After Graduation, respectively. We hope that such a layout helps to scaffold and prepares you as a student here at CoHP and toward becoming a professional. Let us know any feedback you would like to provide associated with this work. Email us at [healthprofessionsinfo@utrgv.edu](mailto:healthprofessionsinfo@utrgv.edu).

For your convenience, below is a quick review of the modules within each unit.

## Unit 1 My Academic Foundations

- Chapter 1: Honor Professional Student Conduct and Professional Conduct in Health Professions
- Chapter 2: What Is Academic Integrity and Associated Dishonesty Sanctions
- Chapter 3: Recognize Plagiarism and How To Avoid It
- Chapter 4: Do I Need Accommodations? Understand Student Accessibility Services
- Chapter 5: Confirm Student Etiquette at COHP and Best Practices
- Chapter 6: Know UTRGV Policies and Learn About CBC
- Chapter 7: Embrace Holistic Wellness

## Unit 2 Skills Towards Professionalism and Getting Ready for My Career

- Chapter 8: Polish My Studying Skills
- Chapter 9: Decide My Major and Minor
- Chapter 10: Why Do I Need a Road Map?
- Chapter 11: Student Support Services Delivered
- Chapter 12: Advice from Students Who Have Graduated

## Unit 3 Explore My Career Readiness

- Chapter 13: Where Do I Start to Explore My Future Career?
- Chapter 14: Understand Critical Thinking for Healthcare Career and Readiness
- Chapter 15: Navigate Networking and Inter-professional Education/Inter-professional Collaboration
- Chapter 16: Step Into Interviews
- Chapter 17: Prepare My Professional Profile

## Unit 4 Professional Development after Graduation

- Chapter 18: Exceed the Expectations and Maintain Work-Life Balance
- Chapter 19: Continue to Build My Professional Identity



1.

# CHAPTER 1 HONOR PROFESSIONAL STUDENT CONDUCT AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT IN HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Let's start with Professional Student  
Conduct

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Congratulations again on becoming a student at our home – the College of Health Professions (CoHP) at UTRGV! As a student ready to dive into the fascinating areas of study, whether it is Biomedical Sciences, Communication Disorders, Nutrition, Exercise Science, or Rehabilitation and Counseling, what does it mean to become a student in this College? Furthermore, what does it mean to exhibit professional conduct as a student at the College of Health Professions?

Jot down notes on whatever comes to your mind now and

compare them to what the video (10 minutes) below provides you – an overview of student professionalism.

Are there any differences between your notes and what you got out of the video? Here is a recap of your professional conduct as a student at CoHP.

- Be punctual: arrive to class on time.
- Come to class prepared; this will allow you to engage and participate effectively in the subject matter.
- Exhibit academic honesty and integrity in all activities (see Academic Integrity for details).
- Be a responsible team member for group assignments and projects (see Student Etiquette for details).
- Treat all email communication professionally (see Student Etiquette for details).
- Respect your colleagues, advisors, and faculty members.

In addition to the above student professionalism principles, healthcare settings require additional guidelines. Here are two videos with an excellent overview of the various dimensions of professional behavior in health professions that will help expand your understanding of professional conduct in health professions. The videos present professional behavior in self-presentation (23:22 minutes) and effective communication with patients (24:15 minutes).

UTRGV students may use university credentials to view

the links below. All other users may follow the openathens.net instructions to view the links.

[Professional Behavior In Healthcare Professions: Professionalism And Self-Presentation – Alexander Street, a ProQuest Company \(openathens.net\)](#)

[Professional Behavior In Healthcare Professions: Effective Communication With Patients – Alexander Street, a ProQuest Company \(openathens.net\)](#)

Do you remember the 6 professional student conduct you need to exhibit? Identify the top 3 that you feel are most important to you as a student and share your thoughts on Professional Student Conduct with a friend and learn theirs or **role-play as a class activity**. Discuss any similarities and differences.

2.

# CHAPTER 2 WHAT IS ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND THE ASSOCIATED DISHONESTY SANCTIONS?

## Academic Integrity

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### Introduction

Integrity is a critical trait that people should aspire to. Maintaining academic integrity is a given in educational settings and especially online environments. As members of a community dedicated to honesty, integrity, and mutual respect in all interactions and relationships, our University's students, faculty, and administration, pledge to abide by the principles in the Vaquero Honor Code.

**Vaquero Honor Code**

**WE ARE HONEST**

We do our work and are honest with one another in all



matters. We understand how any act of dishonesty conflicts as much with academic achievement as with the values of honesty and integrity.

### **WE HAVE INTEGRITY**

We will make personal and academic integrity fundamental in all of our endeavors.

### **WE ARE RESPECTFUL**

We act civilly and cooperate with one another for the common good. We will strive to create an environment and a culture in which people respect and listen to one another. We recognize a university is, above all, a place for the exchange of ideas, popular and unpopular. It is the one institution in society that encourages challenges to conventional wisdom. Consequently, we pledge to encourage the exchange of ideas and to allow others to participate and express their views openly.

## UTRGV's Academic Dishonesty Policy

As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity, and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism (including self-plagiarism), and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking

an examination for another person; any act designed to give an unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.

## Academic Integrity Violation Sanctioning Guidelines

Academic integrity violations at UTRGV have serious consequences. These violations are categorized into four levels. A copy of UTRGV's Academic Integrity Violation Sanctioning Guidelines is available [here](#). Take a minute to review the different types of violations and the corresponding sanctions.

## Contact Information

For more information on scholastic integrity as well as your rights and responsibilities as a student, contact Student Rights and Responsibilities at the Office of the Dean of Students:

Brownsville Campus: Cortez Hall, Room 204

Phone: (956) 882-8292

Edinburg Campus: University Center, Room 315

Phone: (956) 665-5375

Email: [srr@utrgv.edu](mailto:srr@utrgv.edu)

Website: [www.utrgv.edu/srr/students/index.htm](http://www.utrgv.edu/srr/students/index.htm)

UTRGV Faculty may request a presentation on the topic of academic integrity via the [Presentation Request Form](#) |

### 3.

## CHAPTER 3 RECOGNIZE PLAGIARISM AND HOW TO AVOID IT

### Plagiarism

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The UTRGV Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) defines plagiarism as “the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the unacknowledged submission (resubmission) or incorporation of it in one’s academic work offered for credit” (UTRGV HOP, Section: STU 02-100). UTRGV considers plagiarism an act of academic dishonesty. As such, the Academic Integrity Violation sanctions listed in the above section apply in cases of plagiarism.

In this chapter, you will complete plagiarism training and receive a certificate.

### What is Plagiarism?

The following video defines plagiarism, its many forms, and its consequences. It also guides how to avoid plagiarism.

[A Student's Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism and Understanding Citations – Alexander Street, a ProQuest Company \(openathens.net\)](#)

Remember to always

- Give credit to any resource(s) (including books, articles, social media, personnel communication, etc. consulted for an assignment/paper.
- Use proper in-text citations.
- Generate a reference list to acknowledge the sources in the submitted assignment/paper

## What is self-plagiarism?

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines self-plagiarism as “the reuse of one’s own words, ideas, or artistic expression (as in an essay) from preexisting material, especially without acknowledgment of their earlier use.” In the educational setting, this translates into a student submitting the same paper/essay, or substantial parts of that paper, for more than one course without notifying the instructor of the prior use of the article or its portions.

Self-plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty and violates academic integrity.

## How to avoid the problem of self-plagiarism?

- Never submit the same paper, essay, or assignment for more than one course.
- If you plan to use portions of a prior submission, make sure you communicate with your professor and provide a citation of the pieces of the paper previously submitted. It should also include the course and date of the prior submission.

## Exercise

For this chapter, you will need to:

- Complete a set of short tutorials\* on how to recognize and avoid plagiarism.
- After completing the tutorials, you would register for certification tests to ensure you receive a certificate of completion.
- The tutorials and tests will take approximately an hour to complete.

To access the tutorials, click [Welcome: How to Recognize Plagiarism: Tutorial and Tests, School of Education, Indiana University Bloomington \(iu.edu\)](https://www.indiana.edu/~schoolofeducation/tutorials/Welcome%20to%20Recognize%20Plagiarism%20Tutorial%20and%20Tests.htm).

Source: Frick, T., Dagli, C., Barrett, A., Myers, R., Kwon,

K., & Tomita, K. (2017). How to recognize plagiarism: Tutorial and tests. Bloomington, IN: Department of Instructional Systems Technology, School of Education, Indiana University. Retrieved from: [Welcome: How to Recognize Plagiarism: Tutorial and Tests, School of Education, Indiana University Bloomington \(iu.edu\)](#)

## 4.

# CHAPTER 4 DO I NEED ACCOMMODATIONS? UNDERSTAND STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

## Accommodations

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### Introduction

UTRGV is committed to creating an accessible environment for all its students, staff, and faculty. To that end, UTRGV's Student Accessibility Services facilitates students' equal access to university programs and services, promoting student learning and development, fostering independence and self-advocacy, and providing leadership to the campus on disability issues.



## Students with Disabilities

Students with a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects academic performance) who would like to receive academic accommodations should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as soon as possible to schedule an appointment to initiate services. Accommodations can be arranged through SAS at any time but are not retroactive.

Students who suffer a broken bone, severe injury or undergo surgery during the semester are eligible for temporary accommodations. Make sure to contact SAS as soon as possible.

## Pregnancy, Pregnancy-related, and Parenting Accommodations

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination, which includes discrimination based on pregnancy, marital status, or parental status. Students seeking accommodations for pregnancy, pregnancy-related conditions, or parenting (reasonably immediate postpartum period) are encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services for additional information and to request accommodations.

## Contact Information

For more information on forms, and procedural guidelines, contact Student Accessibility Services at:

**Brownsville:** Music and Learning Center building (BMSLC), Room 1.107

Phone: (956) 882-7374

Fax: (956) 882-7861

**Edinburg:** University Center (EUCTR), Room 108

Phone: (956) 665-7005

Fax: (956) 665-3840

**Email:** [ability@utrgv.edu](mailto:ability@utrgv.edu)

**Website:** [www.utrgv.edu/accessibility/](http://www.utrgv.edu/accessibility/)

The Accessibility Advisory Council of the AMSA RGV Chapter also made the following videos available for review to promote awareness. Let us know any questions you may have. Remember, faculty and staff, are here to assist and ensure your academic success.

