No Limits

NO LIMITS

Foundations and Strategies for College Success

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

Mavs Open Press

Arlington

CONTENTS

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ABOUT THIS PROJECT

OVERVIEW

Student Success and First Year Experience (UNIV 1131 and UNIV 1000, respectively, at UTA) are learning community courses that teach new students academic success skills to aid their transition to college. The goal of the courses is to help students identify their individual needs, determine what resources are appropriate, recognize the faculty role in their development, and formulate a plan for an actively engaged and enriched experience from campus to career. The courses will be taught by Peer Academic Leaders (PALs) and faculty, staff and/or graduate students to provide guidance, raise awareness and understanding of students' majors and help support collaborative and co-curricular opportunities available within the School/College. *No Limits* serves as the required resource for these courses.

CREATION PROCESS

This OER was modified with permission from *No Limits: Foundations and Strategies for College Success* (ISBN 978-0-7380-9602-5) Copyright © 2017 by The University of Texas at Arlington. Contributors to the original textbook, first published in 2012, are listed in the acknowledgments section. In 2018, UTA's Division of Student Success chose to make the resource available to students as an OER rather than requiring students purchase access to a commercially published print copy. In its first semester of use, the OER will impact over 3,000 students and result in approximately $75,000 in cost savings for incoming first-time-in-college students.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ADDITIONAL THANKS TO...

Michelle Reed and Thomas Perappadan of UTA Libraries for assisting in the publication of this resource and to Kyle Pinkos, UTA Libraries' Marketing Coordinator, for designing the cover.

CONTRIBUTE TO THIS BOOK

OER, such as this textbook, derive much of their power from their flexibility and potential for collaboration. Unlike traditional commercial resources, digital OER can be updated and corrected frequently. Additionally, OER creation can be managed in a way that allows students to actively contribute to improvements and additions to the resource. The adaptation of *No Limits* as an OER is an iterative process, and you are invited to contribute in multiple ways.

Instructors are encouraged to seek opportunities to integrate assignments or bonus activities into the course that will encourage students to contribute to the development of this resource.

SHARE A STORY

The original textbook was accompanied by first-person student perspectives on the topics discussed therein. These have been omitted from the current version of the OER. The project team would like to collect new perspectives from current students to be included in the next release of the textbook. Submit your contribution to the book through our online submission form. Accompanying photos are appreciated but not required. Review the submission guidelines (PDF).

CONTRIBUTE ALTERNATIVE TEXT

Mavs Open Press is actively committed to increasing the accessibility and usability of the OER we produce so all students have equal access to the resources they need to learn. Occasionally, timelines require that we publish a resource before it meets the standards addressed in our Accessibility Statement. We aim for transparency in communicating known accessibility issues and seek to engage our communities to quickly address them.

A known issue related to *No Limits* is the lack of alternative text (alt text). Alt text is what allows screen readers to decipher images, charts, and graphs for readers with visual disabilities. Help us improve by submitting alt text recommendations via email at oer@uta.edu. Alt text submissions should include the recommended text to be added to the OER and the location of the image or illustration within the web text.

GO SOCIAL

Share your thoughts about UTA's transition to a free OER for UNIV 1131 by posting to social media using the hashtag #OpenUTA. You can find additional ways to get involved with OER initiatives by visiting UTA Libraries' Open for UTA Students guide.

Acknowledgements: All contributors who submit content that is added to the OER will be listed in the Acknowledgements section when the next version of the resource is published.

CHAPTER 1: WELCOME TO UT ARLINGTON

1.1 MISSION STATEMENT: OUR REASON FOR BEING

A mission statement describes the overall purpose of an institution, organization, or individual—its reason for existence. Oftentimes it will explain the target group served, the major activities conducted, as well as philosophy and values. Typically, the purpose of an institution does not change over time, though how it goes about accomplishing that mission might change given the environment at that time (Radtke, 1998).

UT ARLINGTON'S MISSION STATEMENT

The University of Texas at Arlington is a comprehensive research, teaching, and public service institution whose mission is the advancement of knowledge and the pursuit of excellence. The university is committed to the promotion of lifelong learning through its academic and continuing education programs and to the formation of good citizenship through its community service learning programs. The diverse student body shares a wide range of cultural values and the university community fosters unity of purpose and cultivates mutual respect.

As a university, we affirm our commitment to the following objectives:

- The university is committed to comprehensive programs of academic research. This research effort requires attracting and retaining scholars who promote a culture of intellectual curiosity, rigorous inquiry, and high academic standards among their fellow faculty and the students they teach.

- The university prepares students for full, productive lives and informed and active citizenship. To that end, we have developed undergraduate and graduate curricula and classroom practices that engage students actively in the learning process. Outside the classroom a wide range of student organizations and activities contribute to the learning environment. Our service learning program offers students the opportunity to supplement their academic study with internships in a variety of community settings, testing their skills and aptitudes and challenging their values. State-of-the-art teaching technologies, distance education, and off-site instruction afford access to off-campus as well as traditional students. Non-degree certificate and continuing education programs offer practical, aesthetic, and intellectually stimulating opportunities for community learners, for individual courses, or a sustained program of study.

- The mission of a university can be achieved only when its students, faculty, staff, and administrators value and promote free expression in an atmosphere of tolerance, responsibility, and trust. The university regards these attributes as prerequisites for any community of learners and vigilantly strives to maintain them.

- Mindful of its role as a resource to the community, locally, nationally, and internationally, the university continually seeks partnerships with public and private concerns in order to advance the economic, social, and cultural welfare of its constituencies. We serve the needs of the North Texas community by sponsoring public lectures and academic symposia, as well as artistic, musical, and dramatic productions.

University of Texas at Arlington Mission Statement (2009)

Ultimately, UT Arlington is about "lifelong learning." When fully embraced, the information and thinking skills gained in college establishes you to continue the learning process throughout your life as your world continues to change and grow. UT Arlington promotes learning as an active process by utilizing various methods—through research, inquiry, citizenship, service, internships, free expression, student organizations and activities, public lectures, artistic productions, etc.—rather than the passive absorption of information. As you encounter the discussions and assignments for the classes you take and pass by bulletin boards of flyers, consider how you are approaching your educational experience and think about if you are getting the most out of your time at UT Arlington.

Activity 1-1

Read the UT Arlington Mission Statement and underline the key words and phrases that you think will impact you as an undergraduate student. How do you expect to be impacted by your university experience at UT Arlington? What can you do as a student to contribute to this mission statement? Discuss your findings with a faculty member or classmate.

Chemistry-Physics Building with the new Planetarium

1.2 FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR (FYS): THE VALUE ADDED

Some students are surprised to learn that 80% of four-year universities and colleges offer some form of a freshman seminar for incoming students. The first freshman seminar was offered at Johns Hopkins University in 1877, when faculty recognized that first-year students needed assistance integrating into college life. Since then, the first-year seminar (FYS) has been offered in various forms: one to three credit hours, graded and non-graded, extended orientation to rigorous academic seminars. Overall, most universities report that the main goal for a FYS is to get students thinking—thinking about interesting world topics and how different disciplines view the world, as well as how they learn and manage their affairs (Upcraft, Gardner, & Barefoot, 2005).

Evidence from institutions with freshman seminars indicates that first-year seminars are effective in increasing student persistence to the next year, positively impacting grade point averages, increasing the number of credit hours completed, as well as positively impacting student involvement and helping students better understand what college is all about (Upcraft, et al., 2005). The 2006 National Survey of First-Year Seminars conducted by the National Resource Center for First-Year Experience and Students in Transition also indicated in their findings that, frequently, institutions with first-year seminars also report increases in satisfaction with the institution and the faculty, more positive peer interactions, and an increase in the use of campus services that help support student success to varying degrees (Tobolowsky & Associates, 2008). Hansen, Williams, & Chism (2008) reported that students valued the first-year seminar at their institution for various reasons. Common themes included interacting with other new students, interacting regularly with faculty and advisors, learning how to meet the demands of college life, exploring their major choices, and finding out more about the campus resources available to them.

At UTA, you may experience a first-year learning community of various types based on the needs of students in a particular major department. However, no matter the format of the learning community, certain goals and objectives will be covered in an attempt to provide all incoming students with information that has shown to impact new students positively.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR A LEARNING COMMUNITY AT UTA

Goal 1: To enhance the essential academic skills of incoming students

Objective 1.1: Students will examine and develop academic survival and success strategies (e.g., note taking, active reading, test preparation and taking, deep learning techniques, collaborative learning skills).

Objective 1.2: Students will examine and develop self-management skills necessary for academic success (e.g., time-management and goal setting, motivation, self-responsibility, concentration, financial literacy).

Goal 2: To facilitate the transition of incoming students to the university environment

Objective 2.1: Students will examine and understand the nature of a university and academic disciplines, faculty expectations, and academic integrity.

Objective 2.2: Students will understand university policies and procedures that impact their ability to acquire a degree.

Objective 2.3: Student will explore their strengths and learning styles and relate them to college tasks and major.

Objective 2.4: Students will become aware of and use academic and student support resources.

Objective 2.5: Students will explore and apply techniques that promote student wellness.

Goal 3: To develop and utilize critical thinking skills necessary for academic success

Objective 3.1: Students will explore and engage in higher order thinking activities related to a topic from an academic area.

Objective 3.2: Students will practice oral and written communication skills.

Objective 3.3: Students will conduct library research that includes a critical analysis of sources.

Goal 4: To develop a connection with UTA and become a "Maverick"

Objective 4.1: Students will develop a connection with faculty members and peer academic leaders.

Objective 4.2: Students will explore and become involved on campus.

Objective 4.3: Students will become aware of and use academic and student support resources.

Objective 4.4: Students will develop an appreciation for the diversity of the student body.

Your challenge is to consider carefully with an open mind what this course might have to offer you, as this may be different for every student.

Thought Question

What do you hope to gain from participating in your first-year learning community? Share your thoughts with your professor and classmates.

1.4 A BRIEF HISTORY LESSON ABOUT UT ARLINGTON (FROM SAXON, 1995)

The University of Texas at Arlington traces its history back to 1895, with the establishment of Arlington College near the location of the current E. H. Hereford Student Center. At the time, the college's location was one mile southwest of the city limits of Arlington, a town of only 1,000 residents. Today the university is in a bustling and vibrant metropolitan area, the largest and most populous in the state. The evolution of the school mirrors in many ways the growth and development of the Dallas–Arlington–Fort Worth metroplex, going from a school whose educational programs focused on military school discipline and rural-leaning educational programs to today's modern, urban, research university striving for national prominence like the region that surrounds and embraces it.

The history of the school can be divided into three distinct periods. The first period dates from 1895–1917, when the various schools that opened onsite were private and intended to offer an alternative to parents who did not want their children educated in public schools. The impetus for opening the first school, Arlington College, came from local Arlington merchant Edward Emmett Rankin. It was Rankin who recruited Lee Morgan Hammond and William M. Trimble, the two co-principals of the then Arlington Public School, to start the private school. The community threw its support behind these efforts, and the school opened in September 1895. From this opening there was a succession of schools on the site, including Arlington College (1895–1902), Carlisle Military Academy (1902–1913), Arlington Training School (1913–1915), and Arlington Military Academy (1915–1917).

In today's terms, these schools were not colleges at all but rather schools for children in primary, intermediate, and secondary grades. Each of the schools opened with great fanfare but eventually failed when sagging enrollment caused financial and legal problems forcing closure. In the end, the Arlington community proved unable—or unwilling—to provide the necessary support to keep the private schools operating.

The year 1917 marked the beginning of the second period in the school's development and a major turning point when educator and lobbyist Vincent Woodbury Grubbs led the efforts in Austin to open a junior college in Arlington as an extension of Texas A&M. This idea had been discussed locally for more than a decade, but Arlington leaders only mustered the resources to hire Grubbs in 1917 to work on their behalf. The Texas legislature responded favorably to the idea, passing a bill that Governor James Ferguson signed calling for the establishment of Grubbs Vocational College as a "Junior Agricultural and Industrial College." In return for the college and the state funding that went along with it, the citizens of Arlington had to donate one hundred acres of "good tillable land" to

the state and the "Carlisle Military School property, with all buildings, dormitories, barracks, etc., belonging thereto" (Texas Legislature, 1917).

Under Texas A&M the college experienced tremendous growth and development, going from a two-year junior college focusing on agricultural, vocational, and basic education to a four-year college, beginning in 1959, with the advent of baccalaureate degrees offered on campus. Similar to the first period of the college's history, the school had a few different names during its time with A&M. These names included Grubbs Vocational College (1917–1923), North Texas Agricultural College, called "N-tack" for short (1917–1949), and Arlington State College (ASC, beginning in 1959).

Ransom Hall is the oldest standing building on campus and newly renovated as the home of Division of Student Success

Enrollment grew from a meager 66 students in September 1917 to more than 11,000 in the mid-1960s when the college left A&M. The physical plant grew as well, to accommodate the college's increasing enrollment and broadening status as a senior-level college. Many of the oldest buildings on today's campus were constructed during this period, including Ransom Hall (which was the Administration

Building of Grubbs, completed in 1919), College Hall (which was the Library beginning in 1926), and Preston Hall (built as a Science Building, completed in 1928). The college also reached the pinnacle in sports, as its football team, the Rebels, won back-to-back Junior Rose Bowl championships in 1956 and 1957. Also, in 1962, ASC became the first school in the A&M System to integrate its student body, allowing African-Americans to register for the first time.

ASC's affiliation with Texas A&M came to an end in 1965, bringing to a close the second period of the school's history. Faculty, students, and the local community led the efforts to move ASC from the A&M System to the University of Texas System. The basic issue was the college's mission, scope, and role. ASC supporters pushed for more resources from A&M in order to increase the number of undergraduate offerings and also to develop graduate education programs and more research initiatives, while A&M clung tightly to the purse-strings, resisting this pressure. Local leaders in the North Texas area led the efforts in Austin to move ASC from one system to the next, and surprisingly, they got little resistance from A&M officials who welcomed the change and an end to the controversy. As a result, in 1965, the Texas legislature passed, and Governor John Connally signed, a bill transferring ASC to the UT System. The move to the UT System began the third period in the college's history, the UT years, which date from 1965 to the present.

ASC joined the UT System in 1965 and underwent its last name change in 1967, becoming The University of Texas at Arlington, or UTA to most people. The UT years have seen phenomenal growth at the university in every area. There are now more than 28,000 students who attend the university pursuing bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in 180 different programs. And the university's 140,000 alumni are spread across the globe. The campus has shaken off its "commuter school" image and has become a residential campus, with one-fourth of its students living in student housing and a considerably higher percentage living close to campus. Today's UTA students come from around the world to pursue an education. It is estimated that the university has a $1 billion annual impact on the economy of the region. The physical plant, too, has grown to cover 420 acres and include more than one hundred buildings in Arlington and Fort Worth.

The university is one of seven emerging research universities in Texas pursuing Tier 1 status and national prominence. This would not have been possible without a faculty who aggressively pursue research grants and external funds to expand the boundaries of knowledge and graduate students who carry out exciting research projects. A constant theme throughout the history of the university has been its close ties to the local community and the support it has received, and continues to receive, from it. Virtually every major change the university has undergone (such as its founding, or its joining A&M or the UT System, or its senior college status) has been either sponsored, supported, or initiated by the community. In real estate, agents always say that "location, location, location" determines value. This has certainly been true for UTA as its location and the community that it is a part of have served to shape and define the university.

1.5 ACTIVE UNIVERSITY INITIATIVES

UT Arlington is a university with a lot to brag about. You may not know how truly special it is, but you should take the time to find out.

The faculty members at UT Arlington are one reason why this school is so special. You might think that the best faculty are teaching exclusively at Ivy League schools or the biggest universities in the state, but that's not the case. Research activity is commonly used to measure faculty accomplishment, and UT Arlington is classified as a research extensive university according to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, meaning that the faculty teaching your classes are engaged in meaningful research and are highly respected by others in their field. UT Arlington faculty are also known for their excellence in teaching.

In addition, UT Arlington has a variety of facilities and programs that enhance the learning experience and set it apart from others. For example, the state-of-the-art Smart Hospital gives nursing students the opportunity to work on mannequins that simulate human conditions and symptoms. And, the UT Arlington Planetarium is one of the most advanced in the Southwest. The University also has an Honors College which allows students in any academic discipline to add additional rigor to their degree program and earn the distinction as an Honors College graduate.

The faculty, staff and students are committed to UT Arlington and the community that surrounds us as evident by our campus-wide dedication to initiatives that continue to develop engaging learning experiences inside and outside of the classroom. Consider what impact the following UT Arlington initiatives will have on you.

ACTIVE LEARNING FOR CRITICAL THINKING: WHAT IS ACTIVE LEARNING?

College is more than sitting in class, absorbing information, and just repeating it on a test. Through active learning, you put yourself at the center of your own educational experience. You learn by doing.

As a student, you're not simply a vessel into which professors pour facts, or a "knowledge consumer" waiting for wisdom to be transferred. Becoming an accomplished thinker requires that you not only take in facts, but that you integrate these facts into your own sense of how the world works. Although professors can help you in this endeavor, you are ultimately responsible for constructing your own unique brand of knowledge.

From the professors' perspective, active learning encourages us to look beyond traditional models of college teaching, offering more than "chalk and talk." Faculty find ways to get you intellectually

engaged through in-class activities, service learning opportunities, and assignments that address real-world problems. While these activities may often add an element of fun, there's something deeper at work. Through active learning, you stimulate and build critical cognitive functions: your capacities to analyze, apply, synthesize, and evaluate information—not just memorize it. You'll know you've succeeded when you create something new: a work of art, a better mousetrap, or a truly persuasive argument.

So, how can you make the most of each learning opportunity? First, come to class. Showing up is job one. Second, arrive prepared. The more time spent learning the facts on your own (do the reading, take good notes, etc.), the more time your professors can spend helping you understand the material more fully. Third, stay involved, ask, and participate. Be more than a warm body occupying a seat. Finally, strive to understand how each facet of your education shapes the future "you." As an educated member of society, you're more than a collection of facts. Rather, you realize how diverse parts of the universe are connected in sometimes surprising ways. You are comfortable looking for new approaches to solving complex problems at home, at work, or in the community.

… And it's this "you" that we're here to help you discover. Be part of the process.

EMBRACING DIVERSITY

The diversity of the students at the University of Texas at Arlington in race, ethnicity, age, physical ability, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, and socio-economic background is one of the university's many strengths. In recognition of this, the UT Arlington was recently listed by the U.S. News and World Report in the top 10% for student racial diversity among 200 U.S. universities. Students from 115 countries are represented among the student body, and this diversity is celebrated each year in International Week, and throughout the year via a rich, welcoming environment. In addition, the nationally competitive Movin' Mavs wheelchair basketball team highlights the unique talents of the players and other students with disabilities.

The diverse backgrounds and experiences of members of the UT Arlington community make the university a fertile ground for learning and provide students with distinct advantages after graduation. Through investments in the Maverick Speaker Series, the Diversity Lecture Series, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, Service Learning Projects, Learning Communities, and courses, students have numerous opportunities to increase their understanding and appreciation of diversity.

There is clear evidence that college students profit from living, studying, and working in a diverse environment, benefiting them in the short- and long- term. In such an environment, students begin to see commonality in values with those who are different (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002; Gurin,

Dey, Gurin, & Hurtado, 2003; Gurin, Nagda, & Lopez, 2004). After just one year of studying in a diverse university, students are more able to take the perspective of others, more interested in poverty, and more supportive of race-based initiatives (Hurtado, 2005). Students who take diversity courses and participate in campus sponsored diversity learning programs experience the greatest returns and are more prepared to participate in a diverse economy (Hurtado, 2005, p. 605).

CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY

What is sustainability? Here is the simplest definition: Sustainability represents societal and individual efforts to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

What does this mean? It means that people in industrialized countries have a lifestyle characterized by overconsumption that has impacted our planet in a very negative manner. The fossil fuels of oil and gas that we use to make or grow everything, from food to clothing, pollute the earth and also contribute to climate change. We also throw away a tremendous amount, and our waste, which often is composed of toxic materials, is having a disastrous effect on wildlife and on our own health. Our way of life, therefore, is not sustainable, and this has nothing to do with politics: it is simply reality.

Okay, what does this really mean to me? Unless we begin to change the way we think and live right now, your children will encounter a world that will be less hospitable than today's in terms of pollution, extreme weather, lack of water, lack of food, and loss of both plant and animal species. If all

this sounds rather remote to you, think how interconnected the world is, especially what you buy, use, and discard each day. Everything you do has a negative or positive effect on the future of this planet, for what you do truly does affect the world in a very direct way.

I'm curious, so where do I start? Your first step is to check out the Mavericks Go Green Web site. Next, think about taking a course or joining one of the organizations that you'll find on the sustainability Web site. Finally, realize that sustainability is not a goal, but rather a process: finding out more, changing the way you live, and perhaps most importantly, talking to your friends and family about this as well. Learning to live in a more sustainable manner is something that you do every day, and the more you do it and talk about it, the faster we will get our planet reoriented in a better direction.

Mavericks Go Green: Campus Sustainability
uta.edu/sustainability

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN (QEP)

The University of Texas at Arlington's (UTA) Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) will provide all undergraduate students with a competitive edge by connecting them with the University's experiential learning ecosystem. A committee of faculty, staff, students, and other stakeholders in student success identified The Five Distinguishing Activities that form the focus of the QEP:

- Leadership

- Undergraduate Research

- Global Engagement

- Community Engagement

- Career Preparedness

The QEP will enable students across the University to identify and participate in these experiential learning opportunities that enhance their career preparedness, dedication to lifelong learning, and appreciation of a diverse and inclusive community.

MAVERICK ADVANTAGE

FIVE STEPS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

CAREER DEVELOPMENT
- Internships
- Practicums
- Capstones
- Mentoring

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS
- Study Abroad
- International Collaborations and Exchanges

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH
- Undergraduate Research Assistants
- Federal Programs - McNair
- Honors College Research

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- Alternative Breaks
- Service Learning
- Volunteering

LEADERSHIP
- Freshmen Leaders on Campus
- Leadership Honors Program
- Leadership Minor
- Follett Student Leadership Center

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHY WOULD STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN THE FIVE DISTINGUISHING ACTIVITIES?
These opportunities foster improved communication skills, the ability to problem solve, as well as connect with future employers.

WHY IS UTA REQUIRING THE FIVE DISTINGUISHING ACTIVITIES?
- To replace students for career transitions
- To increase more meaningful learning
- To support student success and engagement

WHEN DO STUDENTS ENGAGE WITH THE FIVE DISTINGUISHING ACTIVITIES?
- All freshmen starting Fall 2017
- All tranfers starting Fall 2018
- All departments and programs will identify opportunities within their first year classes to introduce students to the Five Distinguishing Activities that are available over the course of their degree programs.

"Five Steps in the Right Direction"

CHAPTER 2: ABOUT A UNIVERSITY

2.1 WHAT DOES A UNIVERSITY DO?

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Historically, a university is considered an organized group of scholars and students in which the scholars lead the learning process and investigation (i.e., research) and, in essence, taught students to be scholars themselves. In Europe during the medieval times, universities tended to be regionally located and established by local municipal administrations, kings, or the Catholic Church. In early times, the basis for the curriculum was the trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and logic) and the quadrivium (arithmetic, astronomy, geometry, and music) with the primary purpose of developing well-rounded and well-educated individuals; students could then also study medicine, law, and theology (Haskins, 1923).

Similarly, Tobin (2009) stated that modern public universities in the United States grew to meet the social and economic needs of a state or region. Post– World War II industrial development required a more educated work force. Through a series of commissions, acts, and federal financial aid programs, public institutions of higher education became an accessible mass education system rather than simply a reward for the elite. The nation's military began funding students and research programs related to mathematics, science, and foreign languages in response to national security concerns after the launch of the Sputnik I satellite by the Soviet Union. At the same time, higher education in the United States has not only had influence on intellectual life, culture, and politics, but also has driven economic development and social mobility. For instance, current data collected by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2009) indicate that unemployment rates decrease and annual earnings increase for workers 25 years and older based on the level of educational degree attainment. Also, individuals are more likely to be employed and earn more money if they have attained a post-secondary degree.

As the increase in students from all walks of life came to the university, the need for student affairs and academic support professionals increased to help students meet the transition and demands of college life and continue to allow the faculty to teach and conduct research, all important for a developing country (Tobin, 2009).

TODAY AT UT ARLINGTON

Now that a brief historical and sociological context of higher education has been presented, we can easily see parallels in what we do at UT Arlington. We are proud to have been a part of the neighborhood for more than 120 years, and with an enrollment of almost 40,000, we pride ourselves on teaching students with the intent of developing well-rounded, well-educated citizens of our state,

nation, and world. The State of Texas dictates with legislation that all undergraduates complete a General Core Curriculum for that very purpose, and as you can see this tradition dates back to the early European universities that taught in accordance with the trivium and quadrivium. The mission statement of UT Arlington (refer to "Chapter 1: Mission Statement: Our Reason for Being") stresses the "[…]promotion of lifelong learning[…]the formation of good citizenship[…]fosters unity of purpose, and cultivates mutual respect[…]" (UT Arlington Mission Statement, 2009). The General Core Curriculum—writing, humanities, mathematics, fine arts, social sciences, history, politics, and the sciences—serves to meet these purposes by gaining a breadth of knowledge in areas that are relevant to the world and its citizens. In addition, when we ask employers what they are looking for in new graduates, we often hear that they want students who can think independently and critically, communicate well (both written and oral), solve problems, and interact well with others, which are skills often developed through the General Core Curriculum.

