Academic Coaching Manual

Learning Assistance

Tomás Rivera Center

Where Students Come First!

TRC Learning Assistance Program
Academic Coaching Manual

Acknowledgments
Welcome, Mission, and Team Values

Acknowledgments

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We, at the Tomás Rivera Center Learning Assistance Program, are excited to share this manual with other institutions and leaders in the field of student success. All we ask is that we are given credit for the materials used. Please contact us at Learn.Assist@utsa.edu for permission.

The Tomás Rivera Center thanks you for investing time and energy in the field of Learning Assistance, especially Academic Coaching. We created this manual with the hope that you will use it often and add to it as you master your coaching skills and build your collection of innovative methods to help students succeed. We have designed this manual to include general information about UTSA, as well as information specific to our program. After you have familiarized yourself with the information and made good use of this manual, we would like your feedback regarding our program and training materials. Feedback may be provided by emailing us at Learn.Assist@utsa.edu.

Our Mission

The Mission of the Tomas Rivera Center is to promote **lifelong student success** by providing **innovative resources** to UTSA Students and our Community. We are committed to delivering an **un-paralleled experience** where *Students come first*.

May 2014

Tomás Rivera Center Learning Assistance provides services, in an environment where students come first, that improve academic skills in preparation for success as students and as professionals.

April 2015

Learning Assistance Team Values

Integrity- Doing the right thing for the right reason
Flexibility- Willingness to share responsibility for the betterment of the team
Optimism- Looking for the best- in challenges, opportunities, people, situations, etc.
Respect- Treat others as you would like to be treated
Open-Mindedness- Being receptive to the new- situations, ideas, people, etc.
Gratitude- Being thankful and showing appreciation of one another

Chapter 1: What is Academic Coaching?

Defining Academic Coaching

Academic Coaching can be defined as the one-on-one process of helping a student identify his or her study strengths and needs and assisting them in building general, transferrable skills for use throughout their academic career and beyond. Coaches provide students with academic support in areas ranging from time management and goal setting to synthesizing research and professional development. They work individually with students, assessing their strengths and needs, and devising a personalized plan of action.

Academic Coaches are professional staff members either holding or pursuing a graduate degree. Graduate interns are also an acceptable alternative in support of the professional staff. Coaches have excellent oral and written communication skills and are comfortable in presenting to small and large audiences. They are highly knowledgeable in the area of study skills and strategies, and are invested in student success.

Karen Roth
CASP Conference
October 5, 2004

Academic Coaching:
Strengthen Your Learning Assistance Program

Where do faculty and staff at your institution send students who want help with study skills and time management? Usually they send them to the person who runs the Learning Assistance Center—probably you. Establishing a systemic program of assistance for these students ensures that they get the time, attention, and high-quality help that they need—and it also helps busy Learning Assistance supervisors manage their own time and successfully delegate some of their work.

Set up an accessible, reliable, professional program for help with study skills. Academic Coaching can be defined as the one-on-one process of helping a student to assess his or her current study habits and build an effective and flexible set of study skills. Establishing a program such as this in a learning center can provide consistent, expert help for the entire student population at the institution. When students voice their need for help with study skills, they often end up talking with professors or other students who share random study tips and personal experiences that may or may not work for the student seeking help. As learning specialists, we can provide more consistent and effective help for students – by building a specialized program.

When we think about helping students learn new study skills, we run up against a problem. The act of learning isn't very visible. We can watch a carpenter build a house, and learn something from that observation, but we can't very well watch an expert reader read a book and learn much from what we see. Likewise, watching someone study for a test is not a very rewarding experience for an observer. What's going on in that brain? How is that person learning that material? In order to teach learning skills, we have to make the knowledge *visible*, so that the learner can "see" what's going on and then practice the new procedure (Collins, 1991).

In our institution's Academic Coaching program, we help the student "see" the different learning processes involved by first helping the student to assess his or her own study routines, then by modeling new strategies, and finally by encouraging the student to put the new skills into practice immediately. Through ongoing discussion, demonstration, modeling, and practice, students acquire knowledge situationally, grounding it in authentic activities day by day. Because we encourage students to try the new skills and then return for follow-up sessions, the process involves real-life problem solving and social interaction, not just theoretical and declarative information (Stein,1998; Bredo, 1994). Eventually, the student builds an arsenal of personal study skills that he or she knows is effective, and learns how to choose which skill to use for a particular course of study.

Assess current strengths and weaknesses. A first step for students is to become aware of their current approaches to learning (Pressick-Kilborn, 1999). The Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI) assessment tool, developed by Claire E. Wienstein and David R. Palmer, can help students begin to discuss their strengths and weaknesses

with the Academic Coach. The coach and student together can identify goals that the student wants to achieve, and then come to an agreement about how much time and effort the student wants to dedicate in order to achieve those goals. The coach and student together assess the student's notetaking skills, reading habits, and study routines in order to identify areas of need. Generally, students need to develop global before local skills, and then gradually increase the complexity and diversity of those skills. (Durkin, 2002). For example, inexperienced students might need to consider their weekly schedules first and plan out regular study time before they study the finer points of Cornell Notes or SQ4R.

Teach research-based strategies. When professors and students hand out advice to today's stressed and needy college students, anecdotal experiences or "this worked for me twenty years ago" may or may not fit the bill. Teach skills that are based on research and affirmed by specialists in the field. Help students implement basic time- and task-management strategies. Learning To Learn by Heiman and Slomoianko presents excellent problem-solving strategies and is endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education. Teach and model study skills such as Cornell Notetaking, SQ4R, or logical variants of those systems, depending on the student's maturity and the difficulty level of the material. Discuss the reasons for arranging information into charts, flashcards, or concept maps appropriate to specific tasks – for example, how to prepare for a multiple-choice Economics test versus how to prepare for an American Literature essay test. Help students understand how to choose and apply appropriate strategies.

Embed the strategies within the student's current course work. Discuss study skills topics in the context of the students' own life situations and course content. Model, scaffold, coach, and provide feedback. Help students transfer the theoretical discussion in the office into genuine application by practicing the strategies throughout the week and then bringing the results for a follow-up conference. Discussing the results at subsequent sessions helps students to develop self-monitoring skills. Encourage students to keep regular weekly or bi-weekly appointments, if possible, until they feel that they have learned enough to work independently towards their goals.

Support students and assess results. Encourage, challenge, and support the student throughout the process. Refer them to appropriate resources for help with issues such as learning disabilities or financial aid, which are sometimes the underlying causes of problems such as test anxiety and poor time management. Follow up with students according to their original agreements of how much time and effort they want to commit to the process. Evaluate the results with a second LASSI assessment, an in-person exit interview, or a mailed questionnaire at the end of the student's work with the Academic Coach.

How to start up a program.
- **Choose good people.** A friendly personality and genuine concern for students is essential, but not enough. Choose staff who are experienced in teaching study skills and who are mature enough to articulate their knowledge and demonstrate good judgment in tricky situations.

    Student workers, in our opinion, are not usually good choices for this kind of work. Often, they lack experience or confidence or both, and do not have the skills to provide solid assessment and appropriate feedback. Even experienced

students lack the advantage of perceived maturity and expertise that professional staff bring to the position.

- Start small. Hire and train your specialist(s). Design assessment, diagnostic, and documentation procedures and forms. Set boundaries for what your Academic Coaches can and cannot address. Identify other campus resources (Counseling Services, Disability Services, Financial Aid, etc.) for referrals. Use a semester to train staff and refine procedures before promoting the program across campus. Focus on high-quality experiences first, not on big numbers of student contacts.
- Provide adequate resources. Give your Academic Coaches private and comfortable office space. Make sure that they have office supplies and administrative support. Plan time for ongoing staff development—if funds are limited, try to utilize local resources in order to help Academic Coaches flourish in their new position.
- Take care of your caregivers. The people who will be attracted to this kind of work are generally very giving, caring people who can "burn out" if they are not guided and supported. Set realistic expectations of your coaches – their job is to deliver good professional service, not to take on the responsibility of making sure that all their students get A's. Watch your coaches' schedules in order to stay ahead of fatigue and burnout. Encourage them to block some time, at the end of the week perhaps, specifically for personal reflection and research in their field.
- As the program grows, hold weekly staff meetings. Be available for daily, drop-in consultations with your coaches. Publicize the program and document qualitative and quantitative information.
- Keep good records. Research on this topic is still in its beginning stages. Keep good track of your numbers, document student cases carefully, and gather feedback from staff and students about individual outcomes.

As your Academic Coaching program gathers student praise and thank-you letters – and it will—pass on these positive testimonies on to your own learning assistance colleagues, and take credit for a learning assistance job well done.

Characteristics of Effective Academic Coaches

Years of research indicates that a helper's personal qualities can either enhance or hinder the helping process. Sherilyn Cormier and Harold Hackney have named eight necessary characteristics for effective helpers.

- ♦ *Self-awareness and Understanding*: As an academic coach, explore your needs (i.e. need to give, need to be liked, need to please others, need to be right, need for control). Be aware of your motivation for helping. What do you get from helping others? How does helping make you feel good? Be conscious of your own feelings such as happiness, anger, frustration, disappointment. Know your strengths, limitations, and coping skills.   A healthy degree of introspection will be a good starting point for you to become an effective helper.
- ♦ *Good Psychological Health*: You will be a more effective helper if you are not distracted or overwhelmed by your own problems.
- ♦ *Open-mindedness*: This characteristic suggests freedom from fixed or preconceived ideas that could affect your students and is a prerequisite for honest communication.
- ♦ *Objectivity*: Possessing the ability to be involved with your students, yet at the same time, stand back and accurately see what is happening in their relationships; a quality also known as empathy.
- ♦ *Competence*: This refers to whether or not you have the necessary information, knowledge and skills to be of help. Competency sets you apart from a friend by demonstrating a combination of academic knowledge, personal qualities and helping skills. "It would be rare to find a friend with this combination." (Egan, 1990)
- ♦ *Trustworthiness*: This means being reliable, responsible, and avoiding responses or behaviors that could cause harm to your students.
- ♦ *Interpersonal Attractiveness*: Consider this characteristic as being genuine. It is more helpful to be down to earth, friendly and warm versus being stuffy, formal, aloof, or reserved.

(Cormier & Hackney, 1993)

Essentials of a Coaching Relationship
*Adapted from Department of Transportation Mentoring Handbook (1996)

There are five essential factors in a coaching relationship:
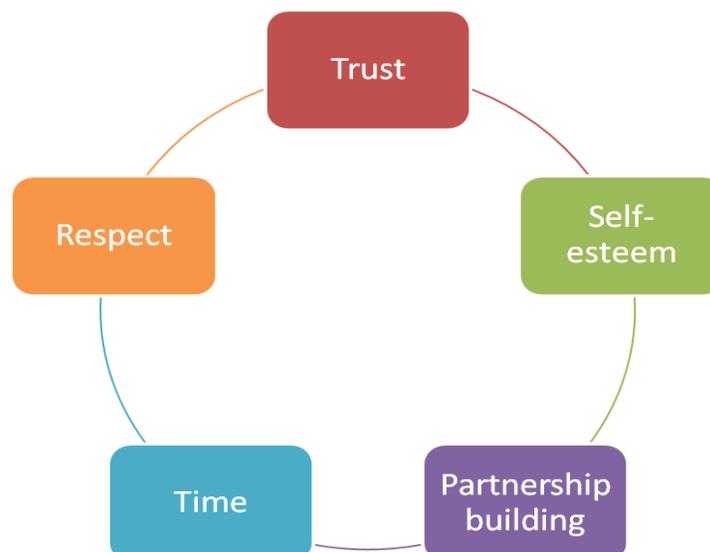
- **Respect**

  The first essential of a successful coaching relationship is respect. Respect is established when the student recognizes knowledge, skills, and abilities in the coach that he or she would like to possess. The student then attempts to acquire these much-admired characteristics. Respect usually increases over time.

- **Trust**

  Trust is another essential of a successful coaching relationship. Trust is a two-way street – both coaches and students need to work together to build trust. There are four factors to building trust:

  - o Communication – You need to talk and actively listen to your students. It is important to value your students' opinions and let each student know that he/she is being taken seriously. Students can help to build trust in the relationship by honestly relaying their goals and concerns and by listening to your opinions.
  - o Availability – You should be willing to meet with your students whenever they need you (within reason). Your students also need to make time for this relationship.
  - o Predictability – Your students need you to be dependable and reliable. You should make a point to give consistent feedback, direction, and advice. You should be able to predict the needs of your students. Conversely, your students need to be consistent in their actions and behaviors. Although your students will grow and change during the coaching relationship, drastic changes in behavior or attitude could signal a problem that needs referral. Look for these indicators of potential trouble in your student:
    - ▪ Frequent switches in direction
    - ▪ Frequent arguments
    - ▪ Frustration at lack of progress
    - ▪ Excessive floundering or procrastination
  - o Loyalty – Never compromise your relationship by discussing things a student told to you in confidence with others, following FERPA guidelines (unless you feel additional intervention is necessary). Avoid criticizing or complaining about UTSA. Disloyalty to the organization may cause confusion on the part of your students.

- **Self-esteem**

  Everyone has the desire to believe that they are worthwhile and valuable. There are several steps you can take to help build your students' self-esteem:
  - ▪ Encourage your students to have realistic expectations of themselves, the coaching relationship, and their experience at UTSA as a whole.
  - ▪ Encourage your students to have a realistic self-perception by identifying their social traits, intellectual capacity, beliefs, talents, and roles.
  - ▪ Encourage your students to change a poor self-perception. Changing a poor self-perception requires a good deal of commitment from a student. Help students change the "can't" self-perception by helping them develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities they need, and help your students change the "won't" self-perception by instilling in them that change is possible if they are willing to make the effort.
  - ▪ The most effective way to build your students' self-esteem is to listen and give positive feedback.

- **Partnership Building**

  When you enter into a coaching relationship, you and your students become professional partners. There are natural barriers that all partnerships face. Natural barriers may include miscommunication or an uncertainty of each other's expectations. Five things that can help you overcome these barriers:
  - ▪ Maintain communication
  - ▪ Fix obvious problems or refer student to proper resource
  - ▪ Forecast how decisions could affect goals

- Discuss progress
- Monitor changes

You and your students can use the following activities to help build a successful partnership:
- Show enthusiasm – Create a positive atmosphere for your students by showing enthusiasm and excitement for their efforts.
- Create an atmosphere for emotional acceptance – Transformation is a campaign for the heart as well as the mind. Help your students feel accepted as they experience the growth and development of the first year at UTSA, whether as a freshmen or a new graduate student.
- Approach changes slowly – Listen to your students and be responsive to their concerns. Freshmen, especially, need time to accept and experiment with the new changes they will face.

- **Time**
  You need to make time to interact with your students. Be on time and consistent – make coaching a priority in your schedule.

Academic Coaching Guidelines

Think back to the people who really made a difference in your life as a student. There may have been many, or perhaps one person really comes to mind. What qualities did that person possess and share? How did this person help you? Often, memories of our own mentors guide us in our way of coaching. Of course, our personal style also becomes a part of how we help others. Finally the needs of those who we coach will largely determine the strategies we employ.

Whatever the style you develop, there are some basic guidelines we would like for you to incorporate.

1. Be committed, and do what you promise.
2. Be a good listener, and never forget that the program is about your students first and foremost.
3. Share yourself and your experiences. Don't be afraid to admit your shortcomings.
4. Set professional boundaries. Your role is to be friendly and supportive of your students, but you are not their friend; therefore do not exceed the limits of a professional relationship.
5. Assist your student in making decisions for him or herself. Teaching effective decision-making and problem-solving skills are some of the best gifts you can give.
6. Be supportive. Everyone needs encouragement and validation.
7. Have an appropriate sense of humor and laugh often.
8. Challenge your students and yourself to be the best possible people you can be.
9. Be on time for all scheduled meetings with students.
   - The front desk must be notified if you are unable to keep a scheduled meeting.
10. Greet your students at the TRC front desk at the time of their appointment.
    - The front desk staff will be responsible for notifying you when your appointment arrives.
11. Act professionally and be courteous throughout the semester.
12. Attend supervision meetings that are scheduled every week.
13. Complete any additional responsibilities agreed upon between you and your supervisor.
14. Record keeping is an important part of documenting the services we provide. Keep detailed notes, complete paperwork, and maintain a file for each student.

By following these guidelines, the coach will fulfill many roles for their students (Joe Cuseo, *n.d.)*:
♦ Advocate ♦ Guide ♦ Role Model ♦ Resource & Referral Agent

Benefits of Coaching

There are benefits to the coaching relationship that can foster development and improve skills in many areas for both the coach and the student. These benefits are similar to the benefits of those exposed to a mentoring relationship, as seen in the literature. The following chart highlights some of those benefits:

Coaching benefits in:	For the Coach:	For the Student:
Learning	- Learn new theories, ideas, and ways to communicate successfully - Opportunity to strengthen academically through study and review with mentees - Enhance leadership and coaching skills - Learn to think critically about themselves and to seek additional help when needed	- Learn the informal and formal regulations and procedures for doing things at UTSA - Gaining information quickly and easily directly from an experienced source - Learn what it takes to succeed and how to push self beyond your expectations - Acquire the skills to get through the organization and achieve a sense of control
Growth	- Becoming aware of your own level of competence - Self-discovery and personal awareness – recommitment to educational and personal goals - Reacquainted with love of learning - Build reputation as a leader and expert	- Ability to develop and maintain relationships - Attain a strong sense of identity and self confidence - Self-regulatory skills such as persistence in tasks and ownership of one's work - Development of leadership skills and increased positive self-perception
Development	- Experience the intrinsic value of helping others work towards their goals - Discover that you want to make contributions to younger people and to your organization	- Ability to feel more comfortable working independently because of guidance - Ability to find value in the learning process, approach learning intentionally - Maturity to develop other relationships that can be mutually beneficial

*Adapted from Schultz, S. F. (1995). The benefits of mentoring. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 66*, 57-67.

"Learning is not attained by chance; it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence." ~Abigail Adams

The Academic Coaching Process – Undergraduates

Abuabara & Wilkins, 2005

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Initial Intake          Identify Task/        Provide              Decide/agree         Teach and
                        Problem               overview of          on plan of           model specific,
LASSI                                         possible options     action               research-based
assessment              Current               or solutions                              strategies
                        concerns                                   Set goals
Build rapport
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Review and                                    Refer to other resources                  Embed the
assess student's                              on campus (Counseling                      strategies within
progress from                                 Services, SI, tutoring,                    the student's
previous                                      professor, etc.)                           current course
session                                                                                  work
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```
Student decides         Student               Summarize
to return for           independently         session
additional              practices newly
coaching                acquired skills       Schedule next
                                              appointment
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The Academic Coaching Process – Graduate Students

Sczech Johns, 2016

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Initial Intake          Task                  Provide              Decision or          Writing Project
Rapport building        Identification        overview of          agreement on
Information             Current               possible options,    plan of action       Both writing &
gathering               concerns              alternatives, or                          coursework
                                              solutions
                                                                                        Coursework
```

```
Review & assess                                                                         Teach & model
progress on                                                                             specific
goals/tasks                                                                             research based
                                                                                        strategy and/or
                                                                                        set
                                                                                        goals/timeline
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Coach &                 Student attends       Student works        Summarize
student work on         follow-up             independently        session & make
task together           appointment           outside of session   follow-up
                                              on tasks/goals        appointment
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Protocols for Conducting Coaching Sessions

During your coaching sessions you will cover a multitude of topics. You will be assisting students in adjusting to the academic environment, and helping minimize confusion and frustration. A good coach can be a source of emotional support, practical information, and inspiration!

Tips for setting up appointments:

- Maintain communication with Front Desk staff that make student appointments.
- Ask the student to arrive 15-20 minutes early for intake at the initial meeting.
- Do not schedule more than 4 meetings back to back, or 5 within the same day.
- Remind students not to make an appointment that is 30 minutes before the start of one of their classes. They should not need to leave an appointment early because they have another commitment. Helping the student schedule appropriately is part of teaching them time management skills.
- Explain to your students that they need to let you know in advance if they cannot keep an appointment.

Coaches' Responsibilities at meetings:

- Meet with students as needed based on the arrangement that you and your student make. Typically, meetings are set weekly and then may continue on that schedule or time may be lengthened between meetings as the student becomes more independent and set in their academic plan.
- Be on time for all scheduled meetings. Students are taking time out of their schedule, too.
- Have students sign in at the TRC Reception Desk. As professionals, the expectation is that you act professionally and be courteous throughout the academic coaching relationship.
- Maintaining documentation on each student is a necessary step in building and preserving rapport that is built and in substantiating our services. Some data will be collected and reported aggregately. Academic Coaches are required to keep a file for each student that includes intake paperwork and notes for each contact with the student (i.e. meetings, phone calls, emails).
- Make sure that the student understands their role in achieving the expectations of the academic coaching process.

Suggestions for Facilitating Undergraduate Coaching Sessions

Keep in mind that these are only suggested topics. Most often, your student will choose what s/he wants to discuss based on what their needs are.

First Meeting

- Introductions. This should help to break the ice. Talk about your role as an Academic Coach and what you can do for them. Review expectations and sign any additional forms.
- Review the student's LASSI Scores.
- Start by discussing their academic experience. What classes are they taking? How many hours? Are their classes traditionally difficult? How do they like their classes; any issues? How do they like their professors? Have they purchased all needed textbooks and supplies? Are they using a planner? (Encourage them to use one.) Are they checking their email?
- Discuss how they are doing with note taking, reading, studying, and time management.
- Discuss any expectations, goals, strengths, weaknesses. What grades are they realistically wanting to earn?

Second Meeting

- Assist students in looking ahead. Talk about important and upcoming dates on their syllabi. Have they put test/project/paper dates in their planner? Work with them on a timeline to get these projects taken care of in a timely fashion. Start from due date and work backwards to not be swamped at the end.
- Are they caught up on all reading for classes? This is the point the 'excited-ness to succeed' starts to wear off. Chances are, they've started to get behind on reading.

Third Meeting

- Talk about stress levels and time management, the two coincide. Encourage 'to-do' lists and talk about what they do not understand in classes. Discuss study strategies that may help them. Refer them, if needed, to campus resources.
- If students do have grades back from tests or assignments, how did they do? If they did well, are they still studying with the same enthusiasm? If they did fair, what can they do to do better? If they did poorly, what needs to improve? Do they now understand the material they didn't understand for the graded work? Chances are the concepts will show up again.
- In the midst of tests, discuss the importance of food, sleep, and time management.

Meeting Close to the End of the Semester

- Gear up for finals! Remind them when study days are, and what study days are. Make sure they know when and where their finals are. Are their tests comprehensive? What exactly do they need to know? What are their plans for conquering finals? Talk about study strategies for finals, no cramming! Discuss your own strategies for making it through.
- Do they have final papers or projects they should be working on? Encourage them to have these done prior to finals so they may concentrate on studying.
- Did they enjoy their coaching experience? What did they like most? What would they do differently?

Suggestions for Facilitating Master's Level Coaching Sessions

First Meeting

- Introductions. Talk about your role as an Academic Coach and what you can do for them. Review expectations and sign any additional forms.
- Start by discussing their current academic situation. What classes are they taking? How many hours? What program are they in? Are their classes traditionally difficult? How do they like their classes; any issues?
- Discuss how their graduate experience is going. What has been the biggest change from undergraduate to graduate? Where are they finding that they have issues academically? What additional resources have they sought out?
- Some graduate students will come into academic coaching sessions with a clear cut goal in mind. Ask them what brought them to academic coaching and how academic coaches can help.
- Review the syllabi for each class the student is taking. Work on establishing a timeline for the completion of the semester. When are their exams? When are any major papers or projects due? Establishing deadlines and a time management plan can be one of the most beneficial topics to discuss.

Second Meeting

- Continue to discuss how each specific class is going. What are some of the highs and lows that they have experienced thus far? Do they feel the class is easy or demanding? What kind of challenges do they see coming ahead?
- Discuss how they are progressing on their major projects. Ask them to reflect on the process. What have been some successes they have had? Where do they find themselves faltering? These discussions can help fine tune the game plan for academic success.
- Discuss how they are adjusting to also being a graduate student among other things. Graduate students often are working professionals, so one of their biggest challenges is striking a balance between school and life. If they are having issues, talk about ways to confront and tackle those difficulties (i.e. Time Management, Motivation, Holding Yourself Accountable)
- Discuss if they are considering other opportunities within the college. Encourage participation and networking so as to build connections and opportunities for the future.

Meeting Toward the End of the Semester

- Discuss the importance of sticking to deadlines as the end of the semester approaches. Are they making time to complete their other duties? Do they feel they will be able to complete their tasks on time?
- Game plan for preparing for any impending finals and or assignments. What major projects are left to complete? What is the plan for ensuring that those assignments are completed on time and are of good quality?
- Consider discussing plans for the future. What are their plans once the semester ends? Are they graduating? Taking classes next semester? Working? This serves as an excellent time to remind them that academic coaching will be available to them

in the future and that you are committed to continuing to deliver excellent customer service as they continue through their career.

Suggestions for Facilitating Doctoral Coaching Sessions

(DOCTORAL STUDENTS TAKING COURSE WORK)

First Meeting:

- Introductions. Ask them how they heard about the Learning Assistance Center. Explain your role as an academic coach and the expectations you have of the student for each academic coaching session.
- Look at their file and briefly glance over the student intake sheet they completed at the Reception area. Go over the information on that sheet. What doctoral program are they in? How many hours are they taking? What classes are they taking? How are their classes going at the doc level? Ask if they have their syllabi on them. If not, ask them to bring it to the second meeting.
- What short/term goals do they have for both the semester, doctoral program, and professionally? Discuss those and ask how they plan to execute the short term goals (semester).
- Transition the conversation to talking about Time Management. Ask how they are organizing their assigned readings and how they plan to execute any upcoming seminar and/or research papers. Does the student utilize a tangible planner or on their technological devices? Ask them to complete the Semester at a glance calendar by inputting the BIG things: Research Paper/ Seminar due dates, Quizzes, Final Exams.

Second Meeting:

- Have the student pull up all of their syllabi. They should have completed the Semester at a Glance. Ask them their thoughts when completing the document? Have they made any realizations? What weeks will be more stressful than others?
- Take out the 2 or 3 week game plan. Some doc students prefer to plan ahead 2 weeks while others prefer to plan further out. Ask them what their preference is and utilize the proper document from then on. Go over each class syllabus and mark the Game Plan with their next upcoming assignment.
- Transition the discussion to an academic concern they are experiencing in the doctoral program. Ask the student more questions to get a better idea of what they need instead of jumping in to give them advice.

Meeting Close to the End of the Semester:

- As the semester comes to a close, ask the student to reflect on their experience that semester.
- Did they accomplish the goals they discussed the first meeting? If so, congratulate them. If not, what can they do?
- What could they have done differently? What did they accomplish that semester? What expectations and goals do they have for the next semester?

(DOCTORAL STUDENTS WORKING ON THEIR DISSERTATION)

First Meeting:

- Introductions. Ask them how they heard about the Learning Assistance Center. Explain your role as an academic coach and the expectations you have of the student for each academic coaching session.
- Look at their file and briefly glance over the student intake sheet they completed at the Reception area. Go over the information on that sheet. What doctoral program are they in? Have they defended their dissertation proposal? If not, when do they plan to do that? If they have defended their proposal, when do they plan to have their final defense?
- What short/term goals do they have for both the semester, doctoral program, and professionally? Discuss those and ask how they plan to execute the short term goals (semester).

- Transition the conversation to talking about Time Management. What chapters are they currently working on? Have them brainstorm an outline for the current chapter and ask them to bring it the next session.

Second Meeting:

- Before delving into the current chapter they are working on, have a plan of attack for the rest of the chapters they need to complete. Take out the semester at a glance document and map out the following:
    - Chapter 1 Completion Deadline
    - Chapter 2 Completion Deadline
    - Chapter 3 Completion Deadline
    - Date to submit final product to chair and committee
    - Proposal Defense Deadline
    - Chapter 4 Completion Deadline
    - Chapter 5 Completion Deadline
    - Chapter 6 Completion Deadline
    - Date to Submit final product to chair & committee
    - Final Defense Date
- Now take a look at the outline they created for the current chapter they are working on. Make mini deadlines for them to complete the current chapter.   Take a look at the sections and subsections for that chapter and plan a few days for the student to work on their mini deadlines so that they are able to meet the big deadline you discussed prior.

Meeting Close to the End of the Semester:

- As the semester comes to a close, ask the student to reflect on their experience that semester.
- Did they accomplish the goals they discussed the semester?
- What could they have done differently? What did they accomplish that semester? What expectations and goals do they have for the next semester?

Communicating with the Student

(L. Duncan & P. Glenn, Tomás Rivera Center for Student Success, University of Texas at San Antonio, Academic Coaching Interviewing Techniques, summer 2003)

1. **Opening**
   - Greet students by name, be relaxed, warm.
   - Open with a question, e.g. "how are things going?" or "what brings you to coaching today?"
   - Talk about what academic coaching is and how you can help.

2. **Phrasing Questions**
   - Conversational flow will be cut off if questions are asked so that a "yes" or "no" reply is required.
   - A good question might be, "What have you done differently to prepare for your next exam?"

3. **Out-Talking the Student**
   - Good coaching is effective listening.
   - Listening is more than the absence of talking.
   - Identify the fine shades of feelings behind the words.

4. **Accepting the Student's Attitudes and Feelings**
   - A student may fear that the coach won't approve of what he or she says.
   - Coaches must convey their acceptance of these feelings and attitudes in a non-judgmental way.

5. **Cross-Examining**
   - Do not fire questions at the student like a machine gun.

6. **Silence During the Session**
   - Most people are embarrassed if no conversation is going on.
   - Remember, the student may be processing what was said.

7. **Reflecting the Student's Feelings**
   - Try to understand what the student is saying.
   - For example, it is better to say, "You feel that the professor is unfair to you" rather than "Everyone has trouble getting along with professors sometimes."

8. **Admitting Your Ignorance**
   - If a student asks a question regarding facts and you do not have the facts, admit it.
   - Let the student know that you will look into it and follow up with them.

9. **Setting Limits on the Session**
   - It is better if the coach and the student realize from the beginning that the session lasts for a fixed length of time.

10. **Ending the Session**
    - Once limits have been set, it is best to end the session at the agreed time.
    - A comfortable phrase might be, "Let's make another appointment so that we can go into this further."
    - Set up an appointment by asking for their email address so that it is sent to their calendar.

Chapter 2: Guiding Theories

Chapter 2: Guiding Theories

In this section we discuss different theories which are relevant and applicable to academic coaching. We focus on theories about coaching, student development, communication, and how to be an effective helper. We feel these theories are important to include because academic coaching is based not only on concrete study skills, but theory as well. We must first understand the theory which drives the coaching process before we can become effective coaches.

Where Mentoring, Role Modeling, and Coaching Collide

Although academic coaching is not mentoring per se, there are aspects of coaching and mentoring that merge together. It is important to understand the definition of mentoring in order to see the differences and appreciate each type of assistance. Furthermore, the attributes of an effective role model impact our understanding of an effective coach.

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What is mentoring?

From Dr. Patricia Glenn, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Retention & Success

While there are many naïve misconceptions about mentoring, a great deal is known about the characteristics of an effective mentor or role model. First, let me be clear about one thing. Whatever is assigned or programmed is not a real mentoring relationship. This is the origin of the word:

The term "mentor" comes from the story in Greek mythology about Telemachus, the son of Odysseus, and his search for his father who had departed to fight in the Trojan War. As he traveled Mentor, a trusted and loyal friend of his father, who offered words of advice, comfort, and encouragement, accompanied him. Therefore, the term "mentor" has come to mean a wise and trusted guide and advisor.

A genuine mentoring relationship occurs organically and spontaneously in real life. Usually, the relationship is between an older and a younger person, one who values the other and teaches and one who values the other and learns. It is a mutually satisfying alliance, and is, in fact, rare.

What are we doing now, if it isn't mentoring?

Well, OK, what would you call the engineered type of relationship, where one person is designated to teach or share experiences and one person is designated to learn and benefit? I would say that what we are talking about is a *role model*. Luckily, there has been a great deal of research to determine what makes an effective role model. The legendary Stanford social psychologist, Albert Bandura, has been researching and publishing on role modeling and self-efficacy since the early 1960s and, amazingly is still going strong. Here is a summary of what he has found about what makes a good role model:

What makes for an effective role model?
1. A good role model must be perceived as being similar.
This does not necessarily mean that he or she must be exactly the same age, race, sex or personality. It does mean that the subject, (I'll call this the student from now on) must believe that he/she is capable of being like the role model. There is some research indicating that, in certain cases, a same-sex mentor is more effective.

2. A good role model must be attractive.
This does not mean beautiful or handsome, but somehow, the model is appealing to the student. The student would like to be like the role model in some aspect(s).

3. A good role model is rewarding.
The best kind of rewarding behavior is not constant praise or "unqualified positive regard." The most effective rewards are recognition for a fairly difficult task done well. This kind of task carries its own type of reward in building self-efficacy. The good role model builds on this with appropriate praise and reward. By extension, a good role model sets challenging tasks that allow the student to succeed.

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What we are trying to accomplish with academic coaching is something similar to role modeling or mentoring. "Coaching is unlocking a person's potential to maximize their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them" (Whitmore, as cited in Parsloe & Leedham, 2009, p. 198). A mentor "is a more experienced person willing to share their knowledge with someone less experienced in a relationship of mutual trust" (Clutterbuck, as cited in Parsloe & Leedham, 2009, p. 198). Therefore, academic coaching combines role modeling and mentoring.

We hope that this brief look at mentoring, role modeling, and coaching will continue to guide your work and help us to construct the best possible program to benefit our students.

Meaningful Learning Theory

According to David Ausubel's Meaningful Learning Theory (1960), there are three conditions which must be met in order for meaningful, effective learning to occur: first the learner must intend to apply meaningful learning strategies to any learning task (*intent*); second, the material to be learned must have potential meaning to the learner (*relevance*); and third, the new information must be connected to the learner's prior knowledge base, also known as "schema" (*connection*).
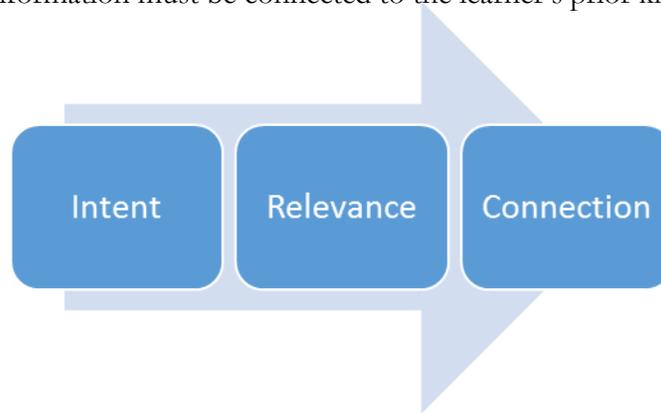
Once the above-mentioned conditions are met, according to the theory, the learner is said to make *meaning* of new material. In other words, the learner actively interprets their learning experience based on internal, cognitive operations. Within the mind of the learner there exists a cognitive structure which provides a framework for learning based on "anchoring ideas." These anchoring ideas are existing ideas which provide a specific point for new information to be connected. As new information is received it is connected to existing ideas (anchor points) in one of three ways: *subordinately* (lower in the cognitive structure), *superordinately* (higher in the cognitive structure), or *coordinately* (at the same level in the cognitive structure). See diagram below:
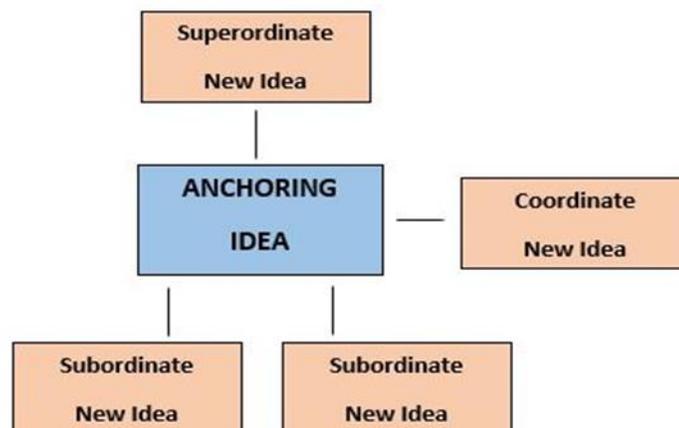
Academic coaches have the opportunity to help students apply intentional strategies to their learning through discussion of study skills, time management, and other learning strategies. Additionally, coaches can assist students in making connections to existing knowledge while learning new material as well as seeing the relevance of material in all their coursework.

Ausubel, D. P. (1962). A subsumption theory of meaningful verbal learning. *Journal of General Psychology, 66, 213-224.*

Gibb's Communication Model

Using Gibb's communication model, you can become a more effective and supportive academic coach. This model of communication seeks to find common ground between you and the person you are assisting and considers one style of communication destructive and the other constructive.