Reading Strategies: [AMSA – AAC Reading Strategies – YouTube](#)

Student Veterans: [AMSA – AAC Student Veterans – YouTube](#)

Dyspraxia: [AMSA – AAC Dyspraxia – YouTube](#)

Depression: [AMSA – AAC Depression – YouTube](#)

Deafness: [AMSA – AAC Deafness – YouTube](#)

5.

# CHAPTER 5 CONFIRM STUDENT ETIQUETTE AT COHP AND BEST PRACTICES

## Social Media

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### Introduction

Student etiquette encompasses a broad spectrum of behavior from the face-to-face to the online environment. In this module, we will discuss in-person and virtual classroom etiquette.

### Discussion Board Posting Guidelines

In most courses, your assessments will include posting to Discussion Boards in response to specific prompts. Below are some posting guidelines.

1. Read the instructions carefully and review rubrics (when

- available) to ensure an accurate and responsive post.
2. Always address the prompt directly and add new insight to the topic.
  3. Write clearly and professionally. The Discussion Board is not an informal chat room or texting thread. Therefore, your answers and replies should utilize proper language and grammar.
  4. When referencing other people's work in your post, citing your source using the recommended style guidelines is good practice.
  5. Always maintain a constructive and respectful professional tone, even when you disagree with the opinions of others.
  6. It is good practice to compose your posts first in Microsoft Word or another word processing program to avoid spelling and grammatical errors and connection glitches while collecting. Then, copy and paste your answers to the Discussion Board once completed.

## Email Etiquette

You are familiar with communicating via email, text, tweets, etc. However, email communication is crucial to project a professional image with your professors and fellow students in the academic environment. The following tips can help.

**Use a Professional Email Address.** Using catchy, cute, and witty screen names may result in you not being taken

seriously or your email landing in a spam folder. Always use your official university email address for all communication. For your non-university-related communication, creating a professional email address with your first and last name is advisable.

**Use a Formal Salutation.** Professional correspondence should have a certain level of formality, including a standard greeting. Unless you are invited to use the first name, it is best to address your recipient by their titles, such as Dear Mr., Ms., or Professor. Hint: If you don't know a recipient's gender, a quick Google search will usually help clarify if you are addressing a Mr. or Ms.

**Lead With a Clear Subject Line.** A concise and specific subject line will help your reader know precisely what to expect. For example, if you are writing to inquire about an assignment, a good subject line may look like this: HSCI-6300 Assignment 2 Question.

**Be Clear, Polite, and Succinct.** Ensure that your email contains all the necessary information to help evaluate and respond to your request. Before sending, always review your message and make sure that it has a clear and courteous tone of voice, that it is written in complete, coherent sentences, that there are no spelling errors, and that no part of it is written in all capital letters or caps (using caps is equivalent to SHOUTING YOUR MESSAGE).

**Sign Off with a Thank You.** It is common courtesy to thank someone for their time and help. End your email with

a “thank you” or “best” and your full name. Include your student ID number in all messages to faculty or advisors.

**Boost Your Image with a Strong Email Signature.**

There is no exact template you have to follow, but your ultimate goal should be to state who you are and how to contact you quickly.

**Practice Common Courtesy.** You should do the same for others if you expect timely, helpful replies. Check your email regularly, and respond as soon as you are able.

Source: <https://students.tufts.edu/career-center/i-need/network/professional-email-etiquette>

## Group Assignment Etiquette

### General Group-Project Etiquette Tips

At the beginning of the project, evenly assign tasks and set deadlines for when you want to have certain parts of the project completed. This way, certain group members don’t feel like they are doing everything and everyone has a clear goal of when to complete their portion of the work.

Be flexible about group meeting times. All students have busy schedules between work, family, and class commitments. Make sure that you don’t limit your availability because of frivolous responsibilities.

Tell your group members the best way to communicate with you (email, text, WhatsApp, Group Discussion Board

(when available) and respond within 24 hours, ideally sooner if you can. Sometimes not having a quick answer to a question can hold up the entire project. Reacting quickly to group members avoids frustration and gives them confidence that you are a responsive part of the team.

Keep the communication open. Update your group members about the progress you are making on your work. It also guarantees that everyone knows you are contributing.

Proofread your portion of the assignment. This saves time on the back end when group members have to put everyone's work together. In addition, it shows that you cared about your work and the group's grade.

Source: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/college/2013/05/14/5-group-project-etiquette-tips/37435605/>

## Online Group-Project Etiquette Tips

Create a plan: As soon as a group is established, students should develop a clear plan outlining deadlines and assigning responsibilities.

Communicate in a way that can be monitored: Try to communicate with your classmates in forums that your instructor can access. If students have tried to prompt a group member to respond to emails and other messages and it doesn't seem to be working, including your instructor in emails.

Be aware early of group-project deadlines: Deadlines for group work require a different plan to meet them than

deadlines for individual work. While in a particular assignment, you have the luxury of working on your assignment a few hours before the deadline (not recommended); such a strategy will not work for a group project. A group project requires planning as soon as it is assigned. Make sure to check your assignments as soon as a new week opens to ensure no group projects for that week.

In case of problems, contact your instructor early and explain the problem: If the group communicates their concerns to the non-contributing member to no avail, then it may be necessary to reach out to your instructor and explain the problem. When you do, make sure that the whole group endorses the communication. Given the accelerated nature of this program, it is best to act quickly and notify your instructor as soon as issues arise. This allows the instructor to intervene constructively. Waiting until the due date to let the instructor know that someone did not do their fair share of the work leaves few options if any.

Source: <https://www.usnews.com/education/online-education/articles/2014/02/04/3-tips-for-surviving-group-projects-in-an-online-class>

## Social Media Profiles

Having a social media presence is essential in the professional world. However, social media profiles can be a double-edged sword.



Employers are increasingly checking and screening social media profiles when hiring a candidate. They do that to learn more about a candidate's educational and work background and the skill sets they bring to a prospective job. Unfortunately, in the process, many employers decide not to hire a candidate or to fire a current employee because of inappropriate content on their social media. Therefore, it would be best to exercise sound judgment when deciding what to post and share on your social media. Below are some Dos and Don'ts for US News & World Report students.

- Do create positive content. Show interest in your prospective field by posting links to interesting stories and making LinkedIn connections with recruiters and internship coordinators.
- Don't post questionable photos of yourself. Many employers turn down job applicants because of inappropriate photos (e.g., drug- or drinking-related photos).
- Do Google yourself.
- Don't post negative status updates or tweets. Don't complain or attack a fellow student, coworker, professor, or boss. This will not reflect well on you.
- Don't make your online presence all about you.

Also, check out the following links for practical tips on regulating your social media profile.

### Six Social Media Do's and Don'ts for Students



and Social Media Do's and Don'ts



## Requesting a Letter of Recommendation

Recommendation(s) make(s) essential to any application packet. See tips from this website on [requesting a letter of recommendation](#).

6.

# CHAPTER 6 KNOW UTRGV POLICIES AND LEARN ABOUT CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS (CBC)

## Policies

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### Introduction

It is essential to know our institutional policies. Always consult the most recent catalog from our institution. About information for your program of study, look for the curriculum published for your catalog year. In addition to the policies you have reviewed in prior sections, UTRGV has many policies that guide students and faculty. For example, policies on attendance, withdrawal, course evaluations, and sexual misconduct are relevant to students. Moreover, learn if

a CBC is needed as a progression requirement for you, as is the case in many of our college programs.

## Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and may be dropped from the course for excessive absences. UTRGV's attendance policy excuses students from attending class if they participate in officially sponsored university activities, such as athletics; for observance of religious holy days; or military service. Students should contact the instructor before the excused absence and arrange to make up missed work or examinations.

## E-mail Communication

Per UTRGV policy and by The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), all e-mail communication with students must be conducted via the student's UTRGV e-mail account. Many professors will not even respond to e-mails from non-UTRGV accounts. Therefore, it is imperative:

1. that you have an active UTRGV e-mail account,
2. that you check it regularly, and
3. that you use for all course-related communication.

It is recommended that you check your UTRGV e-mail

account daily.

## Course Drop

According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty, earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. Following that date, students must be assigned a letter grade and can no longer drop the class. Students considering dropping the course should be aware of the “**3-peat rule**” and the “**6-drop**” rule so they can recognize how dropped classes may affect their academic success. The 6-drop rule refers to Texas law that dictates that undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses during their undergraduate career. Courses dropped at other Texas public higher education institutions will count toward the six-course drop limit. The 3-peat rule refers to additional fees charged to students who take the same class for the third time.

## Mandatory Course Evaluation Period

Students must complete an ONLINE evaluation for all courses, accessed through your UTRGV account (<http://my.utrgv.edu>). Every semester/module, you will be contacted through e-mail with further instructions. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades.

## Sexual Misconduct and Mandatory Reporting

Per UT System regulations, your instructor is a “Responsible Employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report to the Office of Institutional Equity & Diversity ([oi@utrgv.edu](mailto:oi@utrgv.edu)) any instance occurring during a student’s time in the College of sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, and sexual harassment, about which they become aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at [www.utrgv.edu/equity](http://www.utrgv.edu/equity), including confidential resources available on campus. In addition, the faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect that is free from sexual misconduct, discrimination, and all forms of violence. If students, faculty, or staff would like confidential assistance or have questions, they can contact OVAVP (Office for Victim Advocacy & Violence Prevention) at 665-8287, 882-8282, or [OVAVP@utrgv.edu](mailto:OVAVP@utrgv.edu).

## Criminal Background Checks and Other Screenings

Many majors at the College of Health Professions (similar to

other programs like Nursing and Social Work) require a criminal background check (CBC). In addition, such statements can be required for continuation in some programs, for licensing, and before being placed in clinical rotations.

A criminal background check is a legal investigation into a person's past that helps decide whether to hire, promote, contract with or use a person's services. The information on a criminal background check can vary depending on the type of inquiry requested by schools, hospitals, clinics, employers, etc. Nearly all checks will include the following:

- Felony and misdemeanor criminal convictions
- Misdemeanor criminal convictions
- Any pending criminal cases

Requests may also check information related to driving records, past employment, education, and professional licenses.

## Additional screenings

Given the nature of health professions, **screenings for drug and substance abuse** and **immunizations**. In addition, hospitals, clinics, and schools require these screenings for clinical rotations and internships.

Please note that such checks and any appeal process are completed independently of UTRGV.