Many students express concerns and annoyance with taking these general core courses again, indicating that they already had the course in high school. What new students need to understand is that information in these courses will not be presented as it was in high school. Dating back to early universities, professors were allowed the freedom to teach the "truth" as their research, texts, and logical reasoning prescribed (Haskins, 1923). Oftentimes in higher level undergraduate majors and graduate level courses, some of the information presented in those courses has actually originated from research that faculty members and their students over the years have conducted. It is not uncommon for a faculty member teaching a course to have also written and published texts that may be assigned as a portion of the course reading.

During their research and scholarship process, your faculty members are creating original works of art, writing, and research in an attempt to convey new understandings of the world around them. They are asking research questions like, Why does this happen?, What would happen if…?, and How can we improve this…? In addition, they express new ideas and images in an attempt to capture more about the human condition and impact the emotions and thoughts of others. University faculty members see that their role in part is to create the next generation of the world's scholars (Haskins, 1923). It is safe to assume that once certain foundational information is presented that your faculty members may be asking you some of the same questions or encouraging you to engage in similar activities so that you can participate in the creation of knowledge for yourself and others in your classes. These exercises will likely require you, as a student, to engage in your educational process in a much different way than in high school.

2.2 GENERAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF UTA

While you were in high school, the organizational structure was very clear cut. Your teachers were in charge of the classroom, and if an issue was elevated beyond the classroom, the principal or assistant principal became involved. However, a hierarchy beyond your school's principal did exist and in many cases that hierarchy served to determine the policies and procedures followed at your school. Understanding the organizational structure of a university can help students understand the complexity of a campus community and how to better navigate in that environment.

Universities across the United States offer slightly different hierarchical structures. The organizational chart and nomenclature depicted in Figure 2-1 represents the general structure of UT Arlington. The president of a university provides the overall leadership of the institution's academic and administrative units as well as serves as a liaison to the State government and the UT System Board of Regents, the primary governing board for UT Arlington. The president is typically very involved with fundraising for the university and promoting the positive image of the institution (Pusser & Loss, 2009). The provost is the "chief academic officer" of the institution and serves to develop and implement the educational goals of the institution (Bray, 2009).
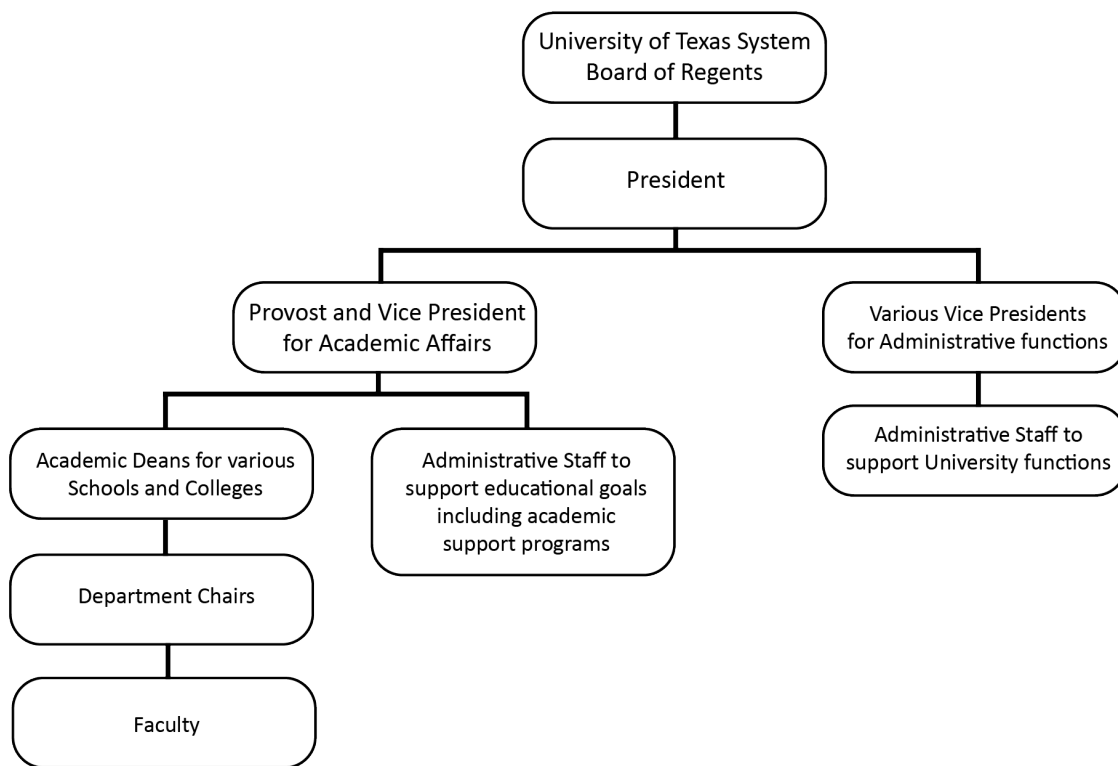
Figure 2.1 *UT Arlington's General Organizational Structure*

UT Arlington is a research-intensive, public, four-year institution that offers over 180 different bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees from 10 different schools and colleges that comprise the university as well as Division of Student Success. (See Table 2-1.)

Table 2-1. The University of Texas at Arlington (UT Arlington) Schools and Colleges

- College of Architecture, Planning, and Public Affairs

- College of Business

- College of Education

- College of Engineering

- College of Liberal Arts

- College of Nursing and Health Innovation

- College of Science

- School of Social Work

- Honors College

An academic dean serves as the leader for all of the academic departments within a particular school or college and reports directly to the provost. Deans lead the department chairs and their faculty in developing and implementing the curriculum and academic requirements necessary for students to earn a degree from the university (Del Favero, 2009). In addition to serving as a role model for teaching and conducting research, deans also manage the administrative issues allocating resources and funding for their school or college. Department chairs for each academic department serve as the liaison between the dean of the college and their faculty. Their primary tasks include faculty development, management of the department resources, conducting research, and teaching (Wolverton, 2009). The faculty members are what students typically think of as their "teachers," though are typically referred to as "professors" in higher education. Faculty members have typically earned a higher-level degree in the specific discipline in which they teach and conduct research to further the knowledge of their academic discipline. Ultimately, the faculty members from an academic department determine what knowledge students should master in order to obtain a bachelor's degree from that academic discipline. Typically, this knowledge base is reflected in the courses offered by a given department and the degree requirements set forth in a degree plan for a particular major (Pusser & Loss, 2009).

It is also important to note that beyond the classroom there are experienced professional staff on campus that help students succeed and ensure that a university of this size can function every day. Staff members that you may see regularly include student affairs professionals who ensure a positive campus life and student leadership opportunities, academic advisors who help students navigate the curriculum of their degree plans and understand the policies and procedures needed to obtain that degree, and counselors who help students deal with stress or personal issues that are impeding academic success. However, there are staff that you may only see intermittently or not at all, such as the financial aid counselors that students may visit only when there is an issue with funding and the people on campus that pay employees of the campus, facilities workers who maintain the beautiful landscape, or chefs who cook the food served in the cafes. UT Arlington is a bustling, vibrant community with dedicated faculty and staff here to help students succeed however they can.

Thought Question

How are the American History classes offered in high school different from the American History classes in college?

1.3 QUICK REFERENCE ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES

Academic Support Services

- **Academic Success Center**
  - 206 Ransom Hall & 415 Central Library
  - uta.edu/student-success/course-assistance/available-course-support
  - 817-272-2617
  - learningcenter@uta.edu
- **Counseling and Psychological Services**
  - 303 Ransom Hall & 212 Maverick Activities Center (MAC)
  - uta.edu/caps
  - 817-272-3671 & 817-272-1888
- **English Writing Center**
  - 411 Central Library
  - uta.edu/owl
  - 817-272-2601
  - uta-wci@uta.edu
- **Math Clinic**
  - 325 Pickard Hall
  - uta.edu/math/clinic
  - 817-272-3261
  - MathLRC@uta.edu

- **Student Access & Resource Center**
    - 102 University Hall
    - uta.edu/student-affairs/sarcenter
    - 817-272-3364
    - sarcenter@uta.edu
- **TRIO Student Support Services**
    - 206 Ransom Hall
    - [uta.edu/sss](uta.edu/sss)
    - 817-272-3684
    - triosss@uta.edu
- **University Advising Center**
    - 100 Ransom Hall
    - uta.edu/advising
    - 817-272-3140
    - uac@uta.edu

More academic assistance services can be found at uta.edu/resources

2.3 FACULTY EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

Important Note: To help students understand more about what the UT Arlington faculty members expect of their new college students, the Academy of Distinguished Teachers, a committee of UT Arlington's award-winning professors, collaborated to write this section for you.

Faculty expectations of students are focused on two primary areas: (1) interacting with the subject matter and (2) developing and maintaining respectful relationships.

FOCUS #1: INTERACTING WITH THE SUBJECT MATTER

One of our goals as university professors is to help students become knowledgeable in a specific topic or subject area that is applicable to life situations or relevant for future learning. For example, English majors learn about poetic structures, writing styles, different types of literature, and strategies for writing a thought-provoking essay. In contrast, nursing majors learn about pathophysiology, medications, disease processes, and techniques for providing nursing care. We want students to integrate the acquired knowledge into their own lives. English majors gain an appreciation for a historic novel, and nursing majors use their course readings and lab practice to assess a patient. Because we have this goal for you as a student, we have higher expectations of you and your work as a college student. Most importantly, you, the student, are expected to take responsibility for your own learning. One UT Arlington professor conveyed this idea in this way: "taking ownership of your education, being proactive to maximize your learning."

HIGHER STANDARDS IN THINKING: THE UNIVERSAL INTELLECTUAL STANDARDS

Thinking about the quality of your thinking and reasoning—a process often referred to as metacognition—is one of the best ways to begin stretching your critical thinking. Consider this list of Universal Intellectual Standards and associated questions as ways to develop deeper levels of thinking.

1. **Clarity:** Oftentimes, you cannot determine if something is accurate or relevant unless you have more information. Ask, "Can you elaborate further on that point?" or "Can you give me an illustration, example, etc.?"

2. **Accuracy:** A statement can be clearly presented, but then you have to ask, "Is it true?" In addition, ask, "How could we check that information?"

3. **Precision:** A statement might be true and even accurate, but then you must ask, "Can you be more specific?" or "Can you give me more details?"

4. **Relevance:** Statements may be clear, true, and precise, but that does not necessarily mean the information presented is relevant to the discussion at hand. Ask, "How is that information connected to the question?"

5. **Depth:** Some statements can be superficial, such as the "Just Say No!" campaign. It is a clear, accurate, precise, and relevant statement, but it lacks depth into the issue and reasons for drug use. Ask questions like, "Are you taking into account the problems in the question?" or "Are their complexities not being considered?"

6. **Breadth:** Statements may not include all points of view. Ask questions like, "What would this look like from a conservative or liberal point of view?" or "Is there another way to look at the statement?"

7. **Logic:** Often, as we are thinking, we are bringing information from many different locations and putting it together into a new thought. Ask questions like, "Does it make sense?" or "Does that thought follow from what was presented previously?"

Adapted from Paul, R. and Elder, L. (1996). Foundation for Critical Thinking, online at Web site criticalthinking.org/

So, what about grades? In short, we don't assign grades: you earn them. As a college student, you will be assessed based on your performance (and not, for example, simply because you tried hard). Paying tuition provides access to learning opportunities but does not imply that a faculty member will give you a high grade merely for registering for and attending the course. Because grades are earned rather than given, you should expect learning to be hard work. Attending classes is an important indicator that you value your investment and are committed to learning. Interaction with faculty members and fellow students is an essential part of the educational process that promotes personal

and professional growth. Another indicator that you value your investment is the effort you make to complete assignments and readings on time. At the university, learning occurs at least as much outside of the classroom as it does inside the classroom. Between classes, we expect you to engage in study, reading, and thought—behaviors that require discipline and a commitment of significant amounts of time. In most cases, for every hour you spend in class (e.g., in a lecture), you should plan to spend at least three hours either preparing for or completing assignments for that class. If you're spending 15 hours per week in class (approximately 5 courses), then your "homework" time should come to at least 45 hours each week—minimally.

COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMY OF DISTINGUISHED TEACHERS, UT ARLINGTON

- Do your best and attempt to exceed your best. Just "getting by" shortchanges your significant financial investment in this course.

- As a professor, I give priority to this course in my schedule. I request that you do the same.

- Remember the more you put into the course, the more you will get out of it.

- Read widely, question, and analyze. You have the tasks of learning and evaluating that content. Shoot for improving thinking skills such as evaluating, critiquing, and synthesizing, as well as learning facts. Try to look at the content from different perspectives. Additionally, read beyond the textbook as much as you can from the recommended reading list.

One part of being responsible for your own learning means that you will only submit class assignments you completed yourself. When you use information from a book, periodical, or the Internet, you must cite the source appropriately and list the source in the reference list or bibliography. In addition, you should never consult fellow students for answers or share your answers unless the assignment is being completed as part of a team project or the faculty member has clearly stated that collaboration is expected (Refer to "Chapter 6: Avoiding the Hazards Along the Way," "Academic Integrity" section for more information). If you are unsure if you should consult with others on an assignment, it is acceptable to ask your professor.

Attending classes, completing all of your reading, and successfully completing your own work in each class requires self-discipline, time management, and organization. As a UT Arlington professor noted, "In recognition that you have many things going on in life, set time aside for this course each week for class attendance, reading and assignments and be sure to keep that time prioritized for this course." Another faculty member noted that class attendance is especially important in professional

schools because class interaction promotes professional socialization. Use a calendar program on a cell phone or computer to note when assignments are due, and schedule automatic reminders so that you start the assignment early enough to be able to complete it on time. Remember that obtaining library sources for a research project or reading 200 pages will take time. Be sure to allow time for each step of the process necessary to successfully complete the assignment. If you have questions, review the syllabus and class notes first so that, when you ask the teacher for more information, you are not asking for information that has already been provided.

FOCUS #2: DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

We believe learning is more likely to occur in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Respectful communication includes calling professors by appropriate titles, speaking appropriately to fellow students, and minimizing classroom distractions, such as texting or browsing the Web during a class. Creating an atmosphere of interpersonal respect allows students to feel more secure and able to take the risk of being exposed to new ideas. Willingness to be exposed to ideas with which you may not be familiar or agree, provides opportunities to grow in knowledge and as a person. Classroom distractions such as noisily arriving late or carrying on side conversations interfere with the other students' ability to learn. Missing classes also shows disrespect for the professor and for the course.

Your interaction with the subject matter and the maintenance of respectful relationships are essential for your intellectual growth toward critical thinking— the ability to appraise information for credibility and relevance and to integrate the new information with what you already know.

WHAT SHOULD I CALL MY PROFESSOR?

In high school, students typically address their teachers as "Mrs. X" or "Ms. Y" or "Mr. Z." In the university context, however, knowing how to address an instructor becomes a bit more complicated. In nearly every case, it's fully appropriate to refer to your instructor as "Professor So-and-So." If, however, you know that your professor holds a doctoral degree, then it's also appropriate to address him/ her as "Dr. So-and-So." What's important is that you use both a title ("Professor" or "Doctor") and his/her last name. Doing so conveys not only respect for the instructor but also your knowledge of academic culture. By the way, there are some instructors on our campus who might prefer that you address them in a different way, using "Mr." or "Ms." or simply a first name. If so, feel free to do so—but don't presume!

Thought Question

- *How are college professors different from high school teachers?*

- *What do college professors expect from their students?*

2.4 ACADEMIC ADVISING: YOUR ROADMAP TO A BACHELOR'S DEGREE

Obtaining a bachelor's degree can be easily likened to taking a cross-country trip. Let's say that a person wanted to travel from Los Angeles to New York City. This person could take a more northern route and experience mountains and cooler temperatures. Or, this person might elect to take a more southern route and experience deserts, beaches, and warmer temperatures. A really adventurous person might elect to traverse the globe and see oceans, China, and Europe along the way. Earning a degree should be seen as a journey—a long term commitment to self-improvement through education. Many decisions will be made along the way that can take you down discrete paths in your quest for a degree that may ultimately lead you down different career paths based on your strengths and interests. Academic advisors will ultimately help you navigate your academic journey.

WHO IS YOUR ACADEMIC ADVISOR?

Typically in high school, students were automatically enrolled in a course schedule for a full academic year. These schedules were most likely created by a guidance counselor based on your student record and some administrative input. However, in college, students create their course schedule each semester with the help of an academic advisor, not a counselor. In your first academic year, you will be meeting with full-time professional academic advisors from the University Advising Center in the Division of Student Success who will help you navigate your first-year courses and provide additional support as you "learn the ropes." Once you leave the Division of Student Success, you will be advised within your major academic department. In this case, your academic advisor could be a professional staff advisor, a faculty member who agrees to take on advising responsibilities, or even a graduate assistant who works under the supervision of an advising administrator. While being advised by the Division of Student Success, you are not discouraged from talking with the academic advisors of your major department. In fact, in some cases, the Division of Student Success advisors may request that you speak with a departmental advisor to answer specific questions. However, you should always check in with a Division of Student Success advisor before making any adjustments to your course schedule.

University Advising Center in the Division of Student Success

uta.edu/advising

Your academic advisors should have information available in the academic department or on the department Web site regarding their office hours and preferred methods for contacting them. It is your responsibility to seek out that information and have it available for when you need to make contact.

WHEN SHOULD I SEE AN ADVISOR?

Quite simply, you should feel free to contact an academic advisor any time you have a question about your college experience or are experiencing a difficulty that is impeding your success in college. Then again, you do not have to simply see an advisor when you are having a problem; you can even contact your academic advisor when you want to celebrate successes no matter the size. Here are some more concrete instances in which you will want to speak with your advisor:

- For assistance in developing a 4–5 year academic plan for graduation.

Helpful Hint: Refer to Activity 2-3 in this chapter for assistance with this plan.

- Prior to the next registration period to discuss your schedule of classes for the following academic session.

Helpful Hint: Each semester, you will need to see an academic advisor to have an enrollment hold removed in order to register for classes. Beat the advising rush and schedule an appointment to meet with your advisor several weeks before your enrollment appointment specified in the Student Services Center in MyMav.

- When you are experiencing any type of difficulty (personal, academic, or social) that is impeding your ability to perform well in or attend class and need referrals to campus resources or study skills advice that may be able to help you perform better.

Helpful Hint: Dealing with issues as soon as they arise rather than waiting until it is impossible to recover will benefit you in the long run.

- When you are considering changing your major.

Helpful Hint: You may want to visit with many academic advisors on campus including your current advisor and also consider seeking advisement from a Majors Exploration advisor in the Division of Student Success.

- When you need assistance adding, dropping, or withdrawing from classes.

Helpful Hint: After Late Registration, you will be required to seek the assistance of an academic advisor to add or drop classes to complete the MyMav functions.

- Prior to the Last Drop Day during a given session if you are experiencing difficulty in a course.

Helpful Hint: It is in your best interest to check in with the faculty for your classes to determine your current grades and then talk with an advisor if you are considering dropping. Waiting until

the last minute is not recommended. Professors' and advisors' office hours may conflict with your schedule, and it may take several days to get all of the appropriate signatures.

- Any time you have a question about a UTA policy or procedure that is discussed in the Undergraduate Catalog.

Helpful Hint: It is the responsibility of every UTA student to have read their Undergraduate Catalog and understand the policies. "Nobody told me" is not an acceptable defense if you do not follow university policy.

- If your Academic Standing at the end of a session is anything other than "Good Standing."

Helpful Hint: "Chapter 6: Avoiding Hazards Along the Way" discusses issues related to Academic Standing at UT Arlington more in depth.

- If you want some guidance on how to apply for graduate school or discuss career options for your major.

Helpful Hint: In addition to talking with your academic advisor, you can also talk with your professors, attend workshops given by the Graduate School, and do some research in the Lockheed Martin Career Development Center.

- When you reach 60 cumulative credit hours, so you can discuss having your intended major changed to a major if you have not done so already.

Helpful Hint: UT Arlington policy requires that all students are in a major by the time they have earned 75 credit hours. Students not able to make a major decision are required to meet with an advisor in the Division of Student Success.

- Before enrolling in any courses at another institution that you intend on transferring back to UT Arlington to meet degree requirements.

Helpful Hint: While courses may transfer into UTA, they may not meet the requirements of a major degree plan.

- The long semester before you plan to graduate from UT Arlington to double-check your degree progress and find out the procedures you need to follow to apply for graduation.

Student Responsibilities

- Understand and communicate personal values, abilities, and goals.

- Provide accurate and truthful information when being advised.

- Schedule and keep appointments or call ahead to reschedule if you are going to be late or need to cancel the appointment.

- Learn and understand UT Arlington policies, procedures, and requirements by reading the Undergraduate Catalog.

- Ask questions about UT Arlington policies, procedures, and requirements if you do not understand them.

- Come prepared to an advising appointment. For instance, if you are meeting with your advisor to discuss enrollment for the next term, bring your Academic Plan for Graduation and a list of courses you might consider taking.

- Be open to new possibilities that the academic advisor may suggest.

- Follow through on the plans- of-action agreed upon in the advising session.

- **Understand and accept that students are ultimately responsible for their education and their own decisions. Take an active role in the advising process.**

Academic Advisor Responsibilities

- Inform students of the nature of the advisor/advisee relationship and the expectations you have for your advisees.

- Develop purposeful and meaningful relationships with advisees.

- Provide and update contact information and posted office hours.

- Keep appointments or contact a student if it is necessary to change or cancel an appointment.

- Inform and refer students to campus resources and special services available to them.

- Assist students in defining and developing desired educational, career, and life plans.

- Listen and help students in developing a realistic academic plan for graduation that will help a student meet his or her goals.

- Monitor progress toward educational/career goals.

- Interpret and provide rationale for university policies, procedures, and requirements.

WHY IS THE UNDERGRADUATE CATALOG SUCH AN IMPORTANT DOCUMENT?

The policies and procedures set forth in the Undergraduate Catalog are in effect a contract or agreement with the students who enter UTA during that catalog period. If students complete the

degree requirements set forth using the policies and procedures outlined from that catalog, UTA will confer a bachelor's degree. Though policies and degree requirements may change from year to year, the policies and degree requirements set forth in the catalog that students entered under is what they have to follow.

Undergraduate Catalog

catalog.uta.edu

The official Undergraduate Catalog (and the archive of previous years' catalogs) can only be accessed online. Students can access official information about the degree plans offered by the different academic departments as well as the current course catalog that describes each of the courses more in depth and explains the prerequisites for the courses. In addition to the basic degree requirements, the Undergraduate Catalog is considered the official source of information regarding the policies and procedures that students must follow as they are taking courses to obtain their degree. **It is highly recommended that students read and familiarize themselves with the policies and procedures of their entering catalog.**

COMPONENTS OF UT ARLINGTON DEGREE PLANS

1. **Core Curriculum**—State-determined courses meant to provide all undergraduates with a well-rounded education.

2. **Major Coursework**—Courses specific to the discipline students have selected. Includes required courses, major electives, and possibly subplan specialties.

3. **Electives**—General courses that students can take to meet the total semester credit hours required to earn the degree.

Degree requirements can be found in the Undergraduate Catalog at catalog.uta.edu.

Students should always consult undergraduate academic advisors from their major department before enrolling in classes to ensure the proper selection of courses that will meet degree plan requirements.

HOW TO CALCULATE A GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

Students will receive information regarding their cumulative and semester GPAs at the end of each term when grades are posted in MyMav. Any courses taken at another institution are not calculated into UTA's semester or cumulative GPAs, so **do not take courses at another institution and assume that those grades will impact your UTA GPA and Academic Standing. They will not.**

At times, it is helpful to be able to calculate your own GPA if:

1. you want to determine what your major GPA is,

2. you want to play a guessing game to determine what you might need to earn in order to change your GPA from one level to another, or

3. you are interested in applying to graduate or professional school upon finishing your degree (you can calculate an overall GPA that would include those grades as the Graduate Admissions Offices would using this basic formula).

At UTA, students are graded on a 4-point scale:

Grade	Grade Value	Meaning
A	4.0	Excellent
B	3.0	Good
C	2.0	Fair
D	1.0	Poor
F	0.0	Failing

Note: Grades of I, P, Q, W, or Z are not included in the calculation of a GPA.

Let's Do Some Math...

Example:

- List the courses attempted and the grades earned.

- Multiply the grade value by the number of credit hours of that course.

Course	Letter Grade Earned	Grade Point Allocation	Grade x Credit Hours of course	= Grade Points Earned
ENGL 1301	A	4.0	4.0 x 3 hrs	= 12
MATH 1302	D	1.0	1.0 x 3 hrs	= 3
UNIV 1301	B	3.0	3.0 x 3 hrs	= 9
BIOL 1441	C	2.0	2.0 x 4 hrs	= 8
13 credit hours attempted				= 32 Grade Points

- Add the total hours attempted and the total grade points earned.

- Divide the grade points earned by the credit hours attempted >> 32 grade points ÷ 13 hours

Grade point average of these courses: 2.46

Thought Question

- *How are the academic advisors in college different from the guidance counselors in high school?*

- *Overall, how do you think college will be different than high school?*

Activity 2-1:

Read all of the sections under "General Information" of the online Undergraduate Catalog. Also, select one department of interest to you in the "Academics" section and read about that department and the degree requirements. Look up at least one course listed in the degree requirements under the "Course Descriptions" section to see if there are any prerequisites for that course. As you are reading write down any questions you may have. Schedule an appointment with an academic advisor and ask the questions you have about the degree requirements and policies and procedures you read in the catalog.