Destructive	Problem with this language	Supportive	Solution with this language
Evaluate	Destructive "you" language	**Describe**	**Separate student from problem**
Control	Ownership shifts to the advisor	**Assist**	**Student owns ideas, language, and problems**
Manipulate	Creates negative feelings	**Facilitate**	**Acknowledges problem and creates space for problem-solving**
Superior	Academic Coach dominates ideas & discussion	**Equal**	**Coach stimulates thought so student can actively participate**
Certain	Academic Coach knows answer and encourages the banking model of education	**Possible**	**Coach encourages student understanding and critical thinking. Inspires inquiry learning.**
Indifference	Dismisses student's emotional reaction to academic problem	**Empathy**	**Acknowledges feeling and emotions & keeps communication open.**

"We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak." ~Epictetus

Arthur Chickering's Theory of Young Adult Development (1969)

DEVELOPING COMPETENCE

The task of **developing competence** is comprised of three areas; **intellectual, physical/manual** and **social**. **Intellectual** competence most often refers to the **development of intellectual skills** and the **acquiring of information**. It also includes **improving mental ability** as well as the development of **critical thinking**. Physical and **manual competence** refers to both **athletic and artistic activities**. Athletics is an arena where competence (or the lack of it) must be faced and therefore, one's ability is starkly revealed. Artistic accomplishment, like athletics, offers clear evidence of achievement and competence. **Social competence** refers to **interaction with others**. All types of interpersonal communication are part of social competence.

MANAGING EMOTIONS

The task is to **become aware of the range and variety of impulses** pushing from within. The increasing differentiation of feelings leads to the **awareness that feelings can be trusted** to provide useful information and can be expressed. The **second phase** of development, integrating feelings with other aspects of the self and achieving flexible control, leads the student to **find and try new modes of emotional expression**, assess their consequences, and ultimately **come to a point where he/she knows how he/she will handle different feelings** and has defined what will be expressed to whom.

MOVING THROUGH AUTONOMY TOWARDS INTERDEPENDENCE

Developing autonomy consists of **three major components**; **emotional independence**, **instrumental independence** and **recognition of interdependence**. **Emotional independence** progresses from a **disengagement** from **parents**, to an increased **reliance on peers**, and finally, to personal autonomy. **Instrumental** independence includes the ability to **carry on activities without seeking assistance** as well as the ability to be **geographically mobile** in relation to one's needs. **Interdependence** is the capstone of autonomy and refers to one's limit of giving and receiving in various areas. It is a **recognition, for example, that loving and being loved are complementary.**

DEVELOPING MATURE INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Mature interpersonal relationships include an **increased tolerance and respect** for those of different backgrounds, habits, values and appearances. It is an **increasing openness and acceptance of diversity**, which includes an increase in the variety of close and lasting friendships. Mature interpersonal relationships also refers to a **shift in the quality of relationships with intimates** and close friends. It includes creating a larger space around people, characterized by greater stability and trust. When this shift occurs, **close feelings persist despite sharp disagreements.**

ESTABLISHING IDENTITY

Establishing identity refers to an **increasing knowledge of one's self**. The **two primary components** include **perceptions concerning body and appearance** and **clarification of sexual identity**. Issues of sexual identification intimately interact with the concerns for bodily appearance and self-presentation. This includes **what it means to be a man or a woman**, coming to terms with **roles and behaviors** and **developing a position consistent with one's definition of masculinity or femininity.**

DEVELOPING PURPOSE

The development of purpose involves assessment and clarification of interest, education and career options, and lifestyle (sexual orientation, marriage, family, etc.). Ultimately, integration of those factors results in setting a coherent, if general, direction for one's life.

DEVELOPING INTEGRITY

The development of integrity is closely **related to establishing identity and developing purpose**. It is **forming a personally valid set of beliefs and values that have internal consistency** and provide a tentative guide to behavior. These values and beliefs are **affected by the kind of person one is** as well as the kind of person one **would like to become**. They are also affected by life-style considerations, occupational plans and dominant interests.

Transformative Learning Theory

Jack Mezirow (1978) described transformative learning as a process in which our previous assumptions, cultural and psychological, become challenged due our finding ourselves in a new role or perspective. The new role or perspective that we find ourselves in is usually triggered by a life altering event or disorienting dilemma. The process by which we assimilate into our new role is a transformative process. Mezirow describes this process as happening in 10 phases. A person can (and will) experience the transformative process many times throughout life and on small and larger scales. There is no strict sequencing in which these phases occur and one may not experience all 10 within each transformative learning experience.

The 10 phases of the transformative learning process:
- A disorienting dilemma occurs
- A self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame
- A critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions
- Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change
- Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
- Planning a course of action
- Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plan
- Provision of trying new roles
- Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
- A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's perspective

Relationships in Mezirow's theory

Source: Adapted from Mezirow, 1997

Marginality and Mattering

Both marginality and mattering are products of relationships and interactions within a community. The role of an academic coach is to minimize feelings of marginality and help students matter. Nancy Schlossberg (1989)

	Question	Marginality	Mattering
Cues	**What is being communicated through this interaction?**	Excluded Disconnected Silenced Shut-down Invisibility Make Assumptions Fear	Recognition Verbal or Written Validation Given Voice Given Independence Specific/positive Feedback "Thank you" Small Talk
Feelings	**What is the impact of this interaction?**	Out of Place Hurt Angry/Frustrated Humiliation Resentful Ignored/Isolated Annoyed	Validated Valued Proud Humbled Good Competent "Warm & Fuzzy
Actions	**What happened as a result of this interaction?**	Avoid Social Settings Disconnection Negatively Bend Rules Avoid or Withdraw Passive-Aggressive Do the "job" and that's it "To Hell with 'em"	Take on more Responsibility Respond Well Stay Committed to Organization Stay Emotionally Involved Try Harder Take Risks Engage in Relationships

Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry is a cooperative search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them, involving systematic discovery of what gives a system "life" when it is most effective and capable in economic, ecological, and human terms. Using Appreciative Inquiry as a framework encourages students in a positive manner to focus on critical reflections that lead to transformative learning.

The 4-D Cycle, the most widely-used model of Appreciative Inquiry, was developed to engage participants in a narrative-based process of positive change via rapid and/or informal conversations (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). The four D's of Appreciative Inquiry are:

Discovery – mobilizing the individual by engaging in the assessment of strengths/weaknesses; cultivating accountability

Dream – creating a clear vision; setting clearly defined goals; prioritizing strategies to accomplish goals

Design – creating a plan to achieve stated goals/vision; identifying resources which can aid in accomplishing goals

Destiny – affirming strengths; monitoring progress toward reaching goals

The different stages of the 4-D Cycle fit seamlessly with the work academic coaches do with their students; from using tools such as the LASSI to assess academic strengths and weaknesses; to assisting students in setting clearly defined goals; to helping students develop time management and planning strategies and guiding them to other academic resources; to encouraging and affirming students and offering accountability during ongoing coaching sessions.

Cooperrider, D. L. and Whitney, D. (2005). *Appreciative inquiry: A positive revolution in change*. San Fransisco, CA: Berret-Koehler Publishers

Helpers in the Academic Desert

From presentation by Barbara Babcock & Mary Horne Snaden (University of New Mexico, Gallup)

Using Jungian archetypes and Joseph Campbell's heroic journey, with some southwest imagery—one can begin to understand the positive and negative influences that we have on our students.

Journey of the Student as Hero
- Separation: Student decides to go to school
- Traveling: Academic adventures with companions
- The Return: Student leaves university with new information and skills

This journey will continue to repeat itself, at will.

Along the way the Hero will have many different types of companions: professors, academic coaches, tutors, friends, researchers, classmates, administrators, roommates, family, employers, grandparents, children, etc. Any of these companions could fall into an archetypal model. Below is presented two of the strongest, yet diametrically opposed, of these models:

- Trickster/Fool Archetype
  - The trickster is the element of the psyche that represents multiplicity of consciousness, continually undercutting our sense of a unified self… To the fool, it does not matter what contributes to individual development, inner peace, wisdom, or productivity. The point for the Fool is to express all of one's many selves because it feels good to do so. (Pearson, 1991, p. 59-60)
    - Southwest Example of Trickster is Coyote
      - Encourages dependency and status quo
      - Allows personal curiosity to prompt the questions
      - Listens to a student as a matter of pretense or for their own purpose
      - Displays an insatiable emotional appetite
      - Loathes silence

- Innocent Archetype
  - The Innocent is the part of us that trusts life, ourselves, and other people. It is the part that has faith and hope, even when on the surface things look impossible… It is also the part that allows us to trust others enough to learn from them… (Pearson, 1991, pg.71)
    - Southwest Example of Innocent is Deer
      - Fosters problem solving steps and risk taking
      - Challenges students to "dig deeper" into their questions
      - Actively listens to the student's story
      - Balances emotional energy
      - Feels comfortable with silence

## Southwest Touchstones and Their Models

The Deer model is very "settled" and student centered, where the coyote model is very self-centered. The deer can count to 12 before answering, whereas the coyote is already thinking of an answer before the student is finished talking…

Coyote model	Deer model
Talks to	Talks with
Needs students (co-dependent)	Student defines needs
Has agenda	Builds agenda
Short term solutions	Long term goals
Listens to relate personal anecdotes	Reflects student language ("What I hear you saying is…")
Takes pride in amount of time spend with students	Suggests time limits to encourage processing
Encourages narrative details	Encourages feeling responses
Needs to win	Needs to listen

Self-regulated Learning

Self-regulated learning is a cyclical process, wherein the student plans for a task, monitors their performance, and then reflects on the outcome. The cycle then repeats as the student uses the reflection to adjust and prepare for the next task. The process is not one-size-fits-all; it should be tailored for individual students and for specific learning tasks (Zimmerman, 2002).

The stages in the process of self-regulated learning can be shown visually as seen below:

Forethought
| Plan, set goals | Decide on strategies |

Performance Control
| Use strategies | Monitor performance |

Reflection
| Self-assessment | Assess strategies |
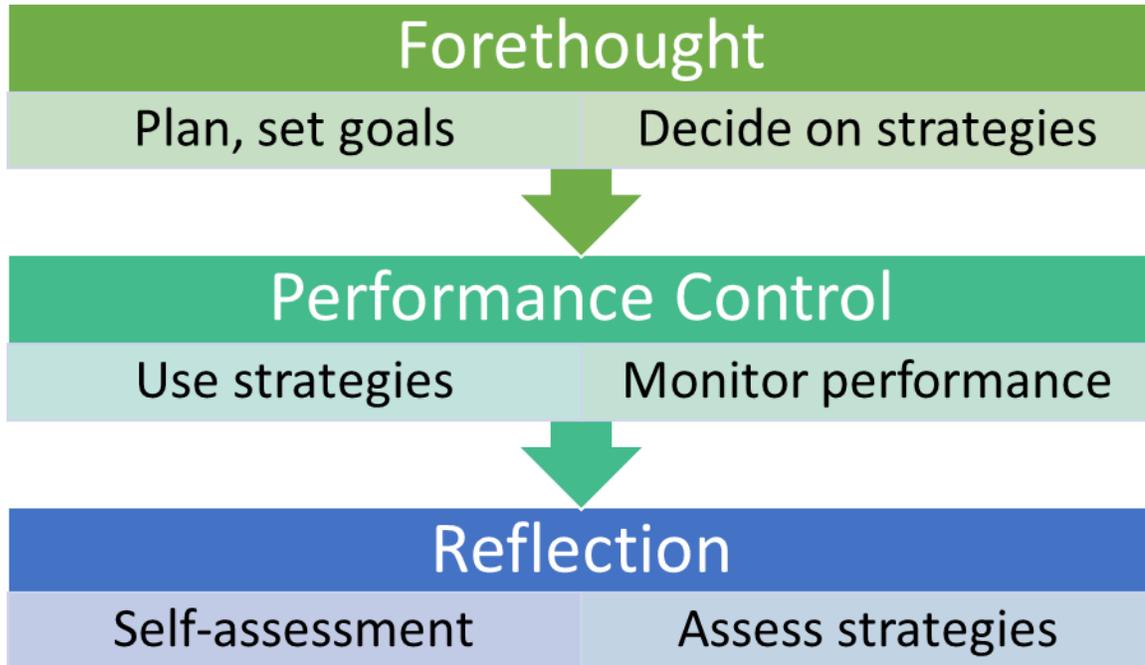
Zimmerman, B. J. and Schunk, D. H. (Eds.). (2008). *Self-regulated learning and academic achievement: Theoretical perspectives* (2nd ed.). Taylor & Francis e-Library.

Validation Theory

Validation theory, introduced by Laura Rendón in 1994, "refers to the intentional, proactive affirmation of students by in- and out-of-class agents (i.e., faculty, student, and academic affairs staff, family members, peers) in order to: 1) validate students as creators of knowledge and as valuable members of the college learning community and 2) foster personal development and social adjustment" (Rendón & Muñoz, 2011, p. 12). Rendón (1994) stresses interpersonal, out-of-class validation as a key component to student learning and retention. Furthermore, validation is active: "the role of the institution in fostering validation is active—it involves faculty, counselors, coaches, and administrators actively reaching out to students or designing activities that promote active learning and interpersonal growth among students, faculty, and staff" (Rendón, 1994, p. 44). Validation allows students to be self-confident, affirms that they are capable of learning, and is empowering.

Academic coaching is a perfect example of both interpersonal and academic out-of-class validation. Based on Rendón's work, academic coaches can be out-of-class validating agents in the following ways:
- Be supportive and caring
- Maintain high standards, not lower standards
- See students as capable of being powerful learners
- Assure students that their ways of constructing knowledge are valid
- Actively reach out to students
- Teach stress and time management

Validation is especially important for retention of nontraditional or underrepresented students who may have not received validation from others in their past or who may continue to not receive in-class validation (Rendón, 1994; Rendón & Muñoz, 2011). As many undergraduate and graduate students at UTSA are nontraditional, incorporating validation into academic support is very important. Academic coaching fills this need by providing validation in a safe, one-on-one environment. Furthermore, validation is a process and validating experiences should be provided early and continuously to students through academic coaching.

References

Rendón, L. I. (1994). Validating culturally diverse students: Toward a new model of learning and student development. *Innovative Higher Education, 19*(1), 33-51.

Rendón, L. I., & Muñoz, S. M. (2011). Revisiting validation theory: Theoretical foundations, applications, and extensions. *Enrollment Management Journal, 5*(2), 12-33.

Socioconstructivist Coaching to Build Self-Efficacy

Socioconstructivism, as rooted in the work of Piaget and Vygotsky, "acknowledges the impact of collaboration, social context, and negotiation on learning" (Wlodkowski, 1999, p. 67). The academic coach can be viewed as an important contributor to a student's learning. Yet, this is balanced with the individualistic view in which students are self-oriented and self-directed. Wlodkowski (1999) discusses this balance when he states that, "I live as a socially constructed being with an individual identity." Therefore, how do academic coaches motivate individualistic students to do their best in a socioconstructed environment? Academic coaches can utilize motivational strategies that challenge students to be their best and that therefore, create a motivational condition (Wlodkowski, 1999).

There are four motivational conditions that enhance adult motivation to learn: inclusion, attitude, meaning, and competence (Wlodkowski, 1999). Therefore academic coaches should strive to establish *inclusion* through respect and connection, model a positive *attitude* toward learning tasks through personal relevance and choice, and assist the learner in seeing the deeper, more purposeful *meaning* of their learning. The fourth motivational condition is *competence* or the desire to build self-efficacy. Students experience this feeling of competence when they are able to apply and practice some new skill or knowledge. Confidence comes from a student's knowledge that they have attempted a task and are successful at it. Therefore, our fourth motivational task as a coach should be to engender competence in our students.

We can assist students with achieving competence through a metacognitive approach to learning tasks—helping the student plan their approach, monitor their progress, and evaluate the outcome. This awareness of the learning process layered with Vygotsky's assisted learning is a blend of individualistic and socioconstructivist approaches. The theory of assisted learning proposes that the student can master certain tasks, if given the appropriate instruction or assistance. The academic coach serves as the "more knowledgeable other" (MKO) and scaffolds the learning task with the goal to provide less and less direction, while simultaneously cultivating competence in the learner. As seen below the MKO would first guide the student through planning, monitoring, and evaluating, then would step first out of the planning portion, then out of the monitoring, and eventually the student should feel competent enough in the learning task to be able to work independently (whether this is managing their time, breaking down an assignment, or writing a dissertation).

Developing Competence

Part of the role of an academic coach is to help students move from unconscious incompetence to unconscious competence in their academics. Through the description and diagram below, academic coaches can learn about this model of coaching.

Before students come in for academic coaching, they may be naïve about what they do not know; in other words, students are in the stage of **unconscious incompetence**. Getting students to make an appointment for academic coaching can be difficult at this point, because they may not realize that they have any trouble academically. For example, students may think they have been studying for tests the best way possible, when in reality they are passively reading their textbook and looking over their notes the night before a test. The recognition that they may not know how to study, brought on by a recommendation from an instructor or a bad grade on a test, may prompt their entrance into academic coaching.

Once students come into academic coaching, the process of discovery or consciousness-raising begins; one way in which academic coaches begin this process is through the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI). LASSI helps coaches and students identify areas of strengths and weaknesses. Coaches can also ask questions that can help students to develop an understanding of where they need to improve their academic skills. This puts students into the realm of **conscious incompetence**. During this process, students have a beginner's mind. Negative experiences, such as continued bad grades on tests or the inability to implement a strategy, can be discouraging for students, preventing them from continuing in the process. They may stop coming in for academic coaching or continue their poor study habits. Positive experiences, such as better test grades or more efficient studying, however, can help students continue into the next level.

Students will learn new skills through the academic coaching process. In addition, students must put in effort to use these new skills. Coaching provides students with the tutelage and mentorship necessary for students to learn these new skills. These processes help students move from conscious incompetence to **conscious competence**. In other words, students are now aware of what they know. This enables them to put their skills to use in an intentional way. The time frame to get to conscious competence will vary by person and skill. Students and coaches should not get discouraged if progression to this stage does not happen immediately!

Through practice and persistence, students can move into the stage of **unconscious competence**. This can also be known as second nature or intuition. In other words, students use their skills without even noticing it. Outside of academic coaching, students can maintain their unconscious competence through self study, peer review, and mature practice.

A diagram of the process from unconscious incompetence to unconscious competence is on the following page.
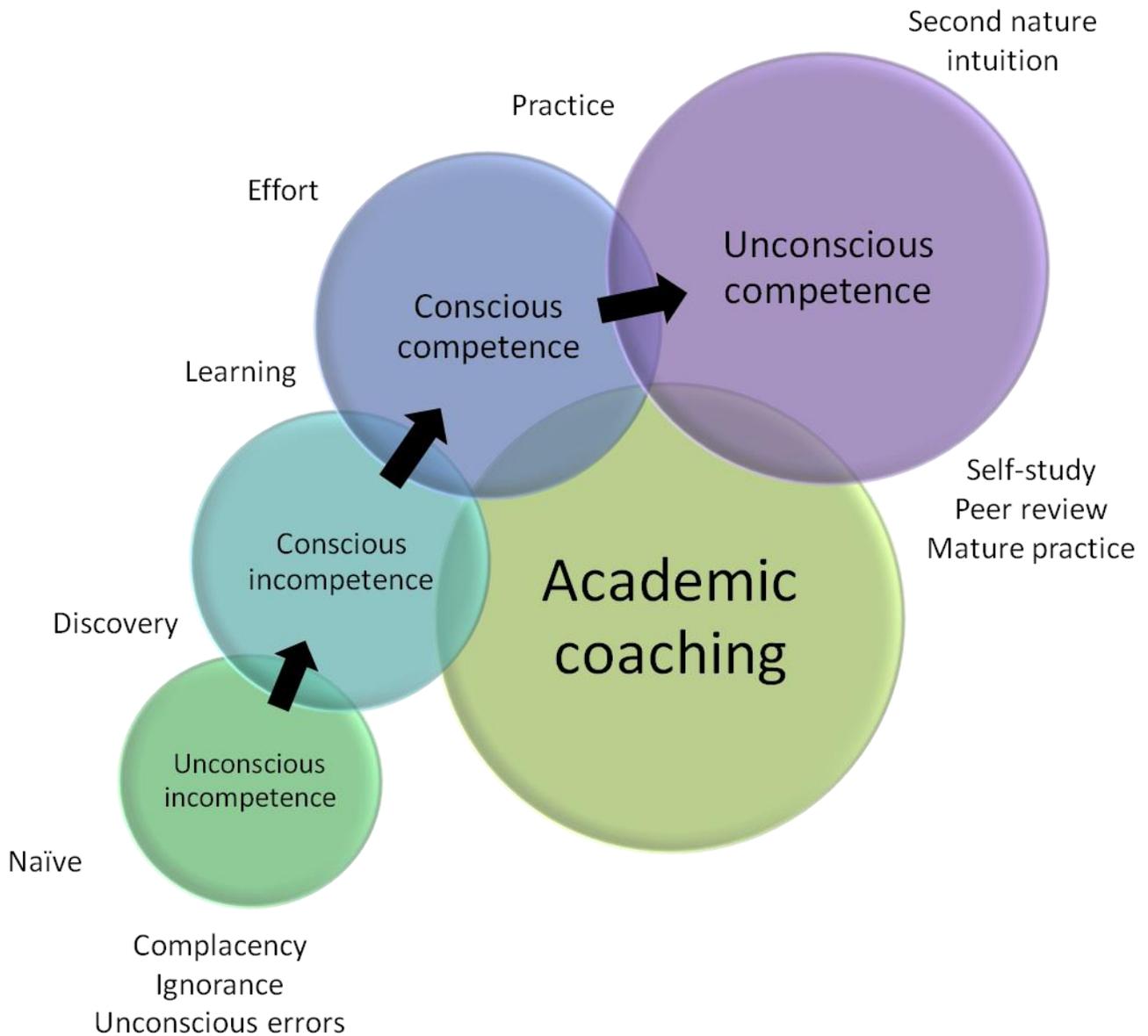
Competence Model Diagram
Adapted from Will Taylor, Chair, Department of Homeopathic Medicine, National College of Natural Medicine, Portland, Oregon, USA, March 2007. Retrieved from
http://www.businessballs.com/consciouscompetencelearningmodel.htm#will_taylor_5th_level_conscious_competence

# Baxter Magolda's (2004) Model of Epistemological Reflection

This theory allows academic coaches to ask students how their goals are in alignment with their personal and academic missions. The Model of Epistemological Reflection allows students to venture through three separate phases: Cognitive Development, Intrapersonal Development, and Interpersonal Development. This model allows students to reflect on how they have progressed as academics throughout the course of their collegiate career. This process creates a vision for

i. Guiding Assumptions
1. Ways of knowing & patterns within them socially constructed
2. Ways of knowing understood through naturalistic inquiry
3. Fluid use of reasoning patterns
4. Patterns are related, but not dictated by, gender
5. Student stories are context-bound
6. Ways of knowing are patterns

ii. Stages
1. Stage 1- Absolute Knowing- Receiving & mastering knowledge
2. Stage 2- Transitional Knowing- Interpersonal & impersonal knowing
3. Stage 3- Independent Knowing-Individual & Interindividual knowing
4. Stage 4- Contextual Knowing.
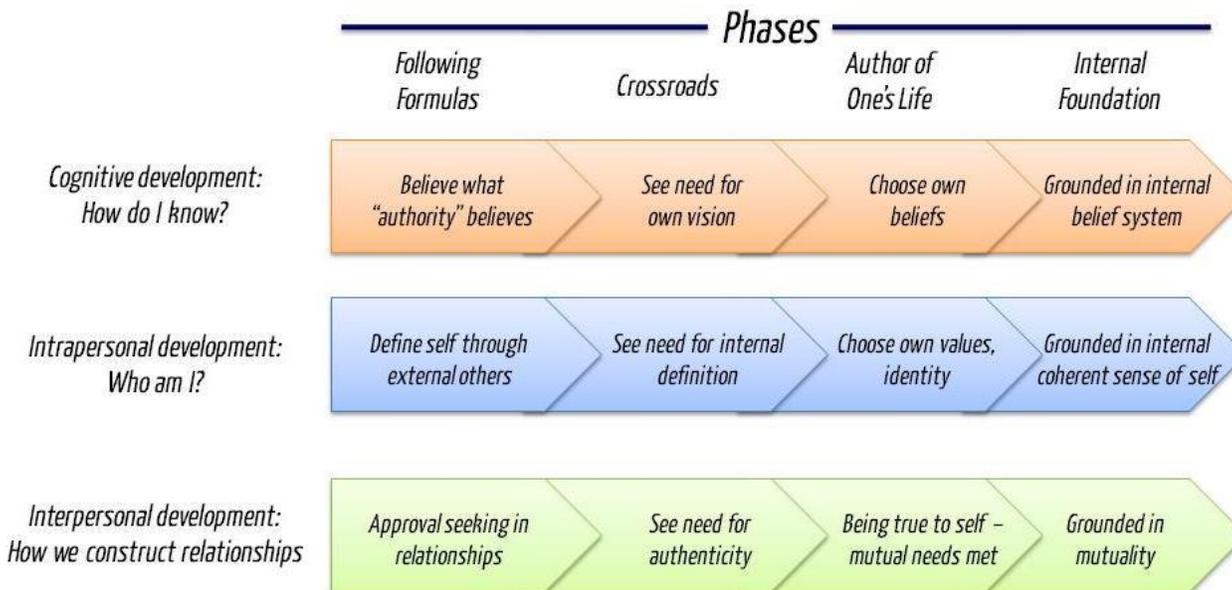
Chapter 3: Populations Served

Undergraduate Student Needs

It is widely recognized that many undergraduate students enter college lacking essential skills which support academic success. Retention and graduation rates are closely monitored by colleges and universities across country. In fact, according to U.S. News and World Report, "as many as one in three first-year students doesn't make it back for sophomore year" (U.S. New and World Report Freshman Retention Rates, 2012). At UTSA, we strive to offer programming to assist undergraduate students in developing those skills necessary for success. Probably the most challenging need that students face is managing the transition from high school to college. Students must learn to adapt to the demands of college such as the rigorous academic expectations and increased autonomy. Undergraduate students need to become more aware of what to expect in college.

According to "How to Get Good Grades in College" by Linda O'Brien, a list of college student needs include:

- Understand dynamics of larger class sizes. Due to larger class sizes, students must adapt to being self responsible to engage in class.

- Critical thinking skills. Because of the large amount of reading to be understood, students must be able to draw conclusions, differentiate facts from opinions, and evaluate ideas.

- Emphasis on tests and less busywork. Since there are fewer grades in college courses, students must become effective at keeping keep long range goals in mind as well as having an effective set of study skills.

- Personal responsibility. Students are responsible for keeping up with their readings, assignments, papers, going to class, etc. They need to develop self-discipline.

- Understanding consequences for low grades. Students must become aware of the university's academic standards and the consequences of poor performance and what probation status means.

- More independent learning. Students will need to know their goals, time limitations, and higher level thinking skills as well as managing time wisely.

- Acquire a variety of learning strategies. Students need to be able to apply study strategies to their coursework and identify which study strategies work best for each of their courses.

Academic Coaching helps students with developing strategies to meet the above needs. Academic coaching also helps students develop self-regulation practices such as time management, self-assessment, and goal setting by helping students identify tools to keep track of time, goals, deadlines, etc.

Reference: O'Brien, L. (2009). *How to get good grades in college*. Dayton, OH: Woodburn Press.

Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI)

Using the LASSI for Academic Coaching

❖ Now in its 3rd edition, the LASSI is a statistically valid and reliable diagnostic measure to help identify areas to work on with the students for Academic Coaching.

❖ Academic Coaches can administer the pre-test measure at initial intake session and then a post-test measure at the end of the semester.

About the LASSI as stated from the publisher, H&H Publishing:

- Developed at the University of Texas at Austin by Claire E. Weinstein, Ph.D., Ann C. Schulte, Ph.D., and David R. Palmer, Ph.D.

- Nine years of research, development, and testing led to the creation of this statistically valid and reliable tool for the diagnosis of study skills.

- The LASSI is a 10-scale, 60-item assessment of students' awareness about and use of learning and study strategies related to skill, will and self-regulation components of strategic learning.

  The Skill Component of Strategic Learning

  - The LASSI scales related to the skill component of strategic learning are: Information Processing, Selecting Main Ideas and Test Strategies.

  - These scales examine students' learning strategies, skills and thought processes related to identifying, acquiring and constructing meaning for important new information, ideas and procedures, and how they prepare for and demonstrate their new knowledge on tests or other evaluative procedures.

  The Will Component of Strategic Learning

  - The LASSI Scales related to the will component of strategic learning are: Attitude, Motivation and Anxiety.

  - These scales measure students' receptivity to learning new information, their attitudes and interest in college, their diligence, self-discipline, and willingness to exert the effort necessary to successfully complete academic requirements, and the degree to which they worry about their academic performance.

  The Self-regulation Component of Strategic Learning

  - The LASSI Scales related to the self-regulation component of strategic learning are: Concentration; Time Management; Self-Testing and Using Academic Resources.

  - These scales measure how students manage, or self-regulate and control, the whole learning process through using their time effectively, focusing their attention and maintaining their concentration over time, checking to see if they have met the learning demands for a class, an assignment or a test, and using study supports such as review sessions, tutors or special features of a textbook.

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Retrieved from: http://www.hhpublishing.com/_assessments/lassi/index.html

Graduate Student Needs

It is important to have a basic understanding of your students' development and what you might expect from your student. Although no theory is complete or universal, the following will give you an idea of what you may encounter in working with graduate students.

Differences Between Undergraduate and Graduate Studies
- New academic standards,
- Different teaching styles,
- Abundance of choices (not much of a set curriculum & a lot less guidance),
- Attendance is key, but usually not tracked,
- Time management should be quite sophisticated now (with semester long planning, not just week to week),
- Meeting new people,
- Balancing life,
- Financial difficulties,
- Confidence, and
- Becoming socialized to the profession & coming to grips with being considered a professional in that field, where you once were a novice.

Strategies for Becoming a Learning Coach
As part of your role as a Peer Advisor you will be working with your students on increasing their academic success.
- Be aware of different learning styles
- Demonstrate effective study strategies
- Facilitate study groups
- Make time for one-on-one advising
- Prepare appropriate presentations

Building Confidence

Many of your students will be suffering from lagging confidence their first semester of graduate school. This is also called "Imposter Syndrome" and is quite common. These students constantly doubt themselves and ask "how did I get here" or "maybe they made a mistake in letting me in to this program." There are specific strategies to overcome it, including: break the silence by talking about it, separate feelings from fact, accentuate the positive, develop a new response to failure and mistake making, visualize success, reward yourself, and fake it 'til you make it.

Your students might also benefit from understanding that there are multiple intelligences and taking the following inventories: (http://www.ldrc.ca/projects/miinventory/miinventory.php), StrengthsQuest (http://www.strengthsquest.com) or VIA- Values in Action (http://www.viasurvey.org/). By focusing on their strengths and the things that make them strong, they can learn to work around their weaknesses.

Stress Management

Two types of stress are *eustress*, which is good or positive stress, such as being newly married, getting a new home, new job, baby, etc., and there is *distress*, which is the bad or negative kind of stress.

Managing stress is very important to a student's success in their graduate studies. Make sure to emphasize:
- Nutrition
- Exercise
- Relaxation
- Breathing techniques
- Humor

Behind every great achievement is a dreamer of great dreams.   -Robert K. Greenleaf

De-Mystifying Graduate Studies

Before Exam

Periodically
Weekly Review Sessions

Daily/Weekly
Before, During, & After Class
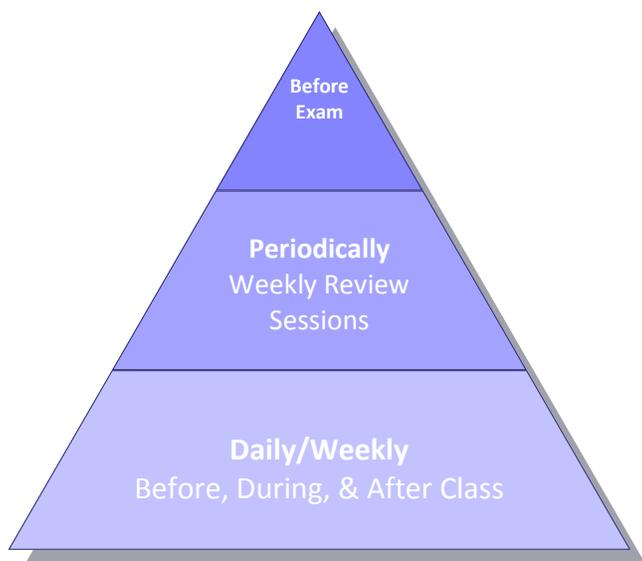
HINT #1: Study as you go
It is easy to get overwhelmed in graduate school, mainly because there are fewer tests that cover more material, which makes each class inherently more important. It is essential to study long before the exam, on a daily and weekly basis, so that you can actually absorb the information. Weekly review sessions can be quite beneficial if you retype notes, or make flashcards as you go.

HINT #2: Talk to other students
Involvement on campus has countless benefits including making friends, gaining valuable skills, learning more about oneself, and keeping interested and motivated in school.

HINT #3: State your intentions early
Ask your advisor about any concerns you have, or your ambitions, early on so that your goals will be realized and your worries reassured.

HINT #4: Manage your time wisely
Stress can be caused by not managing your time and tasks. Make sure that you are keeping a daily calendar, scheduling personal time to relax and exercise, prioritizing responsibilities, and getting plenty of sleep.

HINT #5: Set clear goals and clear pathways to reach your goals
You should always overestimate the amount of time you believe it will take to study, read, or research. Once you have built that time into your schedule, you should stick to it, and then use any extra time to complete other impending tasks.

HINT #6: Stay in touch!
A social network of support is vital to success in graduate school and it is sometimes very easy to get carried away with your schooling and neglect this aspect. A conversation with friends, or a family outing, is a great way to relieve stress and remind you why you are in this program!

HINT #7: Remember, your identity is more than a student number
It is sound advice to keep your outside interests while in graduate school. By doing this you can keep your life and personality in perspective.

Our job is not to straighten each other out, but to help each other up.

■ Neva Cole

Thesis/Dissertation Group
Tomás Rivera Center

The Thesis/Dissertation Support Group is a series of events held each semester that are designed to help those Graduate students working on a Thesis/Dissertation project by focusing on topics that are relevant to the issues of those populations.

Graduate students who are working on their thesis or dissertation often find that their journey to completion is one full of challenges and difficulties. While their committee may serve as the primary source of guidance, the committee may not be able to combat every type of issue a student may face. In order to help them through a successful writing process, the Thesis/Dissertation Support Group is offered as six, 1-hour workshops over the course of each semester. In these 1-hour workshops, students are given the chance to think about, discuss, and reflect over the specialized topic that is the focus of that workshop's dialogue. Topics vary week to week as well as semester to semester in order to promote different experiences for our Graduate students.

Examples of previous topics include (but are not limited to):

- Balancing Life & Academic Obligation
- Using Technology in the Thesis/Dissertation Process
- Overcoming Perfectionism
- Confidence Issues
- Writing a Literature Review
- Selecting & Working With Your Committee
- Overcoming Writing Blocks

Need Thesis/Dissertation Help?

Find out which RESOURCE is best for you!

Need help getting through the thesis/dissertation process?

YES → **Thesis/Dissertation Group** meets each semester. Contact the Tomás Rivera Center (210)458-4694

NO ↓

Have questions about grammar, revision, or citation styles?

YES →

The Writing Center
Please call to make an appointment:
Phone: (210) 458-6086
JPL 2.01.12C/D (Main)
or FS 4.432 (Downtown)

Graduate Writing Institutes
Held each spring and summer semester, contact annemarie.mulkey@utsa.edu

Graduate Student Learner Series Workshops or Online Videos:
http://www.utsa.edu/trcss/gsla/

NO ↓

Need help finding time to write or to overcome writing blocks??

YES → Academic coaching at the **Tomás Rivera Center** can help you work through time management, writing blocks, and motivation issues.
http://www.utsa.edu/trcss/gsla/coaching.html

NO ↓

Need help with how to submit your thesis/dissertation or the technical submission guidelines?

YES → Contact **Lauren Beaver with the Graduate School** at lauren.beaver@utsa.edu

Additional information can be found at http://graduateschool.utsa.edu/current-students/category/thesis-dissertation/

NO? ↓

If you have more questions about the kind of help you need please contact:
TRC's Learning Assistance Services for Graduate Students
210/458-4694 or learn.assist@utsa.edu

Student Veteran Needs

TRC Learning Assistance has made strides through research and practice in serving the transition of student veterans from military to academic life. The slides that follow are a culmination of these efforts that were presented at the 2015 College Reading and Learning Association National Conference in Portland, Oregon.