## 7.

# CHAPTER 7 EMBRACE HOLISTIC WELLNESS

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## Introduction

This chapter aims to provide the tools and resources to support your holistic wellness. In this chapter, you will:

- Assess your life balance situation
- Become mindful of the benefits of self-care and your academic success
- Recognize the physical and emotional signs of stress
- Create an effective support group
- Learn about UTRGV health resources

## Self Care

Let's see what it means to take care of ourselves.

[https://mycourses.utrgv.edu/bbcswebdav/pid-11028602-dt-content-rid-113346429\\_1/xid-113346429\\_1](https://mycourses.utrgv.edu/bbcswebdav/pid-11028602-dt-content-rid-113346429_1/xid-113346429_1)



Below are resources available at UTRGV that one can tap into for different needs:

## Health Services, Department of Campus Auxiliary Services

The main goal of Health Services is to meet student healthcare needs. Office visits are free of charge. The health services clinics provide the same services as a family doctor and much more.

Health Services Clinic, Brownsville: Cortez Hall, Suite 237, Brownsville, Texas 78520; Phone: (956) 882-3896

Health Services Clinic, Edinburg: 613 North Sugar Road, Edinburg, Texas 78539; Phone: (956) 665-2511

Email: [healthservices@utrgv.edu](mailto:healthservices@utrgv.edu)

Website: <https://www.utrgv.edu/health-services/>

## Counseling Center

The Counseling Center provides free and confidential counseling services for UTRGV students to address mental and emotional health concerns and seeks to promote personal growth and well-being among our campus community through education and outreach activities.

Brownsville: BSTUN 2.10; Phone: (956) 882-3897

Edinburg: EUCTR 109; Phone: (956) 665-2574

Email: [counseling@utrgv.edu](mailto:counseling@utrgv.edu)

Website: <https://www.utrgv.edu/counseling/>

## Mental Health Services

<b>UTRGV Counseling Center</b>	<b>Services:</b> Consultation, Individual and group <a href="#">counseling</a> , Mental Health Screenings, <a href="#">Presentations, training, and workshops for classrooms and other groups</a> , Referrals to other health, social, and academic services, & <a href="#">suicide prevention</a> gatekeeper training for UTRGV students	<b>Locations:</b> Brownsville, Student Union 2.10 (956) 882-3897 Edinburg, University Center 109 (956) 665-2574
<b>Counseling &amp; Training Clinic at UTRGV</b>	<b>Programs/Services:</b> Mental health counseling services for any member of the general community who is 6 years of age and older. Services are unavailable for current UTRGV students, faculty, or staff. <b>Fee:</b> Free for students, staff, faculty	<b>Address:</b> 1201 W. University Dr. EEDUC 1.270 <b>City:</b> Edinburg, Texas <b>Phone:</b> (956) 665-5251 <b>Website:</b> <a href="https://www.utrgv.edu/cg/counseling-training-clinic/">https://www.utrgv.edu/cg/counseling-training-clinic/</a>
<b>UTRGV Collegiate Recovery Program</b>	<b>Services:</b> The Collegiate Recovery Program supports students in recovery from addictions. The program offers hope and support to help you achieve your recovery goals so that your time at the university is one of success and pride.	<b>Locations:</b> Brownsville, Student Union 2.10 (956) 882-3897 Edinburg, University Center 102 (956) 665-2574

**UTRGV  
Employee  
Health  
Services Clinic**

**Services:** UT Health RGV Employee Health offers comprehensive medical care for UTRGV employees, including a wide range of health and wellness services, including counseling. \$10 Copay (UTRGV Faculty & Staff Only)

**Location:**

Edinburg, 1214 W. Schunior St.  
(956) 296-1731

**UTRGV  
Military and  
Veteran  
Success Center  
Student  
Support**

**Services:** To assist student veterans, guardsmen, reservists, and military family members in pursuing educational goals. The Military and Veterans Success Center (MVSC) is a liaison between students receiving military educational benefits and the Department of Veteran Affairs.

**Locations:**

Brownsville – Cavalry Hall 104  
956-882-8980  
Edinburg – University Center  
113  
956-665-7934

**UTRGV  
Multi-specialty  
Clinic**

**Services:** Mental health, psychotherapy, health psychology, and behavioral services are offered. They include assessment, consultation, and treatment for substance abuse, mood and anxiety disorders, PTSD, schizophrenia and related disorders, bipolar disorder, psychosomatic disorders, and major depressive disorder.

**Location:**

Harlingen, 2106 Treasure Hills  
Blvd. #1.326  
(956) 296-1519

**UTRGV  
Vaquero Crisis  
Line**

**Services:** The Vaqueros Crisis Line is a 24/7 confidential\* helpline for enrolled UTRGV students experiencing an emotional crisis that may include suicidal thinking, thoughts of harming themselves or others, confusion, panic, or otherwise feeling distressed. A trained counselor will be available on the line to assist.

**UTRGV Vaquero Crisis Line  
(956) 665-5555**

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Exercise, Nutrition, Sleep, Emotional Health, and more

Self Care -Exercise

Self Care – Nutrition

Self Care – Sleep

Self Care – Emotional Health

Self Care – Resilience

## 8.

# CHAPTER 8 POLISH MY STUDY SKILLS

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## Introduction

***“Study, study, study.** Yes, I know this may seem obvious, but studying before the exam or a few nights before is not going to cut it. I suggest you look over your notes **weeks in advance** and learn the best methods that work for you...”*

– Advice from a Communication Sciences and Disorders (COMD) student

Many students looking back at their experience, mention that among the main things they wish they would have known as first-year students were how to study, the amount of studying needed, and advice on effective strategies to manage time and priorities. This section provides some resources related to study skills and time management. For UTRGV student advice on studying, visit “Chapter 12, Advice From Students Who Have Graduated”.

## Important Studying Habits

*“I suggest having 1-2 friends to study with that are determined to stay on task and review the material with you. It helps to start reviewing and quizzing yourself on the material at the end of every week or even the day after and not wait till a couple of days before the exam(s) to review everything. I usually type out my notes based on my reading from the chapter(s), put together questions and answers based on the outlines or PowerPoints to quiz myself repeatedly during the weeks before the exam(s), and reread the chapter(s) at least one more time after the initial reading... Don’t overwork yourself, take study breaks, manage your studying for each class wisely, and study more than a week in advance.”*

– UTRGV

College of Health Professions student

Adjusting to the academic workload in college can be difficult for some first-year students. This gets more complicated as students try to balance various demands on their time, including work, family, and friends. In addition, compared to the high school experience, the curriculum is typically more specialized, and the assignments are often more in-depth.

It’s essential to form good study habits for college early on so that you don’t fall behind when faced with more challenging or time-consuming readings, subject material, and



exams. Make these six study habits a part of your routine, and you'll start your college experience on the right foot.

## **1. Find a Place to Study Regularly**

Consistency is critical in studying, so do your best to make a habit of it! Finding a spot on campus and at home where you feel comfortable and inspired to dive into a successful study session is a good idea.

The environment should be whatever works best for you—whether that means having complete silence, some light background music, or a more lively atmosphere. Give it some thought and try out a few different spots. The sooner you find the space that works for you, the sooner you'll be able to study effectively.

## **2. Keep Track of Deadlines and Important Dates**

You might have the best intentions when buying a new planner, but to make the most of it, you should review it daily and write down due dates for assignments, exams, and other important events. Keeping track of what you need to study for can help you stay ahead of crucial projects and develop good study habits for college.

You can get ahead of upcoming assignments by checking your calendar weekly (and daily), outlining each deadline in

advance, and blocking off time to study. And don't forget the most rewarding part of keeping a list of tasks—crossing them off once they are completed!

### 3. Don't Cram for Your Exam

If you follow the previous tip, you likely won't find yourself in a difficult situation, but it's worth repeating: Remember to schedule your study time wisely to make the most of it. [Studies show that reviewing the material in smaller chunks of time—over a longer time—is more effective than cramming a ton of material into one session.](#) So again, slow **and steady wins the race.**

Once you have your course syllabus and schedule for the semester, find periods between classes and activities when you can fit in some studying. This way, you won't have to stress the night before a big exam trying to review everything at the last minute.

### 4. Organize a Study Group

Studying on your works well for many subjects, but it also might be easier to learn the material if you can bounce ideas off your classmates. During your first year at college, give group study sessions a try. There's a good chance your fellow students will be interested in getting together to review course materials.

You might discover a new way to study while making a few new friends!

## 5. Review Your Notes After Class

Taking notes during the lecture is a study habit you might already be used to, but do you take the time to review those notes after class? If not, consider reviewing your notes later the same day. Going over your notes after seeing the material in class will improve your memory and help you effectively learn the material.

## 6. Ask for Help

At UTRGV, you'll find a team of professors and advisors who are there to help you succeed. It's normal to find a class challenging sometimes, but don't feel you have to face it alone.

Everyone needs help at some point—and it's better to reach out as soon as you think you need it rather than let yourself fall behind. Reach out to tutoring services, your professor, or an advisor if you don't understand the material or need extra assistance adjusting to college academics.

Source: Azusa Pacific University. Crucial Study Habits for College Students. Available at: <https://www.apu.edu/articles/6-crucial-study-habits-for-college-students/>

## Studying Habits for Online Courses

The following video provides excellent advice on strategies to help you succeed in online courses.

- [Setting yourself up for success in an online course](#) (19:11 minutes)

## Time Management Techniques

Time management is commonly defined as choosing how to use and organize our time. Effective time management allows us to work smarter to get more done in less time. The following graph outlines 9 types of time management techniques. Note that different people need different approaches. To learn more about each method and find out which works best for you, visit <https://www.usa.edu/blog/time-management-techniques/>.

In addition to time management techniques, you may find other study skills helpful. Here are some video clips from Lindenwood University: [Study Skills Video Series | Lindenwood University](#)

Academic coaches from UTRGV Learning Center are ready to have a discussion with you. Find them here [Academic Coaching | UTRGV](#).

Some videos may be of interest to you.



[Watch Video](#)

How to manage your time more effectively (according to machines) – Brian Christian

**Duration:** 5:10

**User:** n/a – **Added:** 1/2/18



[Watch Video](#)

Sleep is your superpower | Matt Walker

**Duration:** 19:19

**User:** n/a – **Added:** 6/3/19



[Watch Video](#)

The benefits of a good night's sleep – Shai Marcu

**Duration:** 5:45

**User:** n/a – **Add**

## 9.

# CHAPTER 9 DECIDE MY MAJOR AND MINOR

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## Introduction

Our home, College of Health Professions, offers many opportunities to pursue careers in the health field. along with our sister programs offered through the School of Nursing and the School of Social Work, you have many paths to consider. Take some time to check the various degree programs and to hear from fellow students.