Activity 2-2:

Using the Undergraduate Catalog, investigate the following policies:

1. Schedule Changes (Adds and Drops)—How many courses can an undergraduate student drop during their academic career?

2. Withdrawal for Non-Payment

3. 75 Hours to Undergraduate Major Policy

4. Academic Probation and Dismissal Policy

5. Freshman Potential for Academic Success Policy

6. Grade Replacement and Grade Exclusion Policies

Write down any questions that you may have about these policies and talk about them with an academic advisor.

Activity 2-3:

Using the Undergraduate Catalog, complete this worksheet to the best of your ability. Then schedule an appointment to meet with an Academic Advisor from the major department that you are interested in pursuing to discuss how realistic your plan is and adjustments that might be necessary given your life circumstances.

Name:				Major Degree:	
❏ I confirm that my academic advisor has reviewed this page along with my academic plan.					
YEAR ONE					
Fall	HRS.	Spring	HRS.	Summer	HRS.
Totals:					
YEAR TWO					
Fall	HRS.	Spring	HRS.	Summer	HRS.
Totals:					
YEAR THREE					
Fall	HRS.	Spring	HRS.	Summer	HRS.
Totals:					
YEAR FOUR					
Fall	HRS.	Spring	HRS.	Summer	HRS.
Totals:					
YEAR FIVE					
Fall	HRS.	Spring	HRS.	Summer	HRS.
Totals:					
Expected Semester/Year of Graduation:					

Activity 2-4:

Using the example academic record below, calculate the overall GPA and major GPA assuming that the student is a Biology major.

Courses Taken	Letter Grade Received	Grade Point Equivalency	x	Credit (Hours of Course)	=	Grade Points earned
1st semester						
ENGL 1301	A					
MATH 1323	B					
BIOL 1441	B					
UNIV 1131	P					
POLS 2311	B					
2nd semester						
ENGL 1302	B					
MATH 1426	B					
BIOL 1442	A					
PSYC 1315	A					
3rd semester						
ENGL 2319	B					
BIOL 2343	A					
CHEM 1441	B					
POLS 2312	A					
TOTALS						

Overall GPA

Total Grade Points ÷ Total UTA Hours = _____

Biology Major GPA

BIOL Grade Points ÷ Total BIOL Hours = _____

CHAPTER 3: CAMPUS LIFE - THE VALUE ADDED FROM INVOLVEMENT

3.1 NEW BEGINNINGS: BECOMING INVOLVED ON CAMPUS

The start of the school year is a time for new beginnings and is a special time as new students transition to the university. During these years, students will come across many opportunities that will help them achieve their academic, career, and personal goals. According to Alexander Astin's I-E-O Model (1970, 1984, 1985, 1991), a conceptual model for organizing and conducting studies of student development, there is a direct correlation between a student's involvement in college to their success and eventual graduation. It is encouraged that students become involved in the wide variety of co-curricular opportunities that are available to them on campus.

This added involvement will prove to enrich their experiences, help them attain better grades, and ultimately lead to continued success after graduation. As you embark on your educational career, take some time to think about your interests, goals, and activities and what it would be like to become involved in the University of Texas Arlington.

Thought Question

How can students turn their interests into involvement at their university?

There are many ways for students to turn interests into involvement. [Click here to go to the student affairs page.](#)

Figure 3-1. Programs and Services from Student Affairs

The central diagram shows the "Division of Student Affairs" surrounded by the following departments:

- Leadership Center
- The Shorthorn student newspaper
- Health Services
- Lockheed Martin Career Development Ctr
- Student Activities & Organizations
- Apartment & Residence Life
- Disability Services
- New Maverick Orientation
- Multicultural Affairs
- Movin' Mavs & Campus Recreation
- Fraternity and Sorority Life
- Student Conduct
- Counseling & Psychological Services
- Parents & Family Center

Students can become involved on campus through EXCEL Campus Activities and with their community through UTA Volunteers. Students are encouraged to celebrate diversity with Multicultural Affairs' cross-cultural programming activities and events and to empower themselves by joining a culturally based student organization. To promote a healthy lifestyle, utilize the Maverick Activity Center and the multitude of programs offered by Campus Recreation. Students can hone their leadership skills with the Follett Student Leadership Center and take charge of campus policies with campus governance. On a daily basis, stay connected to the university with the award-winning student newspaper, The Shorthorn. By becoming involved, you can enrich your life and gain career experience. This added involvement will prove to develop dynamic personal skills, marketable career experiences, and lifelong friendships.

Numerous national and university-wide studies show that students are able to retain more academic information and obtain a more robust and ultimately successful learning experience by becoming involved. Astin's I-E-O Model (1970, 1984, 1985, 1991) is divided up into three sections: inputs, environment, and outputs (see Figure 3-2). The inputs include the student's personal qualities, such as educational background, life goals, and reasons for attending college. The environment refers to the actual experiences during the educational program (Astin, 1993). These include programs, teaching styles, staff, friends, roommates, co-curricular activities, and organizational affiliations. Outputs refer to the "talents" the faculty and staff are trying to develop in the educational programs (Astin, 1993).

These output variables include consequences or end results, grade point averages, exam scores, degree completion, and overall course satisfaction.

Figure 3-2. Astin's I-E-O Model Retrieved from ojni.org
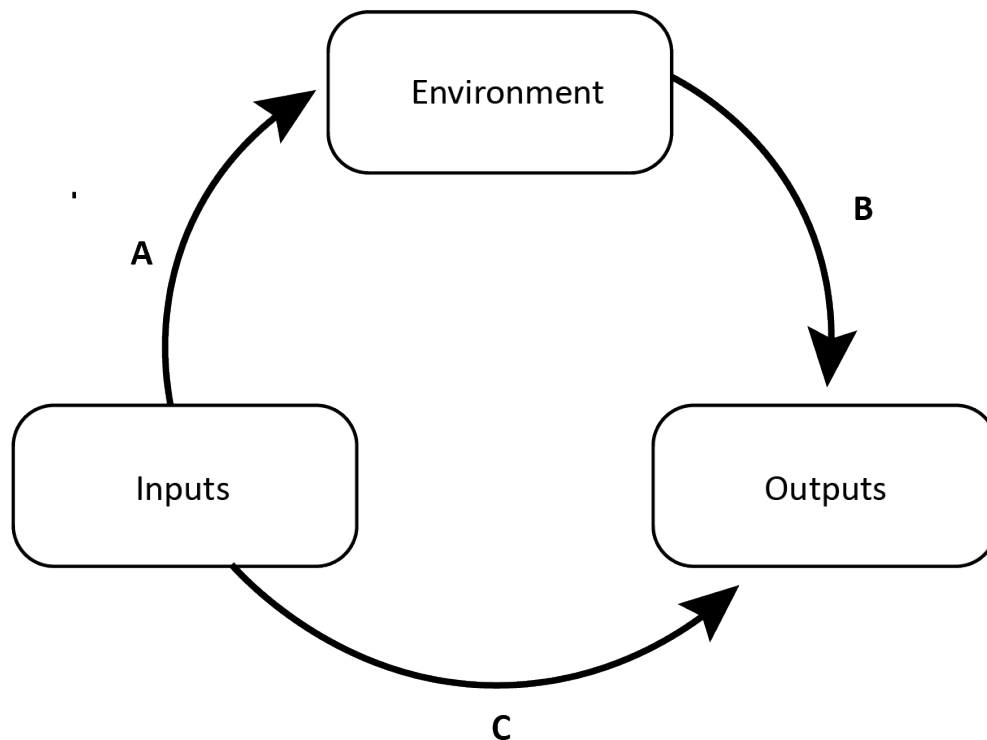
Astin collected data on 24,847 students at 309 different institutions and determined the influences of a host of institutional characteristics on the students' college experiences. A few of the results from his findings show that the quality of the college experience is strongly affected by student-faculty interactions. The frequency with which students talk with professors outside class, work with them on research projects, assist them in teaching, and visit their homes, correlates with student grade-point average, degree attainment, enrollment in graduate or professional school, every self-reported area of intellectual and personal growth, and satisfaction with quality of instruction (1993). Students learn more the more they are involved in both the academic and social aspects of the collegiate experience. Students who are involved devote significant energy to academics, spend time on campus, participate actively in student organizations and activities, and interact often with faculty. On the other hand, uninvolved students neglect their studies, spend little time on campus, abstain from extracurricular activities, and rarely initiate contact with faculty or other students (Astin, 1984). Astin's model shows that the positive connection between students and their peers, faculty, staff, and environment, ultimately leads to successful outputs, or end points, including final grades and their eventual graduation.

Recent findings from a 2008 Student Affairs Services (SAS) assessment study completed by The University of Texas at Arlington Division of Student Affairs tell us that 47.6% of students are involved in organized co-curricular activities. Out of the students surveyed, 72.7% said that they received

their greatest personal satisfaction while at UT Arlington in areas including peer group interaction, interaction with faculty/staff, co-curricular activities, leadership opportunities and development, and living on campus in a residence hall or apartment. It was also found that 34% said that Student Affairs staff had a positive influence on their personal growth, values, and attitudes.

Thought Question

What is the best way for students to decide on an interest and become involved?

WHAT'S MY PLAN?

The best way for students to organize themselves is to develop a plan of action. Below are a few tips for college students to consider for successfully moving forward toward becoming involved as they begin their college experience.

- Join a club or organization.

- Develop positive relationships with staff, faculty members, and peers.

- Work on campus.

- Participate in service or volunteer activities.

- Utilize campus services, some of which include orientation, legal services, advising, disability services, tutoring, and counseling.

- Get socially integrated through active involvement and engagement in on-campus activities including speakers, social events, recreation, and leadership activities.

UT Arlington encourages student involvement. The general skills that students attain in clubs and organizations will allow them to succeed both in and out of college. The next section will discuss the opportunities to develop utility and enhance leadership abilities. These experiences will also help you to reach your full potential and influence our campus community.

Thought Question

- *What leadership opportunities are available on campus for students through Student Affairs?*

- *What are three benefits of becoming involved on campus?*

3.2 THE RELEVANCE OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

You may have noticed that the term "leadership" seems to be just about everywhere you look lately. If you haven't, take a closer look around. Our bookstore shelves include popular books on the subject (e.g., Northouse, 2007).

A simple Google search of the term yields an astounding 784,000,000 results! And the interest in leadership extends far beyond popular culture. Increasingly, colleges and universities identify the development of leaders as central to their missions. Over the past ten years many institutions of higher education have begun investing resources into the creation of leadership centers which sponsor a variety of leadership activities and programs, and more recently, universities have begun to establish academic programs dedicated to leadership studies (Bennis & Goldsmith, 1997; Dugan, 2006). So, what is driving this intensive interest in leadership?

One driving factor may be that leadership skills are a highly valued commodity in the workplace. Did you know that employers consistently identify leadership skills as among the top qualities they are seeking in new employees? Every year corporations invest millions of dollars in leadership training and development for their workers (Nelson & Quick, 2009). Another and perhaps even more significant factor may be what some have called a "global crisis of leadership" that is resulting in the deterioration of our corporations, political systems, and communities (Burns, 1978; Gardner, 1990; Bennis & Goldsmith, 1997). Scholars have suggested that this pervasive failure of leadership not only impedes our ability to address many of the urgent problems which threaten our society, but also contributes to an increasing skepticism of leaders in general (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 1998). It follows then, that if we hope to improve our world, we must give careful consideration to the ways in which we conceptualize and practice leadership.

- *Do you believe that we are experiencing a crisis of leadership in this country? If so, what evidence supports that belief? If not, what is your perception of our current leaders?*

- *What do you think it takes to develop strong and ethical leaders?*

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

Leadership development occurs in various arenas throughout the collegiate environment, but a good deal of what is known about college student leadership development has emerged from the work of scholars and practitioners in various fields related to Student Affairs, College Student Personnel, and Educational Leadership. Dugan (2006) states that the "research has demonstrated that college students can and do increase their leadership skills while in college" (p. 335). And this growth is attributable, in part, to their involvement outside of the classroom, in various types of student organizations and activities. Astin (1993) found a significant correlation between student involvement and leadership development. Studies also show that involvement in leadership activities enhances students' sense of themselves as citizens of a broad societal community (Dugan, 2006). More specifically, the work of Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, and Osteen (2005) suggests that it is through organizational involvement that college students 1) learn about themselves in relation to others; 2) practice various leadership skills; 3) examine and reflect on their leadership experiences; and 4) deepen their understanding of leadership and their own leadership identity. This is consistent with Kolb's Cycle of Experiential Learning (see Figure 3-3) which emphasizes the importance of experience in the learning process.

Figure 3-3. Kolb's Cycle of Experiential Learning

Practical experience
Organizational involvement

Reflection
Examining what happened

Abstraction
Developing a theory

Application
Testing out the theory
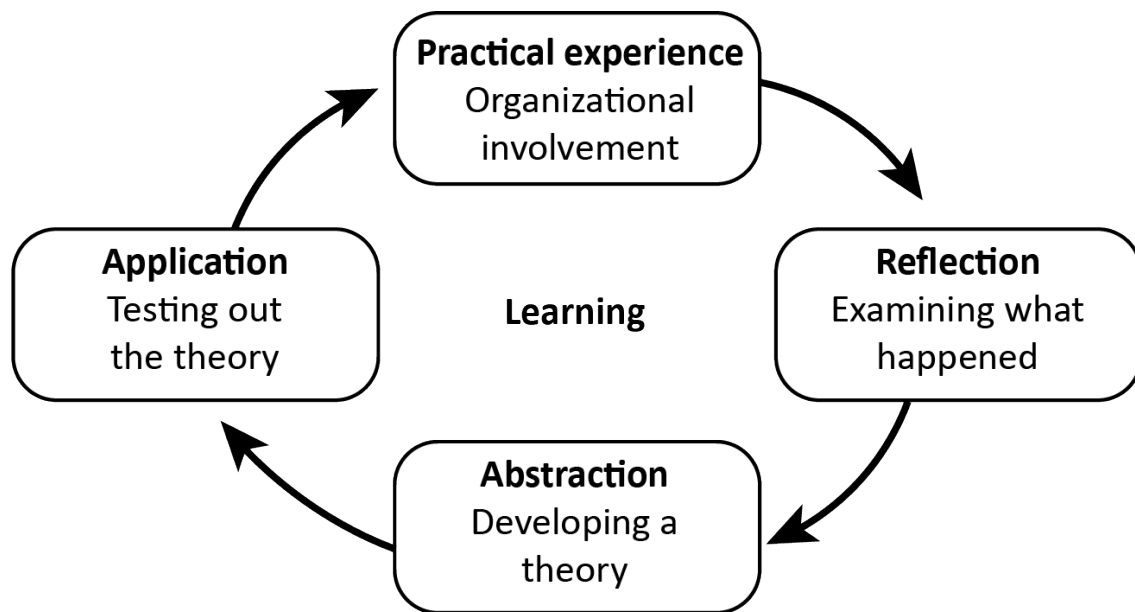
Learning

Source: Learning Theories Knowledge (2010)

Thought Question

- When you think back over your life, which experience/activities have aided you most in the development of your leadership skills? What made them particularly beneficial for you?

- Are you currently involved or planning to be involved at UT Arlington? What kinds of activities do you want to get involved in while in college? What attracts you to these?

LEADERSHIP AT UT ARLINGTON

There are many interesting and fun opportunities for you to be involved and to develop your leadership skills during your years at UT Arlington. One of them is through the programs offered by the Leadership Center, which is located in the Division of Student Affairs. The Center collaborates with staff in the various departments of Student Affairs, as well as faculty and staff from departments across campus to provide a broad range of leadership opportunities for you. These include:

- Academic Courses

- A minor in Interdisciplinary Leadership, which is instituted in partnership with the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

- Leadership Retreats

- Lectures and Organizational Field Trips

- A campus-wide Leadership Recognition Ceremony

- Leadership Development programs, including the Leadership Honors Program

You can engage in the practice of leadership as a small group leader or a presenter of a breakout session at a retreat. You might also choose to be a student organization leader or graduate with leadership honors through the Leadership Honors Program. There are so many options for you to choose from.

The Center's approach to leadership development is explicitly guided by two leadership development models (Relational Leadership and Social Change) which reflect what Rost (1993) has termed the post-industrial paradigm of leadership. According to this approach, leadership is a process which involves the development of collaborative relationships, the use of non-coercive influence, the achievement of shared purpose and vision, and a focus on making transformational changes in the service of organizations, communities, and society. This view of leadership represents a significant departure from what Rost calls the pre-industrial paradigm of leadership which focused heavily on the traits, attitudes, and behaviors of "the leader" and viewed the people in management positions as the primary "doers" of leadership in an organization. The post-industrial paradigm suggests that leadership is, instead, a dynamic process that is influenced by all of the participants involved in it. From this perspective, leadership can and should emerge from anyone and everyone in the organization regardless of title and position. The "leader" is no longer viewed as the authority but rather as a facilitator of the change process or the achievement of shared goals. Many scholars view this paradigm shift as critical to our ability to manage complex organizations and address the multifaceted issues confronting us in this new millennium. What do you think?

While the Center's work is explicitly guided by a particular view of leadership, there are many other leadership development opportunities within the Division of Student Affairs that operate from slightly different perspectives. Each of these programs possesses unique characteristics and foci. But all of the leadership programs in Student Affairs are knitted together by an emphasis on some or all of five Core Leadership Competencies, which are identified in the table below. You will also see some examples of the programs the Division offers that will help you develop these particular skills.

Table 3-1. Leadership Competencies and Where to Develop Them

Student Affairs Core Leadership Competencies	Description of Competency	Sample Programs in Student Affairs That Will Help You Develop These Skills
Interpersonal Skills	Interdependence, Collaboration, Meaningful Relationships, Respect for Others, Respect for Diversity	Fraternity and Sorority Life, EXCEL, Orientation Leaders, Intramural & Sports Clubs, Resident & Office Assistants (RA & OA), Multicultural Affairs
Intrapersonal Skills	Realistic Self-Appraisal, Self-Understanding and Respect, Holistic Identity Development, Congruence Between Values and Behavior	Resident Assistants, Shorthorn Writers, Leadership Honors Program, Student Governance
Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility	Participation in Relevant Governance Systems; Engaging in Critical Reflection and Principled Dissent; Appropriately Challenges Unjust, Unfair, or Uncivil Behavior towards Individuals and Groups; Participation in Service; Engagement in Responsible Stewardship of Human, Economic, and Environmental Resources	Freshman Leaders on Campus (FLOC), Student Governance, UTA Volunteers, Fraternity and Sorority Life
Practical Leadership and Management Skills	Critical Thinking, Decision-Making, Ability and Motivation to Pursue Goals, Delegating, Facilitation Skills, Public Speaking, Fiscal Management, Conflict Resolution Skills	Shorthorn Editors, Leadership Honors Program, MAC Building Supervisors, Student Governance, FLOC, EXCEL

As you can see, the opportunities for you to realize your leadership potential are plentiful. Leadership is indeed happening all around you here at UT Arlington. We invite you to find your place and participate.

Thought Question

- *How do you define leadership? Are your views more aligned with the industrial or post-industrial views as defined by Rost?*

- *What kinds of leadership experiences will help you get to the next level of your leadership development?*

3.3 CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT AS A RESIDENT

Living on campus can be one of the most fulfilling and rewarding experiences of your college experience. According to Blimling (2003), living on campus has a positive influence on student retention, participation in co-curricular activities, perception of campus social climate, satisfaction with college, personal growth and development, intrapersonal relationships, and faculty interaction. It is recommended that first-time, first-year freshmen live in the residence halls to assist students' transition from high school to college (Benjamin & Chartiland, 2008).

Students choose to live on campus for a variety of reasons: to meet new people, to participate in events, for convenience, and for cost savings. Students are encouraged to select where they live based on their individual needs and interests. On-campus residents typically have more convenient access to services such as the library, dining facilities, recreation activities, and computer labs. By living on campus you can save time and money by walking to class instead of dealing with the hassle of finding a well-located parking space. It is easier and usually more affordable to live in a residence hall because they are fully furnished, and rent, utilities, and meal plans are rolled into tuition and fees.

Thought Question
• *Why do students choose to live on campus?*
• *What are the factors students should consider before choosing a place to live?*

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM LIVING IN A RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY

There are many benefits to living in an on-campus residential community, whether you are living in a residence hall, such as Kalpana Chawla Hall, Vandergriff Hall, West Hall, or Arlington Hall, or in a campus apartment, like Meadow Run or University Village. Typically these communities have smaller staff-to-student ratios and many resources available to help students succeed academically. Each residence hall and apartment community is staffed with student Resident Assistants (RAs). The RA's job is to meet residents, to connect with others in the community, and to help you maneuver life on campus. RAs also provide programs and events in the community for students to learn new skills and meet new friends. Each community also has a Residence Director, a full-time, professional staff member that lives and works in the community. Other resources in the community include study lounges, computer labs, and community spaces.

Academic success is the cornerstone of the residential experience. All residential staff is thoroughly trained to know the variety of academic resources available on campus. Some residential communities have specialized academic programs, called Learning Communities. Some students who live in Arlington Hall, K.C. Hall, West Hall and Vandergriff Hall live in learning communities based on their interests or major. Learning Communities are smaller cohorts, approximately 15 to 25 first-year students, assigned to live together in a specific learning community. Learning Community students take classes together and a taught specifically for their major. Special programming and events are geared to these Learning Communities. According to Dunkel and Carodine (2008), "Learning communities integrate the academic community with the residential environment. The main purpose is to expand the learning experience for college students beyond the classroom" (p. 101).

Residential communities also offer a number of ways for students to take on leadership positions. Some leadership development opportunities available to residential students are floor or hall councils/government, departmental committees, as well as employment opportunities as a resident assistant or office assistant. Each of these experiences creates "involvement opportunities where students can increase their understanding of leadership theory, practice specific skills, and apply their knowledge in a supportive environment" (Dunkel and Carodine, 2008, p. 97).

> **Thought Question**
>
> *What is the role of the Student Resident Assistant (RA), and when might it be important to seek out your RA?*

LIVING WITH A ROOMMATE

Living with a roommate can be exciting and challenging and may have a significant influence on your overall college experience. According to Blimling (2003), "Living with one another allows residence hall students to have greater interaction with each other and make more and stronger friendships than students who live off campus" (p. 65). The person you live with will influence your study and sleeping habits, social activities, and living environment.

The communication lines that roommates develop are the key to a comfortable and enjoyable living arrangement. In order to maintain a serene living environment you should set clear expectations for cleaning, guests, quiet hours, and safety (locking doors and setting alarms). If there are differences in living expectations between roommates, they will eventually surface. It is best to discuss these differences right away. Roommates are encouraged to fill out a Roommate Agreement that is intended to set up basic ground rules and boundaries for sharing space and personal items.

Conflict is common between students living in the same space. Students need to communicate their concerns clearly and offer suggestions for resolving the issue and at the same time be willing to compromise. If residents are unable to resolve their differences on their own, they should involve a staff member to assist in mediating the situation. In the event that the conflict does not get resolved, students often have the ability to change their location to another room, residence hall, or apartment.

Tips for Getting Along with Your Roommate

- Try to get to know each other.

- Don't expect too much; you don't have to be best friends.

- Ask, listen, and discuss. Filling out a Roommate Agreement early on sets ground rules and boundaries for sharing personal items and space.

- Be sensitive to each other's moods. Everybody has good and bad days, so try to be understanding.

- When things go wrong, discuss them. If things can't be worked out between the two of you, seek assistance from someone else, such as a Resident Assistant.

Thought Question

What would be important to you to include in a Roommate Agreement?

RELATIONSHIPS IN THE GREATER COMMUNITY

Maintaining positive relationships within the community as a whole is equally as important as maintaining positive roommate relations. In order for the community to promote academic and personal success, residents living within the community must engage respectfully with one another. Expectations and policies are developed to guide the behavior of the students living together in the residential environment. Blimling (2003) states that "Policies regulating quiet hours, conduct in the hallways, noise, and similar environmental concerns are designed to enable all students to benefit from the environment without infringing on the rights of other students" (p. 153). Each resident is expected to know and to understand what behavior is expected in order to ensure the success and safety of all residents.

Being respectful to others in the community also requires residents to understand diversity. "Cultural biases exist when people have limited experience with people of other cultural heritages. The residence hall environment helps break down cultural stereotypes by allowing students to experience cultural diversity" (Blimling, 2003, p. 65). Living in a residential community provides excellent opportunities to learn about others who come from different backgrounds. The successful residential student is open and willing to learn about all types of individuals regardless of their ability, race, ethnicity, and background.

Living in a community on campus is more than just a place to sleep. Students feel more connected to their community by meeting others, participating in activities, and learning the community history

and traditions. By living in a residence hall or on-campus apartment, students have easy and convenient access to campus resources and events. Getting involved is an integral part of the college and university experience. "Involvement is essential to advancing the growth and development of students because it requires them to invest something of themselves in the process" (Blimling, 2003, p. 70).

Thought Question

- *What leadership opportunities are available for residential students?*

- *What are three benefits of living on campus?*

3.4 CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT AS A COMMUTER STUDENT

Commuter students are defined as students who do not live in institutionally owned housing (Jacoby, 2000). Nationally, commuter students make up over 85% of college students in the United States (Horn & Nevill, 2006). Despite being in the majority on college campuses, commuter students can find difficulty in making a successful transition to college life. Commuter students often have difficulty accessing campus services, because co-curricular events and activities normally take place outside the classroom and at odd hours of the day (Dickson & Thayer, 1993). Furthermore, these students typically have significantly more time demands and commitments than other students. Commuter students often enroll in fewer classes, devote significant time to off-campus employment, and sometimes have commitments to family, home, or community that reduce their involvement in campus life (Henry, 2004). Being a commuter student can be a challenging experience.