STUDENT VETERANS:

Easing the Transition from Military to Academic Life

Presented by:
Lisa Johns, Director
Stefanie Gonzalez-Lopez, Student Development Specialist II
Shannon Sczech, Student Development Specialist I
Heather Frazer, Student Development Specialist I

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

- 4-year, public institution with 3 campuses - Main, Downtown, and Institute of Texan Cultures

- Emerging Tier One research institution specializing in health, energy, security, sustainability, and human and social development

- 28,628 students for Fall 2014
    - 24,285 Undergraduates
    - 4,046 Graduate Students

Source: UTSA 2014 Fact Book. Retrieved from http://www.utsa.edu/ir/factbook.html

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STUDENTS BY AGE

1% 1%
5% 3%
8%
22% 60%

- Under 18
- 18-22
- 23-27
- 28-32
- 33-39
- 40-49
- 50 and over

Source: UTSA 2014 Fact Book. Retrieved from http://www.utsa.edu/ir/factbook.html
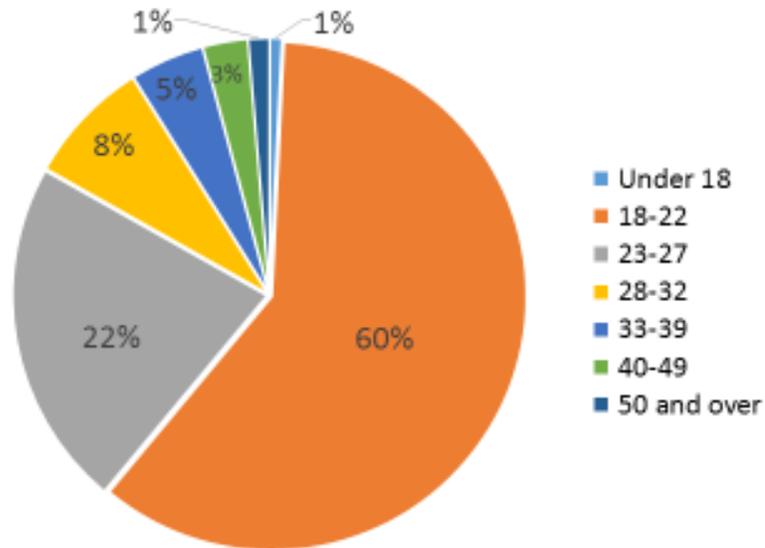
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STUDENTS BY GENDER
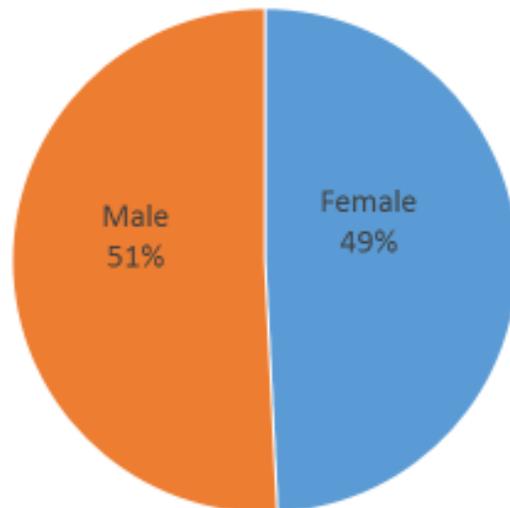
Male
51%

Female
49%

Source: UTSA 2014 Fact Book. Retrieved from http://www.utsa.edu/ir/factbook.html

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STUDENTS BY ETHNICITY
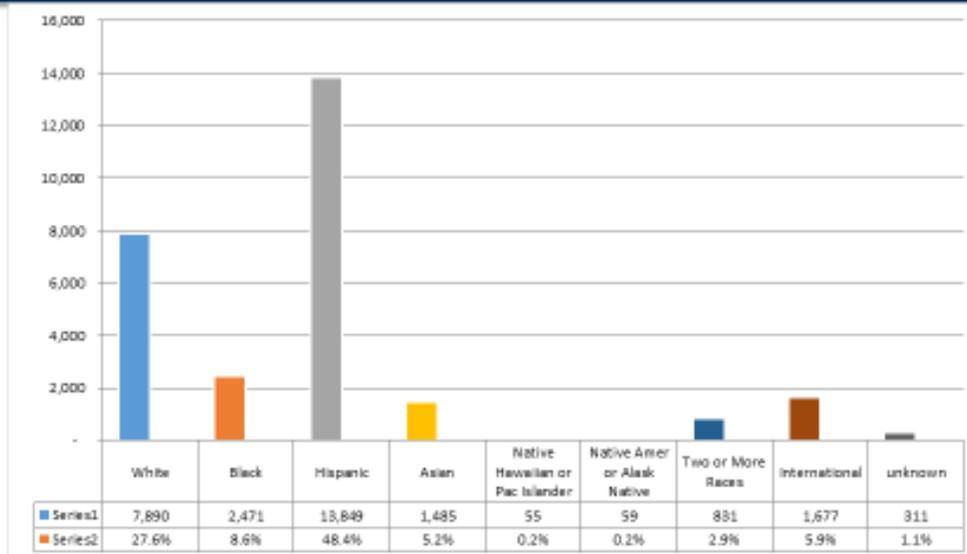
	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native Hawaiian or Pac Islander	Native Amer or Alask Native	Two or More Races	International	unknown
■ Series1	7,890	2,471	13,849	1,485	55	59	831	1,677	311
■ Series2	27.6%	8.6%	48.4%	5.2%	0.2%	0.2%	2.9%	5.9%	1.1%

Source: UTSA 2014 Fact Book. Retrieved from http://www.utsa.edu/ir/factbook.html

UTSA STUDENT VETERANS

- 2,859 Student Veterans enrolled for Fall 2014

- 10% of UTSA student population are active duty military, veterans, and dependents

- 88% of Student Veterans are undergraduates

- 59% Male, 41% Female

- Pillars of Support - Veteran Services Advisory Committee (VSAC), Student Veteran Association, Veteran Certification Office

- VA VetSuccess on Campus

- Center for the Well-Being of Military Children & Families

Source: Veteran Cultural Competence Module. Retrieved from http://www.utsa.edu/tlc/Learning_Technology/veterans/

TRC SERVICES

- **Supplemental Instruction (SI)**
  - Peer-led, collaborative study groups assisting students in what to learn and how to learn
  - 3 study sessions offered each week
- **Tutoring Services**
  - Traditional walk-in tutoring offered 6 days a week
  - Individual appointments available
- **Learning Assistance**
  - Academic Coaching
  - Group Topic Workshops

VSAC TRAINING
(the precipitating factor)

- November 2014 Veteran Cultural Competence training offered

  - Lt. Colonel (ret.) Lisa Firmin, Associate Provost for Diversity and Recruitment
  - Dr. Mary McNaughton-Cassill, Professor of Psychology
  - Dr. Dianne Hengst, Director of Student Disability Services

- February 2015 training for TRC Staff

SPRING 2015
VETERAN WORKSHOP SERIES

- 5 Workshops throughout semester
  - Topics:
    - Support Services on campus
    - Easing the Transition from Military to Academic Life (Student Veteran Panel)
    - Goal Setting & Time Management
    - Reading & Note-taking
    - Stress Management
- Collaboration with other campus services
  - VetSuccess (VA representatives)
  - Student Financial Aid

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Quantitative & Qualitative Research

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QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

- Post 9/11, 750,000+ Veterans have used their benefits to enroll in college (Kim and Cole, 2013).

    - "68.1% of 4 year public institutions have established new programs or services since 9/11 to better serve the military and veteran population" (American Council on Education, 2009).

    - 33.2% of those programs involve academic support (American Council on Education, 2009).

SUBPOPULATIONS

- **Combat**
    - Combat Trauma is an injury not an illness

    - Emotional shock of witnessing a friend dying causes an adrenaline rush

    - Understand the sacrifice of the greater good because they have lived it

(Lighthall, 2012)

SUBPOPULATIONS

- **Non-Combat**
  - Non-combat veterans are goal-oriented, mission-driven, experienced leaders (Lighthall, 2012).

  - Non-combat veterans often feel they do not deserve to utilize benefits because they did not suffer the same way that combat veterans did (Kelly, Smith, and Fox, 2013).

SUBPOPULATIONS

- **Females**
  - "Today, of the 22.7 million living veterans, nearly 8% (one in 13) are women and, by 2035, estimates are that women will make up 15% (one in 7) of living veterans."

  - "Fifteen percent of today's active duty service members and more than 17% of reserve and National Guard forces are women."

(DiRamio, Jarvis, Seher, and Anderson, 2015)

SUBPOPULATIONS

- **Females Continued**

    - "82% of post 9/11 female veterans say they joined the military to receive educational benefits and it is reasonable to expect that a quarter of a million women with military experience will attend or are planning to attend college by the end of the decade" (DiRamio et al. 2015).

    - They are less likely to ask for help (Baechtold and Sawal, 2009).

SUBPOPULATIONS

- **Females Continued**

    - At least 22% of females are sexually assaulted during their time of service and compared the assault to incest.

    - They do not begin to heal until after the military because they are less likely to report the incident because of close working relationships.

(Lighthall, 2009)

SUBPOPULATIONS

- **With Disabilities**
  - Visible
  - Non-Visible
    - PTSD (Baechtold and Sawal, 2009)
    - The latest veteran review indicates 23% of veterans returning from Afghanistan were diagnosed with PTSD (S. Morissette, personal communication, October 7, 2015).
    - "The rate of anxiety and depression increases from 12% to 27% from the 1st to 3rd deployment" (Tanielian, Jaycoxx, and Schell, 2008).
  - Traumatic Brain Injury
    - "Approximately 43% of the veterans returning from GWT [Global War on Terror] have been evaluated for TBI" (Kaplan 2008, Church 2009).

GENERALIZATIONS
(but not really)

- **Communication Style**
  - Very concise in the military vs. verbose words in academia (Kelly et al. 2013).
  - They are short with their responses with personal and written communication (Cass, 2014).

- **Emotions**

  (Ackerman, DiRamio, and Mitchell 2009a, 2009b)
  - Loneliness, anger, stress
  - Depression, less social
  - Guilt of non-combat veterans
  - Survivor's remorse for combat veterans
  - Isolation due to lack of understanding from family and friends (civilians)

GENERALIZATIONS

- **Sense of Identity**
  (Ackerman et al. 2009a, 2009b)
    - Camaraderie
    - Terminology
    - Strong sense of pride
    - Differences among military branches

GENERALIZATIONS

- **Sense of Identity**
    - Roles
        - Identity Renegotiation (Rumman and Hamrick, 2010)
        - Having difficulty transitioning from a highly regimented life to having more time (Jones, 2013)
        - Difficulty adapting to different instructional styles
            - Military = hands-on, "See then do"
            - Academic = book & lecture style
            - Crave Structure (Rumman and Hamrick, 2010)

What "They" Are Saying

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **From The Experts**
  - According to Ackerman et al. (2009a, 2009b):
    - Orientation sessions for veterans by veterans
    - Student-centered activation and deployment policies
    - Campus connections during deployments
    - Veterans certification officer who knows the students who constitute the veteran population
    - Personnel policies, resources, and programs that reflect sensitivity to and understanding the needs of veterans
  - Alison Lighthall (2012) suggests mentoring

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **In Their Own Words:**

   (UTSA Student Veteran Success Panel)
   - Peer Mentors
     - Veterans who have successfully made the transition
   - Check Lists
     - Making the deployment process less stressful
     - Making returning to campus less stressful
   - 2-Month Check-In
     - Showing support at a critical time in the semester for this population
     - Throw a pizza party and invite us!

What We've Learned

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

- **From the Research:**
  - Huge gap in the literature
  - What the experts are saying:
    - Need for awareness
    - Focus on challenges veterans face during transition
    - Small sample sizes
      - Actual percentage of Veterans dealing with severe challenges is less than one would expect
      - Difficult to generalize
  - So, what works?
    - Practical tools & solutions needed

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WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

- **From Experience:**

  - **Workshop Series:**
    - Difficult to get student veterans to voluntarily attend workshops
      - One student...yes, one.
    - Seeking help seen as weakness in military
    - "Death by Power Point"
    - Not the usual sense of community with the campus

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WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

- **From Experience:**

  - **2-Month Check-In (Campus Checkpoint)**
    - Collaboration with multiple departments on campus
    - Opportunity to connect with other student veterans and campus resources
    - 13 student veterans in attendance!
    - Response was overwhelmingly positive
      - Representatives from campus departments
      - Student veterans in attendance

What Should Help

PRACTICAL TOOLS

- **Promote Self-Regulated Learning**

  - Skills gained in military = assets in academic life

  - Lack of self regulation/determination during transition

  - Parallels
    - Plan
    - Execute
    - Observe
    - Evaluate
    - Maintain/correct
    - Learning is hard work!

PRACTICAL TOOLS

- **Applying Meaningful Learning Theory**
  - Intent
  - Meaningful content
  - Connection to previous knowledge

- **Assets-Based Approach**
  - Language/terminology
  - Focus on strengths, experience

Where Do We Go From Here?

MOVING FORWARD

- **Maintaining and Increasing Collaborations**
  - Student Veterans Association
  - VetSuccess on Campus
  - ROTC programs
- **Veteran Success Learning Series**
  - Increase outreach efforts or find creative means of encouraging students to attend
- **Roadrunner Transition Experience (RTE)**
  - One of 4 activities funded by a Title V Grant
  - Mentoring program for a student population that includes veterans mentoring veterans

MOVING FORWARD

- **Push for Institutional Change**
  - Seize opportunities for external funding
  - Orientation for Veterans facilitated by Veterans
- **Host a Summer Bridge Program**
  - Brief series of workshops & guest speakers during summer to help students with their transition
- **Awareness**
  - Updating Coaching Forms to include Veteran Status
  - Adjusting language during sessions when working with student veterans
  - Actively represent on university wide committees

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Chapter 4: Study Skills

General Study Strategies

Four Steps to Success

The Tomás Rivera Center believes there are four basic steps to success that are universal, for both undergraduate and graduate students. Encourage your students to incorporate these approaches into their study habits. The best way for them to become proficient in the use of these strategies is to practice them daily. If they are concerned about their academic progress or appear to be having problems with their classes, you may refer them to any of the Tomás Rivera Center's student support services.

Step 1 – Attend all of every class
Arrive on time
Stay for the entire class
Attend every class

Step 2 – Read text assignments BEFORE each class
This helps you understand the lecture
It improves your understanding of the topic
It improves your note-taking

Step 3 – Revise your lecture notes the same day you take them
This improves your memory by 400%
Fill in the blanks you left as you wrote
Look up difficult terms
Show the main ideas and the supporting details

Step 4 – Study 2-3 hours for every 1 hours of class
Include the time you spend revising your notes
Use the time between classes; don't go home or waste time
Find a really good place to study
Guard against interruptions

Four Learning to Learn Tools

One set of tools you can emphasis are Marcia Heiman's and Joshua Slominanko's four thinking strategies of successful learners. The following is stated in "Learning to Learn: Thinking Skills for the 21st Century":

1) **Ask questions**- asking yourself questions about new information will help predict exam questions.
2) **Break tasks into smaller parts**- will help you manage your time better.
3) **Being goal-directed** will help you find important facts and ideas in the material you are learning and help you assess your progress
4) **Get feedback on your learning process** –find out what you know…and what you need to know.

M. Heiman & J. Slomianko "Learning to Learn: Thinking Skills for the 21st Century" (2004)

The pages that follow are handouts used in Academic Coaching sessions with both undergraduate and graduate students. Handouts have been categorized alphabetically for convenience.

The PLRS Learning Theory Cycle

The PLRS Learning Theory Cycle is one of the tools that the undergraduate academic coaches have as one of their theory based tools when working with students. This has helped with assisting students to improve their study approach. The following is adapted from Frank Christ's PLRS Cycle (University of Idaho, 2011):

PREVIEW. This immediate preparation before class is similar to a warm-up. It develops a specific readiness before a class by going over previous lecture notes and textbook study notes. Written assignments and problems are proof-read before being turned in.

LECTURE. Formal learning begins or is extended in the lecture hall where students and instructor engage in dialogue. Through efficient listening/note taking techniques and by means of incisive questions, frequent recitations, and lively discussion, learning takes place in a dynamic atmosphere.

REVIEW. This active response to classroom learning includes both recall and reorganization of the lecture and preparation for later intensive study. It should take place as soon after class as possible. This review requires that lecture notes be edited and summarized and that any class assignments be planned while its details are still fresh in the mind. The review following each course's final weekly class session can be expanded into a full review of all material covered in the past weeks (assignments and lectures.)

STUDY. This intensive session occurs normally the night before the next class lecture. It begins with a brief review of the latest lecture notes. Then the textbook assignment is overviewed and mastered with a study-reading technique such as Survey-Question/Study-Read/Summarize-Test. Questions and personal reactions to the study-reading should be written down to be brought up for clarification and discussion in class.

By following the recommendations of the PLRS LEARNING CYCLE, students will increase dramatically the number of times they work at learning with little, if any, increase in their total study time. Some students will probably spend less time in the intensive study sessions because of the class previews and reviews. Cramming before major test will be replaced by the weekly cumulative reviews that include each week's course work. Remember, CONTROL over a student's time begins when signing up for classes. The number of courses students take and how class hours are arranged determine to a great extent their study schedule.

PLRS Cycle

Preview

Immediate preparation before class

1. Review notes and textbook

2. Review written assignments or problems

3. Anticipate lecture (review syllabus, previous new chapter & questions)
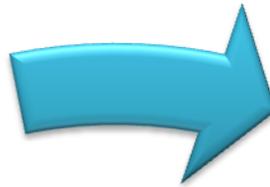
Lecture

Class lecture activities

1. Listen

2. Take notes

3. Ask questions

4. Recite/Discuss
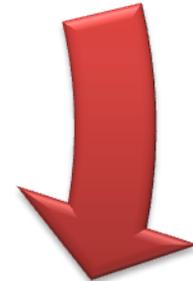
Study

Intensive study session

1. Review lecture notes

2. Study-read textbooks that correspond to lecture notes

3. Question & reflect

4. Review & summarize main points

Review

Immediate review after class

1. Edit, process, and summarize notes

2. Question & reflect

3. Set purposes for later study

Text and Diagram adapted from
University of Idaho. (2011). PLRS Learning Cycle by Frank L. Christ. Retrieved from
   http://www.mrc.uidaho.edu/~atkinson/ECE491/AAP/plrscycle.pdf

Learning Log

A learning log supplements your lecture and textbook notes. You will track your learning by writing down your ideas, questions, problems and solutions for each class.

The Benefits

1. Makes Meaning of What You're Learning	2. Helps You Discover and Solve Learning Problems	3. Allows You to Practice Expressing Yourself Through Writing

Example

Psychology Learning Log

10/3 Need to spend more time reading the textbook before class. Having trouble keeping up with the notes during lecture, esp. vocabulary.

10/5 Interesting discussion today about "projections." Prof. said projections are a big issue in dating. Want to think about dating experiences – talk to Liz and Aaron about them.

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Learning Styles

Left Brain
- The left cortex controls logic, reasoning, words, and numbers
  - Make list
  - Plan out tasks
  - Follow directions carefully
  - Pay attention to detail
  - See cause and effects

Right Brain
- The right cortex controls imagination, pattern recognition, color, and daydreaming
  - Use images or visualizations
  - Access demonstrations
  - Use brainstorming techniques
  - Be flexible in your work

Detail-Focus
- Good at analysis, seeing the parts of an item or even
- May see the trees clearly, but not notice the whole forest
  - When studying, ask open-ended questions to focus on the whole picture
  - Ask questions that begin with "how," "why," and "what if" will help to broaden a topic

Low Structure
- Prefer working in a low pressure setting
- Dislike working in a structure environment
  - Ask "how," "why," and "what if" questions to help give direction
  - Get concrete feedback on progress to keep moving in a productive direction

High Structure
- Prefer a quiet work setting, where there are few distractions
- Enjoy structure in learning
  - Set specific goals to build structure
  - Learn to ask mirror questions on reading and lecture notes.
  - Focus on asking open-ended questions.

Big Picture
- Tend to be visionaries
- Understand the importance of working towards a large goal
- Notice the whole forest but not the individual trees
  - Asking open-ended questions comes easy
  - Ask questions that reflect simple facts, like "what is," "when," "where," and "who."
  - Understand the details within the big picture

Learning Styles

Kinesthetic Learners

- Learn through movement (kinesthetic) & tactile (touch)
- In lecture, take notes to allow for physical action such as writing or typing
- While reading, scan the material first & focus on the details (get the big picture first).

Auditory Learners
- Prefer to hear directions than to read or write them
- Enjoy reading out loud
- Remember detailed information heard during conversations or lectures

What Auditory Learners can do:
- Begin new material with a brief explanation of what is coming, and conclude with a summary of what has been covered.
- Incorporate auditory activities, such as brainstorming, buzz groups, or Jeopardy
- Make connections of material learned and how it applies to personal situations.
- Verbalize the questions or assignments

Visual Learners
- Learn though written language, such as reading & writings tasks
- Remember things by writing them down
- Can easily visualize faces & places by using imagination

What Visual Learners can do:
- Use graphs, charts, illustrations, or other visual aids
- Include outlines, concept maps, agendas & handouts for reading & taking notes
- Emphasize key points to cue when taking notes
- Eliminate potential distractions
- Draw pictures in the margins of notes or textbook.
- Envision the topic or act out the subject matter

What Kinesthetic Learners can do:
- Use activities that get you up and moving.
- Use colored markers to emphasize key points on flip charts or white boards.
- Give frequent stretch breaks (brain breaks).
- Use toys such as Koosh balls and Play-Dough to give you something to do with your hands
- Transfer information from the text to another medium such as a keyboard or a tablet

TRC
The University of Texas at San Antonio

Source: Clark, D. (2011). Visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles (VAK).

Goal-Setting

Dos and Don'ts of Goal Setting

Do — Write it down

Don't! — Forget to set a deadline

Do — Leave room for failure

Don't! — Expect perfection

Do — Track your progress

Don't! — Guess about your progress

Do — Reward your successes

Don't! — Beat yourself up over failures

Do — Find a support system

SMART Goals Worksheet:

Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic, & Timely

**Goal Statement:**

Where are you right now in achieving your goal?

What do you need to do to reach your goal?

Obstacles to achieving your goal:

Solutions to your obstacles:

S.M.A.R.T. Goals

Specific
Describe your goal.

Measurable
How will you track your progress?

Timely
When will you reach your goal?

Achievable
List 3 steps to reaching your goal:
1.
2.
3.

Realistic
List skills needed to reach your goal:
1.
2.
3.
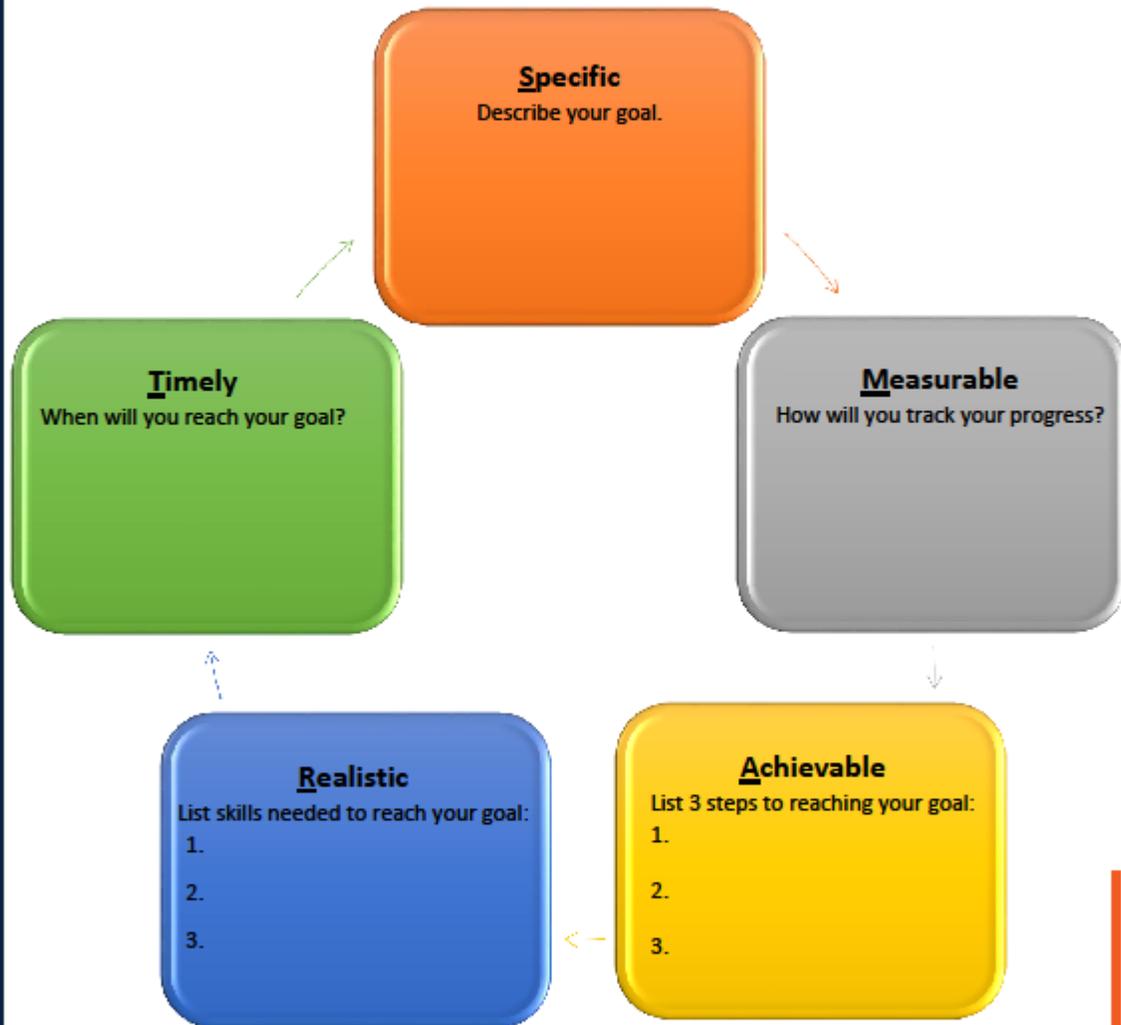
Weekly Goal Setting

Week of: _____

Task:	Goals:	Action:
Task:	Goals:	Action:
Task:	Goals:	Action:

Monthly Goals for a Healthy Balance in Your Life

Education:

Family/Friends:

Health:

Finance/ Work:

Fitness:
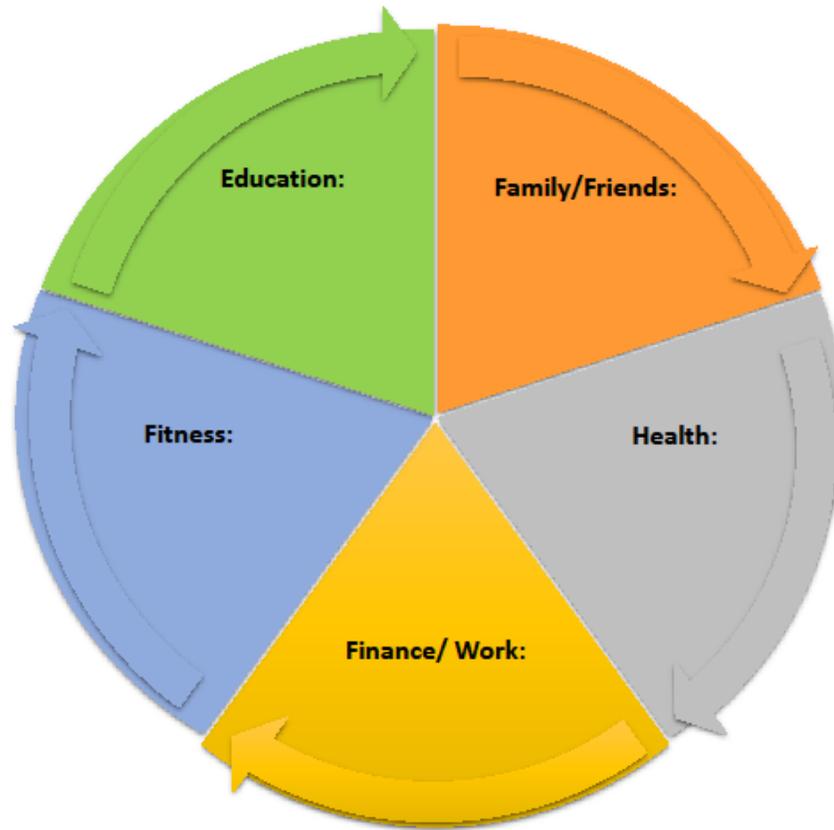
Career & Intermediate Goals

Career Goal or Job Objective:

Timeline for this goal: the next _____ months

Job/Career Goal:

Steps to accomplish goal:

Education/Training Goal:

Steps to accomplish goal:

Health/Wellness Goal:

Steps to accomplish goal:

http://www.jobinterviewtools.com/blog/wpcontent/uploads/2011/10/smartcareergoalsworksheet-partI.png

Memory

F.O.C.U.S. to Improve Concentration

Five More Rule: Just like athletes build physical stamina, you can build mental stamina by s-t-r-e-t-c-h-i-n-g your brain. When you are in the middle of a task and you feel like giving up, just do five more. Five more minutes, problems, or pages.
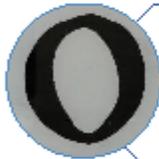
One _Think_ At a Time: When trying to concentrate on something and your brain continues to be invaded by other thoughts or lesser priorities, write those down to address later. Assign your mind time limits and specific times to think about those other things.

Conquer Procrastination: Next time you are putting off a task, ask yourself 3 questions. 1) Do I have to do this? 2) Do I want it done so it's not on my mind? 3) Will it be any easier later? The task is not going away and delaying it will keep it on your mind and prevent concentration.

Use Your Hands as Blinders: Picture your mind as a camera and your eyes as the lens. If you are prepping for an exam and need 100% concentration, cup your hands around your eyes to create "blinders," blocking potential visual distractions, and just focus on your notes or textbook.

See As If For the First or Last Time: This is all about being present, mindful and in the moment. When you find you are losing focus, try stepping away and looking at your notes/textbook as though for the first time. Look with a fresh perspective and refocus.

Tips for Improving Memory

1. Repeat, Repeat, Repeat

Learning and memory involves a lot of repetition. Our brains also respond to novelty or repeating things in a different way and at different times.

Examples:
- Re-organize your notes after class
- Review your class material on a regular basis
- Repeat content from the textbook or lecture, using your own words

2. Organize

Using a planner or smart phone calendar can help you keep track of assignments and activities. You can also use your planner or phone to journal about things you want to remember. The process of organizing clears our mind which helps us focus, concentrate, and remember more.

Examples:
- Take notes about conversations, thoughts, and experiences to help you remember
- Review current and previous day's entries or notes
- Always have your planner or smart phone with you in case you need to write something down

3. Visualize

Visualization strengthens the association you are making between two things

Example:
- Linking a term with a definition is easier when you attach an image to the term. For example, the country Italy is roughly shaped like a boot. When you picture it on a map in your mind, you envision a "boot" protruding from Europe.

4. Cue

You can use different types of cues to help you remember information, such as object cues, visual cues, olfactory (smell) cues, movement cues, or sound cues.

Examples:
- Use an ordinary object to identify with a particular term or topic
- Chew the same flavor of gum while studying and taking an exam
- Create hand motions to represent new terms or topics

5. Group

This strategy helps extend the capacity of our short-term memory by chunking information together instead of trying to remember each piece of information separately.

Example:
- When studying processes, group steps in sets of 3-5

Note-Taking Methods

Generating Questions from Lecture Notes

Benefits:
- Turns passive learning into active learning
- Creates a frame of reference
- Helps predict exam questions
- Clarifies important points
- Aids in retention of material

3 Types of Questions:

Mirror Questions
- Reflect the facts and ideas from the lecture
- Rely on recall of information
  - Examples:
    - What is the New Deal?
    - Who is Franklin D. Roosevelt?

Summary Questions
- Sum up the theme or main idea of the information in your notes
- Rely on understanding of information
  - These questions are more general
  - They recap the section

Higher Level Questions
- Require you to think at a higher level
- Rely on synthesis of information
- Usually start with why/how/compare
- Example:
  - Compare Conflict Theory to Functionalism

Note Taking Methods

Cornell

HOW: Divide your paper as shown. Take notes in the right column, leaving space between major points. After class, write key words or questions in the left column and summarize notes at the bottom of the page.

WHEN: In classes that cover a lot of detailed information quickly.
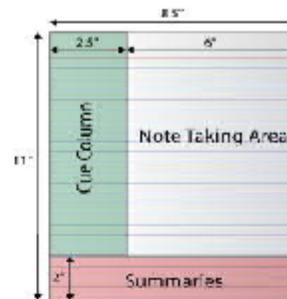
Mapping

HOW: Start with main ideas and branch off with details and sub-topics. Leave plenty of room to connect ideas and show relationships.

WHEN: After lecture to organize the information in your notes in a way that makes sense to you.
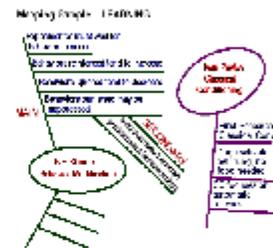
Chart

HOW: Make several columns, each representing an important category of information. Fill in spaces with information to compare details.

WHEN: Before class to provide an organized way of taking notes OR after class to organize information to see the relationship between details.

Outline

HOW: Write main points of lecture in a logical order, indenting sub-topics and leaving space between categories. If the professor skips around, write additional information in the spaces.

WHEN: This method is probably the most common and natural method of note taking; works well for any class.

Note-Taking Strategies

learning assistance tomás rivera center UTSA

Read before class
- Take notes as you read; write down any questions you have about the material
- Make connections between notes from reading and from lecture

Be present
- Attend every class
- During class, sit up front and put away distractions (i.e. cell phone, Social media, etc.)

Focus on key details
- Don't try to write everything the professor says
- Capture main ideas, key facts, important vocabulary, and major examples
- Pay attention to information on PowerPoints, if they are used

Pay attention to cues
- Listen for cues during lecture to capture main ideas
- These can include: a pause for emphasis, restating a point, or a change in tone of voice

Use abbreviations
- Develop a system of abbreviations to make writing notes more efficient
- Keep it legible and make sure you remember what your abbreviations stand for!

Revise your notes
- Read and revise your notes within 24 hours of class
- Organize your notes in a way that makes the most sense to you
- Create your own study guide from your notes

Note Taking

In Academic Coaching, we try to provide our students with several different note taking strategies. The four most effective note taking strategies that we emphasize are:

1) Main Ideas & Relevant Details Format
2) Outline Format
3) Cornell System
4) Note Cards Question & Answer Format

One note taking strategy may work better for one class over another. We recommend students modify and or/combine formats to meet their needs.

We also provide students with note taking tips on what to do BEFORE CLASS, DURING CLASS, and AFTER CLASS.

Note-taking Strategies

Make listening an active process. Being an active listener means being a critical and discriminating listener. Students should practice thinking and questioning along with the speaker. In a typical lecture, probably five or six major ideas related to the central topic are presented. Students should make headings in their notes that reflect these themes.

Become familiar with the instructor's mannerisms. The sooner students become familiar with their instructors' unique methods for emphasizing important points, the easier it will be for them to decide what to write down. Many instructors summarize important concepts at the close of each lecture. Students should take the time to check notes for accuracy.

Relate the material to what you already know about the subject. Material presented in a lecture is often related to reading assignments. Keeping up to date with reading will be enable students to mark related ideas from the text in their notes.

Listen carefully during discussion and update lecture notes. Many times the questions asked during a discussion class help clarify points made during a lecture. Encourage students to go back to their lecture notes to add information.

TAKE THE SURVIVOR CHALLENGE AND DEVELOP THE SKILL TO TAKE MORE ACCURATE, COMPLETE AND ORGANIZED NOTES!

(M.Jackson, Tomás Rivera Center for Student Success, University of Texas at San Antonio, fall 2006)

BEFORE CLASS

- Complete the assigned readings **before** going to class.

- Make a brief list of major headings and key terms in the readings to use as a guideline for taking notes in class.

- Generate a list of questions from the readings to ask the professor in class.

- Read over notes from the previous lecture and identify the main points. Write down any questions to ask the professor in class.

DURING CLASS

- Attend all of every lecture. If you miss a class, borrow notes from at least two other students. Use multiple sets of notes to generate your own copy for the missed class.

- Sit near the front of the room in order to listen carefully and remain focused during the lecture.

- Include a date and title for each lecture and record information as legibly as possible.

- Leave blank spaces between topics so that you may add comments later.

- If you miss something during a lecture, see the professor after class. Take advantage of study groups and/or Supplemental Instruction as an opportunity to fill in any gaps of information in your notes.

AFTER CLASS

- Read and revise your notes within 24 hours of the class.

- Compare your notes with information from the text and with fellow students. Clear up all misunderstandings by consulting the professor or other students.

- Reflect on the information in your notes by really thinking about what you have learned. Think about how the information relates to your other courses or to something familiar in your own life. Ask yourself: What is the significance of these facts? What principle are they based on? How can I apply them? How do they fit in with what I already know?

Applying your Notes to Lectures

Introduction

Taking notes can be difficult because you can't write as fast as you, your professor, or your peers talk. The key to note taking is figuring out what helps you know and understand information. Remember that your notes are there to help you study. This brochure will help you figure out the note taking method that works for you!

Keys to Listening

- Your professor's actions and language can signify importance.
  - Pay attention to
    - PowerPoint slides and writing on the board
    - Verbal cues such as
      → "The most important…,"
      → "Finally…," "Therefore…,"
      → "On the contrary…," "However…,"
- Digression from the topic through the use of "I" may signify things that aren't always important to write down.