To learn more about a health profession of interest, complete the health professional interview assignment below.

## College of Health Professions Bachelor Degrees

- [Addiction Studies \(BS\)](#)
- [American Sign Language and Interpretation Studies \(Communication Studies\), BS](#)
- [American Sign Language and Interpretation Studies](#)

[\(Spanish Translation and Interpreting\), BS](#)

- [Biomedical Sciences, BS](#)
- [Clinical Laboratory Sciences, BS](#)
- [Communication Sciences Disorders \(American Sign Language Minor\), BS](#)
- [Exercise Science \(BS\)](#)
- [Exercise Science \(Occupational Therapy Concentration\), BS](#)
- [Exercise Science \(Physical Therapy Concentration\), BS](#)
- [Health, BS](#)
- [Health Services Technology \(BAT\)](#)
- Integrated Health Sciences, BS
- [Kinesiology, BS](#)
- [Kinesiology \(Athletic Training Concentration\), BS](#)
- [Kinesiology \(Coaching Concentration\), BS](#)
- [Kinesiology \(Recreational Sports Management Concentration\), BS](#)
- [Kinesiology \(Teacher Certification\), BS](#)
- [Nutritional Sciences \(Food Technology and Management Concentration\), BS](#)
- [Nutritional Sciences \(Nutrition Concentration\), BS](#)
- [Nutritional Sciences \(Nutrition and Fitness Concentration\), BS](#)
- [Nutritional Sciences \(Research Concentration\), BS](#)
- [Rehabilitation Services, BS](#)
- [Rehabilitation Services \(Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Concentration\), BS](#)

## College of Health Professions Minors

- [American Sign Language Studies](#)
- [Addiction Studies](#)
- [Expressive Arts](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Health Services Technology](#)
- [Kinesiology](#)
- [Nutrition Sciences](#)
- [Rehabilitation](#)

Meet students from the College of Health Professions

[https://mycourses.utrgv.edu/bbcswebdav/pid-8354767-dt-content-rid-91190262\\_1/xid-91190262\\_1](https://mycourses.utrgv.edu/bbcswebdav/pid-8354767-dt-content-rid-91190262_1/xid-91190262_1)

## School of Nursing Bachelor Degrees

- [Nursing, BSN](#)
- [Nursing \(RN – BSN\), BSN](#)

## School of Social Work Bachelor Degrees

[Social Work \(BSW\)](#)

After the exposure of the available majors and minors, it's



time to understand how do they translate to the associate career after graduation. Here is an activity that helps you to learn more about healthcare career options.

## Interview with a Health Professional

The objective of this assignment is to learn about what a health professional does.

1. Select a health profession that you are interested in pursuing.
2. Identify a professional in that field.
3. Make an appointment by asking for a 15-20 minute informational interview.
4. Make sure to be respectful of the person's time and not to exceed the allotted time.
5. Make sure to thank them for their time. A thank you email or note are a nice follow up.

### Suggested questions (feel free to add any others):

1. What degrees do you hold and what other practice preparation did you have for your current position?
2. What path did you take to arrive at this position?
3. What types of activities are you involved in on a day-to-day basis?
4. What are the key skills and competencies that are needed

in this job?

5. What brings you satisfaction in your job?
6. What challenges do you face in your job?
7. Did you have any role models on your educational and career path?
8. Did you have a mentor? If yes, how did you go about to have one?

After completing the interview prepare a narrative of the answers and reflect on the knowledge you gained: Are you more or less interested in pursuing this health profession, any surprises, etc.? The total assignment (answers + reflection) is around 500-600 words.

*This assignment is adapted from an [Informational Interviewing assignment by Dr. Sharon Buchbinder](#).*

For any questions you may have on the different majors and minors, consult an advisor, a program coordinator, chair and/or school director.

## 10.

# CHAPTER 10 WHY DO I NEED A ROADMAP?

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## Introduction

Roadmaps are a suggested sequence of courses that you may take during your time at UTRGV. Below are the Roadmaps for undergraduate programs within the College of Health Professions. As you review your own Roadmap, we encourage you to pay close attention to additional course **prerequisites and requirements** such as course sequence, course grades, classification and/or course rotation. These roadmaps help you to stay on track to complete the core and major requirements meeting your degree requirements. Use this link to find more information about your core requirements ([Understand Your Core Curriculum | UTRGV](#)). Additionally, in connection with your core, take a few moments to review your Roadmap and observe how your graduation pathway intersects with the Categories listed in the Core.

For the latest information on Roadmaps, visit the [Know Your RoadMap to Graduation | UTRGV](#).

We have included your program coordinators below for you to outreach to. Communication is a critical foundation skill to have as a health care professional. Let's practice now.

## Bachelor of Science in Integrated Health Sciences

For more information about BSIHS,

- Visit <https://www.utrgv.edu/coha/bsihs/index.htm>
- Contact Dr. Christopher M. Ledingham, Program Director via email at [BSIHS@utrgv.edu](mailto:BSIHS@utrgv.edu)

## Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders offers the following undergraduate degree programs.

- **Communication Sciences and Disorders (BS)**
  - Program Coordinator: Sonya Salinas, (956) 665-2181, [sonya.salinas@utrgv.edu](mailto:sonya.salinas@utrgv.edu)
  - Meet Ms. Salinas and learn about the admissions process into Communication Sciences and Disorders [here](#) (7:47 minutes).
- **American Sign Language Interpretation *Spanish Translation and Interpreting* (BS)**

- Program Coordinator: Dr. Brian Cheslik,  
(956) 665-7040



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:*

<https://pressbooks.utrgv.edu/cohpstudentsuccess/?p=30#video-30-1>

## Department of Health and Biomedical Sciences

The Department of Health and Biomedical Sciences offers the following undergraduate degree programs.

- **[Biomedical Sciences \(BS\)](#)**
  - BMED Program Manager: Ms. Rosalinda Garza, (956) 882-7383, [rosalinda.garza@utrgv.edu](mailto:rosalinda.garza@utrgv.edu)
- **[Clinical Laboratory Science \(BS\)](#)**
  - Program Director: Dr. Daniela Gill, (956) 665-2296, [daniela.gill01@utrgv.edu](mailto:daniela.gill01@utrgv.edu)
- **[Health Services Technology \(BAT\)](#)**
  - Program Coordinator: Ms. Kim Garcia, (956) 665-4781, [kim.garcia@utrgv.edu](mailto:kim.garcia@utrgv.edu)
- **[Nutritional Sciences \(BS\)](#)**

- Program Director: Ms. Rachel Villarreal, 956-665-5269, [Email: rachel.villarreal@utrgv.edu](mailto:rachel.villarreal@utrgv.edu) or Email: [bsnutritionalsciences@utrgv.edu](mailto:bsnutritionalsciences@utrgv.edu)
- Nutritional Sciences Tracks
  - **Nutritional Sciences (BS) – Nutrition**
  - **Nutritional Sciences (BS) – Food Technology and Management**
  - **Nutritional Sciences (BS) – Nutrition and Fitness**
  - **Nutritional Sciences (BS) – Research**

## Department of Health and Human Performance

The Department of [Health & Human Performance](#) offers the following undergraduate degree programs.

- **Kinesiology**

- Program Coordinator: Ms. Maria Trinidad (Coach T), (956) 665-2115, [maria.trinidad@utrgv.edu](mailto:maria.trinidad@utrgv.edu)
  - Kinesiology (BS)
  - Kinesiology (BS) – Athletic Training  
(Remember to contact the program as early as possible to complete the internship hours required)
  - Kinesiology (BS) – Coaching
  - Kinesiology (BS) – Recreational Sports

### Management

- Kinesiology (BS) – Teacher Certification  
EC-12<sup>th</sup>

- **Exercise Science**

- Program Coordinator: Mr. Guillermo Perez, (956)  
882-8911, [guillermo.perez@utrgv.edu](mailto:guillermo.perez@utrgv.edu)
  - Exercise Science (BS)
  - Exercise Science (BS) – Occupational Therapy
  - Exercise Science (BS) – Physical Therapy

- **Health (BS)**

- Program Coordinator: Ms. Kendra Stine, (956)  
882-2255, [kendra.stine@utrgv.edu](mailto:kendra.stine@utrgv.edu)

Meet the program coordinators, faculty, and other students to learn more about the Department of Health and Human Performance and its degree programs.

GMT20210609-160441\_Recording\_640x360 (1)(1).mp4

## School of Rehabilitation and Counseling

The School of Rehabilitation Services & Counseling offers the following undergraduate degree programs.

- **Addiction Studies (BS)**

- Program Director: Dr. Eluterio Blanco, MAC,  
LCDC, (956)

665-5240, [eluterio.blanco01@utrgv.edu](mailto:eluterio.blanco01@utrgv.edu)

- **Rehabilitation Services**

- Program Director: Mr. Fidencio Mercado, (956) 665-3074, [fidencio.mercado@utrgv.edu](mailto:fidencio.mercado@utrgv.edu)
- Rehabilitation Services (BS)
- Rehabilitation Services (BS) – Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Print out a copy of your degree plan, take notes, and jot down questions. Take these notes with you when you meet with either your advisor or your program coordinator.



## 11.





# CHAPTER 11 STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES DELIVERED

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## Introduction

UTRGV provides many resources that support student success at UTRGV and beyond. This section introduces you to some of these different resources, some of which are already covered by your student fees.

For a comprehensive list of resources and locations, check the following files:

-  [Academic Resources with Brownsville Map.pdf](#)   
[Academic Resources with Brownsville Map.pdf –](#)  
[Alternative Formats](#)
-  [Academic Resources with Edinburg Map.pdf](#)   
[Academic Resources with Edinburg Map.pdf –](#)  
[Alternative Formats](#)

## Academic Success Resources

### Learning Center

The UTRGV Learning Center (LC) assists students by promoting academic success at all levels, from freshman core courses to upper-level and graduate courses. The purpose of the Center is to help students work towards becoming independent learners.

Brownsville: BMSLC 2.118; (956) 882-8208

Edinburg: ELCTR, Room 100; (956) 665-2585

Website: [UTRGV.edu/Tutoring](https://www.utrgv.edu/Tutoring)

### Writing Center

The Writing Center aims to assist and guide students to become better, independent writers. It can help you with writing assignments in any course at all writing process steps.