Thought Question

- *What are some of the challenges that commuter students face?*

- *How can you, as a commuter student, be proactive in ensuring your success at UT Arlington?*

It is important for you to develop a sense of belonging on campus while maintaining your continued affiliation with high school friends, family, off-campus employment, and community groups (Upcraft, Gardner, & Associates, 1989). Commuter students can have difficulty in forming peer groups because they are afforded fewer opportunities to interact than residential students and often do so only in classroom settings, which is only one part of the overall collegiate experience. There are myriad opportunities on college and university campuses to interact with peers, as well as faculty and staff, in and outside of the classroom. Social and intellectual interaction can be just as beneficial as coursework and academic involvement (Pascarella, 1989). These interactions can occur by avoiding

the "parking lot, to class, back to the parking lot" mentality that many commuter students experience. It is important for you as a commuter student to find ways to integrate into campus life. Consider staying after class to speak with a professor in an informal setting or eat lunch on campus with friends from class.

Thought Question

- *What do commuter students need to be successful?*

- *Where can you go to meet these needs on campus?*

All students should find a way to develop a sense of belonging on campus by becoming engaged in university life. You must find avenues to connect with peers and reach out to university administrators to ensure that institutional planning and programming considers your needs. Commuter students may opt out of voicing their needs because they may assume that "this must be the way college is" and often are not given the opportunity to speak out (Clark, 2006). College is what you make of the experience. Take advantage of the opportunities that college life has to offer. Plan class and work schedules in such a way that getting involved on campus is a possibility. Consider finding an on-campus job to give you flexibility in scheduling around your classes, and to make you more readily available on campus. Join a student club or organization to meet friends outside of the classroom. Work out on campus or join a campus intramural team. Take advantage of mentoring programs when possible to get advice from an advanced student who has been through similar experiences. Even attend a program or event on campus just to spend some added time at the university. Most importantly, find your "best fit" by becoming involved and engaged on campus. Make this your home away from home.

Thought Question

- *What are some other ways that you can ensure that your voice is heard on campus? What are other ways to avoid being a silent majority on campus?*

- *Which of the University of Texas Arlington's almost 300 clubs or organizations could you join?*

Table 3-2. Challenges and Solutions for Commuter Students

Challenges for Commuter Students	Solutions
"It is difficult to make new friends and feel socially connected to campus."	• Join a student organization or a fraternity or sorority in Greek Life. • Invite classmates to join you after class for studying or a coffee break. • Swap phone numbers and e-mail addresses with classmates and propose a study group.
"I do not have enough time to participate in on-campus activities."	• Arrive on campus an hour or two before your classes start to get an early start to the day. • Consider getting an on-campus job, which will often have understanding bosses and co-workers and a flexible evening schedule. • Build time into your class schedule to allow you to spend extra time on campus in a place you enjoy.
"I find it difficult to interact with staff and faculty."	• Set up a meeting to talk with your professors during their office hours or after class. • Join a student organization to interact with faculty and staff advisors. • Faculty and staff hang out on campus just like you. Some even play intramurals. • Make an effort to be on campus, and you will likely increase your interaction with faculty and staff.
"I drive a long distance to come to class every day, and parking is always a problem."	• Arrive early to campus to ensure that you get a good parking spot. • Check the UTA Web site to make sure there are no cancellations or delays. • Carpool with friends or classmates to cut down on gas money.
"I never know what's going on."	• Pick up a copy of The Shorthorn, the student newspaper, every day as you come to campus to see what other students are talking about. • Establish a relationship with a mentor, a faculty or a staff member, or a student who can help you become connected to campus. • Sign up for newsletters or listservs through University Communications and Student Governance and Organizations to keep up-to-date.

CHAPTER 4: FOUNDATIONS OF ACADEMIC SELF-MANAGEMENT

4.1 ATTITUDE: IT'S YOUR CHOICE

In high school, students are required to attend school—it's the law. However, college is a choice. Students can choose which college to attend, what to major in while in college, what professors to take, and what career path they want to follow after college. A key point for you, as a student, to understand is that for whatever the reason, you have made a choice to be in college. Ultimately, you have a choice to manage that decision responsibly, which in part requires that right attitude toward college if you are to be successful in the end.

Students typically begin college with an optimistic view of their ability to succeed beyond some of the normal apprehension regarding what college will be like. After a few weeks or months, students might begin to have some doubts about their ability to succeed, and that is completely natural. However, it is the attitude that students adopt at this point that can "make" or "break" their academic career.

VICTIMS AND CREATORS

According to Skip Downing (2008), students' general attitude toward a given situation tends to fall into one of two general categories: a Victim or a Creator (see Table 4-1).

Table 4-1. Behavioral Indicators of Victims and Creators

Victims	Creators
Focus on their weaknesses related to a situation	Look to use their strengths to overcome obstacles
Complain and make excuses	Acknowledge the problem and seek solutions
Blame someone else	Take personal responsibility
See problems as permanent, catastrophic events	See problems as temporary events that they can overcome
Repeat behaviors that have not been successful in the past	Actively seek new information and take new actions based on this information
Predict defeat in the face of obstacles	Look for better ways to approach a problem
Use negative self-talk like "This professor is stupid."	Use more positive self-talk like "I am having troubles focusing in this class so I am going to prepare for class and sit in the front."

Victims tend to believe that they have little control over the world and what happened to them in a given situation. Often, victims continue to repeat behaviors that have not proven to be effective in the past, in part because it is the easier thing to do. Typically, they understand what they should have done in a situation but tend to respond, "Yes … but…," followed by an explanation of who is to blame or an excuse. On the other hand, creators accept personal responsibility for themselves and their thoughts,

beliefs, and actions. When their thinking and behavior has been proven to be ineffective, they seek out help and new information and try something new (see Figure 4-1).

Overall, in a study of nearly 1,000 new undergraduate students, researchers found that those students who adopted an attitude of a creator were more successful in meeting their goals in continuing in college compared to students who adopted an attitude of a victim (Vallerand & Bissonnette, 1992).

Figure 4-1. Differing Responses of Victims and Creators

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                        ┌─────────────────┐
                        │    Stimulus     │
                        └─────────────────┘
                                │
                        ┌─────────────────┐
                        │     Choice      │
                        └─────────────────┘
                         ┌──────┴──────┐
                ┌─────────────┐   ┌─────────────┐
                │   Victim    │   │   Creator   │
                └─────────────┘   └─────────────┘
                       │                 │
        ┌─────────────────────┐   ┌─────────────────────┐
        │      Response       │   │      Response       │
        │ Blames, complains,  │   │ Seeks solutions,    │
        │ excuses, repeats    │   │ takes actions,      │
        │ behaviors           │   │ tries something new │
        └─────────────────────┘   └─────────────────────┘
                       │                 │
        ┌─────────────────────┐   ┌─────────────────────┐
        │      Results        │   │      Results        │
        │ Seldom achieves goal│   │ Often achieves goal │
        └─────────────────────┘   └─────────────────────┘
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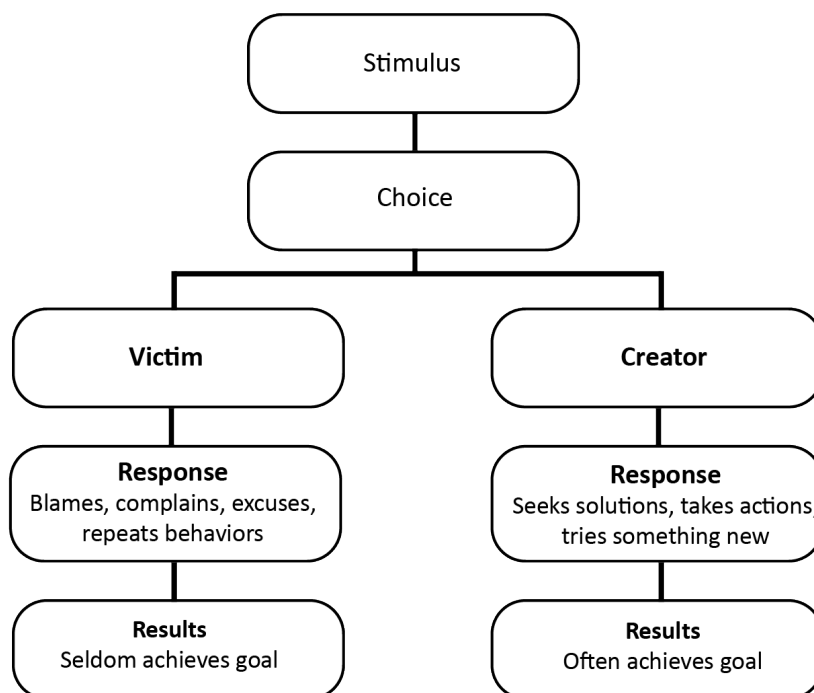
Source: Downing, Skip. (2008)

It is important to note that students are not born with the mindset of victim or creator in their approach to life. Students can choose to adopt the mindset that they want to adopt. For instance, students can choose to spend their precious time and energy blaming others and complaining about all of the obstacles (behaving as a victim) which does nothing to change the outcome, or they can choose to seek out new information and assistance from others that will help improve the outcome (behaving as a creator).

If you find that you (or a fellow student) is behaving more like a victim in a given circumstance, think about how you are reacting and choose to adopt a creator mindset and action plan.

4.2 MOTIVATION: JUST DO

Introductory psychology textbooks commonly define motivation as an internal psychological state that serves to activate behavior and drive them toward meeting a particular goal or need (Huitt, 2001). Motivation is inferred by others when they observe overt and persistent behaviors that are linked to fulfilling some sort of need or action steps toward a goal. Dembo and Seli (2008) explain that the choices that students make (e.g., to study or not to study), the level of engagement in academic tasks (e.g., note taking, preparation for class, use of learning strategies), and finally, the persistence and effort (e.g., working even when a task is considered difficult or boring) directed toward academics are key behavioral indicators of a student's level of motivation toward academics.

Thought Question
Does your behavior show that you are motivated to go to college?

An enormous amount of research has been devoted to the numerous factors that impact a person's motivation. Maslow (1943) argued in his theory, coined the Hierarchy of Needs, that individuals seek to fulfill basic needs as they ultimately strive to reach a level of self-actualization, living to their full potential.

Figure 4-2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

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Self-actualization
Morality, creativity,
spontaneity, acceptance,
experience, purpose,
meaning and inner potential

Self-esteem
Confidence, achievement, respect of
others, the need to be a unique individual

Love and Belonging
Friendship, family, intimacy, sense of connection

Safety and security
Health, employment, property, family and social stability

Physiological needs
Breathing, food, water, shelter, clothing, sleep

Source: The School of Life

Maslow suggested that a person would not be able to deal with certain higher level esteem needs, such as a need to have a sense of achievement like earning a college degree, without having met basic physiological or safety needs, like having proper food and financial security. Dembo and Seli's (2008) survey of factors that impact the motivation of college students focused upon three main factors: sociocultural context, classroom environment, and internal beliefs and perceptions. To summarize, the value that your culture or parents place on the importance of a college education may provide a sociocultural context that places education as a high priority or not. Also, the classroom environment can impact motivation based on the size of class, the time of day it is offered, the compatibility of the teaching style with your learning style, and level of instructor guidance and support. Finally, your internal thoughts and feelings greatly impact your level of motivation. For instance, students who are more mastery goal-oriented (i.e., learning for the purpose of self-improvement) tend to exhibit a more positive attitude and long-term retention of information in comparison to students who are more performance goal-oriented (i.e., completing a task only to get the grade or to do better than someone else). Also, students who feel that they are capable of completing a task are more likely to engage in that activity, more likely to receive positive feedback from that activity, and therefore feel better about themselves in general. On the flip side, if students do not feel like they are capable of succeeding in a task, they will oftentimes avoid completing that task and experience the negative consequences; however, the safety mechanism is that they really did not try so their self-worth remains relatively intact.

It is also believed that certain types of motivation are associated with more positive outcomes in an academic setting. Using a series of psychological assessments, Vallerand and Bissonette (1992) identified students as either intrinsically motivated (i.e., engaged in behaviors for the pleasure or satisfaction of performing in those behaviors), extrinsically motivated (i.e., engaged in behaviors due to an external reward, avoidance of negative consequences, or as a means to an end) or amotivational (i.e., perceived lack of control or purpose). They found that students who were more intrinsically motivated were more likely to be enrolled one year later. In addition, they found that students who were identified as having self-determined forms of extrinsic motivation were also more likely to be enrolled in college one year later. However, students who were identified as amotivational were unlikely to be enrolled in college one year later. Students for the most part report that they are motivated to earn a college degree, but then ultimately, faculty and staff on college campuses often report that students do not complete the work necessary to earn that degree. Why the disconnection? The question on the minds of many students is, "studying is not always fun, so how can I get motivated to study?" Overall, research presented above indicates that students who gain a level of satisfaction from the learning process or have determined for themselves that it is important to earn a college degree are more likely to get the job done. Refer to "How Can I Get Motivated to Study?" for some concrete ideas to boost your motivation.

HOW CAN I GET MOTIVATED TO STUDY?

- Set goals! Set long-term, short-term, and weekly goals. Goals motivate students by focusing their direction and attention on a task (Dembo & Seli, 2008). Making your long-terms goals

visual and salient help to keep them in the forefront of your mind.

- Set a study session goal of what you plan to produce or know at the end of the session.

- Check a task off of a To-Do list and take the time to recognize the satisfaction that you have gained from completing a task that serves your goals. Along similar lines, think about how good it would feel to master a new or difficult topic.

- Reflect on the value of what you are learning. How might this help you in the real world? How might this new information or skill help you become more effective in a given situation?

- Make the information you are studying more interesting by looking at the pictures and reading the captions, Googling the topic on the Internet, thinking about how information personally ties to you, or asking yourself thought provoking questions like "What if 'X' happened? How would things be different?"

- Study a topic for a shorter segment of time and alternate with other subjects. For instance, read for history class for 30 minutes, then work on math homework problems for 30 minutes then go back and read for history again.

- Make studying more "social"—form a regular study group or talk with your faculty member. Learn more about study groups in Chapter 5: "Collaborative Student Learning: The Art of Study Groups."

- Schedule routine study times for topics.

- Reflect on what will be gained by studying and how much self-control you feel by foregoing other lower priority activities.

- Consider the consequences of not studying now. How will you do on your next exam? How late will you have to stay up to get this work done, and how will you feel the next day? Will you have to give up another activity later that you would rather do?

- Make your study goals public to others and ask them for their support in helping you stick to your plan.

- Reward yourself. For instance, commit to not checking your e-mail or Facebook until you have completed your study session, or if you finish reading for your government class, you can watch your favorite TV show.

- Vary the study techniques that you use.

- Be more active in your study sessions like taking notes or developing notecards while you are reading.

- Reduce temptations! Turn off your cell phone, TV, Internet, and go someplace where there are fewer distractions.

- Select a major and classes within that major that you personally enjoy.

- Seek help when life is too stressful. It is hard to be motivated when you are feeling overwhelmed.

- Check your attitude. Are you approaching a situation as creator or a victim?

Adapted primarily from Muskingum College Learning Strategies Database (n.d.) and University of Victoria Learning Skills (2004).

Thought Question

- *What motivates you to study? What techniques are you willing to try the next time you are not feeling motivated to study?*

- *Why did you come to college?*

4.3 GOAL SETTING: PLANS FOR PROGRESS

Too many times, students start college without any end goal in mind. Taking the time to think about what you want and how you plan to get there is a useful exercise as you begin something as important as starting college. Now, that is not to say that goals and plans do not change along the way; goal setting should be viewed as a process that includes evaluating the results of a plan to determine if you need to modify your plans or goal. It has been established that "goals motivate," so taking the time to spell out those goals will help keep you moving forward in life rather than stagnating or just settling for what comes your way.

GOALS MOTIVATE BY...

1. Directing attention—What do I need to do?

2. Directing effort—How hard do I need to work?

3. Specifying a duration—How long is it going to take?

4. Providing a strategic plan—What steps do I need to take?

5. Providing a reference point—How far have I come?

Adapted from Dembo & Seli (2008)

Long-term goals, like graduating from college, can be very overwhelming, and sometimes it is hard to see the end in sight or the pay-off. That is why it is important to break goals down into smaller goals, so that you feel like you are accomplishing something along the way.