Annotating

TAKE NOTES IN THE MARGIN OF YOUR TEXT!

- Promotes active learning and creates handy references for studying and class discussion.
- Your notes and text work together to make studying and paper writing more convenient!
- Summarize material in the margin to check for basic comprehension.

* **Tip**: Pencils make fine lines, so marginal notes and circling text is easier than with a highlighter. It also makes correcting your notes easier.

Different Lecture Formats

Factual Lecture

Takes place in most introductory courses, when the professor presents and explains information with little discussion.

Conceptual Lecture

Applies the facts.
- Emphasis on concepts and ideas.
- Deals with understanding, not memorization!
- Get the ideas down and connect them to the facts you already know.
- Record the most interesting or specific ideas and the best example(s).

Analytical Lecture

Focuses on close studies with interpretations and the reasons behind interpretations of material.
- Decipher the value, worth, and aesthetic qualities of the material.
- Pay attention to themes, characteristics, theories, significance of related events, and important facts.

Discussion

React, think about, and *evaluate* material.
- Know the material
  - Discussion relies on involvement: Reading and taking notes in preparation for class is essential.
  - Promotes your involvement in discussion because you already have ideas down.
- Prepare by writing down questions, information you agree or disagree with, and good or poor examples and arguments.
- Take notes in class to stay involved: Keep track of key information or points, what you want to say, and what others say.
  - Allows for an informed reaction.
- Pay attention to your peers.
  - Both you and your peers are becoming experts.
- Go over your notes and edit them (soon) after class.
  - Edit by filling in examples, definitions, or anything else that will help you retain what you study.

Organizing your notes

Cornell System

Turns your notes into a study guide.
- The left column is for convenient studying, so write down words that will trigger your memory for what is in the right column.

Cornell Example

Recall Column	Notes Column
Write within 24 hrs of class: • Key terms/ Names/ Dates • Questions • Concepts/ideas • Examples	• Take notes here • Write in words you understand, not necessarily your professor's. • Use abbreviations and symbols • Use indentation to signify that information is/is not related * **Tip**: Separate different ideas by leaving a space between them.

Summery of notes
(Write within 24 hours of class)

Mind Map

Illustrates relationships between ideas.

83
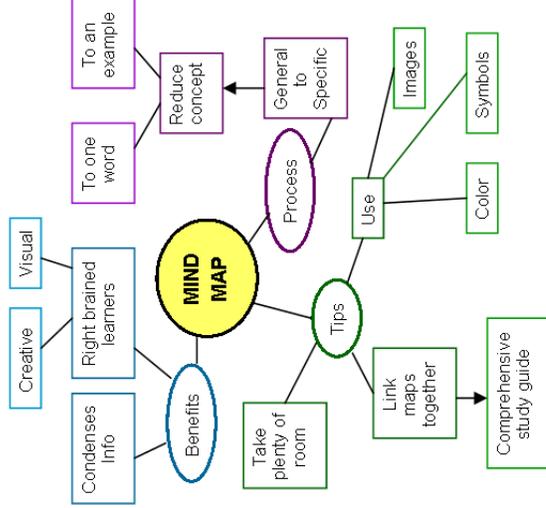
Mind-Mapping

The Benefits

Mind-Mapping Encourages You To:

- Learn Actively
- Make Connections Between the Facts & Ideas You're Studying
- Use Critical Thinking Skills

Making a Mind-Map

Example

Write Your Topic in the Middle of the Page

Draw a Line Outward From Your Topic & Write a Related Fact or Idea

Keep Adding Lines, Each With a Fact or Idea
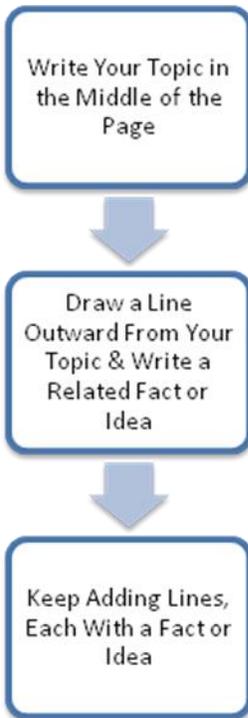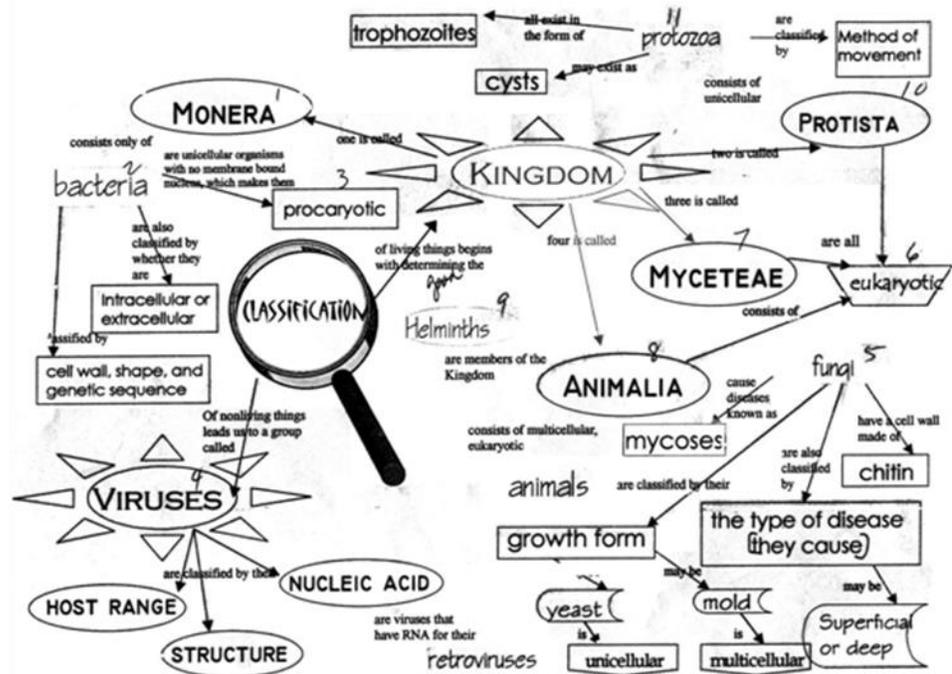
Source: Reynolds, J. (2002). Succeeding in college: Study skills and strategies New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.

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Generating Questions From Lecture Notes

Why generate questions from your lecture notes?

- Frame of reference
- Focus on structure
- Predict exam questions
- Passive learning becomes active learning
- A way to get feedback

3 Types of Questions:

Mirror Questions
- Reflect the facts and ideas from the lecture
  - Examples:
    - What is the New Deal?
    - Who is Franklin D. Roosevelt?

Summary Questions
- Sum up the theme or main idea of the information in your notes
  - These questions are more general
  - They recap the section

High Level Questions
- These questions require you to think at a high level
- Usually start with why/how/compare
- Example:
  - Compare Conflict Theory to Functionalism

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Procrastination

Procrastination

Causes

Fear of Success or Failure:

Some students worry so much about producing a perfect product that they wait until every drop of research has been done or every avenue explored. Others engage in elaborate preparatory or avoidance activities before beginning a task, such as deciding that all the dishes must be washed and put away before you start your paper.

Overestimating the time left to complete a task:

When your teacher assigns a research project the first week of school do you begin on it right away or wait? Many students think they have plenty of time, but fail to take into account the pile of other homework and life tasks they must manage during the semester.

Underestimating the time required to complete tasks:

Many students don't have a realistic concept of how much time it will take to look up sources, take notes, extract the information and formulate a paper. People with a poor concept of time also think they can drive a 30 minute trip in ten minutes.

Believing that they must be in the mood to do a task:

Delaying the start of a task until you are in the mood is a favorite among many students.

Over reliance on time-saving modern technology:

If you've ever seen a procrastinator kick and scream at a copy machine or printer that's moving slower than they wish, you know what I mean.

Cures

Change your flawed thinking to positive, realistic thinking:

You can't wait until you're in the mood to finish important tasks; you must use positive self talk to get yourself motivated.

Set SMART goals:

Specific

Measurable

Attainable

Realistic

Timely

Prioritize and divide your tasks:

Have you ever tried to consume a steak in one bite? Probably not. Neither should you expect to finish an academic project in one step. Put all your assignment due dates on a semester calendar along with test dates. Determine how many parts each assignment will take and work on one piece at a time.

Organize your work area and tools before you begin:

Resist the urge to clean your work space at this time--that's just another procrastination tactic.

Use a semester calendar & reminders to help you complete important tasks.

Reward yourself when you finish on time.

Checklist for Research Assignment

- ☐ Topic identified and it is something you are passionate about
- ☐ Initial Internet or library search completed
- ☐ Identify a research question(s)
- ☐ Guiding research question(s) written
- ☐ Subtopics listed
- ☐ At least 4 types of resources located (Web sites, interviews, museum visits, books)
- ☐ Identify gap within existing literature that your research will address
- ☐ Revise research question(s) if necessary
- ☐ Notes taken on color-coded cards; sorted by questions
- ☐ First draft written
- ☐ Second draft written
- ☐ Final draft written
- ☐ Bibliography completed
- ☐ Score yourself on the rubric if you have access to it
- ☐ Reflections guide below filled out

Reflections

What are the strengths of your piece?

Describe two things that you learned about your topic and guiding questions.

What did you learn about doing research?

What was especially important or helpful to you as you worked on this project?

If you could continue working on this project, what would you do next?

What advice would you give to someone else who was working on a similar project?

Stress Management

10 Easy Stress Busters

Grin and Bear It
Smiling instantly lifts your mood and relieves stress

Phone a Friend
Sometimes you just need to talk it out

Aromatherapy
Certain scents, such as lavender, have the ability to calm and soothe

Visualize
Use your imagination to temporarily remove yourself from a stressful situation

Meditate
It's as simple as focusing on a calming idea or word for a few minutes

DIY Massage
Your own hands have the power of touch to calm and soothe

Stretch
Not only does it feel good, it sends stress-relieving oxygen through your body

Tune In
Find music you find relaxing and let it carry the stress away

Tune Out
Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths to feel calm

Take a Walk
Even leisurely exercise for a few minutes can lift your mood

Stress Management

Understand It
- Stress is a normal part of life.
- Acknowledge it and learn ways to handle it.

Identify It
- Everyone experiences stress differently; learn your stress signals.
- Know what triggers stress for you.

Resolve It
- Find tools to help head off stress before it becomes a problem.
- Follow the stress management tips below!

Stress Management Tips for Students:

- <u>Get organized</u> – use a system for note taking; use a planner/organizer to keep track of classes, work, appointments, assignments, tests, etc.
- <u>Prioritize</u> – what are the most important things on your schedule? Which things take more of your time? Say "no" to activities and commitments that are not a priority *right now*.
- <u>Manage your time</u> – use that planner to organize your activities; make sure to plan time for hobbies and things you enjoy doing, as well as work and studying.
- <u>Be consistent</u> – plan study time throughout your week and study *regularly* for classes; don't wait until the night before an exam. Procrastinating will only add to your stress.
- <u>Create a support network</u>– join study groups, attend SI sessions and/or tutoring; stay connected with friends and family, use campus support services such as Counseling or Academic Coaching.
- <u>Stay positive</u> – keep the "Big Picture" in mind, but focus on small, attainable goals and reward yourself when you achieve them; don't let setbacks bring you down – learn from them and keep moving forward.
- <u>Stay healthy</u> – get enough rest and sleep; eat nutritional foods and stay hydrated; exercise regularly; learn simple stress-reducing techniques, such as visualization or breathing.

7 Ways to Stay Strong This Semester

Get Back to Basics
- Make small changes
- Start with Time Management

Find a Study Buddy
- Find accountability
- Someone with similar goals

Bust Out of Your Rut
- Change your routine
- Study in a different place, add a block of study time

Create Fun Incentives
- Develop a reward system
- Choose long-term goals over instant gratification

Spread the Word
- Tell others about your goals
- Ask others to hold you accountable

Lean on Technology
- Goal-setting apps
- Calendar & time management apps

Re-evaluate Your Goals
- Are they realistic?
- Be willing to make adjustments

6 Brain-friendly Ways to Start Your Day

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- ## Don't snooze
  Every time you hit "snooze" it interrupts your sleep cycle, making you even more tired when you do wake up.

- ## Eat breakfast
  After sleeping 7-8 hours or more, your brain needs fuel to process information throughout the day.

- ## Veg out!
  Try sneaking some veggies in your breakfast to get extra nutrients in your body and boost your brain power!

- ## Hydrate!
  Drinking water in the morning will flush out toxins and get your body systems up and running, not to mention cognitive processes.

- ## Sneak in some exercise
  There's no better way than working out in the morning to kick-start your energy and get blood flowing to your brain for the day.

- ## Jot down your thoughts
  Take a few minutes to write down your thoughts or create a "To Do" list to start your day with a clear head.

http://www.sparkpeople.com/resource/slideshow.asp?show=83&utm_source=sparkpeople&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=best-of-sparkpeople

Test Anxiety

Test Anxiety

CAUSES:

- Poor study habits.
- Inadequate preparation.
- Unrealistic expectations.
- Limited test-taking strategies.
- Pressures that others may exert on you.

SYMPTOMS:

- Headaches
- Nausea
- Sweaty palms
- Perspiration
- Rapid heart beat
- Tense muscles
- Loss of appetite
- Difficulty sleeping
- Difficulty concentrating

OVERCOMING ANXIETY:

- Analyze the cause of your anxiety. Where is it coming from? Is there something you can change to help lessen your anxiety?
- Use POSITIVE self-talk such as "I'm trying as hard as I can."
- Improve your study methods by practicing good study habits from Day 1.
- Seek outside help from campus resources such as SI, Tutoring, and Academic Coaching.
- Break tasks into smaller, manageable chunks.
- Avoid procrastination.
- Familiarize yourself with the instructor's expectations.
- Believe that you can do it!

Math Anxiety?

Try out some new activities for your next test

Before the test:
1. Make a list of all the topics, or concepts that will be covered
    For example: slope, quadratic formula, area

2. Review your previous tests, if you still have them
    This is especially useful for the final
    What kinds of mistakes did you make?
    Ask your teacher for practice tests

3. Put examples of problems on notecards and review them in <u>random order</u> (otherwise you'll get context clues for remembering them). Shuffle the problems and practice them. Work out each problem. Don't look at the answer until you're done.

While taking the test:
1. Get plenty of rest the night before, and eat something good for you before you go to your test. Arrive early and come prepared—pencils, erasers, piece of paper with formulas, if allowed. Get a seat in the room where you feel comfortable. Organize yourself.

2. Do a short last minute review. If you are not allowed to use your notes, then write down your memorized formulas right away on your test paper as soon as you get it. This is called "brain dumping" and is very useful for a math test. That way, you don't forget your formulas halfway through the test.

3. Look over the questions. Do the easy ones first. This will help relieve some of your anxiety, and then you'll have more time for the harder problems.

4. Show all your work. Write down every single step, even if you usually do some of the steps in your head when you do homework. If you write down every step, even just changing signs from positive to negative, then when you go back and check your work you have a better chance of catching any mistake you have made.

5. Use lots of space on your paper. Give yourself plenty of room to write down the details of each step. Use extra paper, if necessary.

6. After you are done, check your calculations. Look at your answers and think about them. Do your answers make sense? (This is especially effective for word problems.)

7. Stay until the end, if you need to. Work carefully and check your answers. Any mistake that you can catch will probably increase your grade!

8. Breathe -- stay confident – use your strategies – you can make it!

Test Preparation

Study Strategies for Busy College Students

Attend Class
- Every class, the entire class time
- Be present - get rid of distractions (i.e. cell phone, social media)

Take Notes
- Helps with understanding and memory
- Revise notes within 24 hours

Read the Textbook
- Read *before* class
- Use a method such as SQ3R to read with *intent*

Study Regularly
- Plan daily study time
- Take regular breaks when studying

Use Your Resources
- SI, Academic Coaching, Tutoring
- Form a study group

Final Exam Tips

Start Early
- Preparation should begin even before the actual week of final exams. You cannot cram an entire semester's worth of information into one or two nights of studying.

Predict Exam Questions
- For possible questions, use the textbook headings, class notes, and previous quizzes and exams.

Review the Main Points
- Especially review the main points you find most difficult to recall.

Follow the Rule of Thumb
- As a rule of thumb, go through the main headings of the text or your notes and see if you can remember the content.

Life Should be Normal as Possible
- For the week before and during exams, life should be as normal as possible and normal habits of sleeping, eating, exercising, etc. should be maintained.

Arrive Early
- Choose a seat where latecomers will not disturb you. Use this time before the test to relax and take a minute to get focused. Use earbuds to block out noise.

Look Over the Entire Exam
- See how long it is, which parts count more in scoring, or which parts may be easier to answer or require more time.

Answer the Easy Questions First
- Attack only one question at a time without worrying about the ones to come.

Remain Calm After the Exam
- Worrying about your exam afterwards will not change a thing. It may however, effect how you do on you other finals. Keep your head up and move on to the next exam.

Study Your Favorite Subject Last & the One You Dread First
- Devote more time to a subject in which you are not strong.

Preparing for Exams

BE CONSISTENT

- ✓ Attend EVERY class & take notes. Keep up with the required readings.

- ✓ Regularly attend study groups, such as SI, whenever possible.

MANAGE

- ✓ Use an organizer to plan. Include at least 2-3 hours of study time for each hour you are in class.

- ✓ Plan to study well in advance of the exam. DO NOT cram the night before.

HIGHLIGHT

- ✓ Pause after reading a section of your text to emphasize main points & paraphrase what you have read.

- ✓ Go back over your notes & highlight key concepts & terminology.

ORGANIZE

- ✓ Use a graphic organizer such as a matrix or a concept map.

- ✓ Make flashcards for key vocabulary terms & important definitions.

REVIEW

- ✓ Review your lecture notes & fill in the gaps within 24-hours of writing the notes to maximize retention.

- ✓ Set aside time the week before the exam to refresh the information you organized. Be sure to study most difficult information first.

GEAR UP

- ✓ Get a good night's sleep the night before the exam. You will be more likely to recall what you have learned if you give your brain a rest.

- ✓ Eat something nutritious & drink plenty of water before the exam.

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How to Raise Your Test Scores

Attend EVERY Class

Any time you miss a class you potentially miss out on important information. If you absolutely cannot make it, be sure to get notes from a friend.

Review your notes

Preferably within 24 hours, go through your notes and organize the information in a way that makes sense to you. Do this regularly and you'll have created your own study guide for the exam.

Read your textbook

Reading the book will help you identify repeated concepts and key terms that may end up on the exam.

DON'T Cram

Seriously. Don't do it. Regular, brief study sessions over time will help your brain process and store information more efficiently than one big "cram" session the night before an exam.

Get a Study Buddy

Find (or make) a friend in class and study together. Go to SI sessions if offered for your class. Studying with others may help you cover information you would have missed on your own.

Ask questions

In class. While studying. Asking questions about material you don't understand helps your brain process the new information. So does trying to predict potential exam questions.

Study when you're alert

Studying when you are mentally fatigued is generally a waste of time. Period.

Catch some Zzzzzs

Your brain simply does not function up to capacity without enough sleep. You will be much more likely to recall what you've learned if you're rested.

Test Taking Strategies

Multiple Choice

Answer questions in your head before looking at the answers. This helps eliminate wrong choices.

Mark questions you are not sure of and come back to them later.

If you are guessing between choices:

- Eliminate any wrong answers and guess between the two best possibilities.
- If the answer calls for sentence completion, eliminate answers that would not form grammatically correct answers.
- If a test item seems unclear, for example if a question can be taken to mean two different things, ask for clarification.

True-False

Look for qualifiers such as: *all, most, sometimes, never,* or *rarely*.

Absolute qualifiers such as *never* or *always* generally indicate a false statement.

Names, dates, and places are often used as the key to make a statement false.

Open Book

Prepare thoroughly for these tests; they are almost always the most difficult.

Write out any formulas or important facts you will need on a separate sheet of paper.

Mark important pages of your textbook with tabs, so you don't waste time flipping pages.

Problem Exams

Write down formulas, equations, and rules before you begin working on the test.

Work the easiest problems first.

Show all work; label your answers.

Check your answers when time permits.

Essay Exams

- Read all the questions first. Jot down any key ideas that occur to you as you read the questions.
- Notice and underline key words in the questions that give you a clue to what is expected in the answer.
- Plan the amount of time you can spend on each question based on the difficulty and the number of points you will get for it.
- Answer the questions you know first.
- Answer all the questions. If you do not know the precise answer, try to write a closely related one.
- Be neat and legible. If time permits, review your answers for grammatical errors, spelling, and legibility.

12 Tips for Planning Your Study Time*

1. Attend class! This is your prime learning time.

2. Review lecture notes within 24 hours of each class. Doing this the same day starts moving the lecture content into your long term memory.

3. Allot two to three hours of study, each week, for each hour of class time.

4. Study each subject every day – at the same time if possible. Your body and brain will get in the habit and be ready.

5. Plan study sessions of 45-50 minutes, *maximum*. That is all the brain wants to absorb at one time. Long sessions are non-productive; you'll retain only the first 20 minutes and the last 20 minutes of your study.

6. Take a break of 10-15 minutes, *minimum*, between study sessions. This lets the brain process information. Don't read anything during that time; physical activity is good as it helps to relax the brain and gets your blood and oxygen flowing.

7. Start with your hardest subject. The rest of your day will have less tension. Many students like to get up early and get the toughest course studied before they leave home in the mornings.

8. Alternate subjects with different brain activities. Follow a reading subject with math. If you are staying on the same subject, follow reading with reciting, summarizing, answering questions, or making memory cues.

9. Make notes of where you want to begin and what you want to review the next session. You won't waste time finding where you left off. Save the notes for reviewing before tests.

10. Reschedule study time if an emergency causes you to get off schedule. That time can be broken up into little chunks throughout the coming days. You can learn facts in just a few minutes.

11. Review what you've already learned in short sessions daily. Frequent reviews keep facts in your memory. This is in addition to learning new content in your daily study sessions.

12. Summarize your toughest subject about 30 minutes before bedtime. Your brain will process, consolidate, and start moving the information into your long term memory while you sleep.

*Adapted from http://www.llcc.edu/learnlab/LearningLabHome/HelpfulHandouts/tabid/6291/Default.aspx

Test Preparation

(K. Roth, Tomás Rivera Center, University of Texas at San Antonio)

Are you good at taking tests? If you tend to develop test anxiety or if you feel that you score low on tests when you actually know the material well, you may be able to improve your scores by looking over the following information and making some changes in your test-taking routine. This handout will focus on three crucial areas of test-taking: **preparation**, **attitude**, and **test-taking strategies**.

Preparation:

The only way to prepare for a test and to be certain that you know the material is to <u>learn</u> the material, and that can't be done overnight. Look over the following checklist and notice anything that you are NOT doing. If you are doing these things, great—if not, start doing them now to improve your test score as much as possible when the actual day of the test arrives.

Test Preparation Checklist:
1. Attend every class
2. Review / rewrite your lecture notes every class session
3. Regularly attend study groups such as SI when possible
4. Read the textbook material before you go to the lecture on the subject
5. Read all the handouts assigned or recommended by the teacher
6. Make charts, graphs, or flash cards, depending on how you need to organize the material
7. Develop a list of questions—things that you don't understand and items that you think are going to be on the test. Get answers to the questions that you don't understand, either in your study groups, in class, or in a conference with the teacher. Use your possible test questions for review.
8. Avoid last-minute cramming
9. <u>Gear up for the test with a good night's sleep and a nourishing meal or snack before test time</u>.

<u>The last item may seem unnecessary to you, but it's important</u>. Your brain doesn't work as well if you are fatigued or stressed. Some stress may be unavoidable—illness and flat tires are part of life—but control as much of your life as you can on test days. You will be much more likely to recall what you've learned if you are rested and ready.

Along the same line of thinking, <u>plan out what you're going to eat and drink</u> before the test. Muscle cells need protein, but your brain cells run on sugar. If your blood sugar is low while you are testing, your brain will not function up to its capacity. You want full capacity! Plan to eat before you start, and if a test is going to be particularly long, you might keep some candy with you to snack on while you work.

Contrary to many students' beliefs, an extra shot of caffeine will not improve your test-taking ability very much. Caffeine may help you feel more alert, but it doesn't support the brain functions as blood sugar does, and it will never take the place of adequate preparation. If you don't regularly drink coffee or cola, don't load up right before a test.

If caffeine could help us score better on tests, we'd all be scholars.

Test Preparation Strategies

Review course material each week. In preparing for exams, it is necessary to understand and memorize factual data. Encourage students to see the interrelationships in the material the exam will cover. Students should organize the material around the main points of the course and make sure they understand them.

Reflect on what has been learned. Reflecting means that students examine the material from their own viewpoint and draw implications that are not explicitly stated. Students should dissect the material and try to see how the facts are combined.

Don't try to cram at the last minute. Because it forces learning out of context, cramming is short term at best. Material treated in this manner often has to be relearned for a cumulative final exam. Cramming on one subject may force students to neglect another, which might result in cramming for that subject's exam later.

Strategies for Taking Tests

Test-Taking Tips

• Get a good night's sleep and eat a light meal before the exam. Avoid caffeine and sugar, as they will decrease one's ability to concentrate and focus.
• Gather the materials needed (scantrons, pencils, pens, eraser, calculator, etc.) ahead of time.
• Arrive at the exam room a little early to have time to get settled and relax.
• Avoid distractions like getting into last-minute conversations with others about specific topics in the course.
• Listen carefully to the oral instructions and read all of the written instructions before beginning. If anything seems unclear, ask for clarification.
• Answer the questions they know well and then go back to work on the others.
• Budget time. Allot the most time for questions worth the most points. Get started immediately.
• Attempt to answer all of the questions even if not absolutely certain of the answers. Sometimes partial credit is awarded for grasping the concept.
• Check all answers for errors before turning in the exam.

Multiple-choice tests:

*Answer questions in your head before looking at the answers. This helps you eliminate wrong choices.

*Mark questions you aren't sure of and come back to them later.

*If you are guessing between choices, these tips may help:

---eliminate any wrong answers and guess between the two best possibilities.

---if the answer calls for sentence completion, eliminate answers that would not form   grammatically correct answers.

*If a test item seems unclear—for example, if a question can be taken to mean two different things—ask for clarification. Even the best teachers can write an unclear test question.

True-False Questions:

*Look for qualifiers such as "all," "most," "sometimes," "never," or "rarely." Absolute qualifiers such as "never" or "always" generally indicate a false statement.

*Names, dates, and places are often used as the key to make a statement false.

Open Book Tests:

*Prepare thoroughly for these tests; they are almost always the most difficult tests.

*Write out any formulas or important facts you will need on a separate sheet of paper.

*Mark important pages of your textbook with tabs, so you don't waste time flipping through the pages.

Essay Exams:

*Read all the questions first. Jot down any key ideas that occur to you as you read the questions.

*Notice and underline key words in the questions that give you a clue to what is expected in the answer. Words such as "define," "compare," "contrast," and "explain" require different ways of answering.

*Plan the amount of time you can spend on each question based on the difficulty and the number of points you will get for it.

*Answer the easiest questions first.

*Answer all questions. If you don't know the precise answer, try to write a closely related one.

*Leave enough space between questions to add any more information you may recall while you work on other parts of the test.

*Be neat and legible. If time permits, review your answers for grammatical errors, spelling, and legibility. Teachers tend to give higher grades for neater handwriting.

Problem Exams:
*Write down formulas, equations, and rules before you begin working on the test.

*Work the easiest problems first.

*Show all work; label your answers.

*Check your answers if time permits.

Additional Studying Suggestions

Be physically prepared to study. Eating nutritious meals and sleeping on a regular schedule make a difference in how students feel and react. Rest breaks are critical during long periods of study. Also, advise students to schedule activities that do not require a lot of concentration for those times when they normally feel tired. Physical exercise will improve concentration and should be included as part of a daily schedule.

Choose a functional study area with no distractions. Work in a place where distractions are at a minimum. Read in a well-lit and well-ventilated room. Have everything needed within reach to not waste time walking back and forth to the study area.

Recognize reasons for lack of motivation. Those who are not interested in their work find it difficult to concentrate. There are many possible reasons people are unmotivated. Poor health can keep a person from being interested in anything. Personal problems may seem so important that they dispel interest in anything else. Getting help in solving problems from friends or a staff member in UTSA Counseling Services may increase motivation and concentration.

Strategies for Taking Tests

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Textbook Reading

How to Analyze a Reading

College assignments often ask you to think critically by "analyzing," "inferring" or "interpreting" some article or other reading. Understanding exactly what these terms mean can help you as you plan a paper or a class presentation. Next time you are asked to analyze a reading, look over these definitions and use them to plan out your response

Evaluate

- When **evaluating**, you decide whether something is good, bad, accurate, misleading, worth buying, worth seeing, and so on. When you see a movie, and you tell someone else that it's good, great, or lousy, you are giving your **evaluation** of that movie. You often add the reason why you did or didn't like it— the plot was funny, there was too much violence, you liked the characters, and so forth. In the same way, when you **evaluate** something you read, you **give your opinion** of its value. You should be able to *point to a reason why* you have that opinion—for example, the writer was logical (or illogical), the story was interesting (or boring), the point made was important (or not important). Be prepared to share your reason for your opinion.

Infer

- When **inferring,** you pick up a meaning that is not specifically stated or written out. For instance, if you read: "This dog that I am taking care of is big, smelly, dirty, noisy, and has chewed up my best shoes," then you can **infer** that the writer does not like taking care of the dog, even though this is not specifically written. "**Inferring**" is oftern referred to as "**reading between the lines.**"

Interpret

- When **interpreting**, you express *in your own words* the meaning of something you've just read. You might **interpret** a very long poem, for example, by stating in a few short sentences your understanding of what the poem means or says. You can make your interpretations very short and concise or very long and creative. It's your own personal interpretation. Be prepared, however, to be able to point to some words or phrases that influenced you to form your particular interpretation.

Text Reading Methods

3-2-1 Method
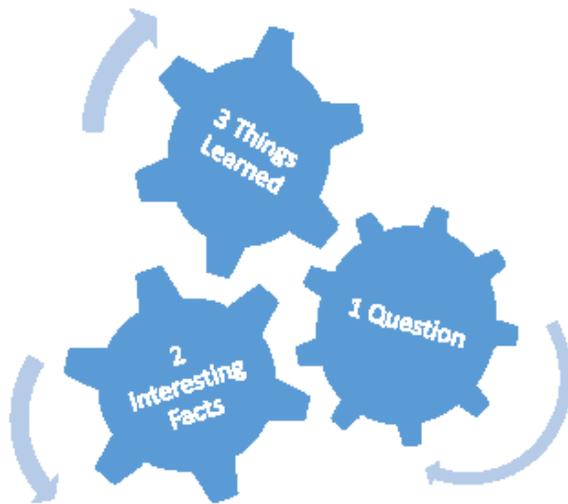
At the end of each section of reading, stop to recap the information by writing down:

- 3 Main Points
- 2 Facts you found interesting (different from main points)
- 1 Question you still have about the material

K-W-L Method
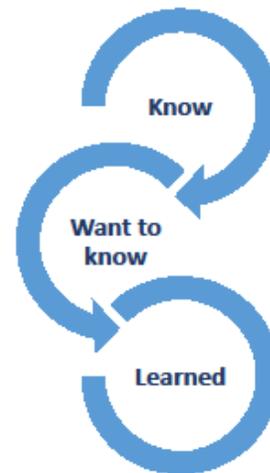
Before starting a new section of reading write down:

- What you already know about the subject
- What you want to learn from the reading

After you've read the section, write down:

- What you learned about the subject from the reading

Reading and Remembering Strategies

In Academic Coaching, we try to provide our students with several different reading strategies. The three most effective reading strategies that we emphasize are:

1) SQ3R
2) PARROT
3) PRR

The basic concepts of these methods are similar. One reading strategy may work better for one class over another. We recommend students modify and or/combine strategies to meet their needs.

Are you doing this? "Chapter 1… The………."

Take a more active approach to reading your textbooks.

<u>SQ3R</u>
This strategy has been around since 1946 when Francis P. Robinson developed and published it in his textbook *Effective Study.*

Survey- by previewing the chapter. Read the introduction, headings, illustrations, and summary.

Question- by turning each heading into a question.

Read- to find the answer to your questions, but read only from one heading/ question to the next heading.
Recite- by saying the question to yourself and mentally answer the question in your own words.

Review- by going over the questions and answers you developed.

<u>PARROT</u>
This strategy was developed at the University of South Florida by Barbara McLay. It integrates steps from the traditional SQ3R but is more simplified.

Preview- involves getting familiar with the reading assignment by scanning major headings, illustrations, charts, bold print, summary, chapter questions, and outline.

Attend- by having a purpose for your reading and ask yourself what you want to learn from the chapter.

Read- by dividing up the reading by reading a section at a time.

Review- by stopping frequently to recap what you have read.

Organize- the information after each section by creating outlines, note cards, concept maps, timeline, Cornell, and book notes.

Test- by asking your questions from the organizing tools you utilized from the above step. Work with a study partner and attend study groups to clear up questions.

The PRR
(Reference: www.utexas.edu/student/utlc)

- PREVIEW
  -Look over chapter outline and summaries
  -Look over headings, subheadings, charts, and illustrations
  -Master the technical vocabulary
  -Break up your readings into sections

- READ ACTIVELY:
  -Develop your questions from titles, subtitles
  -Divide reading into smaller sections
  -Take notes, make outlines, use webbing, retention diagrams, note cards

- RECALL:
  Research shows that we forget about 40-50% of what we read within about 15 minutes unless we take measures to recall it immediately.

  -Recite: Go over your questions. Say the answers in your own words. Do you really understand what the book is saying?
  -Reflect: Can you answer those higher level questions? Can you make connections? Do you see patterns? Can you relate the material to examples?
  -Review: Review on a regular basis. Utilize website review material, practice quizzes on CD, go to study groups.

Reading Your Textbook: Try the 5 R's

Read Selectively
- What is the main purpose of this chapter?
- Start by previewing the chapter.
  - Look over chapter outline and summaries
  - Look over headings, subheadings, charts, and illustrations
  - Master the technical vocabulary
  - Break up your readings into sections

Record
- Write down:
  - Your questions, take notes, make outlines, use webbing, retention diagrams, note cards

Recite
- Go over your questions.
- Say the answers in your own words.
- Do you really understand what the book is saying?

Reflect
- Can you answer those higher level questions?
- Can you make connections?
- Do you see patterns?
- Can you relate the material to examples?

Review
- Review on a regular basis.
- Utilize website review material, practice quizzes on CD, go to study groups.

The University of Texas at San Antonio

Adapted from academiccoaching.KW. Revised 11/10

Time Management

Time Management

Many of our students tell us that they simply just don't have enough time… Everyone has the same amount of time: 24 hours a day, 168 hours per week; yet some students get so much more accomplished. The following ten time management tips are often helpful.

Time Management

Main Points

Time management is a means of controlling and organizing your schedule for maximum efficiency through careful planning of your class schedule.

Avoiding procrastination involves motivation, goals, and getting projects started.

Prime study time is the time of day when you are at your best for learning and remembering. You protect it by eliminating physical and mental distractions. You maximize it by managing the surroundings in which you choose to study.

Management of a semester is achieved by keeping a semester calendar of events and important deadlines.

Weekly time management involves using a weekly plan and daily "To Do" lists.

Constructing a Weekly Calendar

1. **List all fixed commitments first:** Examples include classes, meals, meetings, work hours, SI sessions or tutoring.

2. **Study as soon after a lecture class as possible:** One hour spent soon after class will provide as much benefit as several hours studying a few days later.

3. **Schedule time for studying:** Academically successful students typically study 2-3 hours for every hour they spend in class.

4. **Use odd hours during the day for studying:** identify blocks of free time and time spent waiting. Establishing habits for using them for studying will result in free time for recreation at other times during the week.

5. **Study at a regular time and in a regular place:** Knowing what you are going to study and when saves a lot of time in making decisions and retracing your steps to get necessary materials.

6. **Look for ways to group activities:** schedule these in blocks of free time.

7. **Plan to complete activities before the due date:** allow for unexpected delays.

8. **Schedule regular breaks:** Yes, you get to have fun!

9. **Pay attention to your time:** Notice how others misuse your time, and avoid them or ask to see them later. Try to agree with living mates about study time.

10. **Learn to say NO:** Decide if you need to drop one or more of your activities or classes. This will depend on your personal goals, priorities and level of energy.

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2 Week Game Plan

Week of:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Notes:

POWER HOUR

❖ **Studies show that blocking study time into focused chunks can help make studying more effective.**

❖ **Try setting aside designated 1-hour (60 minute) blocks for studying**

❖ **Within that 60 minutes, divide your time according to the chart below:**

◊ **10 min** - Preview reading assignment, set a goal for this short session, ask questions

◊ **40 min** - Read the text, take notes - jot down any other questions or the answers to questions you asked

◊ **5 min** - Take a break; walk away and do something unrelated to the reading *Caution: don't get caught up in an activity that will take more than 5 minutes!

◊ **5 min** - Review; can you answer the questions you wrote at the beginning of the hour? Is there anything you still don't understand?