Brownsville: University Library 3.206 (3rd floor, near stairs); (956) 882-6792

Edinburg: Student Academic Center 3.119 (3rd floor); (956) 665-2585

Website: [UTRGV.edu/WritingCenter](https://www.utrgv.edu/WritingCenter)

### University Library

The University Library provides services and collections

supporting research, teaching, and learning at UTRGV. Note that most library resources can be accessed remotely.

Phone: (956) 882-7424

Website: [UTRGV.edu/Library](http://UTRGV.edu/Library)

UTRGV University Library provides short instructional videos on accessing and navigating various academic databases. Please refer to the list below for links to these helpful and informative videos:

- For a video tutorial (9 minutes) on accessing available eBooks through the UTRGV University Library, [click here](#).
- For a general video tutorial (2m23s) on accessing UTRGV University Library databases and online search tools, [click here](#).
- For video tutorials on accessing specific UTRGV University Library databases, please [click here](#). Examples include video tutorials on databases such as Academic Search Complete, Computer Source, Ed Full Text, ERIC from EBSCO, Journals, Primary Sources, and Books – JSTOR, to name a few.
- For a video tutorial (3m18s) on how to search Google Scholar, [click here](#).

## Student Life

*Be involved in clubs/organizations... By being closely involved, you start building connections, friendships, and*

*leadership skills, which greatly benefit you with various opportunities during AND after college.*

The above quote is from a Communication Sciences & Disorders student. Many students offer the same advice highlighting the importance of student involvement. UTRGV has more than **250 student organizations** that support the growth and development of students through a variety of interests, values, and opportunities to experience leadership development, networking, professional growth, and volunteering. Student organizations help students discover and nurture their unique passions and individual potential.

Visit [V Link](#) to create a profile and get involved in UTRGV student life. Students can search for student organizations to join, events to attend, and keep track of their involvement on-campus.

For more information about student life at UTRGV, visit the Department of Student Involvement.

## Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) and the DREAM Resource Center (DRC)

The Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) aims to support culturally-based affinity groups, enhance programming that builds cultural competence and civil discourse, and provide direct support to students.

The **DREAM Resource Center** (which functions within the CDI) provides support services and resources for

undocumented and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students.

For more information on the services and resources of these two centers, visit:

Website: <https://www.utrgv.edu/studentlife/student-support-services/center-for-diversity-and-inclusion/>

Brownsville – Cavalry 204; 956-882-5141

Edinburg – University Center 323; 956-665-2260

Email: [diversity@utrgv.edu](mailto:diversity@utrgv.edu)

Connect with a DREAM Zone Advocate [here](#).

Virtual Office Hours: Monday – Friday: 9-11 a.m. and 1-4 p.m.

## Technical Support Portal

The Center for Online Learning & Teaching Technology (COLTT) provides services and facilities that promote, support, and integrate best pedagogical practices in applied technologies in teaching, learning, and research for traditional and web-based learning.

If you are not familiar with the Blackboard learning environment, the following link (<https://www.utrgv.edu/online/getting-support/student-support/handouts-and-tutorials/>) contains helpful handouts and tutorials on how to use the different learning tools online and hybrid courses.

## 24/7 Blackboard Support

COLTT offers 24/7 phone and chats support. You can call the main office numbers, (956) 882-6792 or (956) 665-5327, at any time and speak to a support representative.

## COLTT Contact Information

Brownsville: Casa Bella 613; Phone (956) 882-6792

Edinburg: Education Complex (EDUC) 2.202;  
Phone (956) 665-5327

Submit a Ticket: [UTRGV.edu/coltthelp](https://www.utrgv.edu/coltthelp)

Or [Chat](#) with them directly

## Academic Advising

The Academic Advising Center is your partner throughout your academic career at UTRGV. Their [website](#) has a wealth of resources to guide your journey.

Academic Advising Center

Edinburg: Southwick Hall 101 A

Brownsville: Main 1.400

Email: [academicadvising@utrgv.edu](mailto:academicadvising@utrgv.edu)

Phone: (956) 665-7120

Website: <https://www.utrgv.edu/advising/>

If you want to talk to a peer advisor, visit here [Express Advising | UTRGV](#) and talk to one today

## Administrative Support Service

### Office of the Registrar

The Office of the Registrar is in charge of registration, the course adds/drops, transcripts, the graduation application, commencement ceremonies, and other enrollment issues.

Brownsville: Enrollment Center @ The Tower, Main 1.100; (956) 882-8254

Edinburg: Student Services Bldg. 1.150; (956) 665-2201

Website: [UTRGV.edu/UCentral/Registration](http://UTRGV.edu/UCentral/Registration)

### Financial Aid

The purpose of Financial Aid is to provide students and their parent's information regarding federal, state, institutional, and other sources of financial aid.

Brownsville: Enrollment Center @ The Tower, Main 1.100; (956) 882-8277

Edinburg: Student Services Bldg. 1.192; (956) 665-2501

Website: [UTRGV.edu/FinAid](http://UTRGV.edu/FinAid)

### Career Center

The UTRGV Career Center assists undergraduates, graduate students, and alumni who seek help formulating and implementing career plans. Various programs and workshops are offered each semester to assist students in selecting a major

or relating educational experiences to employment opportunities. Review the module on Career Explorations for detailed information on the Career Center and its services.

Brownsville: BINAB 1.105 ; (956) 882-5627

Edinburg: Student Services Bldg, Rm. 2.101; (956) 665-2243

Website: [UTRGV.edu/CareerCenter](http://UTRGV.edu/CareerCenter)

## Dean of Students Resources

The Dean of Students Office assists students when they experience a challenge with an administrative process, an unexpected situation such as an illness, accident, or family situation, and aids in resolving complaints. Additionally, the office helps advocate on behalf of students, informs students about their **rights and responsibilities**, and serves as a resource and support for faculty and campus departments.

[Vaqueros Report It](#) allows students, staff, and faculty to report concerns about a student's well-being, seek assistance in resolving a complaint, or report allegations of behaviors contrary to community standards or campus policies.

The Dean of Students can also be reached by emailing [dos@utrgv.edu](mailto:dos@utrgv.edu) or visiting [Virtual Office hours](#) in which a representative is available Monday-Friday 9:00-11:00 a.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m.

## Military and Veterans Success Center

The Military and Veteran Success Center is dedicated to



assisting student veterans, guardsmen, reservists, and military family members in pursuing educational goals. The Center serves as a liaison between students receiving military educational benefits and the Department of Veteran Affairs.

Brownsville: Cavalry Hall 104; Phone: (956) 882-8980

Edinburg: University Center 113; Phone: (956) 665-7934

Email: [veteranservices@utrgv.edu](mailto:veteranservices@utrgv.edu)

Website: <https://www.utrgv.edu/veterans/>

**Services only work if you are there with questions.** Visit 3 student services that may be of use to you and learn the services they offer.

## 12.

# CHAPTER 12 ADVICE FROM STUDENTS WHO HAVE GRADUATED

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## Student Testimonials

In this section you will read and hear the advice of students who have been in your shoes just a few semesters ago.

### ***Samantha, BS 2016***

As an entering college freshman, it is exciting to obtain the freedom of building your own schedule and taking classes that focus on your specific interests. Although you can also get lost in the midst of the “newness”, know that many have been where you are and are there to help you along the way.

The following are some pieces of advice to guide during your college experience.

1. **Know your degree track.** Learn what courses you need to take and when you need to take them in order to be on track to graduate by your desired date. UTRGV has

an online tool called “Degree Works”, available via ASSIST, that is a great way to help you see what courses you need. If you prefer to speak to someone, visiting your advisor at the end of every semester can also help you ask all the questions you have about our degree and prepare you to register for your next classes early. Slots for courses fill up quickly every semester, so knowing what classes are next can relieve some stress and allow you to be one of the first to register.

2. **Ask for help.** You never know if the question you have is the same one someone else is afraid to ask. Whether it is a question about tutoring, classwork, or anything at all, don’t let the opportunity to ask pass you by. Professors, teaching assistants, and UTRGV staff are there for anything you need.
3. **Stay on top of your GPA.** Especially if you are considering graduate school, or any program after you obtain your bachelor’s degree, keeping track of your GPA is a must. Every single course you take counts! Be sure to take all your classes seriously and dedicate the proper time to them to get the grade you deserve.
4. **Build your resume.** You may think it’s too early to dwell on extracurricular activities, but before you know it, you will be senior in college! Joining leadership clubs or being a part of any extracurricular activities relevant to your degree are great ways to prepare you for the next phase of your life and keep your head out of the books

for a while. Research, volunteering, working, or simply being involved in your community not only help you become a well-rounded person, but allows others to see your strengths.

5. **Focus on YOUR interests.** Having friends and a community of support throughout college can help bring balance in your life, but sometimes may sway your choices. Keeping your interests in account is key to helping you achieve your career goals. If needed, step out of your comfort zone occasionally to try new things. Most importantly, be a part of activities that drive you to accomplish your dreams.

### ***Paola, BS 2019***

As a new freshman entering the college life, you will soon be discovering and experiencing new and exciting things. As a recent college graduate, I have some valuable advice for you that helped guide me through my adventure years in college. My number one piece of advice is **“GO TO CLASS”**. Don’t miss unless you really have to. You’ll soon come to realize how much information you can miss with just one day of being out. **If an assignment is due don’t wait until the night before to start working on it.** Start working on it each day, a little bit at a time. This will make due dates less stressful. **Use the resources that are given to you, they are there for a reason. Get to know your professors and don’t be afraid to reach out when you have questions.** They are all there to

help you. Ask and you shall receive. **Join clubs**, if you don't know where you can make friends, research the different clubs at the university and start building relationships. **Create healthy study habits**. If you know you can get easily distracted at home, use the library or find a quiet place around campus where you know you can go to and get your work done. Make a schedule and plan. When I was a student, I can tell you that creating a schedule and planning time for assignments really relieved some stress. I had more time to finish my work and was able to enjoy some "me," time without worrying about assignments that were due. **Make a study buddy**. I remember that having someone to study with for an exam made it much more fun as well as helped me retain information for whichever class I was studying for. Don't forget to **exercise**, this will not only help you stay active, but it will also allow you to clear your mind. College can be stressful, and sometimes it can be very challenging, but its important that we remember that we must also take care of our mental health in order to continue to succeed. **Keep an open mind and learn how to accept feedback**, this will help you grow as a student and will make you a great professional someday. When I was a student, I soaked in all the feedback my professors gave me because I knew it would make me more knowledgeable. If you need a job, do a job hunt around campus. If you qualify for work study, I highly recommend that you apply. As a student, being a work study at campus really helped with getting school work done and getting some

extra cash. You will make mistakes, and its 100% OK, as long as you learn from them and continuing striving to be better. You'll come across many challenges and as you go you'll learn to navigate them better each time. Remember there are so many people going through the same thing as you are, so don't be afraid to reach out. Lastly, **don't give up, EVER!** I remember as a student wanting to give up so many times, because I felt I couldn't do it. But, you can and you will.