Figure 4-3. The Breakdown of Long-term Goal

```
                        ┌─────────────────┐
                        │  Long-Term Goal │
                        └─────────────────┘
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(A hierarchical tree diagram showing one "Long-Term Goal" box at the top, branching into four "Sub-Goal" boxes, each of which branches into two further "Sub-Goal" boxes.)
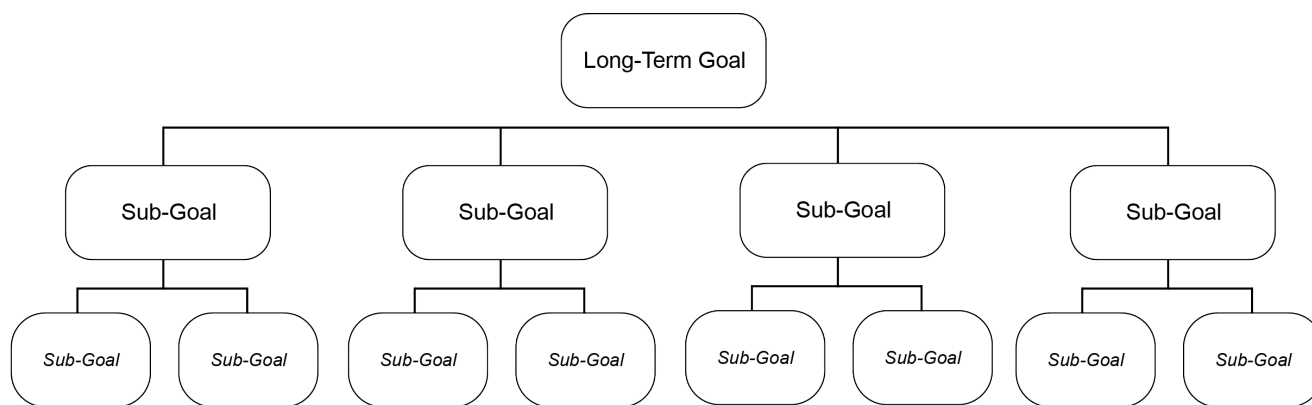
Source: York University Counseling and Development Centre (2007)

Most often, people indicate that they have a goal much like a New Year's Resolution in which we verbalize what we are striving for and then typically it stops there with no real thought into how to get there. Whether the goal is a personal, professional, or academic goal, goal setting should be seen as an ongoing process that requires planning and evaluation. Dembo and Seli (2008) outline a five-step process to goal setting:

1. The most important step is to **identify and define your goal** carefully. A well-written goal serves as the basis for the remaining four steps. Write a S.M.A.R.T. goal. (Refer to the informational box entitled "Be S.M.A.R.T. about Your Goals.")

2. Next, determine how you are going to attain your goal by **generating and evaluating alternative plans**. Many times there is more than one way to go about meeting a goal. For instance, if you were attempting to lose weight, you could plan to make changes in your diet and exercise on your own, join a program like Weight Watchers® or Jenny Craig®, or investigate gastric bypass surgery. Take the time to think about all of the different methods that you could utilize to lose weight and then determine which plan suits your needs. Once you have selected a method, you could incorporate that plan into your S.M.A.R.T. goal.

3. Once you have selected a plan then you need to **develop an implementation plan**. At this point, you carefully lay out what actions or tasks you are going to take toward meeting your goal. For instance, if you decided to make changes in your diet and exercise to lose weight, you then need to lay out the specific steps, such as you are going to go to the gym three days a week for one hour to work out and reduce the amount of sugar and fat that you intake in your foods.

4. Next, you **implement the plan**. Here is where you actually put into place the plan that you carefully thought out and developed. It helps at this stage if you actually record what you are doing on a daily basis. For instance, you would start going to the gym according to your schedule and selecting foods that are lower in sugar and fat when eating and then recording them on a daily basis.

5. Finally, a goal will not help you make progress if you are not personally **evaluating the progress** you are making. Take measurements of what you accomplished so far. Ask yourself some questions: "How well did the plan go this week?" "How many of my tasks did I complete?"

"Did I have troubles completing some of the tasks?" "If so, which ones and why?" "What did I forget to plan for?" At this point or some point down the road, you may need to reevaluate certain aspects of your goal statement, your alternatives, or fine-tune your plan.

BE S.M.A.R.T. ABOUT YOUR GOALS

A S.M.A.R.T. goal is an acronym for a written goal that includes these derived aspects:

Specific – Describes what you want to accomplish in as much detail as possible.

Measurable – Describes your goal in a way that can be evaluated or measured.

Action-oriented – Identifies the general actions that may be taken rather than personal qualities.

Realistic – Identifies a goal that you are capable of attaining.

Timely – Clearly specifies a completion date or may even break the long-term goal down into short-term goals.

Example of a goal related to weight loss:

I am going to try harder to lose some weight.

Example of a S.M.A.R.T. goal related to weight loss:

I am going to lose 26 pounds over the next 5 months by maintaining a healthy diet and exercise regime.

Activity 4-1:

Write a personal goal and an academic goal using the S.M.A.R.T. formula discussed in "Be S.M.A.R.T. about Your Goals" above. Then write down your process for meeting those goals using the five-step process in the "Goal Setting" section of this chapter.

4.4 TIME MANAGEMENT: MANAGE YOUR TIME, DON'T LET IT MANAGE YOU

Setting goals is a responsible first step in making progress, but it cannot stop there. A well-developed goal will fail if you do not take the steps to achieve that goal. As you begin the implementation stage of the goal-setting process, you should plan the time you need to complete those action steps into your schedule.

Figure 4-4. Productivity Pyramid
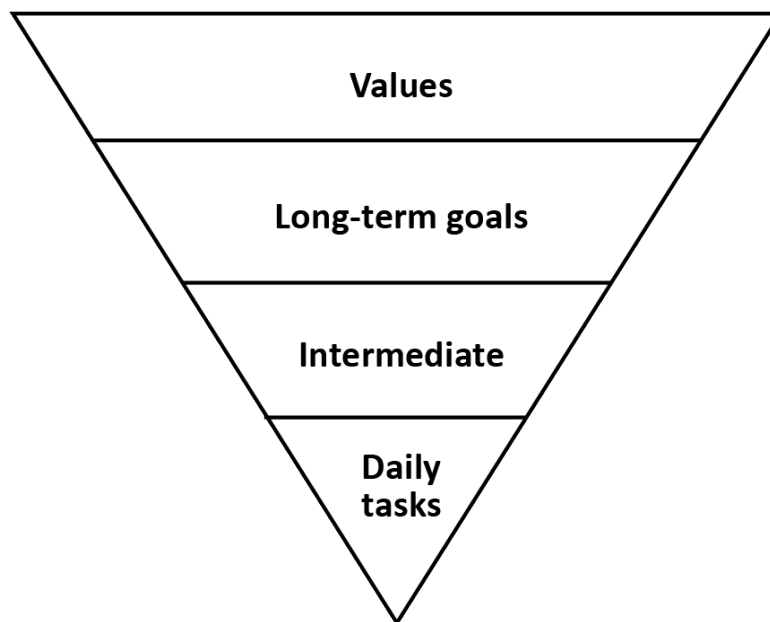
Source: Smith (1994)

For instance, if you value being an educated person or have hopes of being self-sufficient someday, you would set long-term and intermediate goals that would reflect these attitudes and values. Likewise, your daily tasks should reflect that you are working to meet those goals by completing the work necessary to earn the education you want. Not scheduling the time needed to complete the work necessary to earn a degree is where students most often fail in college.

Figure 4-5. Common Failures in Time Management

Figure 4-5

- Monitor/Evaluate
- Unwanted disruptions
- Self-awareness
- Failures in Time Management
- Time awareness
- Long-term goals
- Task awareness
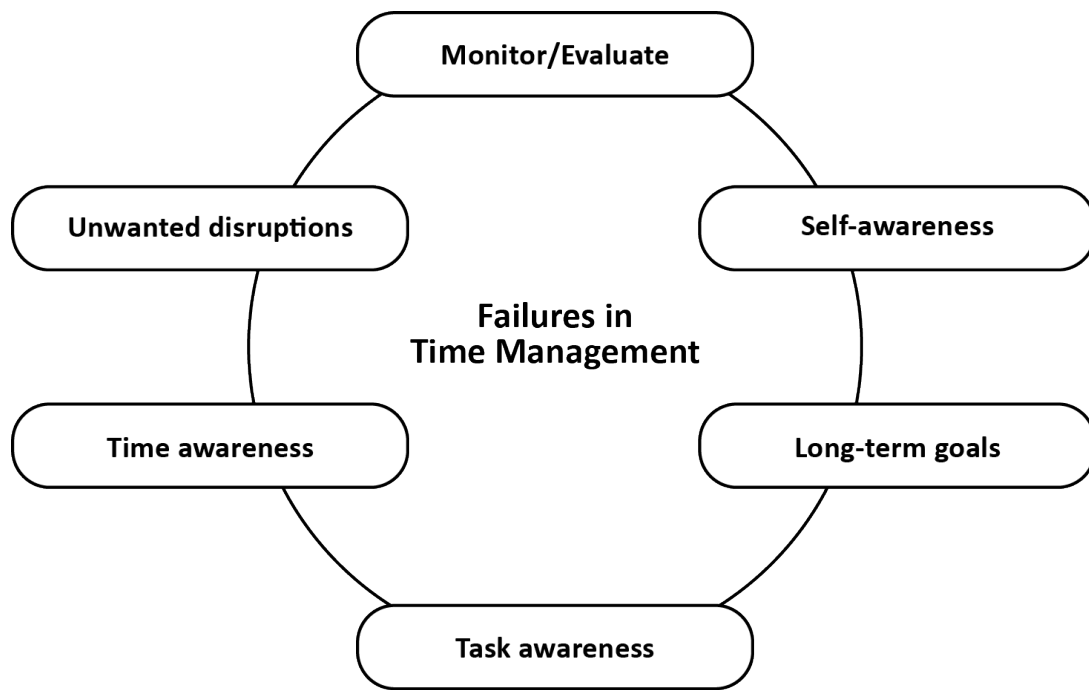
Source: Suny College at Oneonta Center for Academic Development and Enrichment (n.d.)

As illustrated in Figure 4-5, self-awareness and long-term goals need to be considered hand-in-hand. You need to determine how committed you are to the goals you have set for yourself. If you are not committed, you will be less likely to plan the time needed on a daily basis to achieve a goal. You need to consider the demands of the task you are faced with completing and make sure you are planning accordingly. For instance, have you scheduled enough time at your alert time of the day to read your chapter in history or to complete your math homework when the Math Clinic is open? Do you need materials from the library to complete your paper? Students who say, "I can do this later," often lack an awareness of how much time there is in a given day or how far away deadlines may be and what else needs to be done at the same time. In addition, part of time management is managing your environment to avoid unwanted disruptions so that you can concentrate on the work at hand and complete it in an efficient time frame to maximize the learning moment (this topic will be discussed more at length in the "Concentration" section of this chapter). Finally, and maybe most importantly, some students fail to evaluate how they are doing on individual assignments or in their courses in general to determine if they need to be spending more time on academic endeavors.

Thought Question

Which of these factors seems to impair your ability to manage your time well?

TOOLS FOR TIME MANAGEMENT

Semester Calendar. Good time management requires a look at the big picture as well as the day-to-day activities. Documenting big events (e.g., holidays, weekend excursions, visitors, Homecoming, etc.), course deadlines (e.g., exam dates, paper due dates, class presentations, project due dates), and other important dates (e.g., birthdays, regular appointments, last drop day, first and last day of classes, etc.) on a monthly calendar that you can post for easy and frequent review can help you see if you have conflicting events and deadlines. For instance, if you are planning to be out of town on a particular weekend and find that have an exam scheduled on Monday after you return, you could plan ahead in studying for that exam rather than thinking, "I can study for that this weekend," only to remember later that you have plans. Once you have all of these items documented on your semester calendar, input this information into your weekly calendar as general notes, as well (York University Counseling and Development Centre (CDC), 2007).

IMPORTANT UT ARLINGTON CALENDARS

As you build your semester calendar at the beginning of each term, you should consult the Academic and UTA Events Calendars.

Academic Calendar

To view the Academic Calendar, go to the UTA Main Home page, uta.edu, click on Academics>Academic Calendar and select the term for which you are planning. Marking dates like census, the last day to drop classes, registration periods, school holidays, and final exams will help ensure that you do not miss anything important. These dates are deemed "official" by UT Arlington faculty and administration. Conflicting dates on course syllabi or other calendars should be questioned.

UT Arlington Calendar

To view all of the events scheduled on campus, go to the UTA Events Calendar page, events.uta.edu. Check the UTA Home page and this calendar often as they are regularly updated.

Weekly Calendar. Once you have the big picture in mind you need to look at a week at a time so that the balancing act can begin. First, start by listing all of the times that you are in class and block that time out. Then, list other routine events, like your work schedule, commuting, typical meal times, church services, etc. Draw lines for your targeted wake up and bed times as a reminder that you should try to plan for 8 hours of sleep per night. Consider your "academic" work week and the number of

hours a week that you need to study to be successful. Semester and weekly calendars do not have to cost a fortune; print blank monthly and weekly calendars from Microsoft Outlook installed on many computers, and place in a three-ring binder (York University CDC, 2007).

ACADEMIC WORK WEEK: IT'S A FULL-TIME JOB

On average, your faculty members would recommend that students study 2–3 hours outside of class for every one hour spent in class (York University CDC, 2007). For instance, if you are taking a class that meets 3 hours a week, you should be preparing and reviewing for that class on the average of 6–9 hours per week.

Consider this...

A full-time student takes 12 semester credit hours or more in a given semester

12 hours x 2–3 hours per week = 24–36 hours per week studying

12 hours of class time + 24–36 study hours = 36–48 hours per week devoted to school

That is a full-time job!

Mark the blocks of time that you can study on your calendar. It is worthwhile to even write the course that you are going to be studying and special tasks to be completed at that time so you can ensure you are studying for all of your courses and not just ones you like or that are in your major. Remember, every course that you take stands between you and earning a degree. Set up routines. For example, if you have a Math class on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, schedule solving math homework problems during the afternoon on those days at the Math Clinic. If you have a history class on Tuesdays and Thursdays, schedule reading time for history on Mondays and Wednesdays to prepare for class and review of class notes on Tuesday and Thursday nights. Honor these study times as you would an appointment with your doctor or hair stylist. You can adjust your study times, but be sure it is not at the expense of sleep or doing quality work. Once you have a rhythm, you will find that studying will become a habit.

The remaining time in your schedule can be considered recreational/leisure time: time for spending with family and friends, engaging in student organizations and activities, exercising, playing on the Internet or watching TV, etc. Many times, leisure activities can be combined with spending time with family and friends in order to multi-task effectively.

To-Do Lists. At the beginning of each week before you develop or rework your weekly calendar, start by writing a list of all the academic and personal things that you need to accomplish that week. What readings do you need to complete to prepare for class? What phase of a writing assignment do you need to complete? What shopping do you need to do? Prioritizing the list will also help you decide what absolutely must get done versus what would be nice if you could get done. Mark off the items

you accomplish and place the other items on your list for the next week. If you find that items are piling up, leisure time needs to be reduced until you are caught up (York University CDC, 2007).

Project Planners and Five-Day Study Plans. Larger class projects, such as writing a paper, preparing for a speech, learning a new piece of music, creating a work of art, can be a daunting task that can often lead students to procrastinate, in part because they are unsure where to even start. Immediately after the assignment is given, take the time to think about the steps that you need to complete that project and write them down. Once you can see all the parts, it is easier to conceive how to get it done. It is also useful to take these steps to your faculty member's office hours to discuss as he/she may have suggestions on other intermediate steps. Once you have all of your steps identified, set your own deadlines for when these steps need to be completed so that you can ensure you are making progress on the project. Make sure you have plenty of time to access the resources you need to problem solve if obstacles arise. Keep in mind, it is very difficult to get help from campus resources at midnight the night before the big project is due!

Oftentimes, students see an exam as something that they should only study for a night or two before the test. Instead, students need to look at test preparation as an act that starts on the first day of class and ends when the final exam has been completed. Every time you prepare for class by reading the assignment or reviewing your notes after class, you are in essence preparing for a test. It is recommended that students begin the review process for an exam that includes more than one chapter of material at least five days in advance of the exam. Refer to "Create a Five-Day Study Plan for Exams" in Chapter 5 for steps on how to effectively create an exam study plan.

QUICK TIPS FOR TIME MANAGEMENT

- Use your tools. Utilize semester and weekly calendars, to-do lists, and project planners.

- Use "wasted time." For example, in between classes, review your notes or read the next chapter for a class or bring a book to a doctor's appointment and read while you are waiting.

- Set times to study and determine what you intend to accomplish during that study time, but be realistic in what you can accomplish at a given time.

- Take short breaks. For 50 minutes of studying, take a 10-minute break.

- Alternate topics to study if you are studying for more than one hour at a time.

- Schedule tasks that require more energy to stay focused during times of the day that you have higher energy levels.

- Sleep should not be sacrificed for study time. If you need more study time, decrease your leisure activities.

- Set up study routines.

- Study in places with limited distractions... and most importantly, turn off your cell phone.

4.5 CONCENTRATION: MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR STUDY TIME

Building upon the notion of scheduling time to study, students need to monitor their levels of concentration during those study sessions. A study session that is filled with distractions and a general lack of concentration is wasted time. It is the responsibility of students to plan their study time and plan to do it in an environment that is conducive for good concentration.

To say that students are "paying attention" is to say that they are aware of certain factors that are going on in the environment. However, attention can wane and requires a process of continual refocusing, in other words, concentration. To determine if you are concentrating to your full ability, you need to monitor your level of concentration and what you are getting out of a study session. However, if you are not concentrating to your full capacity, that is not an excuse to just stop studying or zone out of a lecture; you need to take steps to improve your concentration in that given situation.

ACTIVITY 4-2:

Keep a Time Log (see Time Log worksheet at the end of this chapter) for one full week. Try to record what you are doing to the nearest 30-minute segment. If you are multitasking, you need to select the most salient and intended task to record.

Record and add up the amount of time spent engaged in the following general activities:

In class	_____hrs.
Studying outside of class	_____hrs.
Sleeping/napping	_____hrs.
Exercising/organized sports	_____hrs.
Work/internship	_____hrs.
Family commitments	_____hrs.
Personal care/grooming	_____hrs.
Meal preparation/eating/cleanup	_____hrs.
Commuting (school, work, etc.)	_____hrs.
Relaxing—watching TV, video games (alone)	_____hrs.
Socializing with friends/entertainment	_____hrs.
Other (List "other" activities)	_____hrs.

There are 168 hours in one week. Do your totals add up to 168?

Reflect on how you are using your time. What surprised you about how you use your time? Are you spending as much time studying as suggested by the Academic Work Week formula? Do you need to make any adjustments in how you are using your time?

Figure 4-6. Concentration Capacity during a Lecture

Time 1 9:10 a.m.

Time 2 9:35 a.m.
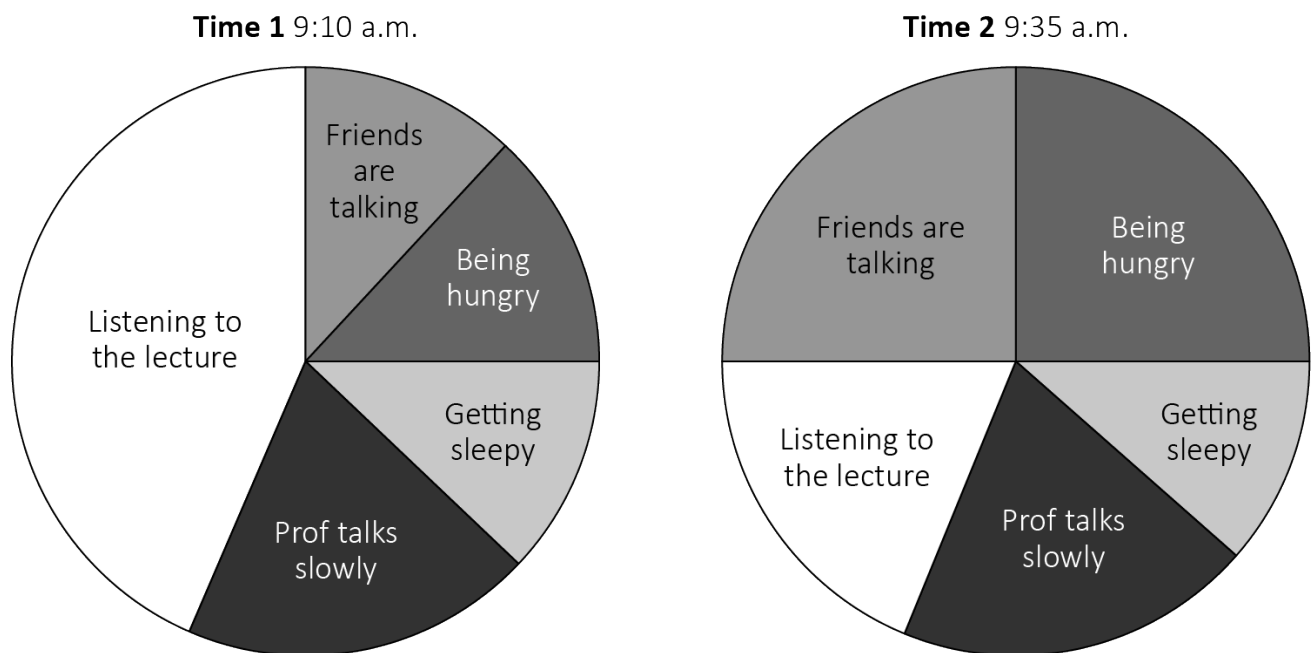
Each person has finite resources that can be allocated toward concentration. You need to determine what you can do to improve your ability to concentrate on the task at hand, which in this case (Figure 4-6) is listening to a lecture. Controlling the distractions is necessary to be able to continually refocus

on the lecture at hand. External distractions are those that originate outside of your body, such as a cell phone ringing, people talking, the temperature of the room, etc. Internal distractions are those that originate inside of the body, such as hunger, stray thoughts, emotional responses and thoughts, etc. (Dembo & Seli, 2008). Students need to be able to identify the distractions that are currently detracting from the task at hand and work to reduce them. For instance, if you learn that you tend to get sleepy in class, sitting close to the front or getting enough sleep at night can help reduce this as a distraction. If getting hungry in certain classes is an issue, bring a snack in to munch on quietly during class. Beyond the classroom, finding the optimal study environment is key to concentration. You will find that if you tend to study in the same basic locations that space will become a mental cue to focus on your work. Typically, students who find the right place to study and learn to manage their concentration will have to study less to reap the benefits, because they are more productive during their study time.

QUICK TIPS TO IMPROVE CONCENTRATION

- Control the distractions that you can. Turn off your cell phone; put a "Do Not Disturb" sign on your door; log out of online distractions like Facebook©, SnapchatTM, Twitter©, and your e-mail; turn off the TV, and if you listen to music while you study, set a lower volume and avoid music selections that you find yourself singing the words to.

- Use active learning techniques. Take notes in lecture or while reading. Quiz yourself on what you just read. Talk out loud about what you are learning. Use a variety of study techniques to reduce boredom.

- Set a goal for what you realistically want to accomplish during your study session with activities that will promote active learning.

- Study in a comfortable and reasonably quiet environment. Make sure the furniture is conducive to studying—comfortable but upright. Find a place with proper lighting, good temperature (about 68°F), minimal people traffic and noise level.

- Make sure you have all the resources needed to complete your study task—notebook, text, writing utensils, charged laptop, etc.

- Schedule yourself to study during high-energy times. It is difficult to concentrate when you are sleepy.

- Resist procrastination. Putting assignments off to the last minute can lead to worry and stressful thinking that can interfere with concentration.

- Take short breaks periodically. A ten-minute break for every 50 minutes of studying or a five-minute break every 30 minutes is enough to refresh your mind and regain concentration. Set a timer if you are prone to taking longer breaks.

- For longer study sessions, alternate study topics to fend off boredom.

- Write down stray or stress-based thoughts. Give yourself permission to consider them later, and move on.

- Use positive directives, like "If I finish with this study goal now, I can relax later" or "I need to clear my head and refocus."

- Track periods of reduced concentration levels with check marks as a way to possibly identify patterns in locations and times that may not optimize your concentration.

ACTIVITY 4-3:

Consider the three places that you tend to study most often. Write those locations below.

Location A: _____

Location B: _____

Location C: _____

Answer True or False to each of these statements with regard to each of your listed study locations.

	Location A	Location B	Location C
I cannot typically hear other people talking.			
I have access to a comfortable, upright chair.			
I have access to a desk or flat writing space that is easy to utilize.			
It is quiet in this space.			
The lighting in this space helps to keep me alert.			
I am not too hot or too cold in this location.			
I tend to keep my breaks short when I study in this location.			
I am not interrupted by family and friends when I study at this location.			
This location is free of distractions (e.g., TV, non-school related computers, magazines, etc.).			
I feel alert when I study in this location.			
TOTAL True Responses			

In theory, you should elect to study in the location with the most "True" responses as it tends to have more of the features recommended for a conducive study environment. If you find that you are unsatisfied with any of your study locations, try out some new locations and utilize this tool to help you assess if it is a good location.

Time Log for the Week of _____

Name: _____

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
12 a.m.							
1 a.m.							
2 a.m.							
3 a.m.							
4 a.m.							
5 a.m.							
6 a.m.							
7 a.m.							
8 a.m.							
9 a.m.							
10 a.m.							
11 a.m.							
12 p.m.							
1 p.m.							
2 p.m.							
3 p.m.							
4 p.m.							
5 p.m.							
6 p.m.							
7 p.m.							
8 p.m.							
9 p.m.							
10 p.m.							
11 p.m.							
12 p.m.							

CHAPTER 5: SELF-DIRECTED AND ACTIVE LEARNING

"In my Learning Community class, I learned about a five-day study plan I decided to try to prepare for my first midterm. Five days before my political science exam, I started to study. I only studied an hour or two every night for five days leading up to the exam. This way, I wasn't cramming the night before or stressing over the material. I got an A! That's the way I've studied for all of my exams, and I've been doing really well."

— Caitlyn Rhodes, Public Relations major who lives on campus

The most significant difference between high school and college is no doubt the amount of time spent learning in the classroom as compared to outside of the classroom. In high school on average, students attend class 6 hours a day, totaling 30 hours per week in class. Students are often given class time to read chapters, complete homework, and work on projects, leaving an estimated 5+ hours per week of studying outside of class to successfully "make the grade." However, in college, students are only in class on the average of 12–15 hours per week, but it is recommended that they study 2–3 hours outside of class for every hour in class, translating to 24–36 hours of studying (including preparing for class, reviewing past material, completing projects, etc.) outside of class. Very simply, it is the responsibility of the student to learn the information and skills needed to be successful outside of class.

However, it is not as simple as logging in the right number of study hours that will lead students to success; what students do with the information that they are learning is important as well. Students who actively process the information they need to learn will be more successful in college. Dewey (1997) reflected on students in class that would say things like, "I studied six hours, but I still got a D! What am I doing wrong?" Dewey advocated that students who engage in active learning techniques like self-testing their comprehension of information rather than simply passively reviewing material are more successful in college classes. Plant, Anders Ericsson, Hill, & Asberg (2005) suggested that the level of processing of information was much more of a predictor of good grades. They found that overall college students who engaged in self-regulatory behaviors such as attending class and studying in a quiet environment with few distractions (maximizing concentration and focus on the material) were more likely to earn good grades, while working more than 24 hours a week and spending more time partying was correlated with lower grades in college.

Students who maximize the use of their study time with the proper environment and active learning techniques will be more successful college students.

5.1 BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

In 1956, educational psychologist Benjamin Bloom and his associates conceptualized a taxonomy to classify aspects of human learning that included three basic domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. The cognitive domain of this taxonomy represents a continuum of thinking that can be useful for teachers as they develop curricula for students, but also for students as they try to determine what a professor may be asking them to do on a particular test question or writing assignment. Bloom's Taxonomy can also help students challenge themselves as they are creating active learning study strategies and/ or developing questions for self-testing for an exam. In addition, once students have taken an exam in a particular course, conducting a post-test review of the levels of thinking required by exam questions will provide clues regarding how to effectively study for future exams.

Table 5-1: Bloom's Taxonomy: Cognitive Domain (1956)

Level of Cognitive Domain	Thinking Level	Generic Activity	Question Cues	Sample Questions	Example Activities of Products
Remembering	Basic thinking (lowest level)	Recalls facts, patterns, settings, etc.; remembers previously learned material	Cite, label, name, list, state, quote, reproduce, define, identify, describe (who, what, where, when)	Who is…? What is…? Where is…? Where was…?	List items. Make a timeline. Recite a passage. List certain memorized facts.
Understanding	Basic thinking	Understands what is being communicated; grasps the meaning of material and can state in own words; can infer causes and predict consequences	Explain, restate, paraphrase, summarize, describe, illustrate, give examples, discuss, distinguish, interpret	How would you put this into your own words? What is an example of ____? How would you translate ___ to a visual form? What was the main idea?	Create a flowchart to illustrate the sequence of events. Retell the story in your words. Write a summary.
Applying	Higher-level thinking	Uses the information in new concrete situations	Apply, classify, solve, demonstrate, calculate, illustrate (how it looks in a new situation), complete, employ	Can you apply this idea to your own life? Can you come up with another example? What does "x" equal in this case?	Use this method to apply to a new case study. Solve different types of math problems.
Analyzing	Higher-level thinking	Breaks new information into parts to understand relationships; sees patterns and organizational structure	Diagram, analyze, diagnose, conclude, outline, separate, explain(relationships), infer, find, classify, discriminate, compare, contrast, why	Why did this happen? What were some of the motives behind ____? What was the problem with ____? Why did ___ changes occur? Can you explain what happened when ____? What difference exists between ___ and ___?	Construct a diagram that shows the relationships between the parts. Research the issue to find information that supports a view. Write a biography.
Evaluating	Higher-level thinking	Make judgement of the value of an idea, method, resource, etc.; assess the value of theories, presentations, texts; make choices based on argument; recognize subjectivity	Assess, appraise, critique, judge, weigh, recommend, convince, support, evaluate, rank, decide, select, grade, defend, justify, compare, contrast	Is this a good or bad thing? Can you defend your position on ___? What do you believe and why? What would you have done differently? How effective is ___? What do you think about ___? Is this a credible source?	Debate an issue from multiple perspectives. State your opinion and evidence for your opinion. Prepare a list of criteria used to judge something and apply it.

| Creating | Higher-level thinking | Creates something new from the elements of the old information; generalizes from given facts; relates knowledge from different areas | Create, design, compose, develop, plan, propose, integrate, invent, generalize, combine, rewrite | What would happen if ___? How can we improve ___? Can you design a ___ to accomplish ___? How can this idea be combined with that idea to develop a better understanding of ___? How can we solve questions? | Invent a new machine. Write a story. Compose a new piece of music or work of art. Devise a new way to do something. |

Students who challenge themselves to engage in higher-level thinking such as Applying, Analyzing, Evaluating, and Creating are using what professors on our campus would commonly characterize as "critical thinking."

5.2 ACTIVE LEARNING FROM LECTURES

The learning of information and skills presented in class lectures or discussions should be viewed as a process: preparation to take in the new information, the act of taking in the new information, and then reviewing the information so that it is later accessible (recalled from memory) to use for a project, paper, or test.

The activities suggested for "Before Class" in Table 5-2 help students develop a mental framework into which this new information can be "filed" or organized which aids information recall (Bower, Clark, Lesgold, & Winzenz, 1969). It also makes note taking easier because you are familiar with the material and feel less panicked about getting everything noted in full detail.

Attending class and taking the notes is important primarily because the professor may be presenting

information that is not presented in the text. It should also be seen as a structured opportunity to engage with the material that will further aid recall when needed. Oftentimes, students can also get clues as to what a professor perceives as important material from attending class that will aid in test preparation.

Table 5-2: Effective Techniques for Learning from Class
Adapted from Dembo Sell (2008) and Downing (2008).

Before Class	During Class	After Class
Complete assigned readings to prepare for class. Take notes or mark your text for easy reference.	Take notes. Active engagement with the material (like writing down what you are hearing) helps improve memory and concentration and material to later review. Have a positive mindset about taking notes – for example, you are writing down answers to questions on the test.	Review your notes and handouts within 24 hours of taking them. Fill in details that you remember but did not have time to write down. Write questions for the notes that you can use for self-testing later. Write a summary of the day's notes.
Prepare questions that you may have about the reading.	Put a date on your note paper. It helps to also include the text chapter or general topic that might be related to these notes as well.	Compare your notes with a reliable classmate who may help give you ideas on what you missed that might be important or how to better organize the information. Discuss the notes to add another layer of processing.
Review notes from the previous class period to get a sense of where you may have left off.	Use active listening techniques. Refer to the informational box called "Ten Tips for Active Listening" for more information.	Follow up on questions that you have written down with your professor, the teaching assistant, or another reliable classmate.
Be sure you have your materials ready for class: text, three-ring notebook with paper, writing utensils, highlighters, charged laptop, etc.	Have your textbook accessible in case your faculty member refers to specific information. Write down that reference in your notes as it is probably important information.	Integrate your class notes with your text notes or markings. If you highlighted in your book, add some of that information to your notes for the "whole" picture.
Get a good night's sleep. It is easier to concentrate on the lecture when you are alert.	Write down the main points a speaker is making along with any supplemental details like examples or experiments. Do not expect to be able to write down every word the speaker says.	Develop tools that will serve to help you review the material now, as well as later. Create visual diagrams* of concepts, develop cram cards* of concepts, reorganize your notes, etc. *Refer to informational boxes on "Visualize Your Information" and "Cram Cards for Long-Term Review."
Make it a habit to attend every class. Put your classes on your schedule and treat them as a limited opportunity to engage with your professor and this material.	Use abbreviations for commonly used words to increase your speed in note taking. Create some abbreviations of your own.	Self-test your comprehension of the information on an ongoing basis. Do not just "look over" or read what you have written. Use the questions you have created. Cover up the "answer" and see if you can explain what is in the notes. Use the cram cards or visual diagrams to test yourself.
If you cannot attend class due to illness or another extraordinary reason, contact a classmate to arrange for notes. It is always a good idea to send an e-mail or call your professor as well.	Develop a system of organization for your notes that works for you. Common methods include the Cornell, Outlining, Mapping, Text-Class, and Sentence Methods. Refer to informational box called "Note Taking Methods: What Is Right for You?"	
	Leave space between main points so that you can add in new information that you may have missed or from the text.	
	If the professor writes it down or puts it on a PowerPoint slide, it is probably important, so write it down.	
	If the professor repeats it, it is important, so write it down.	

	Listen for cues like "very important," "in summary," or sequence words like "first," "second," etc. This information provides cues for what is important and possible note organization.	
	Ask questions you may have. If you are not comfortable talking in class, write them down and talk with your professor later.	

TEN TIPS FOR ACTIVE LISTENING

Effective note taking in class requires the use of active listening techniques for optimal results.

1. Accept responsibility as a listener.

2. Adopt a positive attitude toward listening. Listening is a choice.

3. Sit somewhere in the classroom that will minimize distractions and allow you to focus on the professor.

4. Maintain eye contact with your professor.

5. Focus on the content being presented rather than the delivery.

6. Ask questions in class.

7. Ask mental questions and search for the answer in the lecture or discussion.

8. Avoid emotional involvement that may impair your ability to concentrate or filter important information.

9. Clue in on non-verbal communication, such as exaggerated movements, excitement, etc., as it may serve as a cue to important information.

10. Monitor your concentration throughout the class period and continually refocus.

Adapted from Kline (2002) and Treuer (2006).

NOTE-TAKING METHODS: WHAT IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

Types of Note-Taking Methods

- Outline
- Cornell
    - Uses special paper
- Text-Class
    - Combines class notes and reading notes
- Mapping
    - Draws a picture for visual learners
- Sentence
- Combined

Outline Method

The Outline Method provides a running list of statements that capture the main ideas and supporting ideas for the main points. The highest level of main idea is justified on the left, followed by the next level of supporting ideas that are right indented, followed by the next level of supporting ideas that are further indented, etc. The statements you write down at each level could be key phrases or could utilize the Sentence Method of note taking (see below). It is key for students who utilize the Outline Method to avoid getting so immersed in the "proper" number method for outlining that they lose sight of the information; use a simple numbering or bulleted method. This method is ideal for note taking while reading or listening to a lecturer with a highly structured presentation style.

Cornell Method (sometimes called Split Page Method)

The Cornell Method is a well-known note-taking method that not only encourages documentation of information but also builds in critical thinking and self-testing methods for future review of the material.
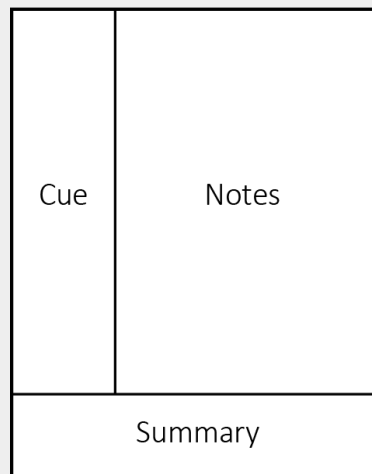
Cornell notes page example

The Cornell Method requires that students set aside a "cue column" on the left side of the paper that is about 2 1/2 inches of the left side of the paper. Notes are taken on the right side of the paper using whatever methods students choose to utilize. After class, a summary of the lecture is written to ensure a review of the material and main points to be considered and expressed. In the cue column, students are encouraged to develop questions regarding the adjacent notes. Consider Bloom's Taxonomy as you develop questions to ensure that you are not only developing Knowledge and Comprehension questions, but also including higher-level questions that you might anticipate on an exam. Later, this format can be used for self-testing. Cover up the answer on the right side of the page, and then ask yourself to answer the question on the left side. Check your answer and determine where you have holes in your knowledge to help focus further review. If you search Google for Cornell Note Taking, you can find Web sites that will generate the Cornell paper format for you to print, though drawing a line on notebook paper works perfectly fine.

Text-Class Integration Method (sometimes also called Split Page Method)

For this method, students split their notebook paper in half with a line in the middle. On the left side, students take notes from their course reading, and on the right side, they take notes in class for the corresponding text material. This method allows for easy integration of material from both sources.

Mapping Method

The Mapping Method represents the lecture in a visual or graphic format. It helps to utilize 11˝ 17˝ inch paper or 8 1/2˝ 11˝ inch paper in landscape profile. Students should start with documenting the main idea and placing that in the center of the paper. Then additional ideas feed off of that center point in a hierarchical manner. It allows students to see quickly the main point and relationships to follow. Typically, it is better if students stick with brief statements—one or two words—that capture the ideas. Mapping Methods are also useful to summarize notes taken in another method.
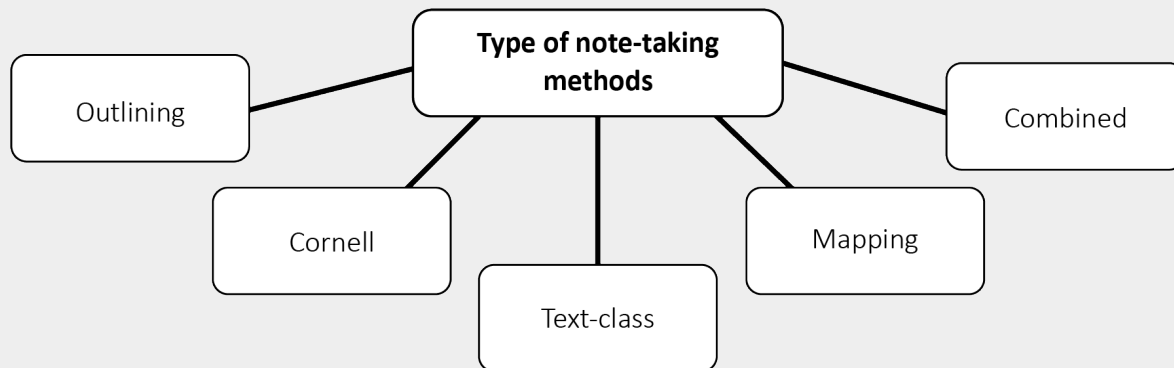
Sentence Method (sometimes also called the Paragraph Method)

This is a simple method in which students write down a main point, fact, or topic, each on separate lines, numbering as they go. It is a useful technique when a lecture is somewhat organized and material is presented at a fast pace. However, relationships may be lost without reorganization of notes at a later time.

Combined Method

You may start with a particular method described above. However, as you become more skilled in your note taking abilities, you may begin combining methodologies to suit the type of information that is being presented. For instance, you may start off the session using the Sentence Method but then use the Mapping Method as you see a pattern emerge in a new concept that is conducive to mapping. You may opt to use the Outline Method in your Political Science course, because the faculty member presents a very organized lecture and use the Text-Class Integration Method in your Math class so that you can see parallel steps between examples from the textbook and the class. The key is to try out some of the different methods and use what works for you.

Adapted primarily from California Polytechnic State University (2007) and Bronx Community College (n.d.)

Oftentimes, students make the mistake of doing nothing special with hand-outs and notes taken from

class until a night or two before an exam. Research indicates that students are able to learn and recall information more readily if they have repeated exposure to material over a longer period of time (Baddeley, 1982; Bahrick & Hall, 1991). In addition, actively reviewing material immediately after the information is presented aids recall tremendously. As you continually review information, keep in mind that it is not good enough to read over information passively. Students need to actively self-test themselves to avoid falling prey to the illusion of knowing (i.e., person thinks that they know something when in fact it is only familiar to them). Developing questions that range the levels of Bloom's taxonomy will aid reviewing and preparation for exams.

Activity 5-1

Try using the Cornell Note-Taking Method in at least two of your courses for one week. Reflect on how the method worked for you. Are there adjustments that you might make to the system to make it work better for you? Does the system seem to work better in some subjects? With different types of presentation styles?

5.3 ACTIVE LEARNING FROM READING

As with learning from lectures and discussions, the learning of information and skills presented in readings, texts, and written text from a Web site should be viewed as a process: preparation to take in the new information, the act of taking in the new information, and then reviewing the information so that it is later accessible (recalled from memory) to use for a project, paper, or test.

Students who simply start and finish a reading with no further actions taken are really wasting their time. Reading a text needs to be approached properly in order to ensure comprehension and retention of the information. Planning for an active reading session by engaging in the "before reading" activities facilitates an active mindset to the reading session and discourages "auto-pilot reading" that results in scanning of the words but no real careful thought about what is being said.

Preparing for class by reading assigned texts related to the lecture material is extremely important to optimize the lecture experience. If you have a professor who tends to lecture at a fast pace, you have the foundational information and only need to focus on writing down unfamiliar information. If your professor expects class participation in discussions or utilizes active classroom techniques, such as case studies, small group activities and discussions, simulations, or demonstrations, you will understand what is happening and be able to contribute to the learning experience. Marking or highlighting your text for main ideas while reading not only keeps your mind focused on the reading but also serves to prepare you for easier exam review.

Before Reading	During Reading	After Reading
Preview the reading headings to get a "big picture" of the outline of the reading. Look at the pictures and figures. Check out the bold and italicized words.	As you are reading, seek out the answers to the questions that the reading or you generated rather than passively scanning the words.	Take reading notes from the highlighted material from the text. Utilize visual organizers and summaries to capture information. Revisit the informational box on "Note-Taking Methods: What Is Right for You?" and visit "Visualize Your information" and "Cram Cards for Long-term Review."
Preview any questions that the chapter may offer so that you can actively seek answers to those questions.	Monitor your concentration and comprehension. After each paragraph, ask yourself, "What was the main point of that paragraph?" After each section, summarize what you have read.	Answer the questions that a the reading may have provided or that you developed. Reread sections in which you remember little information.
Turn text headings into questions so that you can actively seek answers to those questions. Jot those questions down in the margin of the text or in your notes if you plan to take reading notes.	Mark your text. Highlight the main idea of a paragraph or write down the main idea of a paragraph in your notes. If you cannot mark your text, take reading notes on the main ideas. Refer to the informational box called "In Search of Main Ideas" for more information	Integrate your reading notes and lecture/discussion notes into one location for easier review for an exam.
Plan for a high energy time of the day to read. Consider breaking up a long reading assignment into multiple, shorter reading sessions.	Look up the definitions to words that you do not understand to help build your vocabulary and facilitate understanding of the topic.	Discuss readings with classmates on a regular basis. Take turns explaining to each other sections of the reading. Ask and answer reading questions. Jot down questions that are unclear to the study group to ask the professor in class or during office hours.
Be sure you have your materials ready for reading: text, notebook paper, writing utensils, highlighters, charged laptop, etc.		

IN SEARCH OF MAIN IDEAS

Some students do not actively take notes or mark their readings and texts because they determine it is a lot of extra work to write down so much information. However, the problem is that students are usually writing down too much information and not really cluing in to the main ideas. Here are some tips for identifying the main ideas when reading:

1. The Table of Contents and chapter outlines provide a broad view of the main points that will be covered in a reading. Flesh out the outlines that are already provided for you.

2. Oftentimes in a textbook, the main idea is the first or last sentence of a paragraph. If it is not the first or the last sentence, then look back at the entire paragraph to see what the overall issue seems to be. Look for the overall patterns of your textbooks.

3. Titles, headings, and subheadings announce the major subject. Make these headings into questions, and the answers to the questions will likely be the main ideas.

4. Bold and italic words point to a main idea or key concept that you need to understand.

5. Repetition of key words or phrases throughout the text point to a main idea.

6. Chapter questions at the end of the chapter are about the main ideas of the text. Answer those questions and you will identify your main ideas.

7. Summaries presented at the end of the chapter also tend to restate the main ideas briefly. Flesh these ideas out with some supporting ideas, and you would have a good view of the entire chapter.

8. Stop and look at the visuals—pictures, diagrams, tables, etc. Oftentimes, the message depicted in the graph or picture is typically a main idea.

9. Detailed statistics, several examples in a row, and other details often signal that a main idea is being clarified, proven, supported, etc. Track back or ahead to find the main idea they are trying to illustrate.

10. Text that includes bullet points, numbering, or sequences is often a main idea.

11. Look for organizational patterns in the reading that might highlight the main ideas. For instance, are two issues being compared or contrasted? What was the effect of a certain event? Are problems and various solutions being presented? Is there a timeline of events that is important?

12. Be intentional about searching for the main ideas. Ask yourself at the end of each section or paragraph, "What is the point?" or "What is it that the author wants me to know?"

13. If you are reading a narrative, ask yourself questions like, "Who are the main characters?", "Why is this character important to this story?", and "Why did the author chose to tell this part of the story?"

Finally, taking the time to think critically about the reading you have done further solidifies that information in your memory and can serve to prepare you for exam review. Summarizing material using visual organizers (refer to informational box "Visualize Your Information" and Figure 5-1) moves your thinking from low levels of thinking to high levels of thinking on Bloom's Taxonomy. Integrating text and lecture notes and discussing readings with your classmates and professor promotes memory storage of that information and thinking at higher levels as well.

VISUALIZE YOUR INFORMATION

Summarizing main ideas of the readings or lectures can be difficult without the right tools. Visual organizers can help students condense important information into visual diagrams that can be easily reviewed for exams or help organize a writing assignment. Review Figure 5-1 and consider how you might be able to apply several pages of text to a simple flowchart, hierarchical organizer, comparison-contrast organizer, spider map, etc.

An additional benefit of using visual organizers is that you are thinking about the material at a deeper level as you identify the proper visual tool and apply the information. While at first it may take more time to determine the proper tool, it will get easier with practice and become second nature.

Activity 5-2

Utilizing what you have learned from the informational boxes "In Search of Main Ideas" and "Visualize Your Information," select a text chapter or a week of class notes and create some visual organizers that summarize the main ideas of that material. Ask a classmate to share in the same exercise and compare your work in a critical manner. What have you learned from this exercise and each other?

Figure 5-1. Examples of visual organizers

Hierarchical Organizer