◊ At the end, if you accomplished your goal, restart another Power Hour or , if not, pick up at the point where you need to review again

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Priority Matrix

Urgency

High   Low

1 Urgent + Important	**2** Important + Not Urgent
3 Urgent + Not Important	**4** Not Urgent + Not Important

Importance

Low
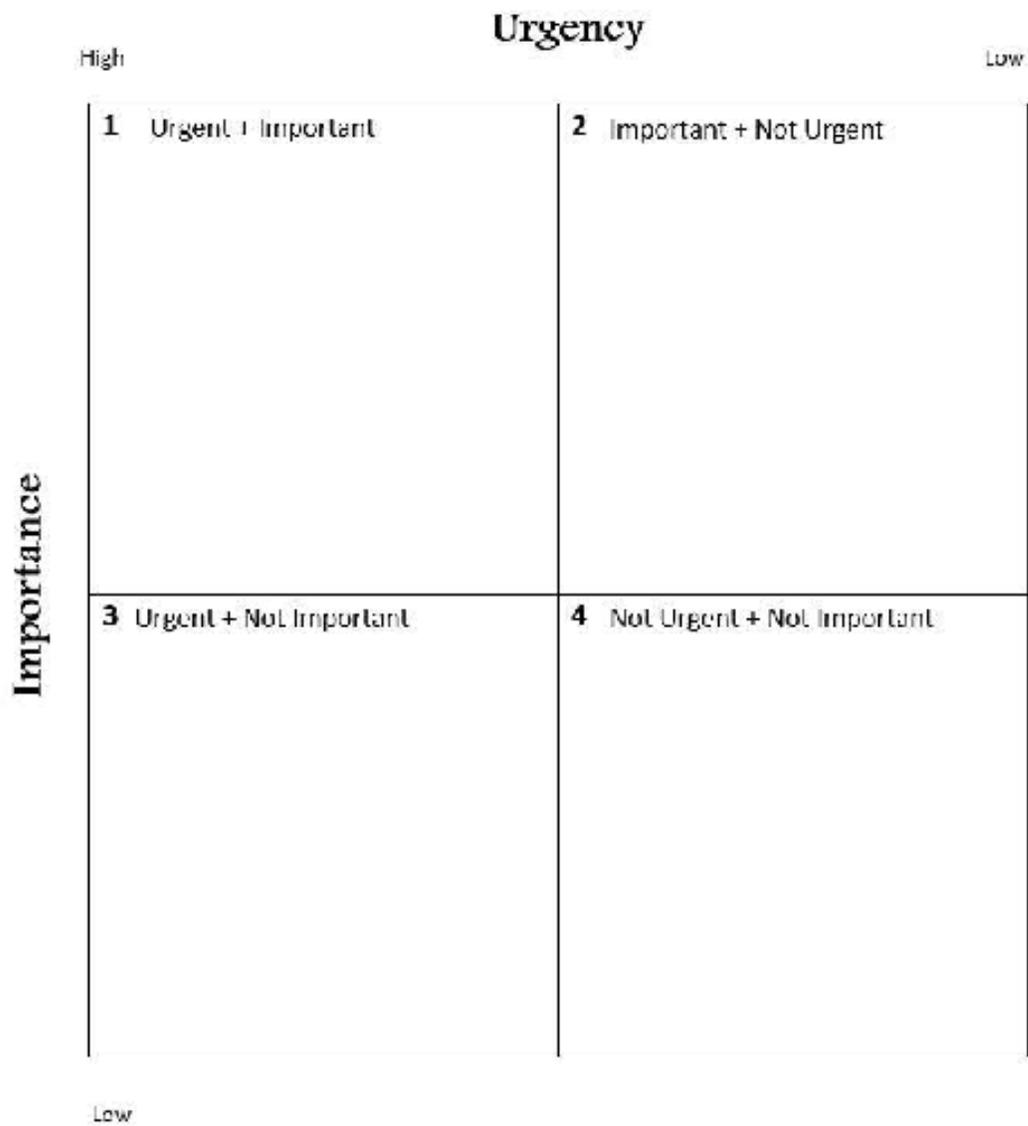
SO WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

SELF-ASSESSMENT (TIME WASTERS)

	Often a Problem	Sometimes a Problem	Seldom a Problem
1. Goal not set	_____	_____	_____
2. Priorities unclear/changing	_____	_____	_____
3. No daily plan	_____	_____	_____
4. Tasks left unfuiished	_____	_____	_____
5. No self-imposed deadlines	_____	_____	_____
6. Attempting too much	_____	_____	_____
7. Unrealistic time estimates	_____	_____	_____
8. Too many involvements	_____	_____	_____
9. Inabilty to say "No"	_____	_____	_____
10. Personal disorganization	_____	_____	_____
11. Lack of self-discipline	_____	_____	_____
12. Telephone interruptions	_____	_____	_____
13. Preoccupied	_____	_____	_____
14. Watching too much TV	_____	_____	_____
15. Too much socializing	_____	_____	_____
16. Failure to listen	_____	_____	_____

Evaluating Your Time

On average, how many hours per day do you spend	Weekdays	Weekends	Hours per Week
1. Sleeping?	_____ (x5)	_____ (x2)	
2. Exercising or enjoying hobbies?	_____ (x 5)	_____ (x 2)	
3. At your job?	_____ (x 5)	_____ (x 2)	
4. Preparing and eating meals?	(x 5)	(x 2)	
5. Showering, dressing, etc.?	_____ (x 5)	_____ (x 2)	
6. Cleaning, doing laundry and other household chores?	(x 5)	(x 2)	
7. Watching TV, surfing the net, relaxing?	(x 5)	(x 2)	
8. Socializing with friends and family?	_____ (x 5)	_____ (x 2)	
9. Getting to and from class, work, etc.?	(x 5)	(x 2)	
10. Studying?	_____ (x 5)	_____ (x 2)	
Total hours per week of routine and study			

How many hours are in a week? _____

How realistic is this schedule? _____

Where can you make changes?

Time Flies, Right?
But Where Does It Go?

Directions:

1) At the end of the week, summarize your activities on the chart below.

2) Evaluate where your time goes and make a planned weekly schedule.

3) Try to follow your schedule to improve your time use.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES										
ACTIVITY		MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	TOTAL	PERCENT*
School Related	Class & Lab									
	Study									
	Clubs & Organizations									
	Total									
Work										
Personal	Social & Recreational									
	TV & Stereo									
	Total									
Health-related	Eating, Bathing, Exercise, etc.									
	Sleep									
	Total									
Travel										
Out-of-school Commitments										
Other										
Total Hours		24	24	24	24	24	24	24	168	100

*To determine percentage, divide the number of hours in an activity by 168. For example; 56 hours of sleep divided by 168 = 33.3%

Time Management Tips

Ways to Get the Most out of Now

1. Plan 2 hours of study time for every hour spent in class
2. Keep a calendar/planner to keep yourself on schedule
3. Study difficult (or boring) subjects first
4. Avoid scheduling marathon study sessions – break it up into smaller sessions
5. Be aware of your best time of day and use it to study!
6. Don't get too comfortable (don't study on a bed or comfy chair)
7. Use a library, or another area with few (or no) distractions
8. Agree with housemates (roommates, family) about study time
9. Avoid noise distractions. Turn off radios, TVs, phones, and computers while studying

Ask Yourself…

1. **What is one task that I can accomplish toward my goal?** Something that will help accomplish a larger goal, but will only take 5 minutes
2. **Am I beating myself up?** Don't get frustrated if you are having difficulty. It is unproductive. Take a break, lighten up, and get back to work.
3. **Am I being too much of a perfectionist?** If you can complete a job 95% perfect in 2 hours, and 100% perfect in 4 hours, consider if the additional 5% is worth the extra time and energy that could be used elsewhere.
4. **How did I just waste my time?** If you notice time passed and you didn't accomplish what you intended, take a minute to determine what happened, and try to avoid that problem again.
5. **Can I do just one more thing?** At the end of the day, do you have the energy to accomplish one more small, important task that will contribute to a larger goal?

Quick Fixes!

If you have 5 minutes, you can….
Review notes
Update your schedule/planner
Skim newspaper headlines
Make a quick phone call
Do a few sit-ups or other exercises

If you have 15 minutes, you can…
Survey a chapter
Practice some flash cards
Check email
Straighten up a room
Take a walk to relax

If you have 30 minutes, you can…
Begin initial library research
Brainstorm and/or outline a paper
Run an errand
Read a chapter
Take a nap (to get more energy to study with!)

Chapter 5: Research and Writing Concerns

Chapter 5: Research & Writing

In this section we discuss different theories which are relevant and applicable to academic coaching with regard to research and writing. We focus on theories about coaching students who present writing issues as a need. Primarily, the student population that requires assistance in these areas is graduate students. Many are working through the process of long-term writing projects such as theses or dissertations. Aside from coaching as an ongoing resource for these students, we also recommend participation in our Thesis/Dissertation Support Group and one of our Writing Institutes.

Understanding Primary Research Articles

When you are reading primary research articles you might have varying purposes, depending on your task. Understanding your purpose will allow you to focus on parts of the article that will serve it best. Also, it is important to allow yourself to vary your reading speeds, depending on your purpose and the part of the article that suits your purpose.

Purpose	Reading Focus & Speed
Preliminary gathering of research for a paper	Skim abstract and conclusion
Basic understanding of research area	Find foundational author and read their work or find encyclopedia and look at that area
Looking for additional sources or research	Skip straight to Lit Review section or bibliography
Annotated Bibliography paper	Read quickly to write one paragraph summary
Literature Review assignment	Read to understand connections between authors & ideas
In-depth reading of article for a research paper	Read thoroughly and slowly as is necessary
Reading for research methodology course	Focus on methodology section
Reading for theory course	Focus on Literature Review of History section

Once you understand what your focus is and how quickly you should be reading the article, use the chart below to pick out the essentials of any academic article. Many students get lost in the details of the article (usually the literature review section) and never understand what the author concludes in his/her own work. This chart will help you see the big picture of each research paper, which is especially helpful if you have to read massive amounts of articles for each class.

Essentials	Look for
Title	Focus of the study, hypothesis, or research question
	Type of article (primary study, position paper, or literature review)
Author & Institution	Is this author the foundational author (being of essential importance, or having done earliest work that is later recognized as having lasting importance)? What institution is this author from? Do they specialize in this arena?
Abstract	Purpose of study
	Source(s) from which the data are drawn (participants or sample)
	Method used for collecting data
	General results
	General interpretations of the results
Introduction	Argument crafted from literature review
	Research question
	Hypothesis
Methodology	Sample
	Research design (treatments, techniques or materials)
	Data-collection procedures (instruments or observational methods)
	Procedures followed
Results	Findings, support or non-support of hypothesis
Discussion/Conclusion	Implications and importance of findings. Further research needed?
Limitations	Is this generalizable?
References	Other research you should read, especially often-cited papers

Essentials	Look for	Content
Title	Focus of the study	
	Type of article	
Author & Institution	Focus & prestige of authors, departments, and institution	
Abstract	Purpose of study	
	Sample	
	Method	
	Results	
	Interpretations	
Introduction	Argument	
	Research question	
	Hypothesis	
Methodology	Sample	
	Research design	
	Data collection	
	Procedures followed	
Results	Findings Support of hypothesis	
Discussion/Conclusion	Importance Next steps	
Limitations	Generalizable?	
References	Other research	

(Adapted from: Perry, F.L. (2005). *Research in applied linguistics: Becoming a discerning consumer*. Mahwah, New Jersey: LEA Publishers.)

Criteria for a Good Research Question

Foss and Waters (2007) say that a good research question meets six criteria:

1. Clearly identifies *the theoretical construct* you are studying (phenomenon, event, or experience that you want to learn more about)

2. *Recognizable* as that theoretical construct (concrete and specific)

3. *Transcends* the data (take the data source out of the question)

4. *Contributes to an understanding* of the theoretical construct

5. *Capacity to surprise*

6. *Robust*
   - What is the nature of
   - What are the functions of
   - What are the mechanisms by which
   - How do … perceive
   - What factors affect
   - What strategies are used
   - How do … respond
   - How do …. affect
   - What are the effects of
   - What is the relationship between
   - How are … defined
   - How do … differ
   - Under what conditions do

Foss, S. K., & Waters, W. W. (2007). *Destination dissertation: A traveler's guide to a done dissertation*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

Basic Approach to Organized Writing

Type of Energy	To Do	How	Target Date
Creative	Choose a topic	Note what interests you in lectures, readings, and in conversations.	
Critical	Narrow your topic	Read about your topic and frame research question. Get help from prof and others.	
Creative	Collect your ideas	Research articles, take notes, keep citation info. Whatever you use (notecards, electronically, paper) be able to shuffle… Brainstorm	
Critical	Organize your ideas	Identify what is valid, important, relevant. Organize your structure and make an outline. Write thesis statement.	
Creative	Get ideas on paper	Make connections- think, talk, pre-write. Work quickly- don't stop for grammar, etc. Expect Aha moments!	
Patience	Allow time to be objective		At least 24 hours
Critical	Revise rough draft	Check unity, paragraph organization, rethink major issues. Make sure conclusion matches your thesis.	
Patience	Allow time to be objective		At least 24 hours
Critical	Edit/Polish final draft	Now check sentence structure, word choice, grammar and citations. Read out loud making sure it doesn't sound awkward.	

Writing a Literature Review

❖ **What is it?**
  o A literature review is a paper or section of a major work that is concentrated on organizing research on a particular topic. Rather than just summarizing the research, the key is to survey, organize, and evaluate the sources in relation to the others. It emphasizes the concepts of your sources instead of your personal argument. It might also lead to a "hole" or gap in the research, which becomes part of your research question.

❖ **How does it function in the context of a larger work?**

Your synthesized sources funnel down into your research question.

More specific
General source
Lit Review
Spot on
Your Research Question
Body of your paper
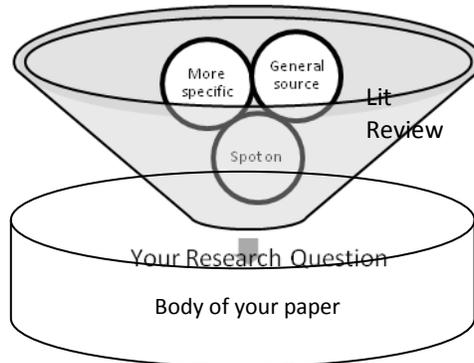
Your research question then sets up the body of your work.

❖ **What should you do & how?**

1. Generate a topic
• Gaps in the research
• Major debates
• Trends
• Common themes

2. Collect Sources
• Start pulling sources
• Skim articles
• Create labeled stacks

3. Evaluate Sources
• What's the most relevant to the field and your research?
• Are they current and solid research?

4. Do your part
• Summarize
• Interpret and analyze
• Synthesize
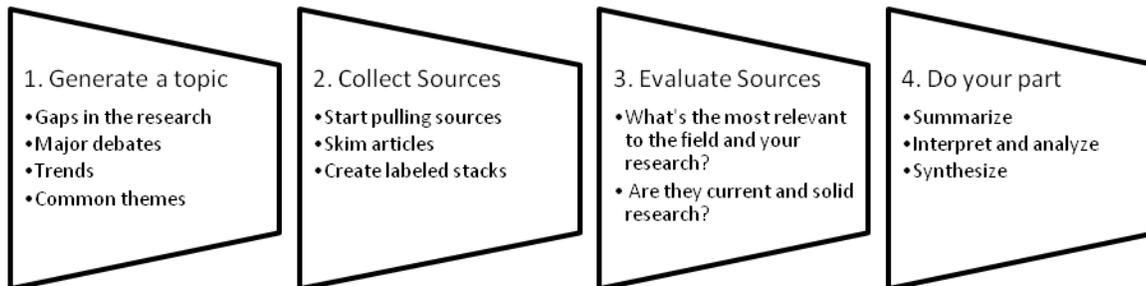
❖ **What's the difference between summarizing and synthesizing?**
  o Summaries make up the thin foundation of your lit review while the synthesis of those summaries should make up the bulk of your paper.

Synthesis:
Re-organize by concept.
Meaningfully interweave key points from summaries.
Effectively synthesize to make the organization of summaries logical.
Summary: Recap and highlight important points *relevant* to your topic.
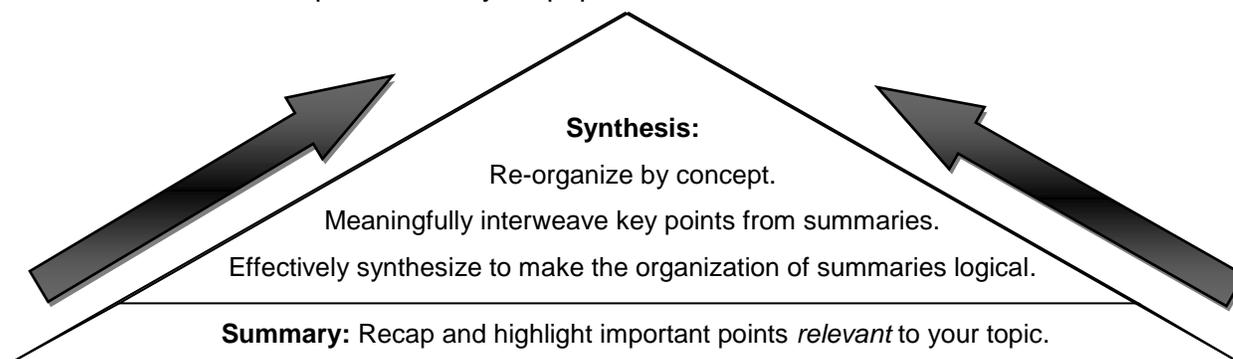
❖ **What parts should my literature review include?**

o Introduction
  ▪ Make sure that the literature review has a thesis statement. This, however, is not an argument, but a statement that concisely summarizes the findings of the research reviewed. This statement guides the organization and purpose of your literature review.
o Body
  ▪ Organized either chronologically, thematically, or methodologically. Choose an organization that makes sense for either your field of study or for the intended purpose of your literature review.
  ▪ Not organized by author (which would be an annotated bibliography).
o Conclusion
  ▪ Provides a quick recap of your thesis statement (i.e., what the research showed). Engages the question, "What does this all mean?" Then, if the assignment allows for it, state what you are going to do with that knowledge. For example, if the literature showed a gap, state that you recognize the gap and seek to fill it with your research.

❖ **What are some tools for organizing all of this material?**
  o Because it is very important to limit your scope and your summarizing, graphic organizers can serve as helpful tools for pulling out the literature's most pertinent *and* relevant information.

Matrix

o **Versatile**
o **Linear, yet visual**
o **Can help in the collection and limitation of data**

o **Reveals gaps in research**

Potential Categories	Source 1...	Source 8
Research Question		
Purpose/ Argument		
Methods		
Results		
Limitations		

Concept Map

o **Great for reviews**
o **Very visual**
o **Centers**
o **Reveals the relations of**

❖ **Additional Suggestions**
  o Look at examples in your field. Not only are they helpful for figuring out what a literature review looks like, but they are also a great place to start your research.
  o More information:
    o http://library.ucsc.edu/ref/howto/literaturereview.html
    o http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/literature_review.html

Writing an Annotated Bibliography

❖ **What is it?**
- o An annotated bibliography is a compilation of sources used for researching a topic, including a summary, and often an evaluation, of each source.
- o Depending on the purpose of one's annotated bibliography, the assignment may contain a simple summary of each source, or an evaluation and reflection over the material each source presents.

❖ **Why do we do it?**
- o The purpose of an annotated bibliography, whether summative or evaluative, is to (1) prepare oneself for a research project or (2) to provide other researchers with possible sources and direction.
- o When used in the first way, the annotated bibliography helps a researcher during the critical collection process to gather sources and/or determine a focus for a thesis.
- o When used to assist others, the annotated bibliography provides a survey of existing references and research.
- o If the purpose of your bibliography includes evaluation, consider comparing your sources as well as assessing their objectivity and relevance.

❖ **What should you do?**
- o Make the annotated bibliography relevant.
- o Summarize using your own words and insights.
- o Make sure you understand the purpose of your annotated bibliography.

❖ **What you should not do?**
- o Simply list the first sources you encounter.
- o Copy and paste the abstract of an article into your bibliography.
- o Neglect to ask your professor for a clarification of the assignment if needed.

❖ **Additional Suggestions**
- o Clarify the format and purpose of your annotated bibliography with your instructor.
- o Source of this information: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/

Chapter 6: Challenges to the Coaching Process

Common Academic Coaching Issues

As an academic coach, you will encounter many students, each with a unique personality. However, there may be frequently occurring issues among your students. Some of the most common are listed below:

♦ **Resistance**- Your student does not care to participate in coaching, so s/he does not come to appointments, comes to appointments unprepared or comes to appointments but does not give more than a one syllable answer to any of your attempts at drawing them into discussion.
♦ Your student comes regularly to meetings but **directs the discussion to personal topics**.
♦ Your student **blames academic difficulties** on everyone or everything other than taking any personal responsibility.
♦ Your **student hugs you** at the end of an appointment.
♦ Your student brings you **gifts**.

How academic coaches deal with these issues will vary, and stylistic differences are great teaching and learning tools. However, there are some things we ask you to keep in mind:

♦ Resistance will present in different forms, and there is *no one right way to resolve this issue*.
♦ This is an opportunity to *develop your own "helping" style*.
♦ No matter what your level of frustration is with a student, *be supportive and encouraging*.
♦ Express your concerns with your student in an *effective, assertive manner*.
♦ *When in doubt, discuss the situation with your supervisor*. It is important that you communicate with your supervisor. They have a wealth of experience in dealing with these same issues and may be able to give you a new perspective in managing these types of concerns.

When to Refer Your Student for Emotional and Psychological Counseling

In building relationships with students, coaches will certainly encounter times when their students require help that the coach is unable or unequipped to offer. Do not hesitate to make appropriate referrals. If, as an academic coach, you are uncertain about the appropriateness of your referral, discuss the situation with your supervisor.

There may also be times when situations arise that will require referrals made to Counseling Services on campus.
Some helpful signs to look for in determining whether or not your student may benefit from personal counseling are listed below:
(Typically more than one)

Academic Problems

- Significant advising problems
- Inability to choose courses
- Unwillingness to take required courses
- Career indecision
- Shift from discussion of coursework to personal issues
- Excessive procrastination
- Uncharacteristically poor work
- Inconsistent work
- Repeated requests for special consideration
- Excessive absences

Behavior markers

- Marked change in personal hygiene
- Dramatic weight gain or loss
- Frequent falling asleep in class
- Irritability, particularly in conjunction with unruly behavior
- Impaired speech or garbled, disjointed thoughts
- Unusually soft or loud voice, or unusually slow or fast speech cadence
- Tearfulness or intense emotion

Interpersonal interactions

- Dependency on advisor ("hanging around")
- Avoidance of professor or other students
- Behavior that regularly interferes with classroom dynamics
- Complaints from peers

Indicators of emergency situations
Get help immediately!
- Expression of suicidal thoughts
- Expression of homicidal thoughts
- Severe loss of emotional control
- Gross impairment of thinking ability
- Bizarre behavior

In case of emergency
Call Counseling Services (458-4140) Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. After hours, call University Police (458-4242), who will put you in touch with an on-call crisis counselor. In cases of acute risk of violent behavior, always call the campus police.

How to make a referral
If you become aware that a student is having personal or family problems (for example, illness of a family member), it is often useful to ask the student, "Are you talking with anyone about this?"

If you feel that the student would benefit from a counseling referral, it is usually best to express your concern and recommendation directly to the student and allow the student to make his or her own decision. If a student needs help immediately, offer to call Counseling Services while the student is present.

If you call Counseling Services on behalf of a student, identify yourself and explain to the receptionist that you are assisting a student in making an appointment. Allow the student to speak to the receptionist to arrange an appointment time. Be sure to let the receptionist know if it is a crisis or emergency situation.

Client confidentially prohibits Counseling Services from providing you with information about a student that you have referred, but it is almost always appropriate for you to check back with the student to see whether he or she followed through on your recommendation. This communicates your continued interest and concern.

Coaches should always inform their supervisor of referrals made on behalf of a student to Counseling Services.

Chapter 7: Assessment

In this chapter, the TRC Learning Assistance Assessment Plan provides information about how data is collected, conveyed, and reported to paint an overall picture of program student participation and usage. Subsequently, the Academic Coaching forms used to collect data are provided in the order typically used throughout the coaching and evaluation process.

Older versions of forms used in the program have not been removed from this manual, so changes over time can be seen. Current forms in use are at the front of this chapter.

Learning Assistance Program
Services for Graduate & Undergraduate Students
Assessment Plan

The Learning Assistance Program strives to evaluate program efficacy in four ways.

Program	Student Needs	Student Satisfaction	Student Demographics	Student Outcomes
Academic Coaching • Survey results should score 3.5 or higher on a 4 pt. scale • Annual increases should be shown in number served and/or average number of sessions by student over previous year	• Session evaluations • Semester surveys • Tracking special requests	• Session evaluation • Semester evaluation	• Age, Gender, Ethnicity • Student Classification • Academic Status (end of semester) • College of Major	• Number of Contact Hours and Students Served • Average number of sessions by student • Grades by self-report • Student Testimonials • Rubric (pilot in Spring 2017)
Workshops by Request • Survey results should score 3.5 or higher on a 4 pt. scale • Annual increases should be shown in number served and/or number of workshops over previous year	• Workshop evaluations • Faculty feedback • Tracking special requests	• Workshop evaluations • Student and Faculty emails	• Age, Gender, Ethnicity • Student Classification • Academic status • College of Major	• Number of Contact Hours • Number of Student Served
Thesis/Dissertation Group	• Session surveys	• Session surveys • Student feedback	• Academic level • Discipline • College of Major • Gender, Age, Ethnicity	• Number of sessions attended • Student testimonials
Graduate Writing Institute	• Faculty input • Institute surveys	• Institute surveys	• Academic level • Discipline • College of Major • Age, Gender, Ethnicity	• Pre-/Post- WISP • Number of sessions attended

- Data is collected, compiled, and reported by the TRC Assessment Team. Data Requests are submitted by staff for ad hoc reports, while weekly and monthly reports are generated automatically.
- Program data is used in weekly, monthly, semesterly, and annual reports to internal staff. Annual reports are shared up the reporting chain to, and including, the Provost.

Student Consent To Waive FERPA Form
Tomás Rivera Center for Student Success

Name:_____ Date:_____

Student ID: @_____ Phone:_____

I am aware of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and do hereby consent to waive my rights to privacy by having someone, other than myself and my academic coach, present during my academic coaching session. I am also aware that any and all information relating to my academic status, performance, history, progress, and records may indeed be discussed during my coaching session (to include, but not be limited to, the following: grades, academic dismissals, transfer course work, grade point average, petitions, substitutions, change of major and/or catalog, personal identifiable information and directory information). Additionally, by signing this form, I give consent to have my academic progress discussed with the person(s) listed below. Should I decide to revoke my consent, I will inform my academic coach in writing and immediate action will be taken to comply.

Student Signature:_____Date:_____

Person(s) present at session:_____

Person(s) granted access to my session information:_____

_____

Academic Coach Signature:_____Date:_____

Student consent revoked:_____Date:_____
<div align="center">Signed or notice from student attached.</div>

TRCForms.FERPAFormAcademicCoaching.8.2016

Academic Coaching Information Sheet

First Meeting Date: _____ Time: _____

Name: _____

Banner ID: _____ Email: _____ Phone Number: _____

Current Address: _____

Semester Information

Program & Degree Seeking: _____

Semester started: _____ Hours taken so far: _____ Cumulative GPA: _____

How many hours are you taking this semester? _____ Term GPA for last semester: _____

What classes are you taking this semester? _____

_____

Background Information

Are you working this semester? ❒ **Yes**　　❒ **No**　　How many hours per week? _____

❒ Mornings　❒ Afternoons　❒ Evenings　❒ Weekends

Do you have any dependents? ❒ **Yes**　　❒ **No**　If so, how many? _____

Approximately how many miles do you live from the campus you generally attend? _____

Are you a first generation <u>college</u> student? ❒ **Yes**　　❒ **No**　Are you a transfer student? ❒ **Yes**　❒ **No**　Are you a Veteran or Active Duty Military? ❒ **Yes**　　❒ **No**

Previous Coaching Experience

Have you attended academic coaching at any other time during college?　❒ **Yes**　　❒ **No**

If so, from whom and for what reason? _____

Did you find it helpful? _____

Are you currently attending any other type of counseling or personal coaching?　❒ **Yes**　　❒ **No**

If not, do you plan to this semester?　❒ **Yes**　　❒ **No**

Academic Questions

What would you identify as your academic strengths? _____

_____

What would you identify as your academic weaknesses? _____

_____

What are your career goals? _____

_____

How did you hear about our services at the Tomás Rivera Center? Did someone refer you to Academic Coaching or did you seek our services yourself? _____

What are you looking to get out of academic coaching this semester? _____

_____

Are you in need of referrals to other campus resources such as Supplemental Instruction, Tutoring, Counseling, Student Disability Services, Student Financial Aid, or another campus office?　❒ **Yes**　　❒ **No**

Basic human needs impact the learning experience, do you need help getting connected to community resources for

Food?　❒ **Yes**　　❒ **No**　Shelter?　❒ **Yes**　❒ **No**

Complete the following statements:

During my coaching period, I am committed to… _____

_____

My plan for the semester is to… _____

Academic Coaching Statement of Understanding

Welcome to Academic Coaching at the Tomás Rivera Center! Academic coaching is the one-on-one process of helping students identify their strengths and weaknesses, then devising a personal plan to build an effective and flexible set of study skills.

When meeting with an Academic Coach, we would like for you to keep a few things in mind:

- Each coaching session will last approximately one hour, depending on your needs.

- There is no limit to the number of appointments you may have with an Academic Coach. You and your Coach will decide how often you should meet for the process to be beneficial for you.

- Please keep scheduled appointments. If you need to cancel or reschedule, please do so with as much advance notice as possible. This allows us to schedule another student during that time.

- Come prepared with questions. Think about where you are having difficulty and what you would like to address. Being ready when you meet with your coach makes for a productive session!

- Bring completed assignments to your sessions. You may be asked to bring your syllabi, book(s), notes, or calendar/planner with you, which will help in evaluating your needs and progress.

- Confidentiality: Communications between a coach and student will be protected. In most situations, we can only release information about you to others if you sign a written authorization form. If you provide us with a written authorization form to release information to any specific person(s), you must revoke the release in writing if you change your mind.

I have read and understand the expectations listed above for Academic Coaching.

_____

Student Signature   Date

_____

Academic Coach Signature   Date

Undergraduate Academic Coaching Evaluation

learning assistance
tomás rivera center
UTSA

Date:	Academic Coach:

Thank you for attending this academic coaching session. Please help us improve our sessions by filling out this questionnaire.

1. What was the most helpful part of this session?	**4=Strongly Agree** **3=Agree** **2=Disagree** **1=Strongly Disagree**
2. How could this session have been improved?	

	4	3	2	1
3. I learned something during this session that I will use to improve my study habits.	4	3	2	1
4. I felt that the session was a useful experience.	4	3	2	1
5. The academic coach was encouraging and supportive.	4	3	2	1
6. The time and location of the session were convenient for me.	4	3	2	1

Comments:

(Optional) May we contact you? If so, please include your name and an email address or telephone number to reach you.

Undergrad AC Eval 9/2016

Session Notes

Name: Coach:

Date:	Work done as assigned?	Comments:	Work assigned for next session:	Next Session Date:

- Page layout changed to fit on page

Academic Coaching

Student Name: _____   Semester:_____

Course	Test Grades	Quizzes	Assignments	Comments

Graduate Academic Coaching Information Sheet

Name: _____   Banner ID: _____

Email: _____   Phone Number: _____

General Information

Graduate Program & Degree Seeking: _____

Started program in ☐Fall ☐Spring ☐Summer _____ Hours completed: _____ GPA: _____

(Year)

How many hours are you taking this semester?_____ Anticipated Graduation Date: _____

What classes are you taking this semester?_____

Background Information

Undergraduate institution, major, degree, and year completed, (and other degrees):_____

_____

Are you working this semester?   ☐ Yes ☐ No   How many hours per week? _____

☐ Mornings ☐ Afternoons ☐ Evenings ☐ Weekends

Do you have any dependents?   ☐ Yes ☐ No   If so, how many? _____

Are you the first in your family to attend <u>college</u>?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Are you the first in your family to attend <u>graduate school</u>?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Academic Questions

What are your academic strengths?_____

_____

What are your academic weaknesses?_____

_____

What do you plan to do after graduate school?_____

_____

Why did you come to Academic Coaching?_____

_____

How did you hear about our services at the Tomás Rivera Center? _____

Did someone refer you to Academic Coaching or did you seek our services yourself?_____

_____

Are you in need of referrals to other campus resources such as Supplemental Instruction, Tutoring, Counseling, Student Disability Services, Student Financial Aid, or another campus office?

☐ Yes   ☐ No _____

Basic human needs impact the learning experience, do you need help getting connected to community resources for Food? **☐ Yes   ☐ No**   Shelter?   **☐ Yes   ☐ No**

Academic Coaching Statement of Understanding

Welcome to Academic Coaching at the Tomás Rivera Center! Academic coaching is the one-on-one process of helping students identify their strengths and weaknesses, then devising a personal plan to build an effective and flexible set of study skills.

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- Come prepared with questions. Think about where you are having difficulty and what you would like to address. Being ready when you meet with your coach makes for a productive session!

- Bring completed assignments to your sessions. You may be asked to bring your syllabi, book(s), notes, or calendar/planner with you, which will help in evaluating your needs and progress.

- Confidentiality: Communications between a coach and student will be protected. In most situations, we can only release information about you to others if you sign a written authorization form. If you provide us with a written authorization form to release information to any specific person(s), you must revoke the release in writing if you change your mind.

I have read and understand the expectations listed above for Academic Coaching.

Student Signature	Date

Academic Coach Signature	Date

Academic Coaching Statement of Understanding 9/2016

Graduate Academic Coaching Evaluation

Date:	Academic Coach:

Thank you for attending this academic coaching session. Please help us improve our sessions by filling out this questionnaire.

1. What was the most helpful part of this session?	**4=Strongly Agree** **3=Agree** **2=Disagree** **1=Strongly Disagree**			
2. How could this session have been improved?				
3. I learned something during this session that I will use to improve my study habits.	4	3	2	1
4. I felt that the session was a useful experience.	4	3	2	1
5. The academic coach was encouraging and supportive.	4	3	2	1
6. The time and location of the session were convenient for me.	4	3	2	1
Comments:				
(Optional) May we contact you? If so, please include your name and an email address or telephone number to reach you.				

Graduate AC Eval 9/2016

Academic Coaching Coding & Abbreviations

Undergraduates

Referred By:		Presenting Problems:	
Advising	A	Anxiety	A
COPP	COPP	Citation	CIT
Counseling Services	C	Concentration	C
EPIC Journey	EPIC	Gen. Study Skills	SS
Email	E	Goal Setting	GS
Friend	F	Motivation	MO
Orientation/OL	ORI	Note Taking	NT
Other	O	Presentation Skills	PS
Parent	P	Reading	RDG
PAS	PAS	Test Preparation	TP
Professor/Instructor	Prof	Time Management	TM
Previous Coach	Prev(Name)	Writing	W
Returning	Returning (Initials)		
SI Leader	SI		
Student Disability Services	SDS		
Tutoring Services	T		
Vet Success	VET		
Website	W		

Graduates

Masters=M		Doctoral=Doc	
Referred By:		Presenting Problems:	
Department	Dept. (Name)	Anxiety	A
Email	E	Citation	CIT
Friend	F	Comprehensive Exam	COMP
Other	O (Specify)	Dissertation	DISS
Orientation	ORI	Goal Setting	GS
Previous Coach	Prev (Name)	Motivation	MO
Professor/Instructor	Prof	Presentation Skills	PS
Returning	Returning (Initials)	Reading	RDG
Self	Self	Time Management	TM
Vet Success	VET	Thesis	TH
Website	W	Writing	W (Specify)

AC Coding & Abbreviations 9/2016

Undergraduate Academic Coaching Log

Audit	Last Name	First Name	SID	Date	New Student	Coach	MC	MC/ SKYPE	DT	DT/ SKYPE
yes	Hale	Tom	abc123	9/13/16	X	Heather	X			

Presenting Problem	Referred	1st Lowest LASSI	2nd Lowest LASSI	3rd Lowest LASSI	1st Gen	Transfer Student	Vet	Food	Housing	
TM	ORI	CON	INP	TMT	N	N	N	N	N	

	Und	Total Sessions		Date	NEW		MC	MC/ SKYPE	DT	DT/SKYPE

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Graduate Academic Coaching Log

Audit?	Last Name	First Name	Banner ID	Date	New Student	Coach	MC	MC/ SKYPE	DT	DT/ SKYPE	Level (M/Doc)
Y	Smith	Dolly	abc123	9/1/16	Y	Connie	Y				M
Referred By	Presenting Problem	1st Gen	Transfer Student	Veteran	Food	Housing					
Prof	TH	Y	N	N	N	Y					
	Grads	Total Sessions		Date	New		MC	MC SKYPE	DT	DT SKYPE	

- Page format has been changed to fit on page.