If you hear from a Communication Sciences and Disorders (COMD) major

### Advice from COMD juniors (2020-2021)

#### What do you wish you would have known before applying to the COMD program?

- Personally, although I knew that it would require more studying once in the program, I wish I knew that it would require more studying than I had done in a long time or rather had ever done. I have always gotten good grades, but I if I had been aware earlier on, I could have gotten into the groove of forming better study habits earlier on. Also, I wish I had known more about NSSLHA before the program. I would have loved to be involved ahead of time if I had known it existed.
- I wish I would have known that I needed to change my

study habits and read more to fully grasp the idea of the material.

- I wish I would've known the deadline to apply for the COMD program because I was held back a year for missing the deadline. The bottom line is to **be informed about dates**. Also, I wish I would've known to be more organized; it helps studying, the earlier you do it.
- Before applying to the COMD program I feel like I knew enough because of the **roadmap, college fairs**, etc. so I didn't have questions. Not to mention that when I had questions, I would **reach out to the undergraduate program coordinator**.
- One thing I wish I knew was how important it is to start **asking for your recommendation letters way in advance**, if it's just bringing up the idea to one of your professors or even emailing them bringing up the idea so they have time to prepare and they are not caught off guard. It helps make recommendations work smoothly and lessens the stress of both parties.
- I personally wish I would have known **how much information-based the program is**. When I was finishing up my core classes I did not find myself studying as hard as I do for this program. I understand that it is expected for our program but seeing that we had to adjust to online courses, it is very different than learning in person on campus. I feel that if I would have known

how much studying we would be doing once in the program; I would have gotten a better study-technique down.

## What has helped you the most, once in the COMD program?

- What has helped me the most so far in the program is having a **friend** or two who is also in the program that I can study with. We study on Zoom every other day for hours, or at least twice a week and talk through what we have learned so far in our classes and quiz each other on the material. I also schedule certain days to work on certain classes.
- Since we have been online due to the pandemic, making zooms has helped a lot with studying and getting to **know my classmates** so that we can give each other feedback.
- Once I was in the program, what helped me the most was **making friends**. By me making friends with my classmates, we help each other during study sessions, answering each other's questions to the best of our abilities.
- Once in the program, what has helped me the most is my **professors, peers, and COMD staff** support. Honestly, COMD professors are so helpful, motivating, and want the best for their students. In addition, when



having questions, I tend to ask my COMD cohort first and they always help. What has helped me also is to **find different ways to study for each class and to study beforehand**. After lectures, reviewing my notes and going over the information has helped me the most. In addition, reading the books and making notes is helpful.

- Building **connections** with all the other people in the program. If it's just one friend or a group that you love to study with, I found out that this is the most helpful thing to have. It gives me peace of mind to know that I have people out there that are going through the same thing as me and I can truly rely on them if I have any questions or anxieties about anything in the program. Furthermore, finding that right **study group** is also something very helpful that I have discovered. Personally, before the program and in high school I would have considered myself an independent person when it came to studying. However, now being in the program I really do not know how I went so long without having others to study with. It has truly helped me in ways that I never even thought about in my younger years.
- I think that once in the program you realize how **available** all your **professors** are. The same goes for the seniors and mentors that we are given. Overall, every person in our program is easily approachable which relieves so much stress for me personally.

- Figure out your best form of studying because it will definitely help you once you are in the program. Once in the program you will literally learn something new every single day. So, it is crucial to have a way of studying that helps you learn the material faster and easier.

### **What suggestions do you have for future students?**

- Read, watch videos, try to understand what it is you are going to learn about. It might seem like a lot at once, but it is so interesting, and it feels good to know that all the information you are taking in will one day make an impact in someone's life. I am barely on my first semester, but I can assure you it is the best program to be in! I could not be happier to be learning all this information to, soon, one day, help someone with a speech disorder.
- I suggest **having 1-2 friends to study with** that are determined to stay on task and review the material with you. It helps to start reviewing and quizzing yourself on the material at the end of every week or even the day after, and **not wait till a couple days before the exam(s)** to review everything. I usually type out my own notes based on my reading from the chapter(s), put together questions and answers based on the outlines or PowerPoints to quiz myself repeatedly during the weeks before the exam(s), and reread the chapter(s) at least one

more time after the initial reading. It is also sometimes helpful to come up with tips, acronyms, or hand motions to recall information faster. Don't overwork yourself, take study breaks, manage your studying for each class wisely, and study more than a week in advance. Also, **get involved with NSSLHA! It is a great organization** with lots of awesome opportunities.

- Take it one day at a time, ask questions and to not be afraid to ask for help.
- Buy a calendar. It helps me to see what my daily objectives are for the day and to give certain classes more attention than others, especially during test time.
- Always **reach out** to peers or professors when you need help. Don't be scared and try out new things. Get a **study buddy** or a group of friends to study and help each other. Another suggestion would be to **join the NSSLHA** organization from our college if you haven't yet. NSSLHA is also very helpful and informative if you want to become a speech pathologist. You get to experience different events and learn new things once in this organization.
- My biggest suggestion is finding those **people that you connect with** and feel like you can be successful studying with. This will help you a ton in this program. Being able to confide in others and be able to succeed in and outside the program is very important and special. Another suggestion is to **study, study, study**. Yes, I

know this may seem obvious, but I mean studying before the exam or a couple nights before is not going to cut it. I suggest you start looking over your notes **weeks in advance** and learn the best methods that work for you.

- Finding what works and what doesn't for studying is my biggest advice. One cannot study the same way for every class, what works for one class might not work for the other. Most importantly, to not be afraid of asking questions or talking to others for help.
- **Study and practice ahead of time.** Also, **learning rather than memorizing** is very helpful. As we move into the COMD program all the information we learn keeps building up and that's why it's not good to memorize information. Moreover, **being organized** and making time to work on a specific class on a certain day is beneficial to not be all over the place and learn better. Furthermore, when being a freshman or sophomore in college, try to **do your best in all your classes**. If you get a C or sometimes a B, don't be too hard on yourself and try to do better as you move along. Learn from simple mistakes you do. For example, if in your first exam you don't do too good, find a different method to study and keep going. Another way is to **use the university resources** that can help you. There's the **learning center** that can help you with anatomy and other

subjects, the **writing center** that can help you with your essays, **professor's office hours** if you need help, and much more. Take advantage of the universities resources and keep doing your best.

## Advice from COMD Seniors (2020-2021)

- **Be involved in clubs/organizations** and participate in class discussions. By being closely involved, you start building connections, friendships and leadership skills, which greatly benefit you with a variety of opportunities during AND after college. Another piece of advice I'd like to share is to **never give up**. Anything can be challenging initially when we are new to it, such as the world of Speech Pathology or virtual learning itself, but you **WILL** learn to adapt. You will tackle many obstacles by using your critical thinking skills or simply asking for help from a professor, peer, or mentor, who are always an email or call away.
- Do research and **talk to your academic advisor** regarding your potential career goals/options and which academic route will be best to get you where you want to go. It is also important to **talk to your professors** when they have office hours. Especially if you need help in the class, but even if you don't. Even though it can seem intimidating, it will help you in the long run, the and professor will appreciate your effort.

- For incoming freshman, I recommend them to **use their time wisely**. Getting a planner will benefit them and guide them through out college. By doing this they will figure out a way to know how to handle each class in a most proactive way and won't forget any duties they need to finish.
- **Utilize your advisors!** That is what they are there for. Be in constant contact with your advisor. Let them know what majors/programs you might be interested in, so that way you have an idea on what programs you must submit an application for, and their prerequisites and requirements. **Ask about what minors could compliment your major** and how you can request for that to be done. Also, be considerate of your **time management**. This is something that I really struggled with as a freshman in college. I was so used to the high school structure, so being on my own time was a different ball game. I had to learn how to manage my time and bought myself a planner to make sure I was keeping up on due dates for my classes and giving myself time to study for my exams. This is key for success throughout your college life. Another thing would be to get or **stay involved in the different clubs and organizations** UTRGV has to offer! There are tons of organizations to choose from and lots of volunteer opportunities that you do not want to miss out on. It

may seem like it is not a big deal, but when it comes around to building a resume, these organizations and volunteer hours are a great way to make you stand out. My last piece of advice would be to **enjoy your college experience to the fullest!** You will not get these years back, so cherish them as much as you can because time will fly by and by the time you know it, you will already be applying to graduate.

- **Get a planner ASAP** because the procrastination is real! Entering this new independent life, you are responsible for your classes and all the deadlines so stay organized and on top of things. Even though it's easy to put off assignments, you'll end up putting an excessive amount of pressure and stress on yourself. These next four years, **utilize the variety of different tools and resources** that this university offers and **don't be afraid to ask for help!**
- (1) **Get involved.** Even if you feel you are only a freshman, it is important to join clubs and organizations to volunteer and get a glimpse of how life after college is. Doing this can orient you towards the right path to your career; (2) **Manage your time wisely.** Keeping a planner can help you organize your projects, homework, and daily activities. This is essential and helps you organize your time to be the most effective and not miss any deadlines. (3) **Go to your professor's office hours.** It is important to develop professional relationships with

your professors so they can get to know you. This gives you the confidence to ask questions when needed and approach them easier.

## Hear what a Exercise Science/Kinesiology major has to say

The following is advice that Exercise/Kinesiology students would give to an incoming freshman.

- Even though many biology classes may be discouraging **be patient** and study hard because hard work pays off.
- **Ask questions and discuss topics with your peers** you will learn from others and may even find answers to your questions.
- **“Take it all in”**. Throughout my college experience, I’ve learned that our lives can change within a matter of seconds. One minute you’re out hanging out with your friends, then the next, you’re crying your eyes out because you do not seem to understand a word that your professor is saying; all while in a world pandemic. You might question whether if college is for you when you’re studying for an exam at 1am. However, it is necessary that you “take in” the countless hours of studying, the questions you ask during the lecture, the extra credit you’re holding on to for dear life, and the proctored



exams that tend to give you anxiety. Because once you've reached your senior year of college, it is then that you will realize what life is about. It is important to remember that your first year of college is not about the parties, but instead of finding ways to help improve discipline, determination and dedication.