```
                          Topic

        Main idea         Main idea         Main idea

   detail    detail    detail         detail    detail
```

Spider Map

Main idea

detail
detail
detail

Topic
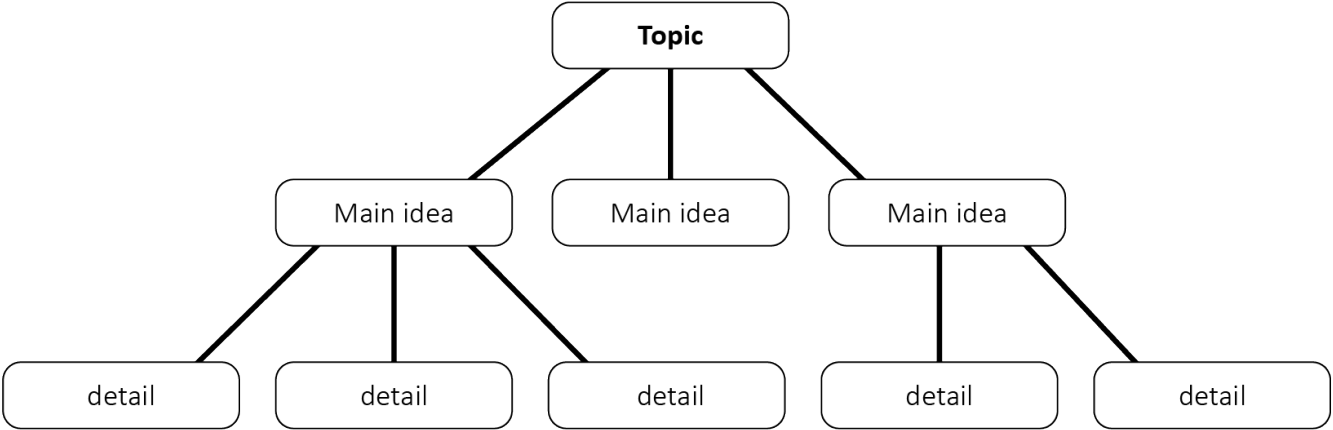
Problem-Solution Organizer

Problem
What:
Who:
Why:

↓

Solution
Attempted solutions   Result
1.   1.
2.   2.
3.   3.

↓

End result

Flow Chart