Monthly Report

Academic Coaching		
Coach	# of contacts/ appointments	# of Individuals Served
Stefanie	27	12
Shannon	25	3
Heather	32	15
Lisa		
TOTAL	**84**	**18**

Outreach	
Total # of Events	Total # of Attendees
2	**623**

Presenter	In-Class	Thesis - Dissertation Groups	By Request	TOTALS
Stefanie	6	4	2	95
Shannon	9	4	5	66
Heather	5	0	5	150
Lisa	1	0	1	30
				341

Total Number of Workshops	
21	
Total Student Contacts for Workshops	
341	
Total Number of Ind. Students Served in Workshops	
212	
Total Student Contacts for ALL activities	
Acad Coaching Workshops	
84 341	
Unduplicated Individual Students served in Coaching and Workshops	**230**

Fall 2016 Graduate Student Academic Coaching Testimonials:

- "I like talking with my coach and going through my weekly plans." (September)
- "Encouragement, talking about strategies to get things done." (September)
- "My coach listened to all my concerns and offered great solutions." (September)
- "I liked how my coach asked what I wanted to work on before giving suggestions. She listened to my concerns and offered a potential game plan." (September)
- "Discussed new concepts and how they apply to my studies." (August)
- "Advice on transitions and how to prepare for defense was appreciated" (August)
- "Planned deadlines for the fall semester and time management" (August)
- "Great reassurance; felt focused to do my research" (August)

Fall 2016 Undergraduate Student Academic Coaching Testimonials:

- "Overall good session. Felt comfortable and understood our conversation." (September)
- "My coach was very helpful to me. I need to talk to her and she listened." (September)
- "I am really grateful for this support resource provided by the TRC" (September)
- "I feel prepared and ready to pursue my goals in a manageable manner with success!!" (September)
- "My first session was really nice. My coach was understanding of my concerns and willing to listen to what I had to say." (August)
- "My coach is a great person and listens to everything. She gives ideas and how to apply what I have learned and need to learn to succeed. (August)
- "Great first experience." (August)
- "Learned how to better manage study time by separating into intervals. She said it is like eating an elephant one bite at a time." (August)

Semester Report Example

SERVICES FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Service Type	# of Student Contacts	# of Students Served (unduplicated)
WORKSHOPS		
Main Campus		
In-Class	547	537
By Request	84	83
Expert Learner Series	13	10
PAS Series	269	136
Outreach	1134	1134
Downtown Campus		
In Class	57	57
By Request	0	0
Total	**2104**	**1957**
ACADEMIC COACHING		
Main Campus	479	177
Downtown Campus	23	4
Both Campuses	---	10
Total	**502**	**191**
Grand Total	**2,606**	**2,148**

SERVICES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Service Type	# of Student Contacts	# of Students Served (unduplicated)
GSLA Workshops		
Main Campus		
Thesis/Dissertation Group	19	6
In-Class	169	165
By-Request	24	23
Outreach	297	297
Downtown Campus		
Thesis/Dissertation Group	31	6
In-Class	183	166
By-Request	55	52
Outreach	50	50
Both		
In-Class	9	8
Total	**837**	**773**
Academic Coaching		
Main Campus	125	25
Downtown	70	16
Both Campuses	---	9
Total	**195**	**50**
Grand Total	**1,032**	**823**

Program Overview:
Fall 2015 was successful for the Learning Assistance team. The Director and three full-time academic coaches got positive feedback regarding the excellent customer service they provided to the UTSA undergraduate and graduate students. A collaborative effort with the Social Sciences Advising Center executed a pilot PAS (Partners in Academic Success) program with the intent to reduce the number of Social Science students placed on academic probation. The three academic coaches provided 7 two-hour workshops garnering a total of 269 student contacts. Students who were not able to attend a workshops were given the option of meeting with an academic coach for three appointments. While the response to take advantage of academic coaching was positive, many times the students had to wait a minimum of 4 weeks to see an academic coach. Thus, emphasizing the need for another SDS I on the team. The Downtown Campus SDS I position was posted in October and again in November; however, the candidate pool and the individuals interviewed were not a good fit for the Learning Assistance program. The decision was made to post the position a third time with the intention of interviewing in January, hoping to attract recent graduates from UTSA master's programs. In November, the Learning Assistance Team presented at the 2015 College Learning & Reading Association National Conference in Portland, Oregon. The presentation, "Student Veterans: Easing the Transition from Military to Academic Life," provided higher education professionals with insight on using an assets-based approach in supporting student veterans.

Academic Coaching:
During fall 2015, 191 undergraduate students attended 502 academic coaching sessions, **averaging 2.63 sessions** each, which was a **106.7% increase** in the number of sessions over Fall 2014 (243) sessions. Evaluations revealed that all academic coaches provided outstanding service. On a scale from 1-4 where 1 represents a low score and 4 represents a high score, the collected average scores for the coaches for Fall 2015 were as follows: convenience of time and location: 3.68; worthwhile experience: 3.73; encouraging coach: 3.96; will change habits due to session: 3.76. Overall, coaches received an **average score of 3.78/4.00 from students** using the service.

For graduate services, 50 graduate students attended 195 academic coaching sessions, **averaging 3.90 sessions** each. This was a **63.9% increase** in the number of sessions among this student population when comparing fall 2014 (119) to Fall 2015 sessions. Thus, indicating that graduate students see value in the service at a higher rate and are seeking multiple appointments. On a scale from 1-4 where 1 represents a low score and 4 represents a high score, the collected evaluation average scores for the coaches for Fall 2015 were as follows: convenience of time and location: 3.94; worthwhile experience: 3.91; encouraging coach: 3.96; will change habits due to session: 3.89. Overall, coaches received an **average score of 3.93/4.00 from students** using the service.

Workshops and Outreach:
Learning Assistance reached 823 unduplicated undergraduate students through 39 workshops, including In-Class, the Expert Learner Series, By-Request, and a new workshop series (PAS) for students on academic probation in the Social Sciences Department. This was a **74.2% increase** in the number of students reached through workshops compared to fall 2014 (212). There was   also a **117% increase** in the number of workshops conducted. Overall, students were satisfied with their experiences in workshops; the service garnered an **average score of 3.85/4.00 on evaluations**. In response to student veteran requests for a "two-month check-in," Learning Assistance piloted a Campus Checkpoint outreach event, an opportunity for these students to network with each other their resources on campus. Thirteen students attended and showed an overall satisfaction with the event, garnering an **average of 3.8/4.0 on evaluations**. Once again Learning Assistance, in collaboration with seven departments across campus, hosted a Stress Down Day event, this semester at the Rec Center, and saw a **100% increase in attendance** from the spring, with 403 unduplicated students participating in activities such as therapy dogs, brain massages, aromatherapy, and much more.

A total of 414 unduplicated graduate students attended 23 workshops, including In-Class, By Request, and an International Graduate Student Success Series, offered by The Graduate School. Learning Assistance participated in several outreach events for graduate students, including orientation and Graduate Student Social Hours at the Downtown campus. Additionally, our Graduate Student Mixer was a success, with 67 graduate students in attendance, a significant increase from the prior fall. Twelve unduplicated graduate students attended Thesis/Dissertation groups at both the Main and Downtown campuses. Overall, graduate students were satisfied with the quality of workshops offered by the Learning Assistance Team, garnering **an average score of 3.8/4.0** on evaluations.

Recommendations:
The fall semester was challenging due to majorly increased usage, and students were disappointed and discouraged when told they had to wait 4-6 weeks to see an academic coach. The new DT SDS I position will aid the team with student availability, however, the need for another academic coach at the main campus has become imperative.   One other solution would be to hire a part-time SDS I to serve our faculty by providing evening workshops so that the full-time academic coaches do not have to take time away from student appointments.

Submitted by: Stefanie Gonzalez-Lopez, Ph.D.
                  Student Development Specialist II

                  Shannon Sczech, M.Ed.
                  Students Development Specialist I

                  Heather Frazer, B.A.
                  Student Development Specialist I

Demographics for Undergraduate Students Served

For reporting purposes, an unduplicated count of 776 students across all undergraduate services was calculated. The breakdown of demographic results were as follows.

Gender

Gender

(Bar chart titled "Gender" showing: Male = 297, Female = 479, with a vertical axis from 0 to 600.)
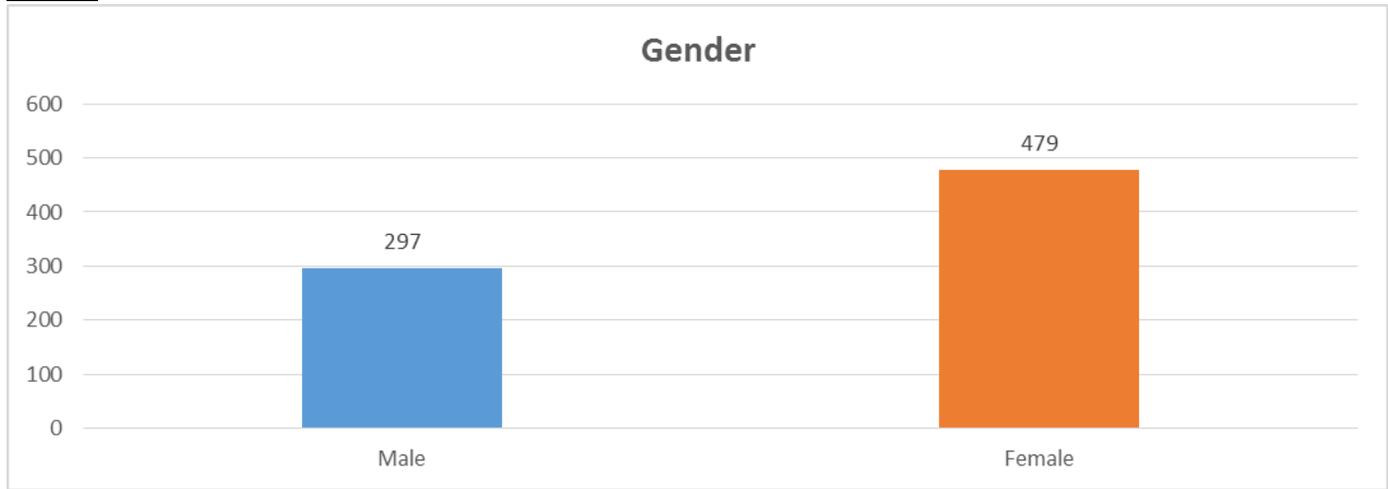
Of the undergraduate students who participated in some service offered by the Learning Assistance Program, 61.73% were female with 38.27% being male. Historically, this remains true to previous semesters with more females or males seeking Learning Assistance services.

Age

Age

(Bar chart titled "Age" showing values by age range: 17 to 20 years = 463, 21 to 22 years = 154, 23 to 30 years = 128, 31 to 35 years = 14, 36 to 40 years = 5, 41 to 45 years = 7, 46 to 50 years = 3, 51 to 55 years = 1, 56 and older = 1, with a vertical axis from 0 to 500.)
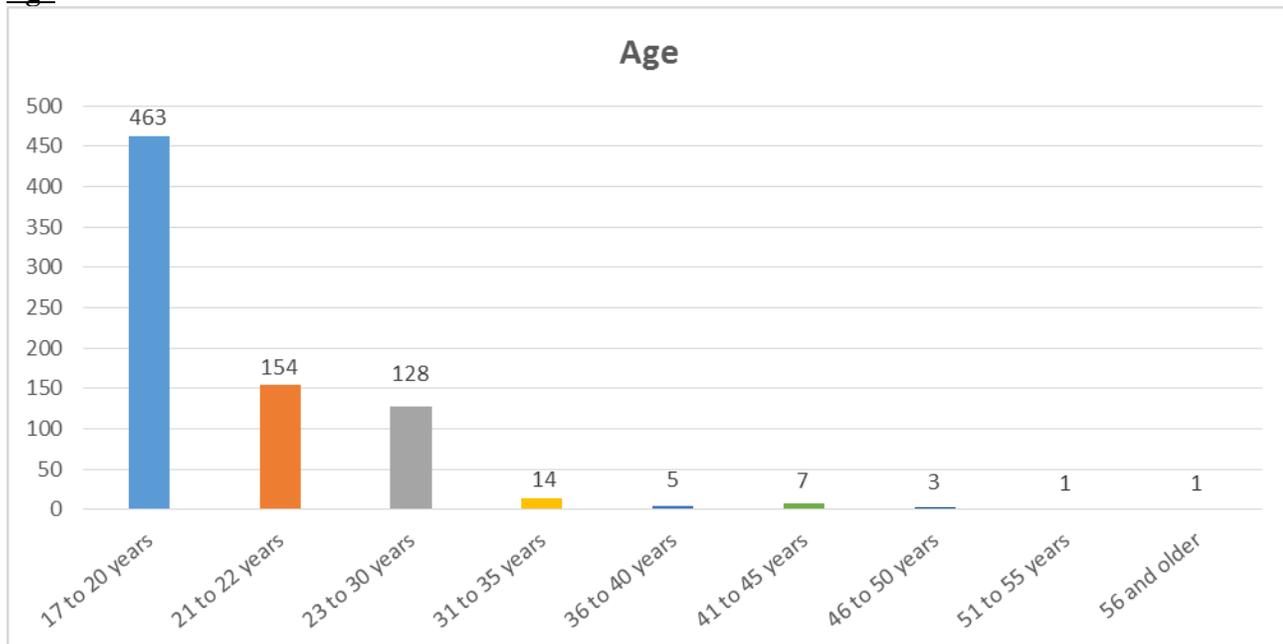
As with previous semesters, most undergraduate students who participated in Learning Assistance services were considered to be within the "traditional" age range of this student population with 79.51% being between 17-22 years of age. However, 20.62% of the students served were 23 to 65 years of age.

Ethnicity
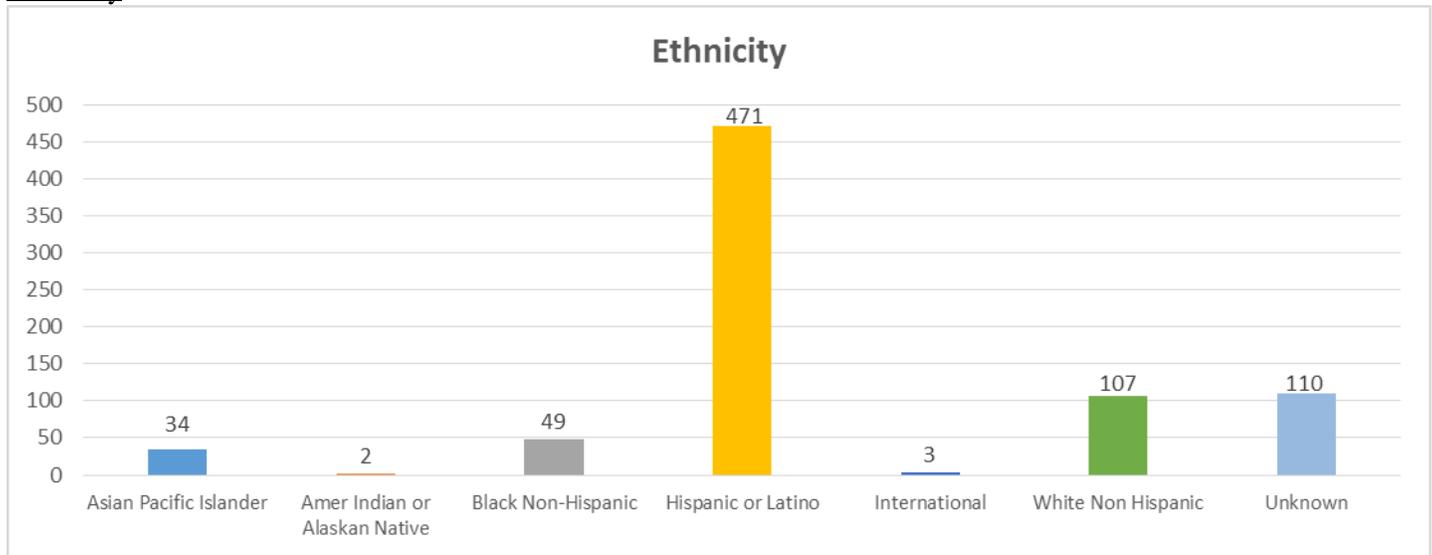
When comparing the ethnic make-up of the students served during fall 2015, it is no surprise that the majority are Hispanic students as UTSA is a Hispanic serving institution (HSI). However, the fact that 60.70% of the undergraduates were Hispanic over 13.79% being White/Caucasian did not reflect the overall UTSA student body with regard to ethnicity. Unfortunately, because ethnicity has become optional to report for students, the number of "Unknown" was increased. In future reports, the Learning Assistance Team should consider changing ethnicity categories to include "Two or More Races" in order to reduce the number of "Unknowns".

Student Classification
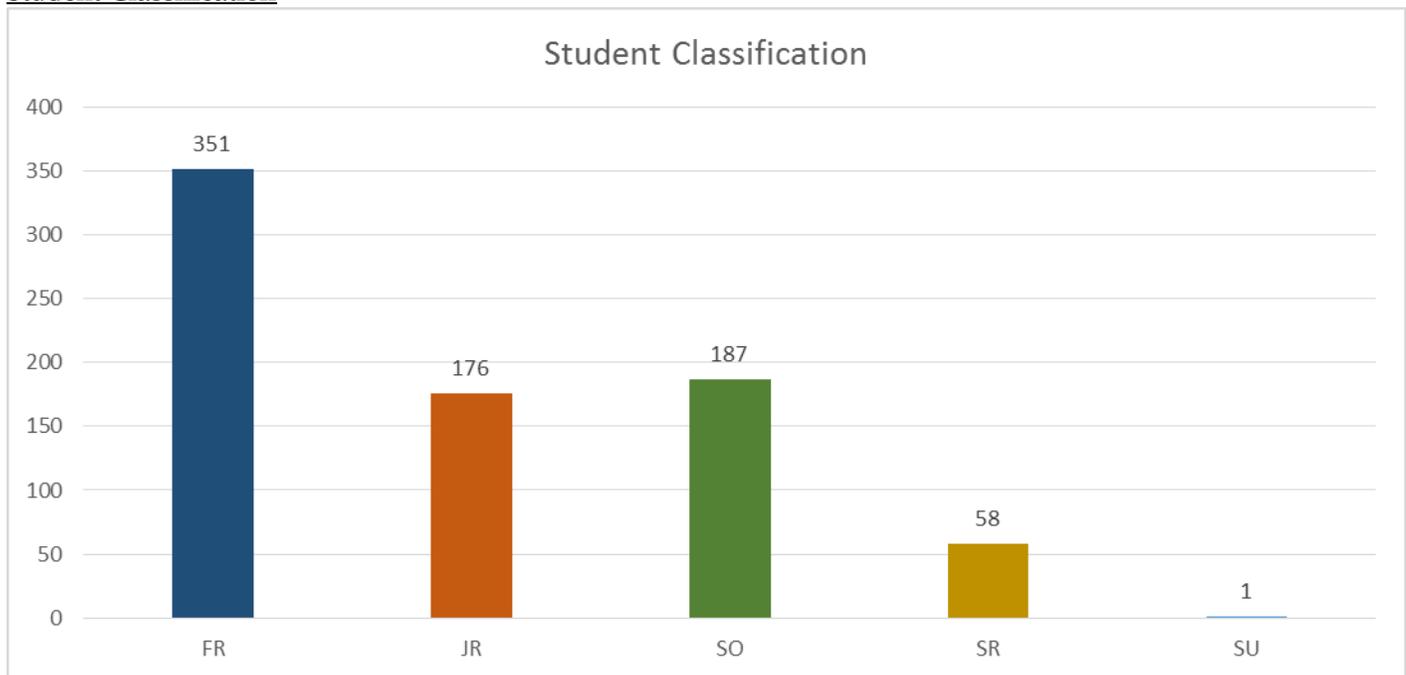
Excluding the three graduate students who participated in undergraduate outreach in this chart, 45.41% of the students served were freshmen with 24.19% being sophomores and 22.77% were juniors. Seniors represented 7.50% of undergraduates served.

College
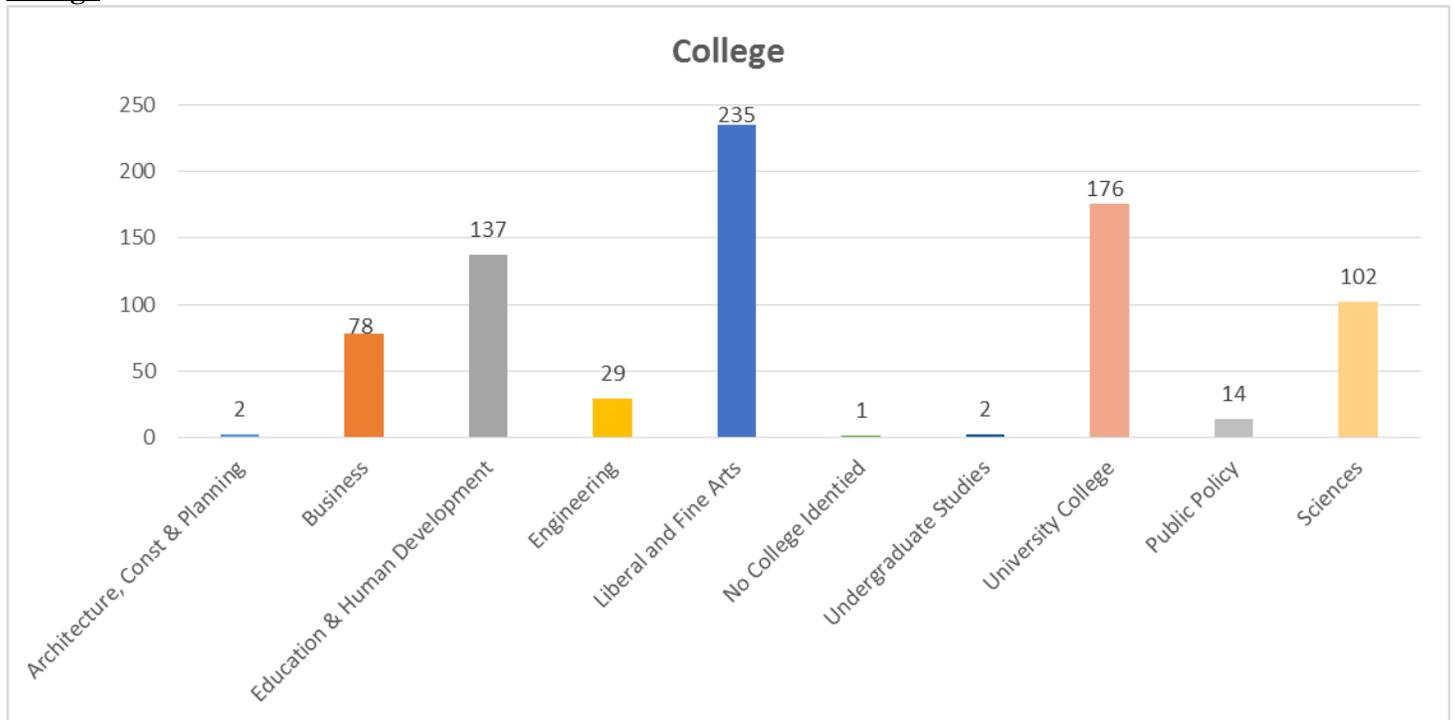
Given that the majority of students served were freshmen, it is reasonable to expect a high number of participants to have been from University College as indicated in the chart above. The well-established relationships with faculty in College of Liberal and Fine Arts and College of Education and Human Development may be attributed to the highest and second highest numbers represented in the chart. Notably, the number of Science and Engineering majors are steadily increasing as students and faculty in those colleges come to know the quality of Learning Assistance services provided by the Team.

Academic Standing
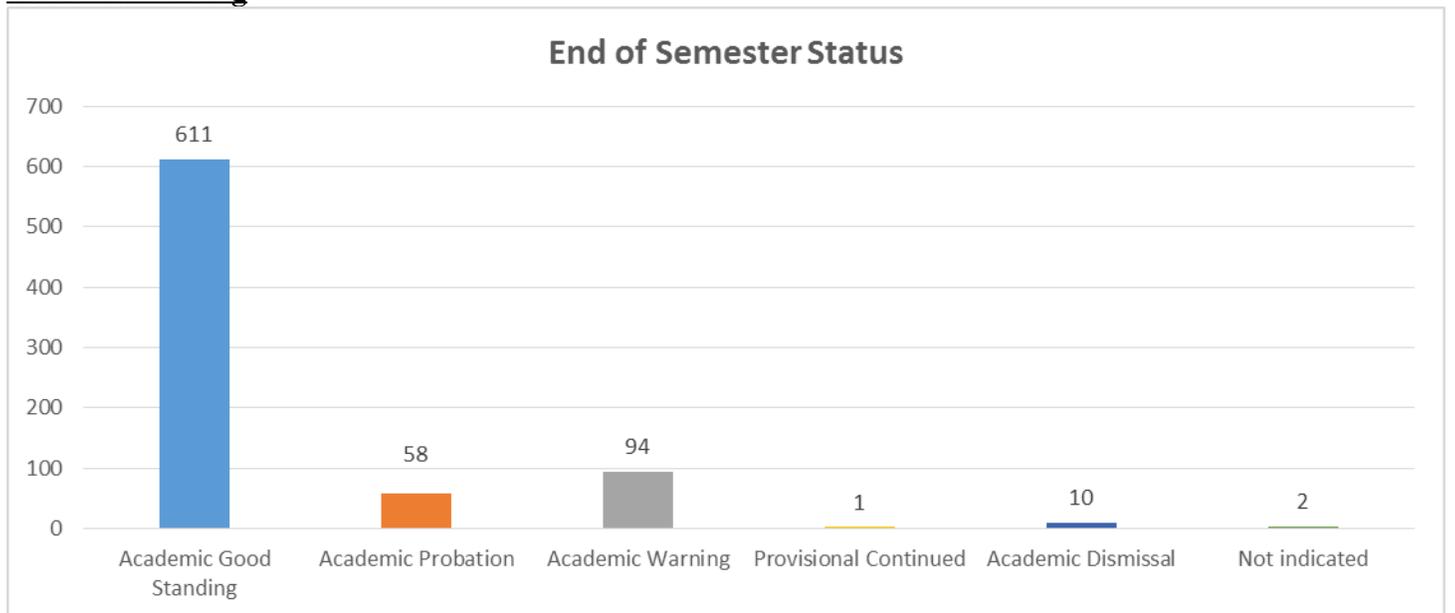
The Learning Assistance Team looks at the academic status of participants as a measure of program efficacy. While there is no way to attribute the success of students, or their lack of progress, solely to the services, the Team bases programming decisions, in part, on how well the students served did at the end of each semester. 78.74% of the students served ended the semester in good academic standing.

Demographics for Graduate Students Served

In reporting demographics for the graduate students served during fall 2015, an unduplicated count of 401 students across all graduate services was calculated. See below for details of this student population who participated in Learning Assistance-Services for Graduate Students.

Gender
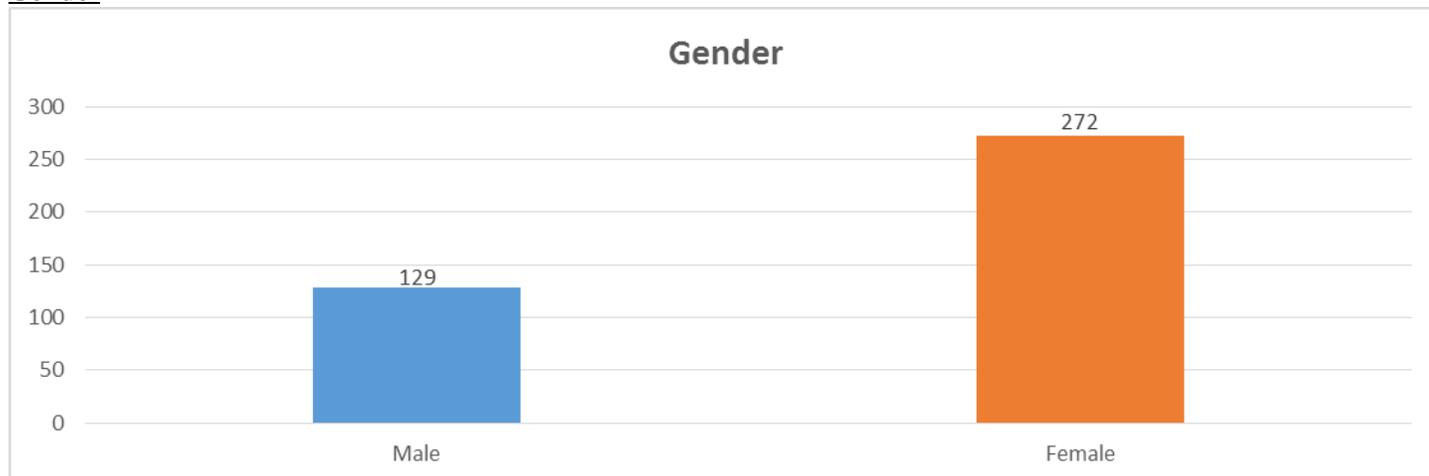
Of the graduate students served by the Learning Assistance program during fall 2015, 68% were female and 32% were male. Of the 272 female students, 261 were master's level students with the remainder being doctorate-seeking. Of the 129 males, 113 were master's degree students with the remainder being in a doctorate program. This was a typical showing of students served as more female seek out services than do males.

Age
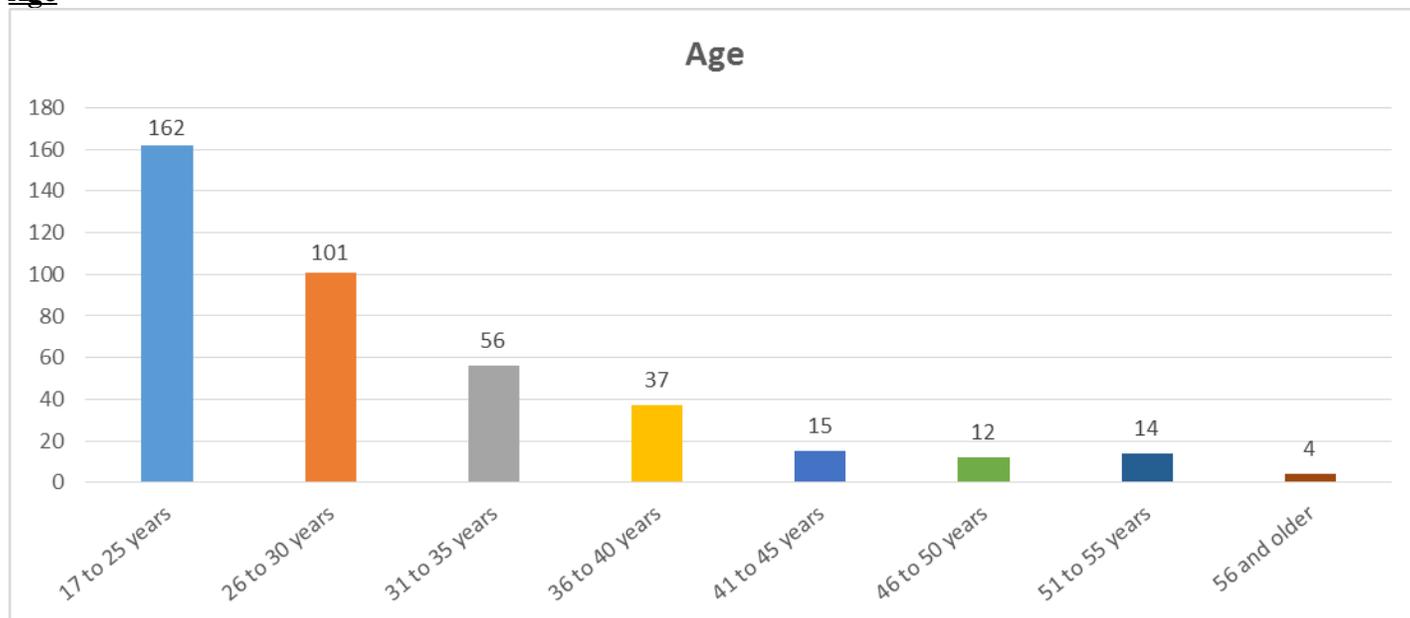
The highest number of graduate participants came from the 17-25 year old age range (40.40%), suggesting that more of the UTSA graduate students in Fall 2015 were students entering graduate programs directly upon earning their undergraduate degrees. The other alternative explanation could have been that this group of graduate students sought services because they were more inexperienced than the more "mature" students in graduate school. The actual ages range from 20-64 years old within this population. One student was a 17 year old undergraduate who participated in a graduate student service, and thus was counted.

Ethnicity
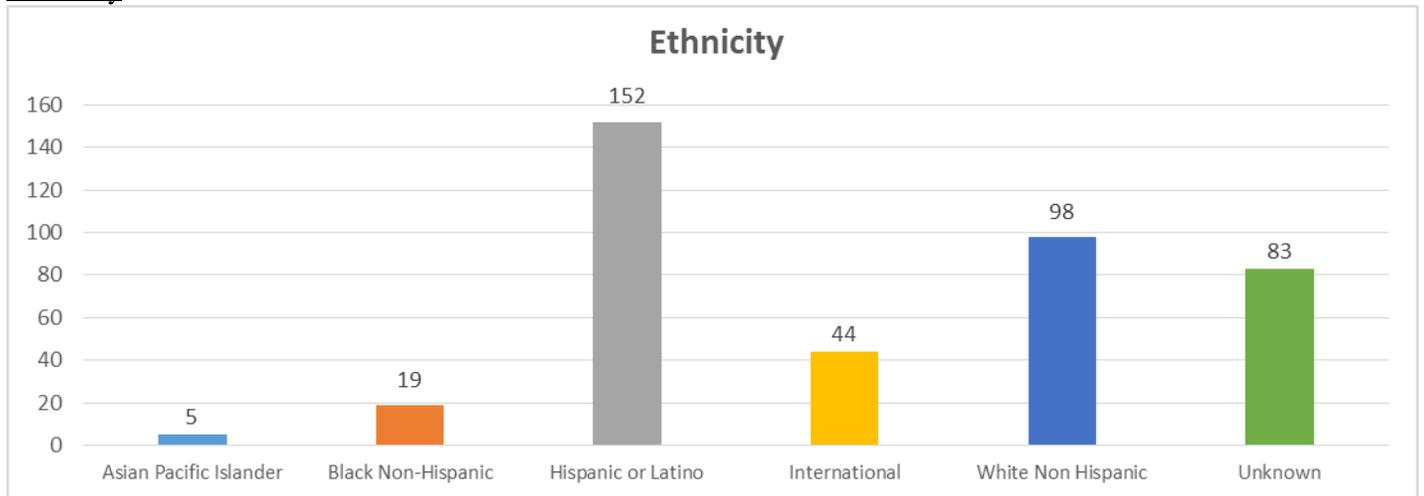
The majority of graduate students who sought services were Hispanic at 38%. The second largest ethnic group was White/Non-Hispanic students at 24%. When comparing these graduate student participants to the overall make-up of graduate students at UTSA, more Hispanic students sought services disproportionate to the number of White/Non-Hispanic students given that the former made up 34.78% of the graduate student body and the latter made up 34.92% of the UTSA graduate students.

College
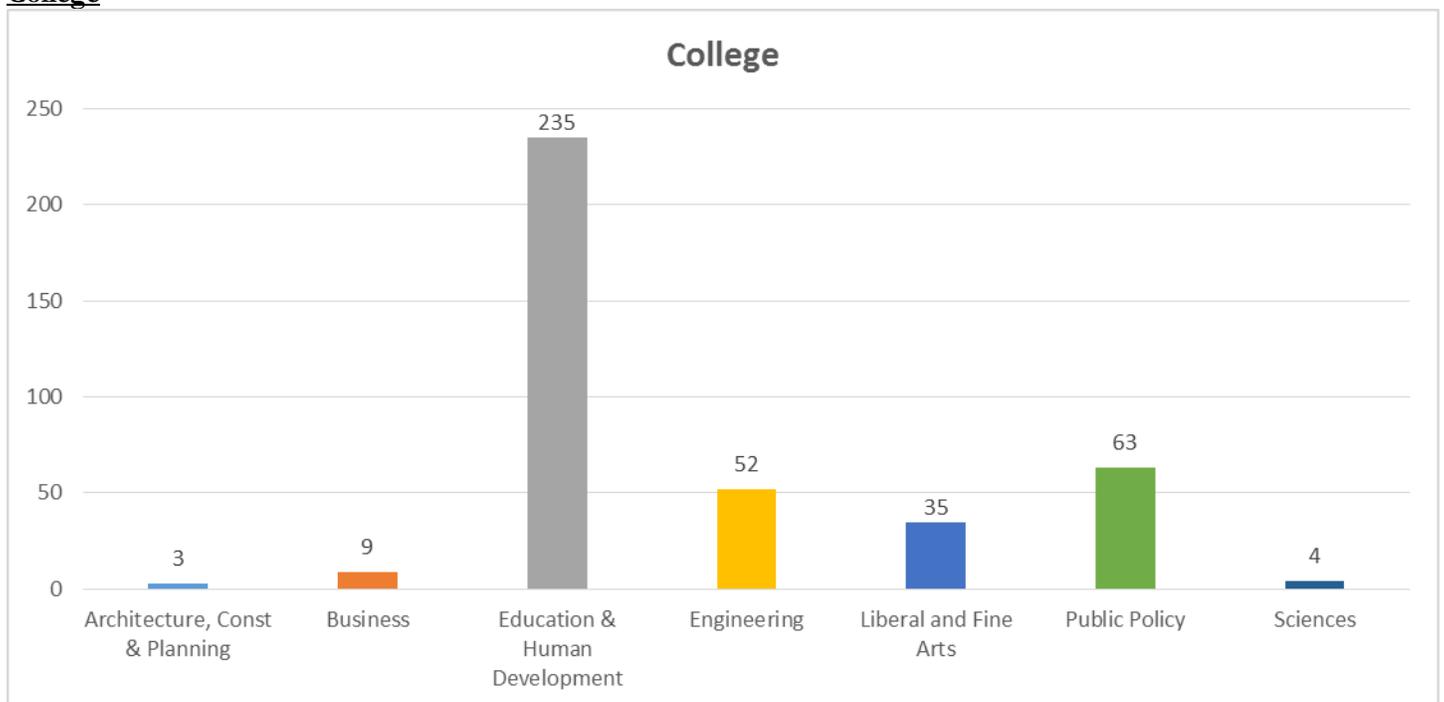
The chart above is an accurate reflection of the historic data with regard to the colleges represented by students served. The College of Education and Human Development has had a long-standing relationship with the Learning Assistance Team as had the College of Public Policy. An important piece of data to note is the third college represented is the College of Engineering, a college that the Team had been striving to foster a relationship with over the last several semesters. This indicated that those efforts were paying off during the fall 2015 semester.