- Make sure Exercise Science is the degree you want to do. Many students who are nearly about to graduate end up not liking their major and are left doing changes. If you want to do changes make sure you do them in your first year or ASAP.

- Do not get discouraged it might seem like a lot but **organization is the KEY!** Buy yourself a planner and get to work. **Ask questions, join or create study groups** with others in your class. **Be involved in the learning process from the start** of the class and **do not wait until the end. Get to know your professors and understand they are willing to help** students who help themselves. **Read everything you can for the subject at hand and always challenge yourself to research information that you do not understand.** It is also okay if you cannot pass a class the first time around, don't be ashamed to take classes again. Sometimes it takes some extra effort to understand the entire material presented and it is ok to fail in order to succeed. It's not the smartest that gets a degree, it is the most determined. **Success is in the effort.**

- **Always make time to study.** Already going to my final year majoring in Exercise Science, it has hit me pretty hard how much I need to make time to study. Also, **time management is very important** when it comes to this degree. Classes from Anatomy and Physiology to Physiology of Exercise require a student to know a vast majority of information and retain it. Time Management is key to be successful in College, especially when it comes to a major such as Exercise Science. Studying and going the extra mile is the key to excellence.
- Measure your options and **research which degree plan is best for you.** There are many occupations to choose from like physical therapy, occupational therapy, a coach, a personal trainer, etc. Another piece of advice is **make time to study and find your ideal note taking skills.**
- My advice to incoming first-year students, would be **not to procrastinate**, you've got to be thinking about all kinds of opportunities that will emerge. One of the best time management tips when it comes to preparing for exams, is to do a little every day instead of putting off all your studying until the last minute. The classroom community belongs to everyone in there. So, **don't be afraid to speak up in class**, provide your feedback. And, if the professor is going too fast, not being clear, using unfamiliar terminology raise your hand and ask for

clarification. Don't compare yourself to other students. It is easy to feel lost, especially when it comes to academics. Remember that everyone has unique talents, and you have four years to cultivate yours.

- Study and actually learn the material. **Most Exercise Science/Kinesiology classes all teach the same background information.** A&P is one of the harder classes I have taken, but if you learn that material by heart, you should have no problem passing every other class. Also try to **manage your time wisely**. If you have an exam coming up it best if you are not going out with friends. Lastly, everyone is just as lost as you are, hang on tight!
- **Take advantage of the classes that are open**, and if there is a seat take it. Also **never and I mean never** – trust me – **leave things till the last minute** and procrastinate. Something I would have liked to know before starting my major would have probably been that **you have to take your classes in a certain order**. Something else is you can't take certain classes together and you need certain prerequisites for certain classes. It would have been nice to know all of this from the start.
- **Take it seriously**. This is not a major you think you can just study a few nights or the night before and think

you are going to pass. You have to put the work in and study if you wanna pass. If you can come into it with prior ***knowledge of at least the anatomy*** portion because this field consists of dealing with the body. Pretty much just study and don't be afraid to ask questions because once you're lost and don't understand the harder it is to understand other topics that follow.

- The single advise I'd give to a first year kinesiology student is to **make sure they really have a passion for the field/career they chose**, because even though it is a rewarding career in itself, if they end up dropping when the classes get hard it is going to be a waste of their time.
- My advice for incoming freshman coming into a kinesiology major or minor would be to be sure that you **know what you want to do with your degree!** The concentrations take you on very different paths and although all of them provide you with useful information it can be tricky if you're not 100% sure what you're doing. On that same note, **don't be afraid to ask questions!** This is your future, your degree. Make the most of it and don't be afraid of taking too long to figure out what you want to do. Getting trapped in something you're not totally invested in can be draining. Lastly, have fun!

## 13.

# CHAPTER 13 WHERE DO I START TO EXPLORE MY FUTURE CAREER

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## Introduction

There are various ways to acquaint yourself with the field you are interested in. These include engaging in experiential learning activities, exploring career paths through internships, and volunteering, among others.

## Where Do I Start?

1. Review the material on engaged scholarship, career center, internships, and volunteering below
2. Create a profile on Handshake
3. Create a profile on Engagement Zone
4. Prepare your resume and submit as an assignment

## Office of Engaged Scholarship and Learning

The Office of Engaged Scholarship & Learning at UTRGV supports student learning experiences beyond the classroom. The Office focuses on helping students integrate and enrich academic knowledge, gain professional experience, and develop skills through hands-on learning opportunities. These experiential learning activities can include:

- Creative works
- Research
- Service learning
- Study abroad

**Funding is available** to support your engagement in any of the above activities.

For more information, visit the [Engaged Scholarship and Learning website](#).

## Career Center

The UTRGV Career Center provides assistance to undergraduates, graduate students and alumni who seek help in formulating and implementing career plans through a variety of career exploration opportunities, employer information sessions, job fairs/expos, and many other

[resources](#). Their services include, among many others, helping you:

- Find a major
- Explore a career
- Find a part-time job on-campus or off-campus
- Prepare for an interview
- Prepare and post your resume
- Connect with employers through the Handshake system
- Find an internship
- Participate in career launching programs such as micro-internships, Student Experience Internship (SEI) program, Student Leadership Academy
- Prepare for graduate school

The following Student Experiences [video](#) (3:45 minutes) includes testimonials from students who have utilized the Career Center services.



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*can view them online here:*

[https://pressbooks.utrgv.edu/  
cohpstudentsuccess/?p=33#video-33-1](https://pressbooks.utrgv.edu/cohpstudentsuccess/?p=33#video-33-1)

To start engaging with Career Center and benefit from all the services available,

- **Access your Handshake account.** The Handshake platform is free to all UTRGV students. Handshake facilitates communication between students, Career Center staff, and potential employers. The process of registering with Handshake takes about 5 minutes. To get started take the following steps:
  1. Log in to [my.utrgv.edu](https://my.utrgv.edu)
  2. In your portal, select and click the Handshake icon
  3. For assistance, view this [video](#) or contact the Career Center.

On handshake, you can [schedule an appointment](#) with a career advisor, [build your Handshake profile](#), [search for jobs](#), [apply for jobs](#), among others.

- Visit the [Career Center](#) during our **Drop-In Hours** via [online](#) or in person at Edinburg (ESTAC 2.101) or Brownsville (BINAB 1.105) locations to connect with staff who can guide you to the services provided and answer any questions you may have or you may also **schedule an appointment** via [Handshake](#).
- Attend a **Coffee & Careers** session for informal career conversations. [Sessions are available every Wednesday](#)



[from 2:30-3 p.m.; online.](#)

- [Grow with Google – HSI Career Readiness Program](#)
- Dress to impress with our [Career Closet](#).

## Resume

Whether you are applying for an internship, a job, a research opportunity, or any kind of student program (e.g., leadership, study abroad, etc.), a resume is one of the first items requested. Developing a top-notch resume does not happen overnight. Starting one early and updating it regularly ensures that you keep track of all your accomplishments and that you have a solid and effective document ready to customize for whenever an opportunity presents itself.

In this assignment, develop and submit your resume. To assist you with the process, the following resources are available.

- UTRGV Career Center: [Get Ready](#)
- UTRGV Career Center: Schedule an appointment through Handshake
- [Advice from a resume expert](#)
- [How to write a resume that will get you noticed](#)

## Internships

An internship is a short-term, paid or unpaid, work experiences that companies and other organizations offer for

students. Internships are an important stepping stone to gain valuable work experience, to explore a career path, to develop and refine your skills, to network with professionals in your field, to gain confidence, and to open doors for future employment.

The UTRGV Career Center offers a [Student Experience Internship Program](#) and [Micro-Internships](#). Visit the Career Center [website](#) for more information and view the UTRGV – Student Internship Panel [video](#) below to hear from students who have recently participated in internships.



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:*

<https://pressbooks.utrgv.edu/cohpstudentsuccess/?p=33#oembed-1>

## Volunteering

UTRGV offers various volunteer opportunities. Through Engagement Zone, volunteer needs and events are posted in real-time by community partners. Over 100 partner organizations are already listed. Interested students and faculty can find requests for volunteers by interest, date, region, and organization.

Start by registering on Engagement Zone (EZ). To get started take the following steps:

1. Log in to [my.utrgv.edu](https://my.utrgv.edu)
2. In your portal, select and click the Engagement Zone icon
3. Add information to your profile
4. View the following video (2:47 minutes) for guidance

## seekUT

### What is seekUT

seekUT is a free, online tool and website that can assist you and your family in making informed decisions about your college education and financial future.

### How does it work?

seekUT presents straightforward and understandable data that tells you what real UT graduates are earning – based on campus and major – one, five, and ten years after graduation. It also tells you what Industries are employing UT graduates in Texas along with predicted job openings.

Additionally, seekUT tells you what the median student loan debt is at graduation for those who took out loans, the percentage of students who borrowed, and the estimated

monthly loan payment compared to median monthly earnings.

Once you realize your foreseeable earnings compared to your expected loan debt, you can better grasp the value of your higher education journey.

## What will the data tell me?

- National and Texas earnings – 1, 5, and 10 years after graduation
- Student loan debt – median loan debt, monthly loan payment, debt-to-income ratio
- Industry of employment
- Job openings by occupation (2012-2022)
- Other interesting information, such as basic degree requirements, time to degree, and the percentage of students who go further in their education

To access seekUT, click [here](#).

For more information on the wide range of services and resources available, visit the Career Center [website](#), or contact the office at:

Brownsville: BINAB 1.105; (956) 882-5627

Edinburg: ESSBL 2.101; (956) 665-2243

Email: [careercenter@utrgv.edu](mailto:careercenter@utrgv.edu)

14.

# CHAPTER 14

## UNDERSTAND CRITICAL THINKING FOR HEALTHCARE CAREER AND READINESS

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You have probably heard about the importance of critical thinking skill for healthcare professionals. Critical thinking is a skill that you will need to practice and service your clients/patients to the best of your abilities as a healthcare professional. It is one of the work-related skills that employers value the most.

You will learn from this section:

Why is critical thinking important for a healthcare professional?

Where does my critical thinking skill stand?

How to develop critical thinking skills?