```
                    3d  ←  3c

  1  →  2  →              →  4

                    3a  →  3b
```
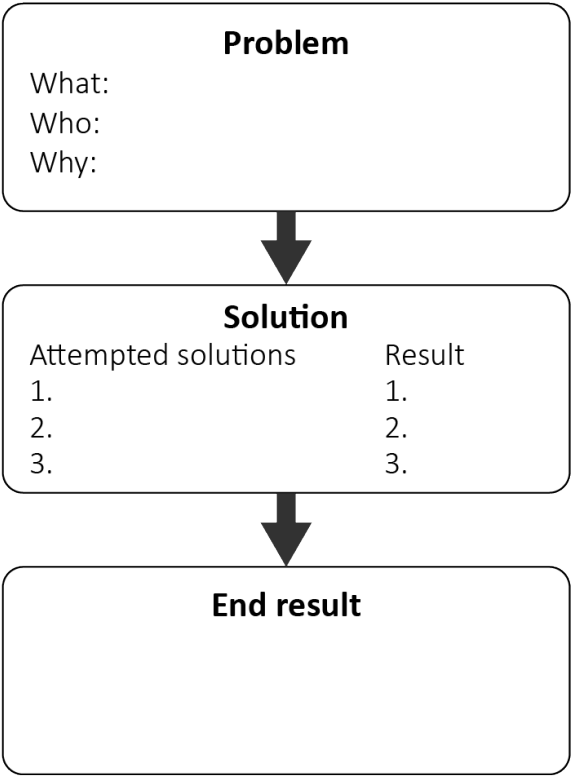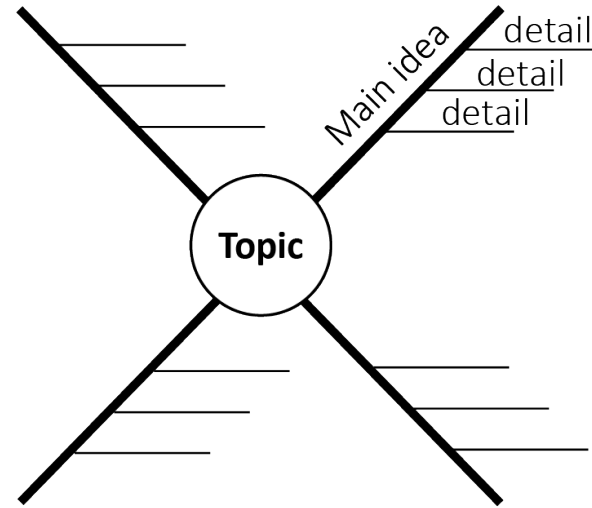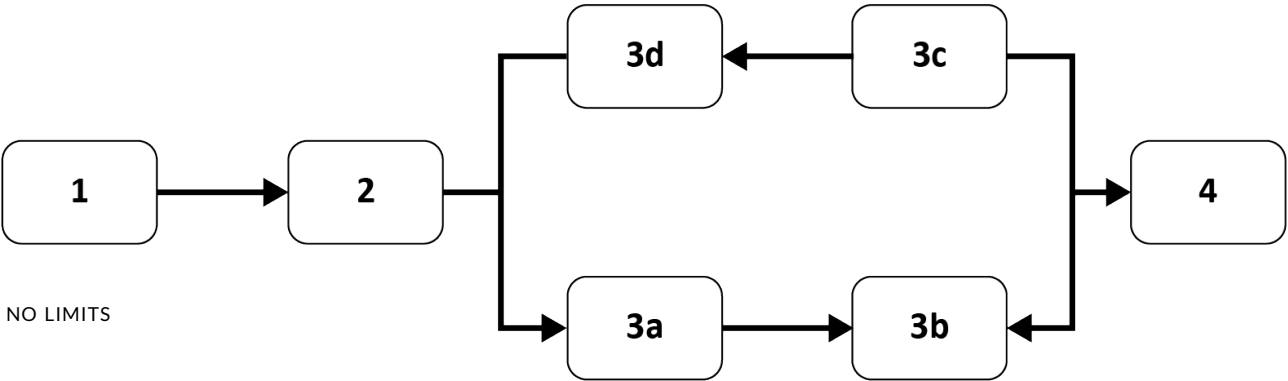
CRAM CARDS FOR LONG-TERM REVIEW

The use of "cram" in cram cards is deceiving. Cram cards are a study tool that promote the active learning of reading or lecture notes and allows for the easy and portable review of material over a longer period of time, therefore promoting later recall. It is a technique that will take some practice to hone your skills in selecting main ideas, but students who use cram cards indicate it is well worth their time.

Tips for Writing Cram Cards:

- Use 4 x 6 index cards (3 x 5 size tends to be too small)—some enthusiasts will even use the colored index cards for different sources of information (i.e., notes versus text reading) or topics (e.g., blue for English and green for Biology).

- Make one cram card per major concept or main idea.

- Do not simply take notes on the card; capture a summary of the main ideas maintaining the proper relationships of the concepts.

- Write the information in your own words.

- Include book examples or provide real-life examples for difficult concepts.

- Include key words.

- Be sure to write legibly.

Goal Setting: Process

Daily tasks → 1 hour of exercise per day

Intermediate goals → Lose 5 lbs by end of semester

Long range goals → Lose 20 lbs

Governing values → Value health and fitness
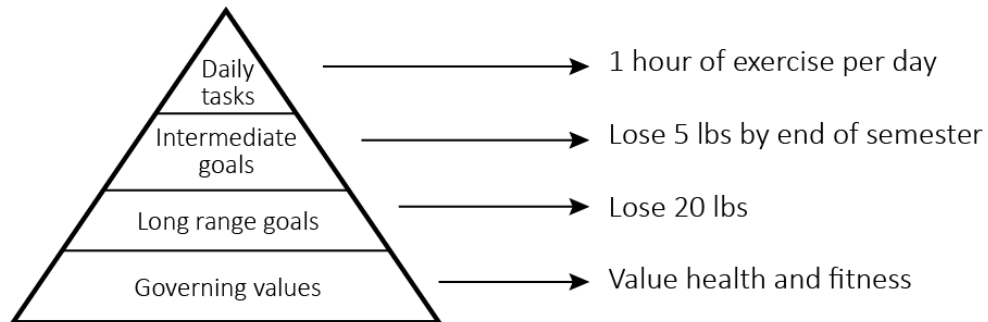
Example

Process of Goal Setting:

1. Identify & define goal (SMART)
2. Generate alternative plans
3. Make implementation plans
4. Implement the plan
5. Evaluate your progress

Example of a Good Cram Card

Activity 5-3

Select a text chapter or a week of class notes and create some visual diagrams that summarize the main ideas of that material and develop cram cards for the information. Use those cram cards for the review of your next exam.

5.4 TEST TAKING AND PREPARATION

Students need to develop a mindset that every time they attend class or complete a reading assignment they are preparing for the next exam, because oftentimes so much of their grade rides on those exams. In college, it is not uncommon for your entire course grade to be based on two or three exams with no options for a retake or extra credit. Instead of an exam being over one or two chapters, exams are more likely to be over 5+ chapters of material, and in the case of a comprehensive exam, an entire semester's worth of material. Intentionally working through the process of preparing for, taking, and learning from the testing process will facilitate successful outcomes.

Table 5-4. Effective Technique for Test Preparation and Taking

Before the Test	During the Test	After the Test
Go to all of your classes and take lecture notes and read all of your assigned reading using techniques described in this chapter.	Mark your exam with the necessary identification. Read all instructions on the exam. Scan the exam for question types, point values, etc.	Conduct an error analysis for items missed on the test. Look up the correct answers. Determine the nature of the errors you made.
Develop a study plan and schedule the time to review for an exam over several days. Refer to "Create a Five-Day Study Plan for Exams."	Develop a plan for how you will use your time to complete all questions on the exam.	Talk with your professor about items you missed on the exam. Discuss adjustments in your test preparation methods if necessary.
Schedule study sessions with classmates in advance of the night before the exam.	Read each item carefully and fully before marking an answer. You might find clues to the answer and will be less likely to make a preventable mistake.	Analyze the test questions to see if patterns arise, such as, "Were most of the questions from the lecture, the book, or both?", "What types of questions were asked?", "What levels of thinking were being tested based on Bloom's Taxonomy?", etc.
Be sure you have materials you need for the exam ready at least the night before the exam, such as multiple writing utensils, scantrons, blue books, notebook paper, etc.	Skip difficult questions and come back to them if you are pressed for time. Caution: if using a scantron to record answers be very careful that you do not incorrectly record your answers on the wrong line and get off track.	Review the methods that you used to study for the exam and determine what adjustments you need to make in preparing for the next exam.
Get a good night's rest the night before the exam.	If time is available at the end of the exam, review questions you marked as "difficult" in order to check for errors.	Determine your overall grade in the course based on the new information that this grade has provided you. Talk with your professor and academic advisor if you have concerns about your overall grade.
Eat a good breakfast prior to the exam. Avoid caffeine prior to the exam.	If you have an essay question to write, take the time to briefly outline an answer to ensure that you are answering all aspects of the question and that you provide a well-organized answer for your faculty member to read.	Archive your exam for future reference.
To ensure that you are on time to your exam, set two alarm clocks or arrange to have a friend call you to make sure you are awake.	Try not to leave any answers blank. You might be awarded partial credit or even make a correct guess.	
	Take a moment to take some deep cleansing breaths (or any other quick relaxation techniques) if you feel stressed by a question or the exam as a whole.	

Preparation for an exam should begin the first day of class. Repeated exposure to material over a longer period of time (Baddeley, 1982; Bahrick & Hall, 1991) optimizes the recall of information when it is needed. Every assigned reading, every opportunity to take notes and engage in class activities, and a routine of reviewing notes should be considered activities toward exam preparation. The volume of information that students are responsible for on each exam is much larger than experienced in high school. Careful review of the material prior to each exam is required for optimal performance, and student reports tell us that the habit of "cramming" the night before the exam is not going to lead to positive, long-term results. Research of the brain supports this typical finding. Physical and neurochemical changes in the synapses of the brain occur when information is learned, a process called long-term potentiation (Kandel & Schwartz, 1982). Without proper time and repeated

stimulation of the neural circuits, long-term learning of this information will not occur efficiently and may not be accessible when needed for a test. Planning for a review period over five days prior to the exam and healthy eating and sleep habits cannot be overemphasized.

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Activity 5-4

Identify when your next substantial exam will be given in a class. Create a five-day study plan using the formula described in "Create a Five-Day Study Plan for Exams" and the "Five-Day Study Plan Worksheet" at the end of this chapter. Once you have created this plan, incorporate the schedule into your time management calendar for implementation.

</div>

Oftentimes, students jump right in to taking an exam feeling stressed and rushed with a need to regurgitate information immediately. However, approaching a test in a careful and methodical way can help ensure the best results. You can best utilize your exam time by taking the time to survey the exam directions and point values and planning how to approach sections of the test. Strategy is particularly important for tests with mixed types of questions (i.e., multiple choice and essay) or tests with multiple essay questions. For example, if you were to spend too much time on the multiple choice questions and not allocate enough time to complete an essay question, you may have answered the majority of the total number of questions but still do poorly on the exam if the essay question was worth a larger portion of the exam's total points. Plan your time carefully and manage your stress.

CREATE A FIVE-DAY STUDY PLAN FOR EXAMS

Making a plan that will allow for the careful review of all of the assigned and presented material leads to less stress the day of an exam and the best conditions for recall and performance on an exam. Here is a simple method for creating a study plan:

1. Break the material for the exam into four manageable "chunks." If material can be logically divided by chapters, use that method. If not, make up your own chunks based on the content of the material. Note: It is not a good idea to break up information by the method of delivery (i.e., one chunk equals notes, one chunk equals readings, etc.). You want to include all information on specific topics together in one chunk (e.g., information about the topic of osmosis from the lecture notes and the textbook in a chunk).

2. Plan to spend about two hours studying on each of the five days.

3. You should work with the material on the exam in two ways, by preparing that material

for review and by reviewing that material. Preparation of material incorporates study techniques discussed earlier in this chapter such as combining and clarifying lecture and textbook notes, creating visual organizers for topics, developing cram cards, solving practice problems, creating self-testing questions using multiple levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, etc. Once you get the hang of preparing material for review, you could do some of that along the way (for instance creating cram cards for readings and notes) to reduce the amount of time needed for preparation at this time, leaving more time for review.

Example of the Schedule for a Five-Day Study Plan

Day One
Prepare 1st Chunk – 2 hours

Day Two
Prepare 2nd Chunk – 2 hours
Review 1st Chunk – 30 minutes

Day Three
Prepare 3rd Chunk – 1.5 hours
Review 2nd Chunk – 30 minutes
Review 1st Chunk – 15 minutes

Day Four
Prepare 4th Chunk – 1 hour
Review 3rd Chunk – 30 minutes
Review 2nd Chunk – 15 minutes
Review 1st Chunk – 10 minutes

Day Five
Review 4th Chunk – 1 hour
Review 3rd Chunk – 30 minutes
Review 2nd Chunk – 30 minutes
Review 1st Chunk – 30 minutes

Taking some time to plan out what material will go into each chunk will ensure that you do not miss anything. Use the "Five-Day Study Plan Worksheet" at the end of this chapter as a guide for your planning.

This method typically works very well for courses that offer two or three tests throughout the semester; however, a similar method could be modified by the number of days or the amount of time spent each day if a course offers more exams with less material on each exam.

TIPS FOR BETTER TEST TAKING

The types of test items on a test are as different as the professors who created the tests. "Objective" test questions refer to items in which students have to recognize the correct answer from a list of provided options (e.g., multiple choice, true-false, matching). In most cases there is one best answer, though it is important to note that a professor could indicate in the directions that you can select more than one answer. "Subjective" test items are the fill-in-the-blank, short answer, or essay questions in which students must recall and produce the answer.

Multiple Choice Questions

- Read the question and all of the answer options first.

- Mark out any answers that you know are not correct.

- Once you have selected an answer, do not change it unless you misread the question and know the new answer is correct. Usually, your first answer is the correct one if you are making an educated guess.

- Many times, the correct answer has more information in it.

- If there is no penalty for guessing, do not leave any items blank—make an educated guess.

- If there is an "All of the Above" option and there are two options that are correct, select "All of the Above."

- In a question with "All of the Above" and "None of the Above," if you are certain that one of the answers is true, do not select "None of the Above" and, likewise, if one of the answers is false, then do not select "All of the Above."

True-False Questions

- Read the statement carefully, but do not read too much into the statement. Base your answer on the information provided.

- With statements that have multiple facts, if any one of the facts is false the entire statement is false.

- Qualifying words like "always," "never," and "every" indicate that this would have to be true all of the time. If it is not true all of the time, then you should answer false.

- Qualifying words like "usually," "sometimes," and "generally" indicate that it could be true or false depending on the situation. Oftentimes the answer is true.

Essay Questions

- Most Important Rule: Make sure you understand what the question is asking you to do. An

essay question is not an opportunity to simply regurgitate everything you know about a particular topic. Revisit Question Cues listed in the "Table 5-1: Bloom's Taxonomy: Cognitive Domain" and be sure you know what you are supposed to accomplish when you see those cues. Underline key words and let those words help guide you. If you are not sure, ask your professor for clarification on what he or she wants you to accomplish in your answer.

- Take a minute or so to plan out your answer and jot down a brief outline of key points to guide your writing before you start. A well-organized answer tends to score more points when graded.

- Formula for Essay Questions:

  ◦ Introductory statements that define terms and describe what you will accomplish in your essay. This section should be brief.

  ◦ State your first main idea, and then give supporting facts, examples, statistics, or details. Follow with your next main idea and continue the pattern until complete. The bulk of your time should be spent developing this section of the essay as it would likely include the details your professor wants to see in grading. Typically, each main idea would have its own paragraph. Use transitional works like "first, second, third…," "next," "also," "however," etc., to aid your reader.

  ◦ End with a summary or final conclusion. This section is also likely to be brief.

- Budget time to proofread and revise if needed.

- Write legibly. Neater papers tend to receive higher marks.

Adapted from Dembo and Seli (2008) and TestTakingTips.com (2003–2009).

Once the exam has been completed, the learning experience is not over. Look over the test after you get it back from your professor and continue your review of the material that may be important for a comprehensive final or information that serves as a foundation for material to be learned in other courses. Even if only a scantron answer sheet is returned to you, professors are willing to give students access to review the test results during their office hours. Comprehensive post-test review not only includes reviewing your correct and incorrect answers to the question but also looking at where questions came from (i.e., lecture notes, readings, or both). Also, consider the study strategies you used and how they worked for you in order to help you prepare for future exams. Overall, it is important to emphasize the benefit of talking with your professor after each exam to gain insights into the information presented in the class as well as your learning and test strategies.

5.5 COLLABORATIVE STUDENT LEARNING: THE ART OF STUDY GROUPS

By nature, talking over course material promotes active learning. Some students shy away from studying with other people, because often study sessions deteriorate into "gripe" sessions about the course or certain members of the group do not contribute to the understanding of information. However, these distractions can be avoided with some study group "ground rules" that develop a habit for effective group work. Students who develop strong team working relationships with other students in their classes often report more motivation toward studying, less stress related to the course with this support system, and a better understanding of the material (University of Illinois–Chicago, 2008).

There are several types of study groups. Some groups simply get together prior to exams to go over the material. While this exercise can be helpful, typically these are not the type of study groups that actually promote long-term learning and social support. The most effective types of study groups

tend to meet regularly—weekly or every couple of weeks—to work on homework problems, compare lecture notes, discuss current assigned readings, and create cram cards or other study tools that will aid later group review for an exam.

Activity 5-5:

Conduct a Post-Test Analysis for one of your exams by answering and reflecting on these relevant questions. It is best if you can complete this analysis prior to receiving your grade for the exam, but if you have already received a grade try to think about how you felt about the test before getting it back.

1. What grade do you think you made on this exam? *(circle one)*
   A   B   C   D

2. How much time did you spend preparing for this exam?

   a. None

   b. 1/2 hour or less

   c. About an hour

   d. About 2 hours

   e. Between 2 – 4 hours

   f. Between 4 – 6 hours

   g. More than 6 hours

3. Approximately what percentage of the assigned reading did you read?

   a. Zero

   b. 100%

   c. Other (write in the approximate percentage) _____

4. What parts of the textbook did you use as you were preparing for the exam? *(mark all that apply)*

   a. Chapter headings

   b. Exercises

   c. Key points

   d. Follow-up activities

   e. Tables/graphs/photographs

  f. Chapter questions

5. Did you use your notes for the test?

  a. Yes

  b. No, I do not have any notes

  c. I have notes, but I did not review them before the test

  d. I borrowed notes from someone else and reviewed them

6. Did you review the handouts given in class before the test?

  a. Yes

  b. No, I do not have any handouts

  c. I have handouts, but I did not review them before the test

  d. I borrowed the handouts from someone else and reviewed them

7. Before the test did you:

  ◦ Read through each portion of the test when you got it? YES NO

  ◦ Set a time budget to pace yourself? YES NO

8. The objective portion of the test was:
For the Multiple Choice:

  a. Easy to complete

  b. Too difficult

  c. Reasonably challenging, but I feel confident about my ability to answer the questions

For the True/False:

  a. Easy to complete

  b. Too difficult

  c. Reasonably challenging, but I feel confident about my ability to answer the questions

For the Matching:

  a. Easy to complete

  b. Too difficult

c. Reasonably challenging, but I feel confident about my ability to answer the questions

9. The short answer portion of the test was:

a. Easy to complete

b. Too difficult

c. Reasonably challenging, but I feel confident about my ability to answer the questions

10. The essay portion of the test was:

a. Easy to complete

b. Too difficult

c. Reasonably challenging, but I feel confident about my ability to answer the questions

11. Did you study with other people? *(mark all that apply)*

a. No

b. Yes, one other person

c. Yes, more than one other person at the same time

d. Yes, I attended a Supplemental Instruction (SI) test review or a test review offered by the instructor or graduate assistant

12. If you studied with others, rate how effective the study sessions were on a scale of 1-10.
(1= not at all effective in helping me review and understand the material, to 10 = highly effective in helping me review and understand the material)

13. What study techniques did you use to study for this exam? *(mark all that apply)*

a. I consolidated my notes with my textbook notes

b. I re-read the book chapters

c. I re-read my class notes

d. I made up questions and tried to answer them and then reviewed what I did not know

e. I reviewed exams from an authorized test file

f. Other – explain what you did below

_____

_____

_____

Reflection. Once you have received your grade, compare that with what you initially guessed you would receive. Consider some of these questions:

1. What types of questions did you tend to miss more? What were the topics of content? Do you now understand the correct answer? Do you see any patterns in the types of mistakes that you may have made? Did you tend to second guess yourself and change a correct answer to an incorrect answer?

2. Do you see any patterns in where the test items tended to come from? Mostly from the readings? Mostly from class notes? An even mix between the readings and notes? From places you would not have thought of like the graphs, photographs, or tables?

3. Was there certain content that you were not as strong in answering correctly? What do you need to do to make sure you understand this material? Do you need to talk with your professor to better understand this material?

4. Based on the answers to some of the questions throughout this assessment, what are you going to do differently next time? Be specific.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Getting a strong start with a group of committed students at the beginning of the class is tremendously important. A group with mixed levels of academic expertise can be a very effective group as long as the members are committed to working with the group. Stronger students can benefit from teaching students who may be struggling with the material, while struggling students learn study strategies as well as the material the group is reviewing. Consider "Tips for Effective Study Groups" as you move forward with developing study groups.

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE STUDY GROUPS

- Establish a study group with 2–4 other committed students in your class. Exchange contact information with those participants. You may begin a conversation with students who attend class regularly, take notes, sit toward the front, and appear to pay attention in class. You may ask the professor to help you identify other committed students that you can recruit.

- Set a regular time and place to meet.

- Meet in a public place like the library, empty classroom, residence hall study room, cafeteria, etc.

- At the first session, decide on the rules that your group will agree to adhere to in order to promote teamwork and accountability. For instance, some groups determine that if a member does not prepare for a session that they cannot stay to learn from the others. Some groups set a routine in which they study for 50 minutes and then spend ten minutes "blowing off steam" and problem solving (with a timekeeper keeping it limited to ten minutes).

- Set study goals for each session regarding what material you want to cover or what activities you want to perform as a group.

- Establish a "monitor" for a given session to watch the time, record notes for the group, and make sure that everyone is participating. This duty can be rotated throughout the group and may even become obsolete once a strong working team has been established.

- Make sure that everyone participates actively. Take turns presenting sections of lecture notes or readings, take turns taking a group through the solution of a problem, take turns asking each other questions and having others answer them, etc.

- Share study tools developed, summaries of topics, visual organizers, etc.

- Write down any questions that one or two group members can approach the professor or graduate assistant for help and then share with the group at the next session or via email.

- At the end of the study session, establish what material you are going to focus on so that everyone in the group can prepare for the next session.

Adapted from Dembo & Seli (2008) and University of Illinois–Chicago (2008).

5.6 LIBRARY RESEARCH: IT'S A PROCESS

Not all of your college grades are based on exams given in class. Papers, oral presentations, and in-depth research projects throughout your academic career will require consultation with resources beyond a textbook or Google. Many students approach research haphazardly not realizing that they can use a step-by-step process to remove the mystery surrounding research and relieve anxiety.

ABOUT THE INFORMATION SEARCH PROCESS

Carol Kuhlthau (n.d.), a professor at Rutgers University, developed a six-stage model called the Information Search Process (ISP) that describes students' thoughts, actions, and feelings as they move through the beginning stages of a research project to the final product. Though using a formal process may sound troublesome, in fact you already use the ISP in your everyday decisions. For example, the last time you went to the movies with a group of friends you gathered information on which movies were at which theaters, what the start times were, who could go, and how you would get there. Once you had all the specifics, you evaluated the information, made choices, and then acted on them. This is the Information Search Process, and you use it without even realizing it.

Breaking down the research process into similar steps and following the ISP model will make your task easier to conquer and help ensure that you have met assignment requirements and have turned in a well-thought-out, thorough research paper.

THE ISP MODEL AND YOU

It is easy to get lost in a research assignment's meaning, lose focus on your topic, get overwhelmed with information, and not seek help. In the movie example above, the ISP does not take long to start and finish. This is not the case with research papers.

This section will describe the challenges you can expect at each stage of the ISP model and give you strategies for managing them.

ISP Stage 1: Initiation – Before beginning any research, make certain you understand the requirements of the assignment.

Challenges:

    a. Understanding instructor expectations

        ◦ **Strategies:** Many instructors will use terms such as scholarly, popular, peer-reviewed,

refereed, primary, secondary, authoritative, etc., to describe the types of sources they expect you to use in assignments. To learn what these mean, see [UT Arlington Library's How to Find and Evaluate Sources](#).

◦ Listen carefully and take notes when the instructor assigns the paper or project and do not be afraid to ask questions. For tips, see [University of North Carolina's Understanding Assignments](#).

b. Worrying about your ability to complete the assignment on time

◦ **Strategies:** Use goal-setting processes learned in this class to create a timeline for completion of the assignment. For an online tool, see [University of Minnesota's Assignment Calculator](#).

ISP Stage 2: Selection – Once you understand the assignment, select a general topic that meets its requirements.

Challenge:

a. Finding interesting topic ideas

◦ **Strategies:** Begin by brainstorming ideas that are relevant to the assignment, but also reflect your personal interests. You may also look to academic encyclopedias, magazines, and journals within the subject area, current events publications, and class discussions for potential ideas.

◦ For help selecting a general topic, see UTA Library's [First Year English Research Guide](#).

ISP Stage 3: Exploration – Once you have decided on a general topic, gather background information to understand it better.

Challenges:

a. Looking for general information about a topic

◦ **Strategies**: When beginning research on an unfamiliar topic, consult sources that provide background information like academic encyclopedias, textbooks, and general Web sites. Although you may not use these sources in the final paper or project, they often provide the information necessary to progress to the next stage of your assignment.

◦ Library databases that contain general information can be found at the [UTA Online Library](#) (NetID and password required) which includes databases such as:

- **CQ Researcher**

- **Gale Virtual Reference Library**

- **UT Arlington's Library Catalog**

- **Points of View Reference Center**

b. Locating appropriate source types

- **Strategies**: The topic and type of information needed determines the type of source (book, magazine article, newspaper article, Web site, journal article, etc.) that is best. To learn more about the information cycle as it relates to type of information needed, see UT Arlington Library's [How to Find and Evaluate Sources](#).

ISP Stage 4: Formulation – Using what you have learned from your preliminary research, develop a thesis that is specific, significant, and arguable.

Challenge:

a. Writing a thesis that is specific, significant, and arguable

- **Strategies**: After gathering background information about a topic, apply what you have learned to the development of a thesis. The thesis will act as the framework for your paper. For information about developing a thesis, see UTA Library's [First Year English Research Guide](#).

ISP Stage 5: Collection – Once you have developed a thesis, gather sources that specifically relate to it.

Challenges:

a. Developing a search strategy

- **Strategies**: Have a plan of action before you begin your thesis-specific research. You may use some of the same sources found when gathering your background information.

  - Brainstorm relevant keywords and combine these terms to retrieve relevant and specific information.

  - Specify the type of sources (scholarly, peer-reviewed, primary, etc.) you require. For help, see UTA Library's [Database Search Strategies](#).

  - Select database(s) or search engine(s) you will use to find your sources. For subject-specific guides to research, see UTA Library's [Subject and Course Guides](#).

  - Use research notes to track where you have searched for information and what you have selected for potential use in your assignment. For tips about keeping track of your research, see Princeton University's [Working Habits that Work](#).

b. Evaluating sources

- **Strategies:** Evaluate each source to determine if it meets the requirements of the

assignment and select sources that are written by experts and published (either in print or online) by reputable organizations or individuals. For information about evaluating sources, see UT Arlington Library's [How to Find and Evaluate Sources](#).

ISP Stage 6: Presentation – Use the information you gathered to complete your assignment.

Challenges:

a. Incorporating sources into your assignment

    ◦ **Strategies:** Once you have found your sources, incorporate them into your assignment in a way that both supports your thesis and observes the rules of academic integrity. For information about incorporating sources, see UTA Library's [First Year Writing Research Guide](#).

b. Citing your sources

    ◦ **Strategies:** To make citing sources easier, you may use online citation generators like [Citation Machine](#) (Warlick & The Landmark Project 2000–2010) or use citation generators built into some of the library's databases. Always check your citations against appropriate style manuals, copies of which can be found in the Library's reference area. For helpful tips about many citation styles, see UT Arlington Library's [Citation How-To Guides](#).

Adapted from Kuhlthau, C. C. (2009, August). Information search process. Retrieved from [sciencedirect.com](#)

The Importance of Citing Sources

When you use outside sources like books or articles in your assignment, you make your arguments more credible. You demonstrate that your arguments are not just your opinion—they are based on evidence. But when you use other people's ideas in your work, you must observe the rules of academic integrity and say where they came from. You must be able to prove which ideas are yours and which ones you borrow.

Citations prevent any confusion over what is original to you and what you are borrowing, while citation styles like MLA or APA supply a standard method for identifying other people's ideas. If you use someone else's idea without citing it properly, you have committed the serious offense of plagiarism.

For more information about plagiarism, see the section on "Academic Integrity" in Chapter 6.

Timeline

As discussed in Chapter 4 of this book, goal setting is an essential element to complete any project. S.M.A.R.T. goals clearly define your tasks and keep you motivated. Consider Figure 5-2. With the

deadline of your research paper as your ultimate goal and considering the stages of the ISP model defined previously, create smaller, short-term goals to ensure your success. Note that each ISP stage should be a stop or short-term goal in your research timeline. Be sure to consider the suggested length of time at each stage when setting your goals.

Figure 5-2. Timeline for the ISP Model

Initiation
Aware of a lack of knowledge or of an information need.
Emotion: Apprehension, uncertainty
Percentage of time at this stage: 1%

Selection
Identify a general topic of interest.
Emotion: Confusion, anxiety, anticipation
Percentage of time at this stage: 5%

Exploration
Begin to search for information.
Emotion: Confusion, uncertainty
Percentage of time at this stage: 30%

Formulation
Use a preliminary information gathered to develop a specific topic or thesis.
Emotion: Optimism, confidence
Percentage of time at this stage: 5%

Collection
Gather information that is relevant to their specific topic or thesis.
Emotion: Realization of extensive work to be done, confidence.
Percentage of time at this stage: 20%

Presentation
Use gathered information to complete assignment.
Emotion: Relief
Percentage of time at this stage: 30%

Tips for Success in Conducting Library Research

- Recognize that frustration and uncertainty are part of the process.

- Build a timeline with short-term S.M.A.R.T. goals.

- Reevaluate your progress and repeat steps if necessary, but do not completely eliminate any.

- Steps take time. Plan accordingly.

- Take advantage of outside resources to help get you through the uncertainty.

Activity 5-6

Pick an upcoming research assignment from any class. Using the Information Search Process model, create a series of short-term S.M.A.R.T. goals that will help you complete the assignment.

Activity 5-7

Go to UT Arlington Library's How to Find and Evaluate Sources (http://library. uta.edu/howTo/evaluateSources.pdf). What are the criteria for determining if a source is credible?

Thought Questions

- Consult "Chapter 10: Campus Resources" and review all of the resources and services offered by UT Arlington Libraries. What are the three library resources that you feel will help you the most? Evaluate the benefit of each resource and discuss with a classmate.

- What challenges do you face when citing sources? Think of at least three strategies that would help you overcome these challenges.

- Why is it important to cite the sources you use in your assignments?

- Examine the relationship between the Information Search Process and Bloom's taxonomy. How does the required task at each stage of the ISP correlate with the types of thinking required in Bloom's Taxonomy?

- How can the active reading strategies you have learned be applied to evaluating sources for your assignments?

FIVE-DAY STUDY PLAN WORKSHEET

Date of Test: _____

Course: _____

Test Format:

- ◦ Objective

- ◦ Essay

- ◦ Mixed

Day	Task	Course Content	Time needed	Completed
Date of Day 1:	Prepare:			
Date of Day 2:	Prepare: Review:			
Date of Day 3:	Prepare: Review: Review:			
Date of Day 4:	Prepare: Review: Review: Review:			
Date of Day 5:	Prepare: Review: Review: Review: Self-Test:			

CHAPTER 6: AVOIDING THE HAZARDS ALONG THE WAY

To begin this chapter, it is important to consider this thought question, as well as the issues presented in the chapter, because each student's circumstances vary greatly.

Thought Question

What are the habits and/or obligations you have in your life that may impair your academic success?

While it is important to consider what the barriers are, it is more important to talk with important individuals in your life—parents, UT Arlington faculty and staff, a counselor, other successful students—about ways to solve your problems and remove those barriers, as there is a lot "banking" on your academic success.

6.1: ABSENTEEISM: IF YOU MISS SCHOOL, YOU MISS OUT

Absenteeism, or truancy, is poor classroom attendance. Class attendance has a direct effect on how you will succeed in your courses, and in the big picture, how you will succeed in college. There is an undeniable relationship between your class attendance, your grades, and your overall quality of learning. Citing established research findings, this section will highlight the importance of classroom attendance and offer practical suggestions on how to ensure you never miss out on valuable information in class.

WHAT THE RESEARCH SHOWS

Many studies have focused on the relationship between absenteeism and student performance in the classroom. Overwhelmingly, the research has identified a correlation among good class attendance, higher grades, and effective learning. According to Moore (2006), students were more likely to answer an exam question incorrectly when the information pertaining to that question was covered in a missed class session. An additional study recognized a link between students' rate of absenteeism and

their ability to learn course material. Students who were absent during a class session where critical material was covered were 9–14% more likely to respond incorrectly to a question pertaining to that material (Marburger, 2006). These findings not only stress the importance of class attendance, but also confirm that students who are absent (even after borrowing a classmate's notes) do not always acquire a complete picture of the missed information.

Class attendance and grades are two factors that work hand-in-hand in determining student success. After tracking student attendance in two sections of Introduction to Biology, Moore (2006) found that a student's good attendance record increased his or her likelihood of earning a higher grade in the class, whereas a student's low attendance record increased the probability that they would earn a lower grade in the class. Marburger (2001) found similar correlations while studying attendance patterns in a microeconomics course. Students who missed class on a given date were more likely to respond incorrectly to questions relating to the lecture material covered on that day (when compared to students who were in attendance). The findings suggested that the students' exam scores were directly affected by their class attendance.

As you can see, good class attendance is the first step toward succeeding in your courses. On average, students who attend class regularly earn higher grades in the course than students who have regular or chronic absences.

THE DOS AND DON'TS OF CLASS ATTENDANCE

DO....

Do set two alarms clocks if waking up in the morning before class is problematic. Also consider asking a roommate to wake you or have a friend call to wake you up.

Do get enough sleep so you can be alert in class.

Do take notes in class. Some information on the test may only be presented in class.

Do give your family and boss your class schedule with test dates and big assignments. If they know what you are faced with at school, they can support "time off" for studying.

Do ask questions in class to engage yourself with the material and professor.

Do communicate immediately with your professor if you have to miss class and make arrangements to make up any missed assignments.

DON'T...

Don't come to class late every day. It is a disruption to the professor and those students who were in class on time.

Don't fall asleep in class. Professors do not take kindly to students who sleep in class.

Don't skip class for avoidable reasons. Even though you may think you can get class notes from someone else, notes taken by another student are not as good for studying later as the ones you take yourself.

Don't sit in the back of the room. It is easier for you to be less attentive in the back.

Don't rely on high energy and/or caffeine drinks to keep you awake in class. They only make you jittery and crash later.

Don't come to class when you are really sick, so be sure to "save" some absences in case you do become ill during the semester.

6.2 PROCRASTINATION: DON'T LET TIME GET AWAY

Dembo and Seli (2008) define procrastination very simply as the behavior of postponing a task that needs to be completed. However, other studies (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984; Rothblum, Solomon & Murakami, 1986; Kachgal, Hansen & Nutter, 2001) have found that there are significant cognitive and affective factors that also contribute to procrastination, such as anxiety related to performance on the task, feeling overwhelmed by a task, miscalculation of time needed to study, or dislike for the task. Sapadin and Macguire (1997) refer to procrastination as an "internal conflict," in which you want or need to do something but are resistant for whatever reason. Ultimately, procrastination is a choice that you make as a student in a given situation, a choice leading to counterproductive behaviors and negative feelings in the end. Unfortunately, procrastination is an incredibly prevalent problem that impacts college students every day and can impede their ability to succeed in college (Burka & Yuen, 1983; Solomon & Rothblum, 1984).

The literature (Kachgal et al., 2001; Rothblum et al., 1986; Solomon & Rothblum, 1984) supports a multitude of reasons for why students procrastinate, such as:

- fear of the consequences of failure or success and the related anxiety and low self-esteem

- issues with self-regulation, such as time miscalculations (e.g., a project takes longer than expected or an overestimation of time remaining to complete a project), inability to delay gratification, peer pressure to do something else

- motivational issues and reported "laziness"

- feelings of being overwhelmed by a task

- overall dislike for engaging in a particular type of task

Depending on the reason in a given situation for the procrastination, these underlying causes lead students to say certain things to themselves, called rationalizations. For instance, students with self-regulation problems may say to themselves, "I can study tonight after I get home from the movie." Students with anxiety-related procrastination issues may rationalize, "I have a headache"—a headache that is likely related to stress. Finally, the students with motivational issues may think, "I work better under pressure."

Understanding in a given circumstance why you may be procrastinating may help you determine what sorts of interventions you need in order to avoid repeating that behavior (see Six Styles of Procrastination for more information). Solomon and Rothblum (1984) suggest that not only do individuals need to learn appropriate time management and self-regulation skills, but also have to deal with the cognitive beliefs (i.e., rationalizations) and emotions that accompany procrastination behaviors. For instance, Burka and Yuen (1983) indicate that students who fear the consequences of failure or success or those who strive for perfection need to adjust their cognitive beliefs and implement self-regulation strategies, such as breaking large tasks down into smaller pieces and creating structured goals. Kachgal et al. (2001) recommended that learning specialists who are helping students with their procrastination issues help students consider what their personal "barriers" are to completing academic work in a timely fashion and help them problem solve with regard to those perceived barriers. Therefore, students may need to implement more than one intervention to deal with their procrastination.

SIX STYLES OF PROCRASTINATION

Sapadin and Macguire (1997) have proposed six styles of procrastination that can help students think about their cycle of procrastination.

Style	General Reason for Procrastination	Suggested Changes to Reduce Procrastination
Perfectionist	Wants everything to be perfect – the project and the circumstances under which the project is completed.	Strive for excellence, not perfection. Avoid telling yourself that you "should" do this to make it better. Set time limits to complete certain aspects of the task and then move on to the next task.
Dreamer	Hates dealing with details. Wishes he or she could get to the end result without having to do all the work in between.	Set specific long-term goals and specific goals for what you want to accomplish in a given study session. Think through what you need to do, how you will do it, and set specifically when you will do it.
Worrier	Worries about change and constantly worries "what if." Tends to think catastrophically.	Reality check when you catch yourself making a problem into a catastrophe. When you are stressed by what you do not know, review what you do know. Break down larger tasks into smaller pieces. Celebrate when something goes well to build confidence.
Crisis-maker	Only gets motivated by the last minute deadline. Waits until he or she cannot delay any longer.	Reality check when you catch yourself saying, "That will not take long to do" or "I can do that later." Understand that you may not get motivated to do some until you get started with it.
Defier	Resents feeling that an authority is making him or her do something that he or she does not want to do.	See the benefits of doing the task.
Overdoer	Has too much to do and has problem saying "no" to people. Gets distracted by unimportant tasks.	Set daily priorities for what is most important to accomplish. Don't be afraid to say "no " to others.

PROCRASTINATION ELIMINATION STRATEGIES

Consider your own patterns of procrastination and what strategies you might implement next time you catch yourself postponing the things you need to do to be a successful student.

- **Use your time management tools.** Create a schedule of study sessions each week. Set study goals and determine what activities you are going to accomplish at each of these study sessions. Utilize to-do lists to keep track of all of the activities you need to complete to stay caught up with a class.

- **Set up study routines.** For instance, if you have your Political Science class on Tuesdays and Thursdays, schedule yourself time to read the assigned chapters on Mondays and Wednesdays. It will help you stay current in your class. With time, it becomes a routine which is harder to

break once you have done it for awhile.

- **Conduct time reality checks.** When you catch yourself saying, "I will have time to do this later," look at your list of tasks and your schedule and determine if that is realistically true. If you catch yourself saying, "That won't take long to finish," really think about how long it takes to do a good job and all of the things that might impede your progress and make it take longer.

- **Increase your motivation and interest in the work.** Revisit the informational box "How Can I Get Motivated to Study?" in Chapter 4.

- **Challenge your rationalizations.** When you say to yourself, "I work better under pressure," consider whether or not that is really true. While you may be more motivated to complete the work if the deadline is tomorrow, couldn't you produce better quality work if you allow time to think about what you are doing?

- **Break down projects into smaller pieces.** Sometimes tasks are less daunting if you do not see them as taking a long time to do, especially if they are tasks that you do not like to do. If you have to read 30 pages of text for your history class, read 10 pages each day over 3 days. If you have a paper to write, develop a list of the steps that you need to complete to write that paper (i.e., research a topic, outline, write a rough draft, etc.) and schedule those steps to be completed over a couple of weeks.

- **Commit to 5 minutes.** Oftentimes, the dread of doing something prevents a student from starting it. Tell yourself that you commit to working on something for 5 minutes and then assess the task to determine if you are going to keep working. Typically, once students get started on it, they get into a working rhythm and finish the task.

- **Increase concentration and decrease distractions.** Keep in mind that it is harder to procrastinate if you are working in an environment where you can focus on your work and avoid interruptions. For instance, turn off your cell phone during study sessions so that your friends do not keep you from your work. Studying in a place where you do not have access to the television or computer games can also be very helpful.

- **Organize your study sessions.** Make sure you have all of the materials available that you need to study.

- **Know your high energy times of day.** It is very useful to complete tasks that you may be dreading during your high energy times of day. You will be less likely to make up an excuse like, "I am too tired to do this now" if you are studying at the time of day that you tend to feel more alert.

- **Reinforce yourself for finishing a task.** For instance, tell yourself before you start working on something that if you complete this task, you will get to spend 30 minutes doing something that you want to do. Treat your school work like a job. If you study and go to class for 40 hours a

week, you will take off some time for relaxation on the weekend.

- **Recruit social support for completing your work.** Ask your friends and family to inquire how you are doing on your studying to-do list. Meet with a study group on a weekly basis to review lecture and reading notes and discuss readings. If you are accountable to others you will be more likely to have completed the work.

- **Utilize relaxation techniques.** If you find that worrying interrupts your concentration or you feel physical symptoms like stomach upset or headaches when studying, try some relaxation techniques and positive self-talk rather than just quitting.

Adapted from Dembo and Seli (2008) and Cuseo, Fecas, & Thompson (2007).

6.3 DEALING WITH TEST ANXIETY: MANAGING YOUR STRESS FOR SUCCESS

The physical and mental arousal brought on by stress is not always detrimental to performance on a given task. According to the Yerkes-Dodson law (1908), a moderate amount of physiological and mental arousal can actually increase or improve performance.

Figure 6-1. Yerkes-Dodson (1908) Law
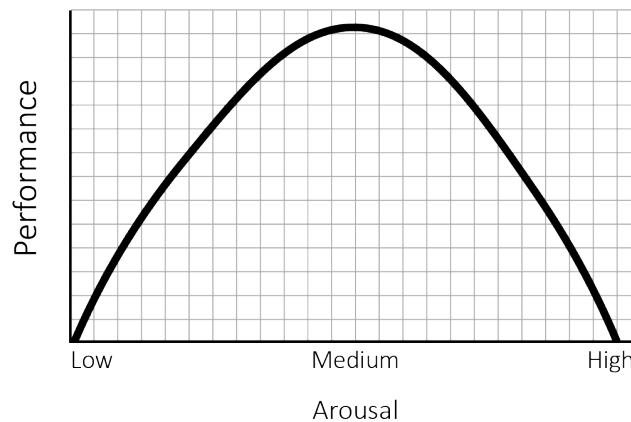
The point at which the arousal becomes too severe and starts to impair performance is when stress becomes a problem. Oftentimes, the stress brought on by a major exam or project in a course can be extreme enough that it impairs the clear thinking needed for optimal performance. Consider the Dos and Don'ts lists below for managing anxiety related to exams.

THE DOS AND DON'TS OF MANAGING ANXIETY RELATED TO EXAMS

DO...

Do prepare for an exam using the "Five-Day Study Plan" in Chapter 5. Students who feel prepared will have less anxiety overall.

Do stay positive about yourself and your ability to perform well.

Do plan to reward yourself with something relaxing or fun after the exam. Think about that when stressful thoughts may occur.

Do relax the last hour before the exam to reduce tension and stressful thoughts.

Do eat a moderate breakfast that includes both protein and healthy carbohydrates.

Do periodically conduct checks on the tension in certain areas of your body and try to relax those areas. Breathing deeply and engaging in some positive imagery can also reduce tension quickly during an exam.

Do survey the entire exam and plan carefully.

Do ask questions of your professor if you are unsure about what to do on a particular question.

DON'T…

Don't cram for an exam. Underprepared students naturally have something to worry about.

Don't let negative thoughts or worrying get in the way of clear thinking. If you catch yourself worrying about what you do not know, stop yourself and replace it with positive affirmations and what you do know.

Don't spend time with classmates who might confuse you or generate stress about the exam on the day of the exam.

Don't stay up late the night before the exam. A good night's sleep will improve your mental state and promote clearer thinking.

Don't drink a lot of caffeine before the exam. Arousal from caffeine can add to stress and make you jumpy.

Don't show up late for an exam. Feeling rushed to finish adds to the stress.

Don't panic if you "go blank" on a question. Go answer other questions and come back to it later. If all else fails, guess or write down what you do know.

Don't resort to looking at anyone else's paper if you are unsure of your performance. Maintaining your integrity is far more important than the results of this exam.

If you feel that you are unable to manage your stress without the assistance of a professional, meet with a counselor in Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) or attend one of their relaxation workshops.

Activity 6-1:

Do you experience test anxiety?

Rate yourself on these items.

From UT Arlington Counseling Services presentation by Ellen Myers on Stress Management, 2002.

	Usually	Sometimes	Not usually
I am so nervous on tests that I don't do my best, even when I have studied well and am prepared.			
My stomach gets tight and upset before or during a test.			
My hands get cold and sweaty during a test.			
I get headaches before or during a test.			
I have trouble sleeping the night before a test.			
I find my mind racing or becoming dull and "muddy" so that I can't think clearly while taking a test.			
During a test, I forget material I have studied and learned, only to remember it again after the test is over.			
I "over-analyze" questions, see too many possibilities, choose complex answers, and overlook the simpler, correct answers.			
I make careless errors on a test.			

The more checks you put in the "usually" or "sometimes" columns, the greater the likelihood that you may be experiencing test anxiety.

6.4 POLICIES WITH "TEETH": ACADEMIC STANDING AND OTHER NEED-TO-KNOW POLICIES

Academic success is a choice. You have a choice as to whether or not you engage in behaviors that successful students engage in, such as attending class regularly, managing time well, actively studying enough time each week, and doing school work in a timely fashion. Students who do not choose to do these things many times experience unpleasant consequences as a result of doing poorly in their classes. Likewise, students who lack understanding of the policies and procedures that they need to follow while earning their degree can also lead to unpleasant consequences. While the university strongly encourages that all students read all sections of the General Information section of the online Undergraduate Catalog as well as their major college/department degree requirements, here are some of the most important policies to consider.

Undergraduate Catalog

uta.edu/catalog

ACADEMIC STANDING

At the end of each term, professors input final grades into the MyMav Student Information System, and the Office of the Registrar makes the grades "official" for that term. At that time, the Office of the Registrar calculates the semester and cumulative grade point averages (GPAs). Based on that information, an Academic Standing is posted that serves as a signal of the academic "health" of a student. The university requires that students maintain at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA to be in Good Standing. Students that earn less than a 2.0 cumulative GPA are not performing according to the standards set by the university, which results in an impact of their privileges and possibly the ability to continue taking classes at UT Arlington.

The Table of Standards sets certain GPA limits based on the number of hours a student has accumulated.
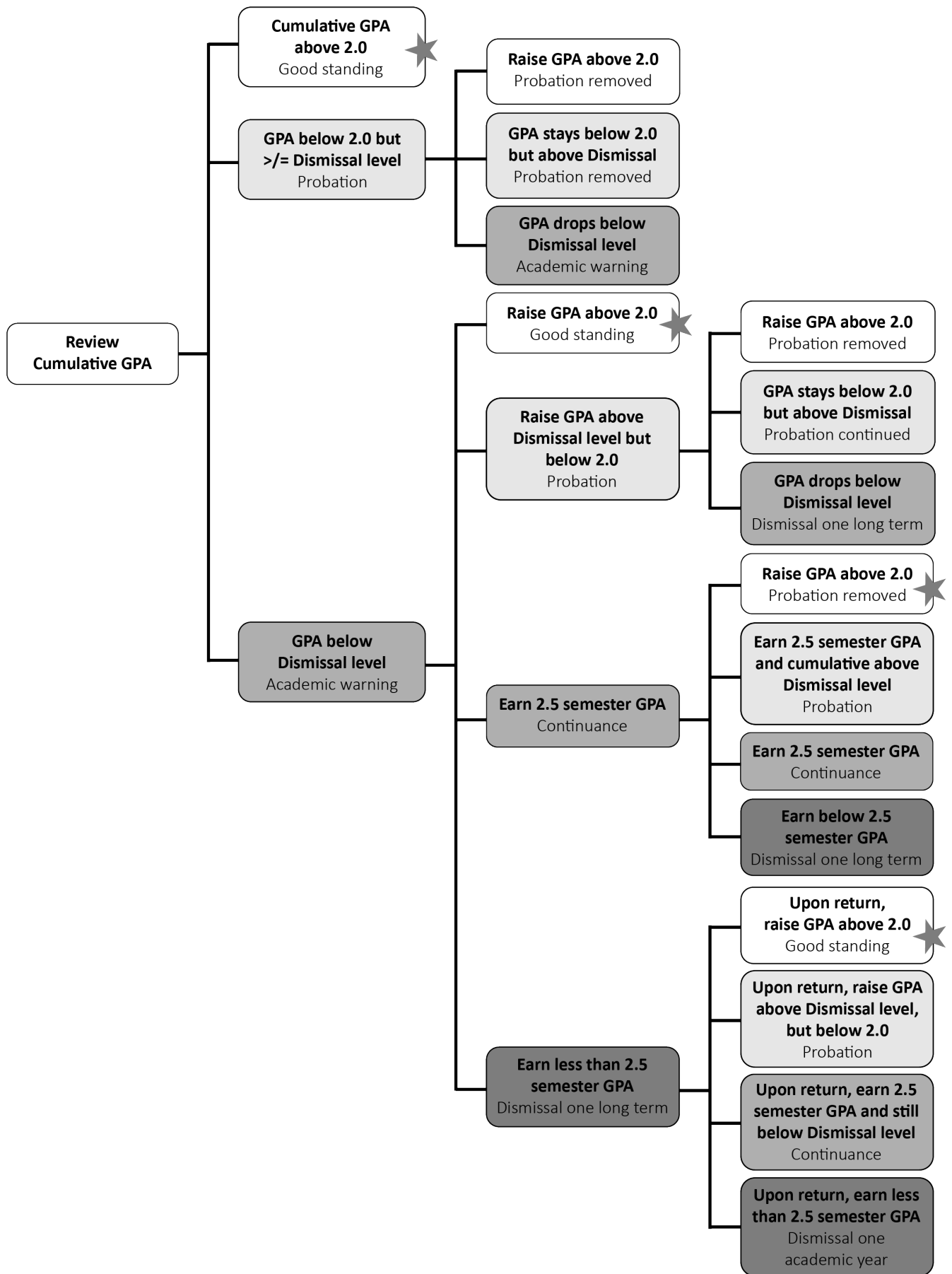
Table 6-1. UT Arlington Table of Standards

Total College Hours Undertaken	UTA Cumulative GPA for Academic Probation	UTA Cumulative GPA for Academic Dismissal
0-29	Less than 2.0	Less than 1.6
30-59	Less than 2.0	Less than 1.8
60 or more	Less than 2.0	Less than 2.0

Freshman and Sophomore students who earn probation—those students with less than a 2.0 GPA but higher than the level for dismissal—are restricted to taking 14 semester credit hours until they raise their cumulative GPA to a 2.0 or above and come into Good Standing again. Academic departments may require students to develop enrollment contracts that specify courses and actions to take to improve academic performance. Once a student reaches the Junior and Senior levels, these students no longer have probation as an option and are simply subject to dismissals after one warning term.

Students who earn cumulative GPAs at the "dismissal level" (i.e., GPAs listed in Table 6-1) for their classification are subject to dismissal and are required to sit out for a period of time after one warning semester. Students flow through a cycle of academic standings based on their semester and cumulative GPAs. Figure 6-2 illustrates some of the possibilities and complexities of this cycle based on semester-by-semester performance.

Overall, students who earn an academic standing of Probation, Warning, Continuance, Dismissal 1: One Long Term, or Dismissal 2: One Full Academic Year should meet with an academic advisor in their department to discuss steps to improve future academic performance for the next term or after the dismissal period has elapsed.

Figure 6-2. Academic Standing Sample Flowchart