Academic Status
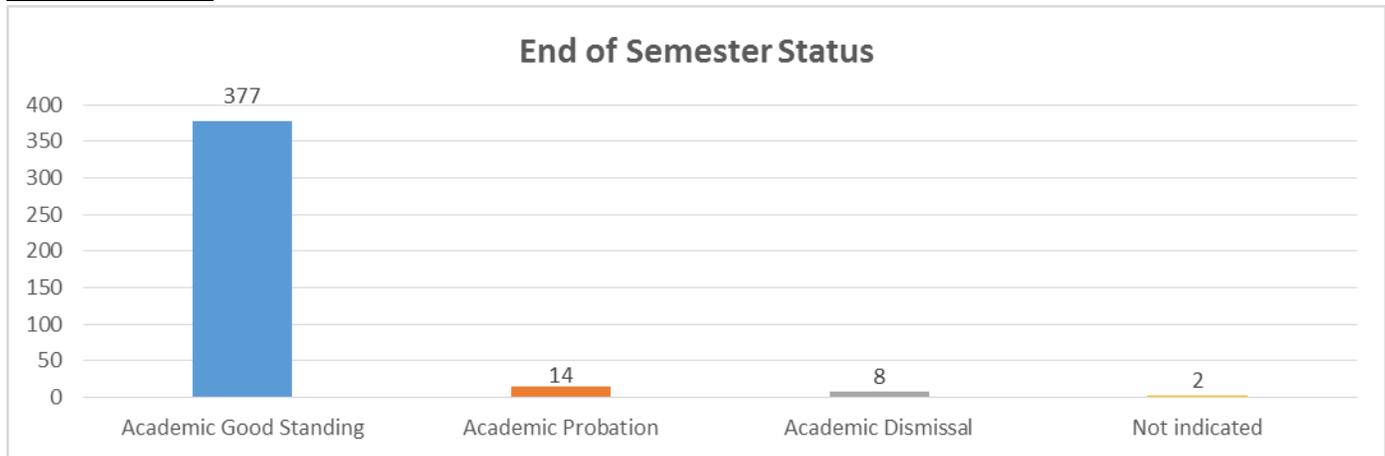
Graduate student participants ended the fall 2015 semester with 94% on good academic standing. Of the 22 students who did not fare as well, 4% ended the semester on academic probation, 1 student was a doctoral student while the remaining 13 were master's level students. Of the 8 students or 2% dismissed from UTSA, all were master's level students. The 2 students in the not indicated category were students who participated in services early in the fall semester and then withdrew from courses prior to Census Date.

Submitted by: Lisa Johns, M.A.
                Director, Learning Assistance & Assessment

Annual Report Example

Tomas Rivera Center
Learning Assistance
Annual Report
2015-2016

Program Overview

Established in 1994, the Tomás Rivera Center Learning Assistance Program has been providing a variety of student support and skills-based services to UTSA students. As the needs of students have changed, the concentration of the Learning Assistance Program has become tailoring services to those changing needs of graduate and undergraduate student populations. Undergraduate Learning Assistance has become known as ULA and Graduate Student Learning Assistance has become GSLA. New services have been added and well established services have received makeovers that appeal to the students we serve. During the 2014-2015 academic year, re-branding of the program became a topic of discussion and preparations began to follow through on this endeavor for the 2015-2016 academic year. Details to come in the 2015-2016 annual report, however, the program will be referred throughout this report as Learning Assistance- Services for Undergraduate Students and Services for Graduate Students.

Program Highlights

During the AY 2014-2015, the Learning Assistance Program experienced significant turnover in staff. The year began with both Assistant Directors and one graduate services staff member resigning from their positions. Reasons given were a retirement for one Assistant Director, a desire to reduce work hours, which we could not accommodate, for a second Assistant Director, and a job offer in the field of study for the SDS II. The months of August and September 2014 were challenging and the Director and remaining SDS I did what was necessary to keep services available. However, quality suffered during this time due to lack of staffing. The addition of a new SDS II took place in October. The new SDS II took over responsibility of rebuilding community trust in program services immediately by seeing students for Academic Coaching within a week of joining the team and by providing workshops within days of her arrival. While the team quickly became very busy with services and were in full swing by November, fall numbers were negatively impacted. The spring semester was spent hiring two additional SDS Is and training these team members in how to foster student and faculty relationships while continuing to provide quality services for both undergraduates and graduate students. Despite the significant staffing challenges of 2014-2015, the Learning Assistance Team ended the academic year with very notable outcomes:

- Undergraduate Academic Coaching saw an increase in the number of average returning appointments over the previous academic year, **2.9 appointments up from 2.7**. This indicates an increase from 2.1 average appointments per student during the 2012-2013 academic year.
- Undergraduate Academic Coaching **increased the number of student contacts by 13% over 2013-2014 and 38.4% over 2012-2013** from 578 to 705 to 800 for 2014-2015.
- Services for Graduate Students were the most negatively impacted by staffing issues. As a result, the program ended the year with a **17.5% decrease** in the **number of student contacts** overall because the interns that contributed to service availability were only allowed to see undergraduate students.
- Despite the decrease in overall student contacts, the Graduate Student Services saw an **increase in the number of average Academic Coaching sessions per student at 4.04 visits**, up from 2.66 average visits during the previous year, a **65.84% increase**.

- **Thesis/Dissertation number of students served increased by 71.43%** over the previous academic year as well for graduate services.
- A trend that was observed during this academic year was increase in the number of graduate in-class workshops over the number of undergraduate in-class workshops. Typically, the reverse has been true.
- The Graduate Writing Institute saw an **increase of 75% in the number of student contacts** for this event over the previous year.
- In total, the Learning Assistance Team provided **4,520 student contacts during the 2014-2015** Academic Year, despite experiencing some significant challenges.

Staffing

The TRC Learning Assistance Program prides itself on providing quality services. This requires staff to maintain flexible schedules and work some evenings and weekends. In order to provide adequate availability to a growing student population who utilize Learning Assistance services, the Learning Assistance Program has become adept at operating at maximum capacity with fewer resources in terms of space and staff. It is not uncommon for part-time staff and interns to stagger their work schedules in order to use the same office space. This has created a growing problem as more staff availability has become necessary in order to meet the demands of student needs. The organizational chart below represents the Learning Assistance staff for 2014-2015.
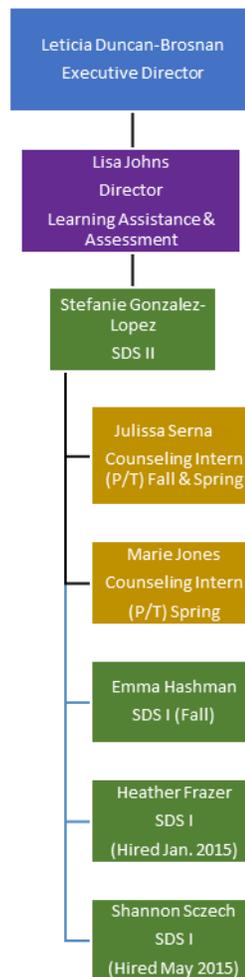
Future Outlook

The 2015-2016 projections include the need for re-branding of Learning Assistance services to bring cohesion to the whole team instead of identifying service providers by the student population they serve as a focus. Instead, all Academic Coaches will be cross-trained to provide services to any student but still allow for areas of expertise to emerge among professional staff members.

By the end of the 2014-2015 academic year, faculty buy-in and student usage had increased moving into the current academic year. This growth is expected to continue throughout 2015-2016, which means that the need for an additional Academic Coach at Main Campus will be necessary in order to continue providing quality services for which the program has become known. With the expansion of Learning Assistance at the Downtown TRC, students will likely participate in higher rates there as well.

Submitted by: Lisa Johns, M.A.
              Director, Learning Assistance

Learning Assistance
Services for Graduate Students

Program Overview

The Learning Assistance Program with services targeting the graduate student population was initiated in January 2006 to provide academic support services to this unique student population at the University of Texas at San Antonio. The Tomás Rivera Center initially hired a Program Coordinator to research, plan, implement, and promote this initiative. Over time, the Program Coordinator grew into an Assistant Director. In August of 2012, the Assistant Director accepted a position elsewhere and the position was re-classified as a Student Development Specialist II. Currently, two full-time Academic Coaches focus on providing services to these students but are also available as needed to serve undergraduates as well.

For the 2015-2016 academic year **2, 343 student contacts** were logged through a variety of graduate student services. The chart below summarizes the attendance of our services and the annual growth of the program. Some noteworthy figures include the increase in the number of academic coaching students served, which was an increase of **58.88%** when comparing AY 2014-2015 (90) to AY 2015-2016 (143). Additionally, the number of students served within the Graduate Learner Series increased by **100%** when comparing AY 2014-2015 (34) to AY 2015-2016 (68).

Annual Comparison of GSLA Program
Event Counts, Student Contacts, and Individual Students Served

Service Type	2012-2013			2013-2014			2014-2015			2015-2016		
	Event Count	Contacts	# Served	Event Count	Contacts	# Served	Event Count	Contacts	# Served	Event Count	Contacts	# Served
Graduate Student Learner Series	*25	*180	*58	5	74	26	5	113	34	8	140	68
In-Class Workshops	51	1057	895	45	871	731	22	501	488	26	523	469
By Request Workshops	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	**5	**33	**33	**9	173	170
Thesis/Dissertation Support Group	4	81	22	4	81	21	18	124	36	24	104	26
Academic Coaching	NA	694	149	NA	418	158	NA	364	90	NA	548	143
Special Projects:												
Stress Down Day	2	242	234	4	878	869	2	25	25	2	11	11
Writing Institute & Consultations	2	137	33	2	75	23	2	131	38	2	141	41
Academic English Skills Seminar	4	58	29	7	50	21	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
GradPrep	6	29	21	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Outreach	11	706	NA	5	1267	1048	13	1870	477	20	703	703
Annual Totals	105	3604	1463	72	3714	2897	54	3161	1221	91	2343	1631

*In AY12-13, Graduate Student Learner Series was offered primarily as online workshops.
** Prior to AY14-15, By request workshops were not included in the annual report table.

Program Components and Outcomes

Graduate Learner Series Workshops. The College of Architecture, Construction, and Planning Workshop Series was offered in the fall 2015 and spring 2016 semesters with the successful collaboration between the Student Development Specialist II and the Graduate Advisor of Records to promote research and academic development. Both departments communicated effectively to produce a schedule of topics ranging from

Managing Research & Readings, Framing and Synthesizing Research, to Presenting Your Research. Thus resulting in a **23.89% increase** in the number of students contacts when comparing AY 2014-2015 (113) to AY 2015-2016 (140) academic year.

In-Class Workshops. Prior to each semester, the Learning Assistance program sends an email to all faculty with the intention of providing a brief paragraph they can include in their syllabi explaining the differences between each of the programs within the TRC. This also allows faculty to coordinate their course schedules so that a professional staff member can facilitate an in-class workshop on topics related to graduate academic concerns. On a related note, these workshops serve as referrals to other services, such as academic coaching, Writing Institute, and Thesis/Dissertation Group. These in-class workshops are both effective and instrumental as they have proven to serve as a significant role in marketing the program and the resources it provides. There was an **18.18%** increase in the number of in-class workshops when comparing AY 2014-2015 (22) to AY 2015-2016 (26).

By Request Workshops. Each semester, various departments and/or organizations request special topic workshops for their students. There was a **80%** increase in number of workshops served when comparing AY 2014-2015 (5) to AY 2015-2016 (9). Several departments who have sought our services for workshops include: The Graduate School, the Social Work Department, the College of Business Doctoral Program, and the Office of International Programs. The Learning Assistance team has continued to collaborate with the office of Student Conduct & Community Standards to approach students with the appropriate ways to avoid plagiarism and the consequences of not citing sources properly. This has brought an effective approach for students to use their best judgement as they explore their research agendas.

Workshops Outcomes. One goal of the program is to consistently provide high quality workshops to graduate students on topics relevant to their studies. The measurement of this goal was to have the average evaluation of our workshops be above a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. The College of Architecture workshop evaluation averaged increased by **2.15%** when comparing AY 2014-2015 (3.71) to AY 2015-2016 (3.79). Likewise, there was a 1.33% increase when comparing the in-class workshop evaluations. For example, for AY 2014-2015 the average evaluations were 3.75, but for AY 2015-2016 the average was 3.80. It could be deduced that students find the value of the information received during an in-class workshop and as a supplement to the material provided by the faculty designated to their course.

Academic Coaching. Academic coaching is the process in which a professional staff member meets with an individual students to assess their study strengths and weaknesses and create a personalized plan for success. Academic coaching for graduate students ranges from developing a personalized time management system to devising study strategies for studying for comprehensive/ qualifying exams to presenting a thesis or dissertation. Academic coaching for graduate students ranges from constructing an individualized time management plan to polishing presentation skills to devising a strategy to study for comprehensive/qualifying exams. The chart below illustrates the number of average visits have increased by **35.64%** when comparing AY 2015-2016 to AY 2014-2016. It could be deduced that students are choosing to meet with an academic coach more than once because they find the services helpful and valuable to their academic success. This also provides a testament to the customer service students receive from the time they schedule their first appointment to the time they walk out of an academic coach's office.

Average Academic Coaching Visits per Student

Year	Visits per student
2015-2016	5.48
2014-2015	4.04
2013-2014	2.66
2012-2013	4.66
2011-2012	3.66

2010-2011	3.02
2009-2010	2.14
2008-2009	1.77

After each academic coaching session students are asked regularly to fill out an evaluation. For 2015-2016, students rated academic coaching a **3.96 on a 4.0 scale**, in terms of location, whether it was worthwhile, whether it was encouraging, and if it would assist them in changing habits.

Several comments validate the work we do, such as:

- "My coach has been an essential person in getting me this far in my PhD."

- "My coach is so honest and awesome with the feedback she gives me. Her coaching technique is awesome!"

- "The support, encouragement, and discussion of ideas were helpful to me."

- "We talked about underlying problems that I didn't even know affected my academic performance."

- "It was really helpful and I feel like this is something I'm lucky to have as a student"

Thesis/Dissertation Support Group.
The group meets for one hour for six consecutive weeks each fall and spring semester at both campuses. The purpose of the group is to encourage students from various disciplines to feel comfortable discussing some challenges they encounter as they work toward graduation, such as writing blocks, stress management, committee management, or defense preparation. The goal of the Learning Assistance Program is to support students as they strive to complete their thesis, dissertation, or exit paper. The measurement of this goal was to have 90% or more of the participants rate the group satisfactory in motivating them to finish work on their project.

Unfortunately there were no workshops offered at the Downtown campus for AY 2014-2015. There was a shortage in staff during fall 2014 and no students signed up for the spring 2015 support group. On the other hand, the Thesis/Dissertation Support group was held at both campuses for AY 2015-2016. The Main Campus experienced a 50% decrease in the number of students served when comparing AY 2014-2015 (24 students served) to AY 2015-2016 (12 students served). However, the most notable difference is that of comparing the Downtown numbers with a 100% increase when comparing the number of students served from AY 2014-2015 (0 students served) to AY 2015-2016 (14 students served).

On the last day of the support group, the participants are asked to complete an evaluation on how they can improve this specific service. All respondents were satisfied with their experience and the facilitators and recommended the workshop series be extended to 8 weeks instead of 6.

Writing Institute. The Writing Institute is a four-day intensive writing seminar (over Spring Break and the May minimester) intended to target students who are completing large writing projects, such as the thesis, dissertation, seminar/ exit paper, or paper for publication, and encourage them to make progress toward graduation.

Instruction includes overcoming writing blocks, drafting methods, punctuation, organization, logical order, citing references, grammar, peer editing, and concrete language. Additionally, lunch is served each day so that students could work in disciplinary groups and peer edit. Each day focuses on specific challenges students encounter while working on their research. The first day aims to provide useful techniques within the preliminary stages of writing as well as ways to improve productivity. The second day, encourages students to be perceptive to various methods that have proven results to provide efficient organizational methods when searching for credible sources. The third day, is dedicated to reviewing specific writing constructs that prevent students from communicating their research effectively such as punctuation, passive voice, and other mechanical writing challenges. The fourth day, focuses on moving forward and understanding various citation

management resources as well as an opportunity to have a peer review their work and provide constructive feedback.

The Writing Institute was created in the hopes of making a significant difference in the attitude and motivation of graduate students towards their large writing projects. The Writing Inventory of Skills and Preferences (WISP) is a self-reported inventory that assesses a person's skills, preferences, and attitudes towards writing. The participants are asked to take a Pre and Post WISP to identify what kind of writer they are and the ways they can use their style to their advantage. The students concurred when asked whether they experienced the most challenges within their writing experiences when it came to the preliminary stages of their research. As a result, the facilitators shared their own experiences on how they overcame similar challenges and the methods they utilized to do so. This allowed students to connect with the facilitators and feel comfortable receiving advice from professional staff members who were in similar situations in graduate school. This, in essence, provides evidence on how the students perceive this specific service provided by the Learning Assistance Program.

On the last day of the Writing Institute, students are asked to complete an evaluation. Below are several comments that validate the work we do, such as:

- "The tips and strategies the coaches offered me the help/push I needed to get out of the rabbit hole and succeed in avoiding productive avoidance. Thank you for all of it!!!"
- "Truly appreciated safe space to openly discuss participant's perspective as well as personal shaping of academic coaches. All topics were very important."
- "Needed and loved it all. Most helpful day? Day 3. Ways to hold self-accountable, writing blocks, 'blurbing,' lit reviews, summarizing vs. synthesizing, constructive feedback, writing with clarity."

International Graduate Student & Professional Development Series. Learning Assistance joined forces with the Graduate School to participate in a series of workshops called the International Graduate Student Professional Development Series. During the fall 2015 semester, Learning Assistance facilitated three workshops: Writing for Success, Thriving within the American Classroom, and Incorporating Academic Research & Readings. Unfortunately, only 4 students attended. The Graduate School redesigned the Series and decided to provide an incentive for students who attend all the workshops. Upon completion, students were able to receive a certificate of completion that could also be added to their CV's. As a result of this decision, there was a significant increase in student attendance the following semester. For example, during the Spring 2016 semester, Learning Assistance facilitated 2 workshops and logged a total of 75 students. The AY 2014-2016 had a total of 30 students attend 6 workshops, while during the AY 2015-2016 had a total of 79 students attend 5 workshops. Thus there was a **163.33%** increase in student participants when comparing AY 2014-2015 (30 students) to AY 2015-2016 (79 students). The changes made by The Graduate School had a profound effect on the students, thus encouraging them to attend all the workshops in the series so that they could include that information on their CVs.

Outreach. This area of the program has grown since inception and is now being tracked so that the effort that is expended can be assessed. The category includes Graduate Orientation information tables, International Student Orientation resource fair, department orientations, and downtown Student Activities'.

Population Characteristics

The total number of graduate students served for the 2015-2016 academic year, including outreach services was 2, 378. For reporting purposes, the demographics section is based on the unduplicated count of students, minus the undergraduate students who might attend our workshops and minus the students who attended an outreach service, for a total graduate student count of 731.

Classification

Of the 731 graduate students served this past year 11.76% (86 students) were doctoral level students, 85.23% (623 students) were masters students, 1.37% (10 students) were post baccalaureate, and 1.64% (12 students) are special graduate students. There was a **49.75%** increase in unduplicated masters level students when comparing the number of students seen via academic coaching or within a workshop setting when comparing AY 2014-2015 (416) to AY 2015-2016 (623 students) . Likewise, there was a **40.98%** increase in the number of unduplicated doctoral students seen when comparing AY 2014-2015 (61 students) to AY 2015-2016 (86 students) .
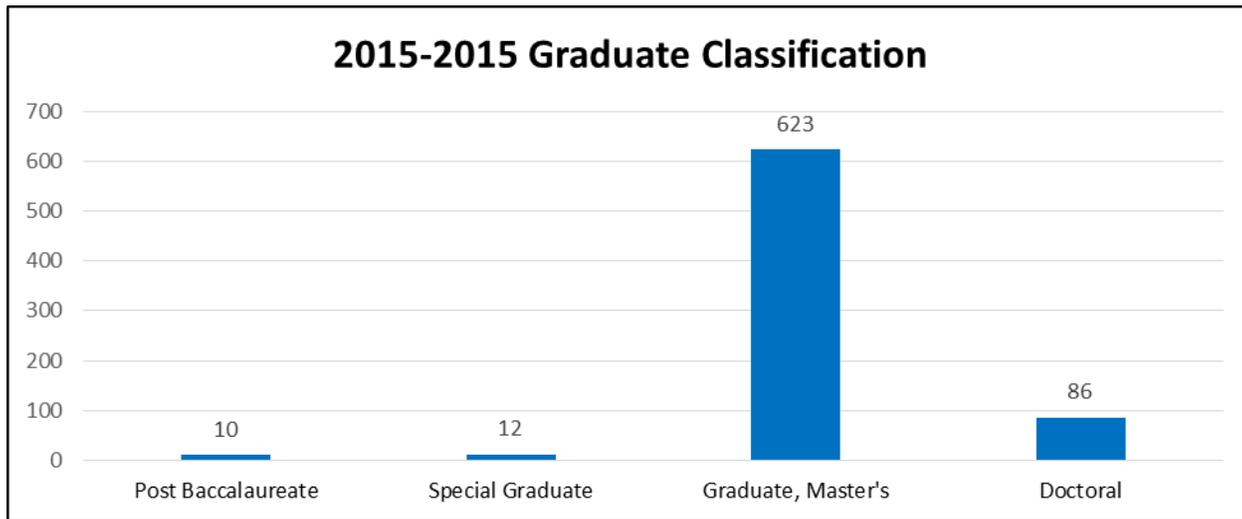
Age

The age range of graduate students varies considerably and this trend is continuing to change, with more and more students attending UTSA graduate programs who are younger and straight out of an undergraduate program.
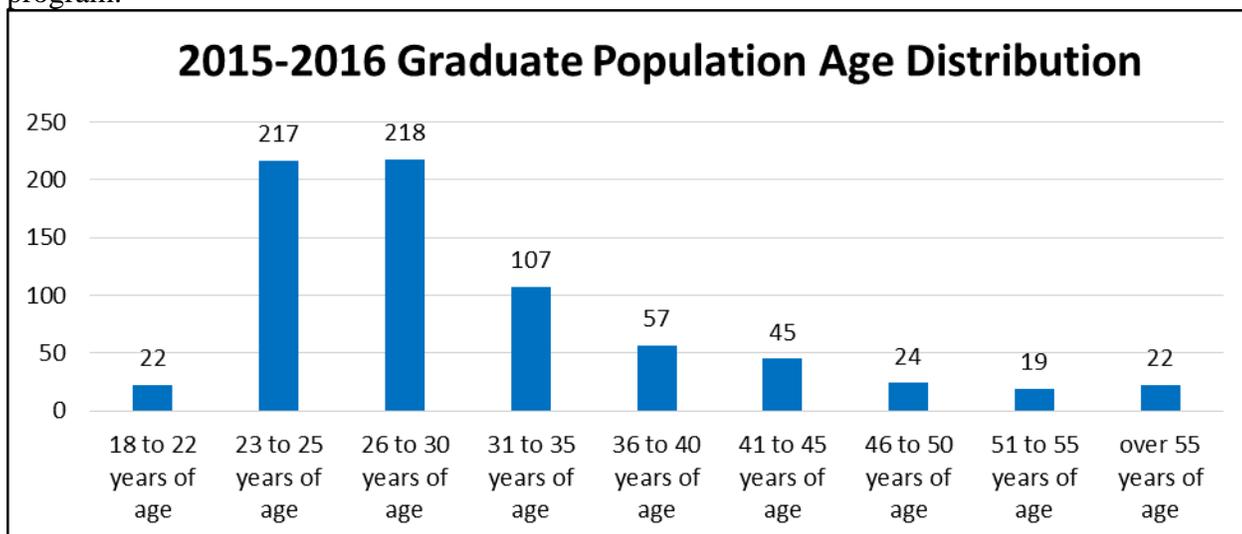

Ethnicity

The number of Hispanic participants has increase by **44.38%** when comparing the AY 2014-2015 (178 unduplicated students) to AY 2015-2016 (257 students). This increase in the number of Hispanic participants justifies our efforts in continuing to make UTSA a Hispanic Serving Institution. The second highest ethnicity served is that of White Non-Hispanic at **28.73%.**   Participants identified as International increased from 87 unduplicated students in AY 2014-2015 to 112 unduplicated students in AY 2015-2016.

2015-2016 Graduate Population Ethnicity Distribution

| Ethnicity	Value
Asian Pacific Islander	15
Black Non-Hispanic	29
Hispanic	257
International	112
Unknown	156
White Non-Hispanic	162
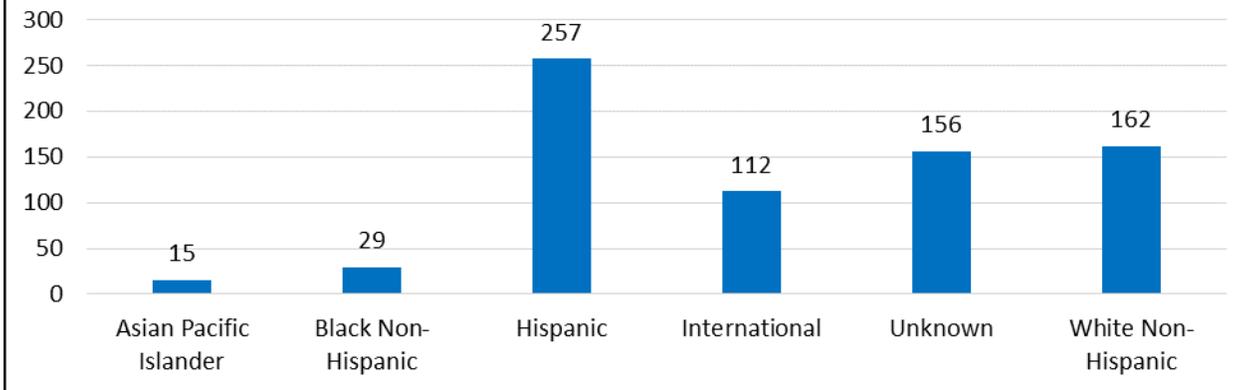
Gender

The majority (66.35%) of graduate students seeking our services were female in AY 2015-2016. There was a **63.29%** increase when comparing females from AY 2014-2015 (297) to AY 2015-2016 (485). Likewise, there was also an increase in the number of unduplicated males when comparing last academic year. For example, in AY 2014-2015 180 unduplicated males utilized the Learning Assistance services while there were 246 unduplicated males in AY 2015-2016, thus yielding a **36.66%** increase. This could have been attributed to our strong presence in the heavily-female College of Education and Human Development (COEHD), through both academic coaching and in-class workshops.

2015-2016 Graduate Population Gender Distribution

Gender	Value
Male	246
Female	485
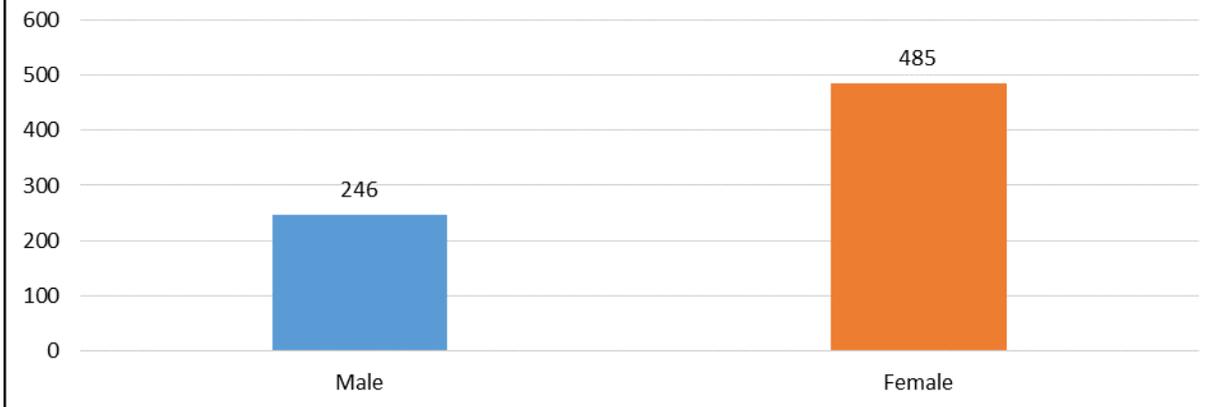
College

The College of Education and Human Development comprised the majority of students who sought our services (44.66%) which can be attributed to the fact that they are the largest graduate college and that we have a well-established relationship with their faculty.   The following graph indicates an increase in participation with the College of Engineering from 99 students in 2014-2015 to 120 students in 2015-2016, resulting in a 21.21% increase. These results may be attributed to the admission push in STEM related majors. Additionally, there was a 270.96% increase in Public Policy students when comparing AY 2014-2015 (31 students) to AY 2015-2016 (115 students).

2014-2015 Graduate Population Distribution by Colleges

A bar chart titled "2014-2015 Graduate Population Distribution by Colleges" with the vertical axis ranging from 0 to 400. Values by college:
- Architecture, Const &...: 24
- Business: 24
- Education & Human...: 356
- Engineering: 120
- Liberal and Fine Arts: 57
- No College Identified: 1
- Public Policy: 115
- Sciences: 34
- Social & Behavioral...: 0
- University College: 0

Recommendations

Learning Assistance Services for Graduate Students can be improved with more resources allocated to it. Suggestions for these resources are:

- Hire an additional permanent Learning Assistance support

It is evident that the Learning Assistance Program has experienced an increase in unduplicated students for both academic coaching and workshops. While this is great, the reception team has found it difficult to offer students a time to meet with an academic coach any sooner than 4-6 weeks. This places both students and the academic coaches at a disadvantage as it prolongs the opportunity to build a relationship centered on overcoming their academic concerns. Likewise, many times students are not able to see their academic coach 4-6 weeks after they have seen their academic coach due to limited availability.

- Create Graduate Worksheets

Last year, the Learning Assistance team updated old worksheets and create new worksheets for the Undergraduate students, such as stress management, time management, motivation, avoiding procrastination, preparing for final exams. However, the graduate student worksheets are very limited in comparison and do not have anything tangible to take with home with them other than a semester calendar. We recommend creating worksheets focusing on concerns experienced by graduate students. Some examples of worksheets that could be created include: graduate reading strategies, demystifying the literature review, overcoming the imposter syndrome, ways to be productive when writing a dissertation, the step-by-step process of writing a thesis, the step-by-step process of writing a dissertation.

- Collaborate with More Departments

The Learning Assistance Program has experienced an increase in citation style in-class workshop requests. While this was a great opportunity to foster relationships with faculty and market our services as reputable services to our students, this results in having less opportunities for students to schedule an appointment with an academic coach. The Writing Center primarily focuses on assisting students becoming familiar and confident in properly citing their sources. One recommendation would be to collaborate with the Writing Center to discuss options of having them take over citations style workshops so that the staff could continue to facilitate

workshops centered on general study skills such as time management, organizing research, overcoming perfectionism and other topics centered on graduate academic concerns.

Summary

Overall, the Learning Assistance Services for Graduate Students, has had a profound influence on the students as indicated by the increase in unduplicated academic coaching students. The continued growth is due in part to professional staff members continuously seeking to explore innovative approaches as they face a multitude of challenges. The program prides itself on the customer service provided to all faculty, staff, students, and prospective students at both the Main and Downtown campuses. It is evident that the Learning Assistance staff works as a team and truly creates a safe environment for students to seek assistance addressing their academic weaknesses. The Learning Assistance team has earned a reputation on campus for being dedicated and inspiring students to reach their full potential. We hope to see continued growth within the Learning Assistance team as we strive to improve our services to help all our students succeed and ultimately graduate.
Submitted by: Stefanie Gonzalez-Lopez, Ph.D.
                    Student Development Specialist II, Learning Assistance

Learning Assistance
Services for Undergraduate Students
Academic Coaching

Introduction

The Academic Coaching Program for undergraduate students continued to be of assistance to UTSA students through the 2015-2016 Academic year. The Academic Coaches provided individual assistance to students, utilizing the Learning and Study Skills Inventory (LASSI) to assess academic strengths and weaknesses, and working with students to build relationships and develop effective study skills and learning strategies. Three full-time academic coaches served undergraduate and graduate students from August 2015 until March 2016, when a fourth full-time coach was added to the team. However, one of the full-time coaches resigned in August 2016. During the Summer 2016, there were four full-time coaches available to serve both undergraduate and graduate students. The following chart provides an overview of the number of sessions and the number of students served during the last seven years.

Academic Year	Fall Contact Hours/ # Served	Spring Contact Hours/ # Served	Summer Contact Hours/ # Served	Total Contact Hours/ # Served
2015-2016	503/199	418/147	103/13	1024/359
2014-2015	243/104	396/129	161/41	800/274
2013-2014	293/109	344/121	68/31	705/261
2012-2013	280 / 126	246 / 121	52 / 26	578 / 273
2011-2012	369 / 149	232 / 96	54 / 19	655 / 264
2010-2011	211 / 85	172 / 66	77 / 30	460 / 181
2009-2010	297 / 110	272 / 93	37 / 13	606 / 216

The total number of **contact hours** during the year 2015-2016, **was 1024**, while the total number of **students served was 359**. This data shows that the total number of **contact hours increased by 28%**, and the **total number of students served increased by 31%**, by comparison with the total numbers of the previous year.

Population Characteristics

The demographics breakdown of the 341 unduplicated students served with Academic Coaching during the 2015-2016 academic year are as follows:

Gender:
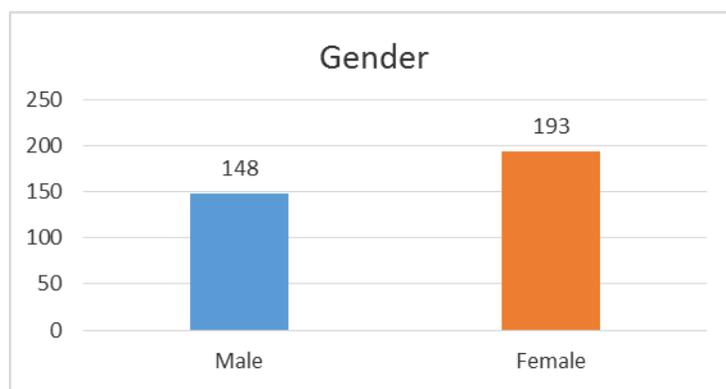
The majority of undergraduate students seeking assistance through Academic Coaching were female.

Age:
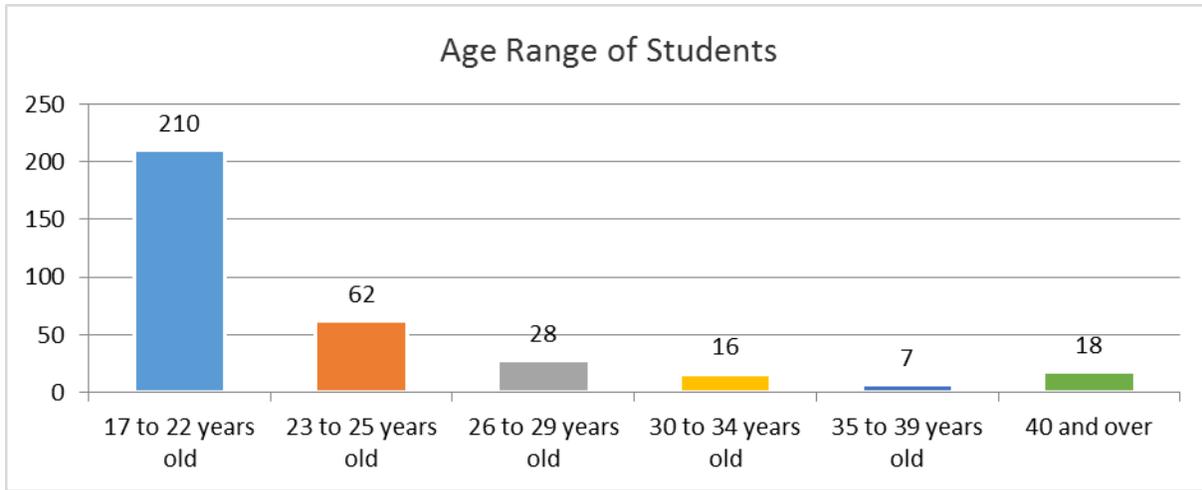
Students who participated in Academic Coaching were by far traditionally aged students. This reflects the overall age distribution at UTSA for undergraduates.