Critical thinking is an essential skill to have especially as a healthcare professional. To serve a client and/or patient better, you will need to make a lot of decisions. To help with your

decision making, one often starts with associated information collection. On the information that you will be collecting, there are questions that you will need to ask before drawing any conclusions. For example, is the information that I have collected reliable and/or valid? Do I have enough information or need more? Do I have one solution or more? Which one is better in terms of the strength and weakness? Quite a process, right? Let's begin with learning the importance of this skill. Click into this resource to learn why is critical thinking important: [10 Essential Critical Thinking Skills \(And How to Improve Them\) | Indeed.com](#)

Now that you have learned about the importance of critical thinking, it may be helpful to learn where you stand as your preparation as a pre healthcare professional. This is actually a method to practice critical thinking, in addition to using tools such as the graphic organization, mind map, or decision matrices, et al. Use this link to conduct a self assessment: [Self-Assessment Tools – Healthcare Workforce Partnership \(westernmasshealthcareers.org\)](#)

It is perfectly fine to be at the exploring stage. It is where we all start to improve. Remember the process of becoming a critical thinker. First step is to collection information on the question you are asking or need to find an answer to. Practice your critical thinking in the classes you are taking by asking professor questions and starting a conversation with a classmate. Also, various healthcare professions pose different real-world problems that you need to find solutions for. Here

are some tools: [Interest Assessment \(minnstate.edu\)](https://minnstate.edu) or [Health Care Careers | Explore Career Opportunities in the Field of Health Care \(healthcarepathway.com\)](https://healthcarepathway.com) if you need to assess your interest.

## 15.

# CHAPTER 15 NAVIGATE NETWORKING AND INTER-PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION/ INTER-PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION

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## Introduction

In this section, we will explore two areas of expanded skill sets. They are explicitly networking and Interprofessional Education (IPE) or Interprofessional Collaboration (IPC). Both skill sets will contribute to your personal and professional growth. Moreover, they can be practiced and improved. You may have heard someone using the word “networking.” What does it mean? Let’s start with exploring its definition.

- What is networking?



- How does it work?
- Networking skills
- What is IPE?
- Why is IPE needed?
- How are our students trained in IPE?

## First things first, what is networking?

According to Merriam-Webster, networking is the exchange of information or services among individuals, groups, or institutions. Specifically, the cultivation of productive relationships for employment or business.

## How does it work?

Networking is a way to build your support team that facilitates your professional and personal growth. Susan Ward shared her perspective on the importance of business networking. Click on the link to check it out: <https://www.thebalancesmb.com/what-is-business-networking-and-what-are-the-benefits-2947183>.

## Networking Skills

Not feeling comfortable at this point of your academic career with reaching out to the network is quite alright. Here are some skills that you can practice to become better at networking. Experts highly recommend these skills.

<https://in.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/networking-skills>

You may be wondering about how to network as a student. Start practicing the skills mentioned above with your faculty members and any staff members from your Program/Department/College. You may be able to network with more professionals in your designated field when you join them at the conference(s). (And, yes, it is a great idea to join a local/regional/national/international conference if you have the chance. Be part of a project that can be submitted to a conference to get you started).

## What is IPE?

Interprofessional education (IPE) is an experience that “occurs when students from two or more professions learn about, from, and with each other” (World Health Organization ([WHO](#)), 2010). It is a striving goal for all health-related programs to enhance the service provided to our patients and clients.

## Why is IPE Needed?

Although a process started to reduce medical errors, IPE has attracted more attention now than before. When he was a student at Cornell Medical School, Kishore referred to IPE as social responsibility (Global Forum on Innovation in Health Professional Education; Board on Global Health; Institute of

Medicine. Interprofessional Education for Collaboration: Learning How to Improve Health from Interprofessional Models Across the Continuum of Education to Practice: Workshop Summary. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2013 Oct 3. 2, Interprofessional Education. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK207102/>). This social responsibility calls for all healthcare-related professionals to become integral members and work as a solid team to provide the best service to our community.

## How are our students trained in IPE?

College of Health Professions keeps IPE at the heart of the educational experience of our students. Annual events are organized at the College level in addition to the activities offered in the curriculum: <https://www.utrgv.edu/coha/interprofessional-education/interprofessional-education-seminar/index.htm>.

Be sure to check with your faculty on any IPE activities you can participate in during your academic journey with us.

## 16.

## CHAPTER 16 STEP INTO INTERVIEWS

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In this section, you will know all about interviews and how to prepare for them. There are different types of interviews one may encounter before land in an internship, practicum, and/or a job, i.e. in person, one-on-one, group interview. Interview is an effective way for employers to understand how you communicate as a professional. It also is an effective way for you to evaluate if you are a good match for the opening an organization has.

### General expectations for interviews

- Arrive on time or a little early;
- Dress appropriately;
- Shake hands firmly;
- Make eye contact with an interviewer when answering questions;
- Maintain a comfortable pace when you speak;
- Prepare one or two questions to ask your interviewer;

## For over-achievers

- Learn the address before and test out the transportation route and add the potential traffic time;
- Familiarize yourself with the organization and rehearsal the job/internship duties and responsibilities;
- Send a thank-you note or message after the interview has been conducted;
- Contact UTRGV “Closest” for availability of appropriate professional attire;

## Prepare and Practice for Your Interviews

“Perfect practice makes it perfect”. Let’s get started with your preparation. Here are some video sources to learn all about different interviews and get your preparation started:

### Top tips for in-person interviews:



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:*

[https://pressbooks.utrgv.edu/  
cohpstudentsuccess/?p=178#oembed-1](https://pressbooks.utrgv.edu/cohpstudentsuccess/?p=178#oembed-1)

A lot more virtual sessions are taking place. Here are some tips for online Interviews:

<https://youtu.be/iw3zCAZk4dM>



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[https://pressbooks.utrgv.edu/  
cohpstudentsuccess/?p=178#oembed-2](https://pressbooks.utrgv.edu/cohpstudentsuccess/?p=178#oembed-2)

## Group Interview for Health Professional Programs

Group interviews are used more frequently to understand an applicant better within a rather short period of time. Read detailed information from [Group Job Interview: What It Is and How To Succeed at One | Indeed.com](#) to understand the process. There are also tips on how to prepare for a group interview.



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*can view them online here:*

[https://pressbooks.utrgv.edu/  
cohpstudentsuccess/?p=178#oembed-3](https://pressbooks.utrgv.edu/cohpstudentsuccess/?p=178#oembed-3)

## Practice With Mock Interview Here at UTRGV

A career advisor from UTRGV Career Center will be able to help you with practicing interview skills. Visit their website to reach out to them for an appointment: [Students | UTRGV](#)

17.

## CHAPTER 17 PREPARE MY PROFESSIONAL PROFILE/BIO

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Having your Professional Profile/Bio built and shared in addition to your Resume and CV is a great idea.

You may have used these terms, Resume, CV, and Bio, interchangeably, each actually has a unique emphasis and serves a different purpose. Read from this website for a briefing [What's the Difference Between a Resume, CV, and a Bio? | WeWriteBios.com](https://www.wewritebios.com/what-s-the-difference-between-a-resume-cv-and-a-bio/)

This approach definitely helps to tell your story. Consider putting one in place for yourself, even if it may not be required by any classes.

Your peers have also developed Professional Profile/Bio. Here is an example from Ms. Escobedo.

[A. Escobedo's Profile](#)



## Digitized Professional Profile/Bio

With the help of technology, you can link any description on paper with a video-image of yourself. Why is it a good idea? 70% of the information that we want to communicate are through non-verbal/written materials. You can see the amount of information about yourself that you will be able to share by providing a visual. You will find a good read here [How To Make a Digital Portfolio in 5 Steps \(Plus Tips\) | Indeed.com](#)

Find examples of Digitized Professional Profile that your peers have created below.

Karla Trevino <https://victoriarobledo02.wixsite.com/coming-together-rgv>

Mata Caleb <https://uthornscaleb2002.editorx.io/my-site-2>

Prepare difference versions would cover all needs. Now you may be thinking which one should I use? This is a very good question to ask. It is strongly recommended for you to have a conversation with your mentor, advisor, and/or someone from the Career Center. Consider this is an opportunity to exercise your critical thinking skills also. To be able to answer the question, you need to start by analyzing what type of information does the opening call for. Then match it up with either your CV, Resume, or your Professional Profile/Bio. Visit their website [Students | UTRGV](#) for details.

You can benefit from the services the UTRGV Career Center offers as an [Alumni | UTRGV](#).

## 18.

# CHAPTER 18 EXCEED THE EXPECTATIONS AND MAINTAIN WORK-LIFE BALANCE

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## What to do after exceeding the expectations

This is our attempt at assisting your professionalism development after graduation.

As a first-generation student or the first one in your family to earn a Master even a Doctoral degree, you have exceeded expectations from your family and friends in your educational pursuits. But, even in graduate school, you may have experienced this before.

Have you had a schedule conflict between the family celebration and your reserved studying/work time.

Or

Have you had not been able to join family time for a work schedule.

How do you communicate with friends and family on the continuously competing needs of time? You may find this article from a expert accountant helpful:

<https://www.thiswaytocpa.com/exam/articles/passing-exam/how-keep-your-friends-and-family-while-studying/>

Please help us with feedback on how you have handled the challenges by emailing [cohpinfo@utrgv.edu](mailto:cohpinfo@utrgv.edu).

## Maintain Work-Life Balance

As you progress further on your journey, you will find “Work-Life Balance” is a challenge for all professionals, including those in training. Hear from our two female leaders in their professions about the strategies they have used and are using to maintain this delicate balance. Thanks to Ms. Paloma Grimaldo for her interview with our special guests.

Interview with Dr. Zelma Mata

<https://utrgv.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=5fe69957-3fe9-413d-b18a-af0e013702d9>

Interview with Dr. Lydia Aguilera

<https://utrgv.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=f2de0335-21f2-404f-923b-af0e013702e0>

We would like to invite your undivided attention to the inspirational TedTalk from Dr. Juliet Garcia on start your journey of becoming a leader by “Raise Your Hand” ([https://www.ted.com/talks/juliet\\_v\\_garcia\\_lessons\\_in\\_leadership](https://www.ted.com/talks/juliet_v_garcia_lessons_in_leadership)). Here is Dr. Garcia’s

story: ([The Newsroom – Dr. Juliet V. Garcia to receive The Presidential Medal of Freedom \(utrgv.edu\).](#))

This is where you can add appendices or other back matter.