Ethnicity:
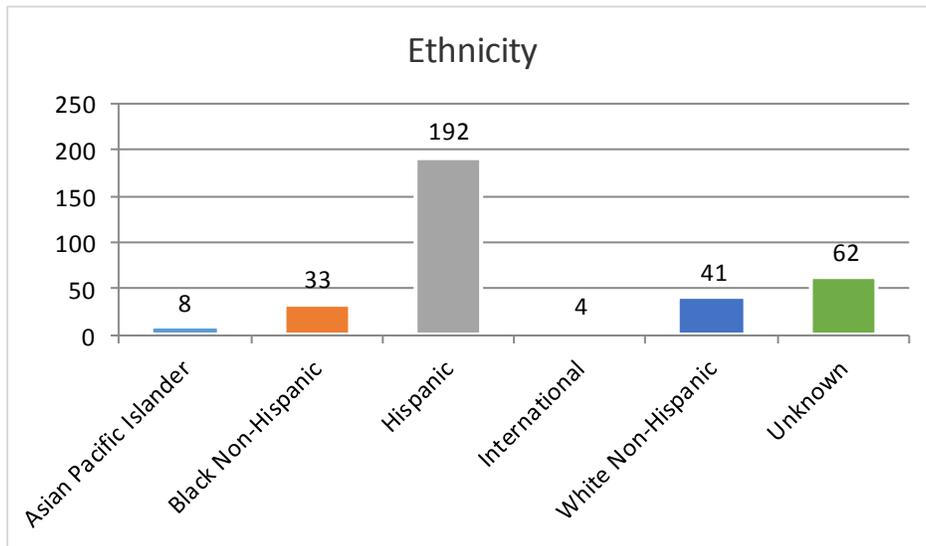
54% of the 359 students who received Academic Coaching during the 2015-2016 AY identified as Hispanic.

Classification:
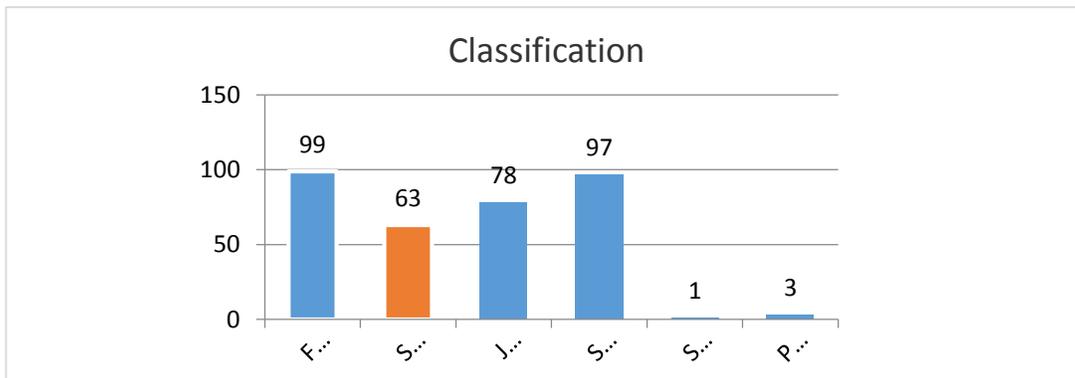
Commonly, freshmen seek assistance to overcome the transitional changes from high school to college. This was the largest group seeking assistance during the 2015-2016 AY. However, senior level students were the

second largest group seeking assistance. This could be attributed with the transitional changes potentially facing students about to graduate. Also, the challenging level of coursework requires more strategy and support.

Colleges Represented:
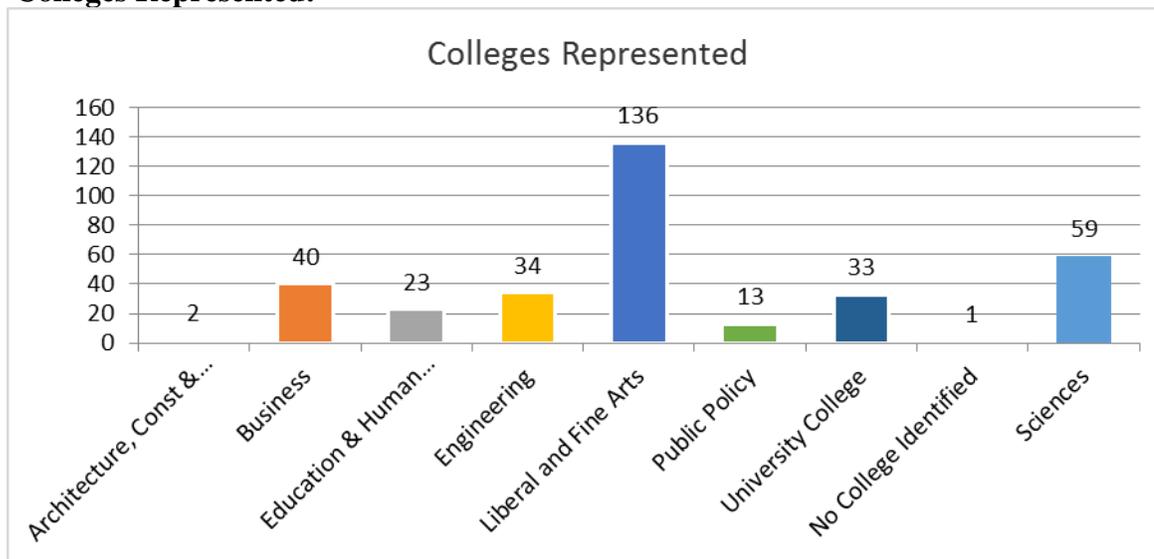
The largest amount of students who utilized Academic Coaching services during the 2015-2016 AY were from the College of Liberal and Fine Arts.

Student Evaluations
The coaches continued using the usual evaluation form to assess the Academic Coaching program. The evaluation form includes the following statements on a Likert scale: 4 = Strongly Agree, 3 = Agree, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree. The students give feedback on the following aspects of their sessions:
1. The time and the location of the session was convenient for me
2. I felt the session was a worthwhile experience

	Responses	Time/Location	Worthwhile	Supportive	Change
OVERALL	N = 912	3.76	3.82	3.95	3.81

3. The academic coach was encouraging and supportive
4. I will change my study habits as a result of attending this session

Recommendations
- Add a full-time Academic Coach for the MC/DT TRC who would serve as a professional learning assistance presence on the DT campus and be able to see both graduate and undergraduate students to meet the growing demand for services at both campuses.
- Continue advertising the benefits of Academic Coaching to students, academic advisors and faculty.
- Build new collaborations on campus that highlight Academic Coaching as the unique and needed resource it is for students.
- Hire another full-time Academic Coach to assist with student demand on the Main Campus. This will allow coaches to focus on other administrative projects, research, and ongoing professional development.

Summary

The Academic Coaching program was promoted in the ususal pattern of previous years. The faculty and academic advisors received information through emails and brochures. The students and their parents were provided information during Orientation at information tables and presentations. The information about Academic Coaching was emailed to students preferred emails and also made available on the TRC website. The Academic Coaches took every opportunity to advertise their services to students individually during on campus events and on various social media outlets. Services were also promoted during in-class presentations and workshops. Programming such as Stress Down Day also provided coaches with opportunities to promote services to both undergraduate and graduate student populations. As a result, the Academic Coaching program continues to grow and serve UTSA students.

Submitted by: Shannon Sczech, M.A.
                Student Development Specialist I

Learning Assistance
Services for Undergraduate Students
Workshops and Outreach

Introduction

The Tomás Rivera Center (TRC) Learning Assistance Program provides study skills workshops to all registered undergraduate students at both the Main and Downtown campuses. For the academic year (AY) 2015-2016, Learning Assistance workshops included the "Expert Learner Series," In-Class Workshops, and By Request Workshops (workshops requested by departments or student organizations and customized to student population needs). Additionally, Learning Assistance collaborated with the Social Science Advising Center to offer the "Partners in Academic Success (PAS) workshop series. These workshops were developed to share study skills and strategies with students on Academic Warning or Academic Probation. Seven "PAS" workshops were conducted in the fall, and four were conducted in the spring.

During AY 2015-2016, Learning Assistance conducted a total of 80 undergraduate workshops with 2,045 attendees, serving 1,762 unduplicated students. This was a 122% increase in number of workshops held and a 406% increase of unduplicated students served from the previous academic year.

Academic Year	FALL # Workshops/ # of Attendees/ #of Unduplicated Students	SPRING # Workshops/ # of Attendees/ # of Unduplicated Students	SUMMER # Workshops/ # of Attendees/ # of Unduplicated Students	TOTAL # # Workshops/ # of Attendees/ # of Unduplicated Students
2015-2016	39/969/823	39/1060/933	2/62/62	80/2045/1835
2014-2015	18/325/212	16/194/190	2/40/40	36/559/348
2013-2014	96/588/416	32/184/156	3/54/47	131/826/619
2012-2013	137/830/658	76/680/531	3/93/93	216/1603/1225
2011-2012	206/1505/750	90/648/531	4/51/51	300/2204/1332***
2010-2011	224/1269/89	184/756/334	54/158/90	462/2183/615**
2009-2010	195/1693	189/1033	88/306	472/3032
2008-2009	34/566	38/1680	35/339	107/2585
2007-2008	37/746	22/592	7/188	66/1526*
2006-2007	42/1221	23/669	10/242	75/2132

*Beginning 2007-2008, tableshops and outreach presentations are re-categorized as information sessions.
**Beginning 2010-2011, only attendees providing their banner ID numbers will be counted.
*** Beginning 2011-2012, data reflects total combined numbers for workshops at both the Main and Downtown campuses

With three full-time academic coaches on staff, the Learning Assistance team was able to conduct significantly more workshops during AC 2015-2016. The hiring of a fourth full-time Student Development Specialist I in March also increased the number of workshops and outreach conducted by the Learning Assistance team.

Throughout the Fall 2015 semester, the Learning Assistance team reached 823 unduplicated students though 39 workshops, including In-Class, By Request, the "Expert Learner Series," and "PAS" workshops. The three Student Development Specialists rotated their schedules so that each of them worked one day a week at the Downtown campus; they also occasionally traveled back and forth between campuses on days other than their designated day in order to conduct In-Class workshops for faculty there. In Spring 2016, another 39 workshops were conducted, reaching a total of 933 unduplicated students. The new SDS I maintained office hours at the Downtown campus 3 days a week from March through August, thus allowing more students to be reached at that campus. During Summer 2016, the focus shifted to student outreach through Freshman Orientation activities, however, one In-Class workshop and one By-Request workshop were conducted, reaching a total of 62 unduplicated students through this service.

Workshop Characteristics

In-Class Workshops

In-class workshops are specifically geared to the course needs of the faculty/instructor requesting the workshop. Thus, each in-class workshop is customized for a professor's unique class population. These workshops typically cover topics such as study skills, citation styles, literature reviews, and presentation skills, as well as information on TRC services. Throughout AY 2015-2016 our largest workshop audience, 67% of attendees, was from in-class workshops

By Request Workshops

Workshops requested by departments and organizations on campus focused mainly on time management, general study strategies, note taking strategies, and test preparation. These workshops were presented to groups such as Housing & Residence Life, the REACT Scholars Program, McNair Scholars Program, and other groups who specifically contacted the Tomás Rivera Center with requests for study skills workshops. These workshops accounted for 9.34% of student attendees.

Expert Learner Series

The Expert Learner Series workshops were offered during the fall and spring semester at both the Main and Downtown campuses. Due to the open format of the "Expert Learner Series," these workshops continued to serve a small population; 2.79% of student attendees. However, several students were referred to the workshops by their advisors or Peer Mentors, indicating that other departments at UTSA place value on this service and are encouraging their students to attend. Attendance for the "Expert Learner Series" at the downtown campus, however, was once again "zero" for this academic year.

PAS Workshops

During Fall 2015, Learning Assistance collaborated with Social Science Advising to pilot a series of study skills workshops to students on Academic Probation or Warning. Seven workshops were conducted, each two hours long. The first hour discussed time management principles and strategies, and the second hour focused on study strategies such as note taking and textbook reading. Four PAS workshops were conducted in the spring semester. Altogether, these workshops accounted for 20.88% of student attendees.

Attendance by Workshop Type
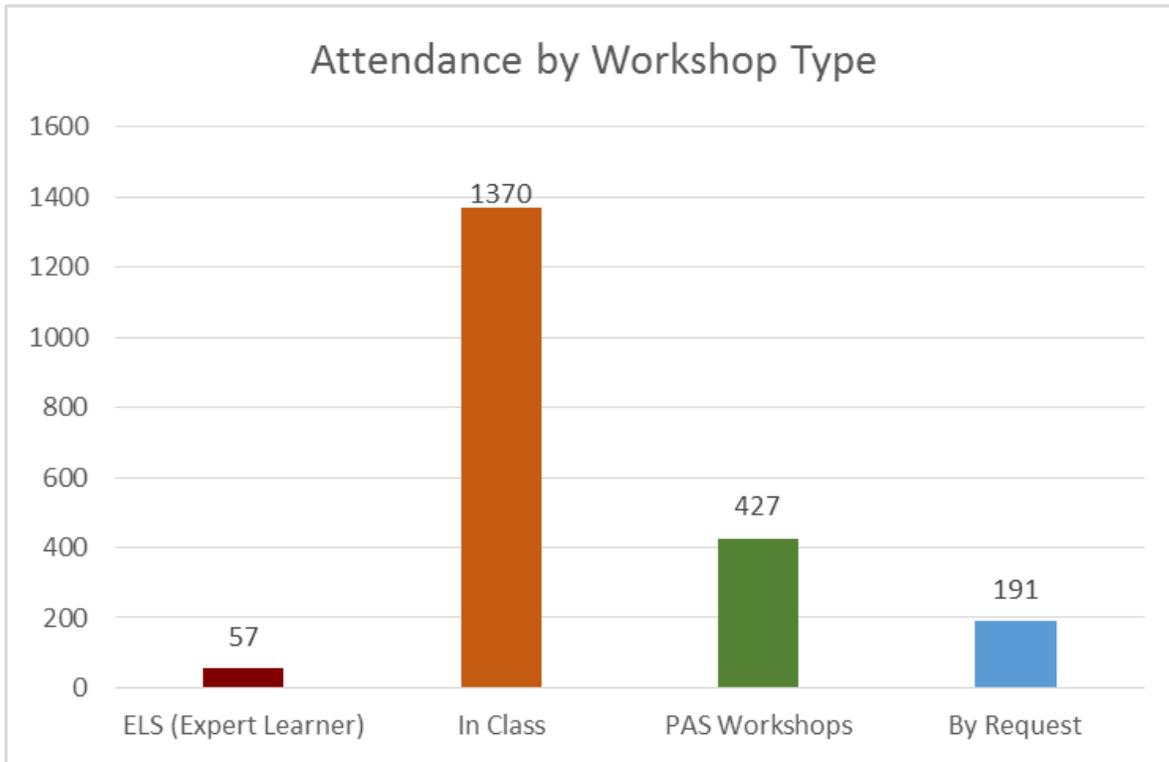
Population Characteristics

Population characteristics of students attending Learning Assistance workshops for AY 2015-2016 indicate that our largest audience consisted of females. Additionally, Hispanic students were the largest ethnicity represented, and freshmen were the largest classification of students represented, with seniors being the second largest classification of attendees. The majority of students participating in workshops were from the College of Liberal and Fine Arts. Percentages of demographics are listed below:

- 62.97% female
- 58.65% Hispanic
- 76.26% 22 years of age or younger
- 30.95% freshmen
- 24.87% seniors
- 31.48% College of Liberal and Fine Arts

Assessment of Service

At the end of each workshop, students are asked to complete an evaluation. The evaluations consist of a Likert scale format addressing several statements about the quality and value of the workshops. Average ratings indicated that workshop attendees agree or strongly agree that the topic was thoroughly covered, the presenter was knowledgeable and encouraged participation, and that students feel their understanding of the topic has improved as a result of the workshop. The following table summarizes the data collected from workshop evaluations based on a 4 point Likert scale (strongly agree=4, agree=3, disagree=2, strongly disagree=1) in response to the following statements:

Statements	Average Rating
The topic was thoroughly covered.	3.85
The presenter was knowledgeable.	3.91
The presenter encouraged us to participate.	3.77
This presentation has improved my understanding of this topic.	3.73

From the data collected from the evaluations, attendees concur that the workshops were beneficial and worthwhile, with an average overall score of 3.77 out of 4.00. In order to better serve our students' needs, the workshop evaluations also asked students about which workshop topics they would prefer to be offered in the future.

- *Is there some other workshop that we could offer to assist you in your studies?*

According to student responses on evaluations, for AY 2015-2016 the top three workshop topics requested by students were time management, stress management, and writing research papers. As a result, the Learning Assistance team plans to modify workshop content to include more strategies for improving memory as a part of the presentations on study skills and test preparation.

- *Which workshop topics did faculty members request the most during the 2015-2016 academic year?*

During AY 2015-2016, many faculty requested workshops on a combination of topics. The top three combined topics requested by faculty who requested In-Class workshops during AY 2015-2016 were Time Management and Study Skills (53.6%), Citation Styles and Literature Reviews (29.2%), and Note Taking (17%).

Outreach

Outreach Activities provide awareness of UTSA services to students on campus and potential students in the community. The focus of Learning Assistance's involvement in outreach is to promote the idea of strategies for academic success as well as provide information about the Tomás Rivera Center's services and programming available to UTSA students. The Learning assistance team was heavily involved in outreach for AY 2015-2016; in addition to summer Orientation Outreach, Learning Assistance staff conducted presentations at International Undergraduate Student Orientation in the fall and spring, as well as the Alamo Runner Orientation. The staff also reached out to students by tabling at on-campus resource fairs. Additionally, information on Learning Assistance services was shared with Supplemental Instruction leaders during their training before both the fall and spring semester. Learning Assistance also reached out to students through participation in the Transfer Student Welcome, as well as the "Fall Into Your Major" and "March Into Your Major" events. Learning Assistance also hosted two special events each semester; Stress Down Day and Campus Checkpoint.

Special Event: Stress Down Days

Since 2005, the Tomas Rivera Center has provided an event each semester dedicated to helping students relieve stress prior to final exams. The first workshop "Stress Relief for Your College Life" was piloted in spring 2005

to target undergraduate students prior to final exams. In 2006, the Stress Down Day event was held in the UC Ski Lodge that was open to all students to learn stress relief strategies and has since been held in different locations across campus. In Fall 2015 Learning Assistance, in collaboration with seven other UTSA departments, held Stress Down Day at the Campus Recreation Center (the Rec). Three hundred fifty students signed in at the event and participated in various stress-reducing activities such as mandala coloring, DIY crafts, therapy dogs, brain massages, rowing competitions, and much more. In Spring 2016, 283 students signed in at the event, once again held at the Rec. In addition to the above activities, students were able to participate in Zumba lessons, receive chair massages, and have their picture taken with the UTSA mascot, Rowdy. Feedback from evaluations for the events indicated that students were pleased with the activities provided; in response to the statement, "The resources at this event were helpful to me as a student," 89% of students indicated they strongly agreed. Ninety-two percent of students who completed evaluations strongly agreed that they would recommend the event to their friends. When asked to offer suggestions for improving the event, 54.4% of the responses indicated they would like to see more Therapy Dogs at the event.

In order to increase attendance for the event, during Spring 2016 a new marketing plan was created, in collaboration with the Director of Communications with the Office of Vice President of Academic Affairs. In addition to emails, printed flyers, Social Media postings, and Digital Signage, poster designs were created and then displayed in elevators across campus. On evaluations, students indicated they heard about the event in the following ways:

- Elevator posters: 24.1%
- Flyers: 24.1%
- Email: 24.1%
- Instagram post: 17.2%
- Friend: 10.3%

Over the course of AY 2015-2016, the SDS I tasked with coordinating Stress Down Day spent a combined total of 86 hours in preparation for both events. In spite of this, and the increased efforts in marketing, participation numbers decreased from Fall 2015 to Spring 2016.

Special Event: Campus Checkpoint

In response to student veteran requests for a "3-month check-in," the Learning Assistance team hosted a "Campus Checkpoint" event in the fall and spring semesters during AY 2015-2016. Student veterans were offered an opportunity to network with each other as well as UTSA departments offering resources to veterans, such as Career Services, Financial Aid, Counseling Services, The Student Veteran Association, and more. Refreshments were served, and students sat at round tables to converse with representatives from each department. Thirteen student veterans were present at the Fall 2015 Campus Checkpoint event, indicating by their responses to evaluations that they strongly agreed (4.0 out of 4.0 points) that the resources provided at the event were helpful, there was time to have their questions answered, and they would recommend the event to their friends. For the Spring 2016 event, a Keynote Speaker was added to the agenda, however, only nine student veterans attended; a decrease of 30.8% in attendance from the fall. In spite of the low numbers in attendance, as indicated by the evaluations, 100% of attendees found the resources at the event helpful and would recommend the event to their friends. However, due to low attendance and a shortage of resources, the

decision was made at a meeting of the Veteran Services Advisory Council (VSAC) to discontinue Campus Checkpoint.

Summer Orientation Outreach

The New Student Orientation provides an opportunity for students who will be starting at UTSA as freshmen to learn about academic support services available to them on campus. Each year Learning Assistance staff collaborates with the Orientation and Family Programs Office to provide outreach services to incoming students and their families through orientation programs.

During Summer 2016 the Learning Assistance Team reached 4,095 students through participation in Summer Orientation programming. The four full-time academic coaches participated in Academic Preview along with distinguished faculty members and Peer Mentors from the Roadrunner Transition Experience program. Academic Preview provides students the opportunity to hear about the TRC academic support services (academic coaching, study skills workshops, tutoring, math assistance program, and supplemental instruction) plus a mock-lecture from a faculty member who is invested in student success.

The director of Learning Assistance also shared a "Keys to Academic Success" presentation with family members who attended the Family Orientation programs. The purpose of family sessions was to help parents and family members of incoming students become knowledgeable about TRC services and instill a sense of comfort as to their role in providing reminders of where their student can seek academic resources, if necessary. Of the 2,000+ family members attending the Keys to Academic Success presentation, 86.43% strongly agreed and 12.16% agreed that they learned how the TRC's programs can help their student with his/her classes.

The Learning Assistance Team also had the opportunity to reach out to students and their families through information tables at resource fairs held during New Student Orientation programs.

Social Media

During AY 2015-2016 the Learning Assistance Program continued to use Social Media platforms to connect with students at UTSA. *UTSALearnAssist* is the handle which students can use to "like" or "follow" Learning Assistance on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The Learning Assistance Team shares strategies and encouragement, as well as updates and announcements via postings on these social media platforms in order to connect with both graduate and undergraduate students. Learning Assistance reached out to as many as 865 people on Facebook during the height of Summer Orientation; as of August 23rd, *UTSALearnAssist* had 425 "Likes" on Facebook, 395 followers on Instagram, and 527 followers on Twitter. Learning Assistance will continue to use digital messaging to connect with members of the UTSA community.

Summary

With the addition of a new Student Development Specialist, the Learning Assistance team was able to provide UTSA undergraduate students with high quality services through their workshops and outreach events at both the Main and Downtown campuses. Final workshop and outreach numbers for AY 2015-2016 are as follows: 80 workshops were conducted at both the Main and Downtown campuses with 2,045 attendees, serving 1,835 unduplicated students. In addition, a total of 9,369 contact hours were made through 56 outreach events.

The Learning Assistance team will continue marketing in-class workshops to faculty and adjunct faculty teaching undergraduate students via email prior to the semester as well as distributing flyers across campus and utilizing social media as a platform to market other types of workshops, while seeking out collaborations with other UTSA departments in order to reach more students.

Recommendations include the following:

1.) Hire an intern to assist part-time with academic coaching and workshops.
2.) Increase marketing at the downtown campus for the Expert Learner Series workshops.
3.) Hand over the coordinating of the Stress Down Day event to another department on campus in order to free up more time on the SDS calendars for academic coaching and workshops.

Submitted by: Heather M. Frazer
Student Development Specialist I
Learning Assistance

Undergraduate Academic Coaching Information Sheet

First Meeting- Day/Time:_____

Name:_____ Banner ID:_____

Email: _____ Phone Number: _____

Current Address:_____

Semester Information

Program & Degree Seeking: _____

Semester started:_____ Hours taken so far: _____ Cumulative GPA: _____

How many hours are you taking this semester? _____ Term GPA for last semester:_____

What classes are you taking this semester?

Background Information

Are you working this semester? **Y   N** How many hours per week? _____

Circle: Mornings Afternoons Evenings Weekends

Do you have any dependents? **Y   N** If so, how many?_____

Approximately how many miles do you live from the campus you generally attend? _____

Are you a first-generation <u>college</u> student? ❐ Yes ❐ No

Previous Coaching Experience

Have you attended academic coaching at any other time during college? **Y   N**

If so, from whom and for what reason? Did you find it helpful?

Are you currently attending any other type of counseling or personal coaching? **Y   N**

If not, do you plan to this semester? **Y   N**

Academic Questions

What would you identify as your academic strengths?

What would you identify as your academic weaknesses?

What are your career goals?

How did you hear about our services at the Tomás Rivera Center? Did someone refer you to Academic Coaching or did you seek our services yourself?

What are you looking to get out of academic coaching this semester?

Complete the following statements:

During my coaching period, I am committed to …

My plan for the semester is to…

Academic Coaching Notes

Student Name:
Coach:

Date/Time	Work done as assigned?	Comments	Work assigned for next session	Next session date

The University of Texas at San Antonio

Academic Coaching
Statement of Understanding

Welcome to Academic Coaching at the Tomás Rivera Center! Academic coaching is the one-on-one process of helping students identify their strengths and weaknesses, then devising a personal plan to build an effective and flexible set of study skills.

When meeting with an Academic Coach, we would like for you to keep a few things in mind:

- Each coaching session will last approximately one hour, depending on your needs.

- There is no limit to the number of appointments you may have with an Academic Coach. You and your Coach will decide how often you should meet for the process to be beneficial for you.

- Please keep scheduled appointments. If you need to cancel or reschedule, please do so with as much advance notice as possible. This allows us to schedule another student during that time.

- Come prepared with questions. Think about where you are having difficulty and what you would like to address. Being ready when you meet with your coach makes for a productive session!

- Bring completed assignments to your sessions. You may be asked to bring your syllabi, book(s), notes, or calendar/planner with you, which will help in evaluating your needs and progress.

- Confidentiality: Communications between a coach and student will be protected. In most situations, we can only release information about you to others if you sign a written authorization form. If you provide us with a written authorization form to release information to any specific person(s), you must revoke the release in writing if you change your mind.

I have read and understand the expectations listed above for Academic Coaching.

_____
Student Signature   Date

_____
Academic Coach Signature   Date

Academic Coaching GradeTracker

Student Name:_____   Semester:_____

Course	Test Grades	Quizzes	Assignments	Comments

Chapter 8: Campus Student Services Information & Directory

Campus Student Services Information and Directory

Common Campus Buildings			
1604			
University Center	UC	Convocation Center	Convo
John Peace Library	JPL	Recreation/Wellness Center	RWC
McKinney Humanities Building	MH	Business Services Annex	BSA
Business Building	BB	Main Building	MB
Art Building	AB	**Downtown**	
Science Building	SB	Durango Building	DB
Engineering Building	EB	Frio Street Building	FS
Multidisciplinary Studies Building	MS	Buena Vista Street Building	BV
Bioscience Building	BSB	Monterey Street Building	MNT

Office and Services	UTSA 1604	UTSA Downtown
Campus Bookstore • Buy textbooks in the store, reserve online, and pick up or have them shipped • Sell your books back for up to 50% of the original purchase price • UTSA memorabilia and gear, supplies, etc. • Work at the bookstore and receive a discount on purchases	University Center UC 1.02.02 458-4220	Buena Vista Building BV 1.342 458-2865
Campus Housing • Information about on-campus housing options – Chisholm Hall (697-4400), traditional style dormitory; University Oaks Apartments, various apartment styles; Chaparral Village (458-6836) and Laurel Village (458-6863), apartment style suites	Laurel Village 009-102 458-6200	No Downtown location
Campus Recreation • Cardio and weight rooms • Racquetball, basketball, volleyball courts • Group exercise classes • Nutrition classes and massage therapy • Intramurals and club sports	Recreation Building 458-6715	Durango Building DB 3.302 458-2735
Campus Services • UTSA ID Card- UTSA Card functions as debit card on campus for food, parking permits and fines, books and supplies at Bookstore, Health Center charges, library fines, Ticket Master on campus, photocopiers and Copy Shop • UTSA Meal Plans • Parking permits, citation appeals, parking rules and regulations • VIA information, shuttle services, ADA cart service, alternative transportation • The 'Runner • Rowdy Campus Store • Campus vending machines	Multidisciplinary Studies Bldg. MS 1.01.52 Information/Main # 458-7275 Parking/Citations 458-6606 UTSA Cards/Meal Plans 458-4639 http://www.utsa.edu/auxiliary/parking.html	Frio Building FS 1.506 http://utsa.edu/dtcamp/transportation.html

Office and Services	UTSA 1604	UTSA Downtown
Career Services • Career exploration assessments and software available • Individual and group training and sessions on résumé writing, job search and interview skills • Full-time, part-time and internships positions posted • Files and resources on employers in and outside of San Antonio • Career fairs and on-campus recruitment and placement	University Center UC 2.02.04 458-4589	Frio Building 1.504B 458-2910
Counseling Services • Individual counseling • Relationship counseling • Group counseling • Personality and LD Assessment • Career Assessment • Referral Services	Health Serv. Building RWC 1.810 458-4140	Buena Vista Building BV 1.3.08 (will be moving next year)
Dining Services-Aramark • **JPL** - full breakfast entrees, burgers, Italian entrees, salads, wrapped sandwiches, hot plate foods, baked potatoes, hot dogs, soups, pastries, and gourmet coffee • **Bistro** - variety chicken, specialty coffees and pastries, grab and go salads sandwiches • **University Center** - breakfast tacos and coffee, Tex-Mex entrees, Subway sandwiches, Chinese entrees, soups, pastries, grab and go, and gourmet coffee • **Downtown** - full breakfast entrees, grilled sandwiches and burgers, Italian entrees, salads, wrapped sandwiches, nachos, baked potatoes, hot dogs, soups, pastries, grab and go, and gourmet coffee • **Full-service catering available**	Main Campus 458-4970 Aramark Catering 458-4209 JPL Food Court Bistro UV Food Court	Frio Street Building Food Court
Disability Services • Academic accommodations – testing, note taking, alternative print formats • Interpretive services • Counseling and advocacy services, library and bookstore assistance • Technological resources	Multidisciplinary Studies Building MS 3.01.16 458-4157 TTY: 458-4981	No Downtown location
Graduate School • First source of information for all graduate students • Deadlines, admissions, scholarships • GRE/GMAT/TOEFL information • Changing programs • International student questions	Graduate School and Research Building 2.210 458-4331	No Downtown location

Office and Services	UTSA 1604	UTSA Downtown
Health Services • Allergy clinics, CPR and first aid training • Dental care, general medical visits • Health education, health insurance, immunizations • Hospitalization, laboratory, medical records • HIV testing and counseling • Nurse visits, physical exams • Observation, self-care, orthopedic clinic, pharmacy • Women's clinic	Recreation Wellness Center RWC 1.500 458-4142	No downtown location
Intercollegiate Athletics • Participants in the Southland Conference • 12 men's and women's' teams – basketball, cross country, golf, softball, tennis, track and field, volleyball • 3 time host institution for the NCAA Final Four • CHAMPS/Life Skills Program	Physical Education Building 458-4161	No Downtown location
Library Services • Courier service, interlibrary loan • Course reserves • Bibliographers to help with research • Multimedia and computing services • References services • Group study rooms	John Peace Library Second and Third Floors 458-4574	Buena Vista Building BV 2.314 458-2440
One Stop Enrollment Center • Staff cross-trained to assist with both financial aid and admissions and registrar services and information • Transcripts, other paperwork processing • Extended hours available during the semester • Verification of financial aid eligibility done through this office • Grants, loans, emergency loans, work study, etc. available based on financial needs and special circumstances • Financial aid information workshops and presentations	John Peace Library JPL 1.01.04 458-4599	Frio Street Building FS 1.500 458-8000
PIVOT Office- First to Go & Graduate , Roadrunner Transition Experience Peer Mentoring Programs • F2GG is for first gen students and RTE is for students who are transfer, non-traditional, or international students, or student veterans • Provides peer mentors and programming for students • Workshops tailored to the targeted experience that focus on finding strengths through life experience, goal-setting, and networking to accomplish goals • Events for students to get connected and get engaged with other non-traditional students on campus • F2GG students also work with a first gen faculty coach	Flawn Science Building FLN 3.02.04 458-7469 458-7304	No Downtown location

Office and Services	UTSA 1604	UTSA Downtown
Scholarship Office • Oversees and administers more than 450 UTSA scholarships a year from federal, state, community, and private funding sources • Reference library, scholarship applications, College Board Fund Finder, calendar of deadlines, and important dates	John Peace Library JPL 1.01.04 458-8000	Frio Street Building FS 1.500
Statistical Consulting Center • http://business.utsa.edu/scc/ • Provides statistical consulting services, including assistance with research design and data collection.	Business Building BB 4.02.68 458-6349	No Downtown location
Student Activities • 12 Chartered Student Organizations (CSOs) • 140 Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) • Leadership Library, UTSA Speaker's Bureau, Workshops, Leader Series • Downtown campus activities	H.E.B University Center HUC 1.2.01 458-4160	No Downtown location
Student Computing Services • 2 student computer labs available on the 1604 campus, one at the downtown campus • Labs open 24 hours or until midnight most evenings • Web CT (course information online) and ASAP (Automated Student Access Program) available through UTSA website • Computers available for academic use only, printing limited	Business Building BB 2.01.20 458-7645	Downtown Library BV 2.314 458-2440
Student Life **(Student Conduct and Community Standards)** • Student Code of Conduct, Scholastic Dishonesty information • Conducts meetings and hearings to discuss violations of code of conduct or incidents of scholastic dishonesty	University Center UC 2.02.18 458-4720	No Downtown location
Tomas Rivera Center-ACE Scholar Program • Promotes academic success through a variety of programs that include including tutoring, mentoring, and dedicated individual academic advising • Helps to provide a bridge in order to make the transition from high school to college as successful as possible • Participants take CSS 1201: College Success Seminar to learn practical and success study habits	No Main Campus location	Durango Building DB 2.114 458-2833

Office and Services	UTSA 1604	UTSA Downtown
Tomas Rivera Center-Learning Assistance • Learning assistance and study skills workshops offered free of charge • Academic Coaching • Writing Institutes (Spring Break & mini-mester) • Thesis/Dissertation Support Group	Multidisciplinary Studies Bldg. MS 1.01.02 458-4694	Durango Building DB 2.114 458-2840
Tomas Rivera Center-Supplemental Instruction • Series of weekly 50-minute study sessions for historically difficult courses (list online) facilitated by SI leaders • SI leaders help students learn how to learn as well as what to learn. • Students who attend these voluntary sessions each week tend to average ½ to 1 full letter grade higher than their classmates who do not attend regularly.	John Peace Library JPL 4.02.08 458-7251	Durango Building DB 2.114 458-2840
Tomas Rivera Center-Tutoring • Provides walk-in tutoring to students with either individual or group tutoring. • Tutoring schedules can be found online at https://www.utsa.edu/trcss/tutoring • Math Assistance Program • College Success Seminar	John Peace Library JPL 2.01.12A 458-6783	Durango Building DB 2.114 458-2839
University Center Operations • Information desk – Ticketmaster ticket sales, student software sales, campus info and directions • Meeting space reservations • University Center Gameroom (The Roost)	University Center (In middle of UC next to UTSA Bookstore/Stairs) 458-4735	No Downtown location
University Police • Law enforcement, emergency preparedness • Lost and found, personal safety • Crime prevention, safety, alcohol and drug prevention programs	Bosque Street Building BOS 1.20 Non-Emergent 458-4242 Emergency 458-4911	Buena Vista Building BV 1.300a Non-Emergent 458-4242 Emergency 458-4911

Anything that we can do to help foster the intellect and spirit and emotional growth of our fellow human beings that is our job. And life is for service.

-Mr. Fred Rogers