```
                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │ Cumulative GPA  │
                    │   above 2.0     │ ★
                    │  Good standing  │
                    └─────────────────┘          ┌──────────────────────┐
                                                 │  Raise GPA above 2.0 │
                                                 │   Probation removed  │
                                                 └──────────────────────┘
                    ┌─────────────────┐          ┌──────────────────────┐
                    │ GPA below 2.0 but│         │ GPA stays below 2.0  │
                    │  >/= Dismissal level│──────│ but above Dismissal  │
                    │    Probation     │         │   Probation removed  │
                    └─────────────────┘          └──────────────────────┘
                                                 ┌──────────────────────┐
                                                 │   GPA drops below    │
                                                 │   Dismissal level    │
                                                 │  Academic warning    │
                                                 └──────────────────────┘
```

Review Cumulative GPA

- **Cumulative GPA above 2.0** — Good standing ★
- **GPA below 2.0 but >/= Dismissal level** — Probation
  - **Raise GPA above 2.0** — Probation removed
  - **GPA stays below 2.0 but above Dismissal** — Probation removed
  - **GPA drops below Dismissal level** — Academic warning
- **GPA below Dismissal level** — Academic warning
  - **Raise GPA above 2.0** — Good standing ★
  - **Raise GPA above Dismissal level but below 2.0** — Probation
    - **Raise GPA above 2.0** — Probation removed
    - **GPA stays below 2.0 but above Dismissal** — Probation continued
    - **GPA drops below Dismissal level** — Dismissal one long term
  - **Earn 2.5 semester GPA** — Continuance
    - **Raise GPA above 2.0** — Probation removed ★
    - **Earn 2.5 semester GPA and cumulative above Dismissal level** — Probation
    - **Earn 2.5 semester GPA** — Continuance
    - **Earn below 2.5 semester GPA** — Dismissal one long term
  - **Earn less than 2.5 semester GPA** — Dismissal one long term
    - **Upon return, raise GPA above 2.0** — Good standing ★
    - **Upon return, raise GPA above Dismissal level, but below 2.0** — Probation
    - **Upon return, earn 2.5 semester GPA and still below Dismissal level** — Continuance
    - **Upon return, earn less than 2.5 semester GPA** — Dismissal one academic year

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

Independent of a student's academic standing at the university, the Office of Financial Aid is required to monitor the academic progress of students who apply for and/or receive federal financial aid. To retain eligibility for federal financial aid, students must show satisfactory progress toward a degree based on one or both of the following requirements:

1. Financial aid recipients must meet the following minimum cumulative grade point average standards:

* includes transfer credit
** based on UTA courses only

Total Credit Hours Complete*	Minimum Cumulative GPA**
0-29	1.6
30-59	1.8
60+	2.0
Graduate	3.0

2. Financial aid recipients must successfully complete the following minimum number of credit hours when compared to the number of hours attempted based on enrollment at census:

Summer enrollment is considered as a separate term and would be added to the fall and spring and would change the minimum hours that needed to be completed.
** *Unsatisfactory grades are letter grades of F, W, I, and Z and will not be counted in the credit hours completed but will count as attempted credit hours.*

Total Number of Hours Enrolled in for Fall and Spring Terms*	Minimum Hours for Completion**
24+	16
18–23	12
12-17	8
6-11	6

Annually in May, the Office of Financial Aid reviews student records and notifies those students who have not met the requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress. If students are deemed ineligible for future federal financial aid, they can file an appeal for future aid or reapply for financial aid when they come back into compliance with these standards. A financial aid counselor can meet with you to discuss this policy more in-depth if you have concerns.

There are two common misconceptions that are important to discuss at this point. First, students who submit and are granted appeals for future financial aid sometimes believe that they are no longer subject to a dismissal period that they may be facing due to their academic standing. These two processes are independent; students who are granted an SAP appeal are not guaranteed enrollment for the next semester if they are on a Dismissal for One Long Term or One Full Academic Year.

Also, advisors often hear from students prior to the Last Drop Date, "I cannot drop this course because then they will take away my financial aid." However, the fact of the matter is that a letter grade of "F" has the same impact as a letter grade of "W" that is earned when you drop a course. It is important to weigh both the impact of a poor grade on your GPA and the number of drops accumulated toward your limit when dropping a course, not simply financial aid eligibility.

ADDING—DROPPING—WITHDRAWING

When a registration period opens for future sessions, students are allowed to enroll in courses during a short window of time based on their classification and possibly other special factors. Refer to your MyMav Student Services Center for information about when your initial enrollment window is scheduled. Students cannot make adjustments to their enrollment until registration opens for all students again. At that point, students can make adjustments to their course schedules through the Late Registration period for a given session. The Academic Calendar will provide enrollment dates.

UT Arlington Academic Calendar
uta.edu/acadcal

After Late Registration, all add and drop procedures must be completed with the assistance of an academic advisor in your major department or Division of Student Success if you are a freshman student. To add a course after Late Registration, you will need to access a form and obtain permission from your major advisor and then seek final approval from the department that offers the course. However, students who have academic standings other than Good Standing are rarely allowed by advisors to enroll in a course after the Late Registration period. In addition, once Census day has passed, students cannot be added to classes as a general rule.

Likewise, to drop a course after Late Registration, you will need to access a drop form that will ask you to get permission from your professor, which is meant to be an opportunity for you to verify your course performance and gain recommendations for possible development that may foster future success in the course. Once the professor has approved dropping the course, you return to your academic advisor to have the course removed from your schedule. Courses dropped prior to Census date are removed from your transcript as if you never enrolled in them, while courses dropped after Census but before the Last Drop date for the semester earn a "W" for that course on your transcript and counts as an attempted course when considering financial aid eligibility, the Six Course Drop Limit, and Excessive Hours policies.

While there are certainly consequences to dropping courses that need to be considered carefully, you need to discuss with your professor and your academic advisor early on if you are failing a course and need to consider dropping the course. Failure to drop a course can also have severe impacts on your grade point average that need to be weighed as well. Students who do not drop a course prior to the Last Drop day must file an exception to have courses dropped from their semester enrollment and receive a "W." In these cases, students must provide solid documentation and rationale for dropping past the Last Drop day for extraordinary, non-academic reasons.

Students who are unable to reasonably complete any of their enrolled coursework for a given semester need to talk with an academic advisor about withdrawing from all of their courses. Too many times, advisors encounter students who come back to them some time later with a damaged grade point average, because they encountered a life event that impaired their ability to complete their coursework which resulted in all F's for the semester. It is important that when serious illnesses or issues arise, you speak with your academic advisor about your options, which include withdrawing from courses rather than suffering the consequences after the fact.

SIX COURSE DROP LIMIT

Beginning Fall 2007, undergraduate students are only able to drop six courses during their entire undergraduate career. After students have exceeded this limit, they will earn the grade for the course. The state legislature created this policy in essence to encourage students to successfully complete courses that they enroll in given that the state subsidizes your tuition dollars for coursework at public institutions like UT Arlington. It is important for students to meet with their academic advisors each semester to develop a realistic schedule of courses to foster success. For instance, if you know that you have a sick family member that you may have to help take care of, consider enrolling in fewer course hours that semester. If you have to work more hours to help pay the bills, enroll in fewer courses that semester so that you have time to give quality attention to the courses you are taking.

EXCESSIVE HOURS

Students who entered college Fall 2006 and after will experience a financial penalty—equivalent to the charge of out-of-state tuition—for coursework taken beyond 30 hours of their major degree plan. For instance, if your major degree plan requires that you complete 120 hours to graduate with a degree, you have 30 hours beyond that to take exploratory courses. At the point in which that student enrolled in 151 credit hours, he/she would begin paying out-of-state tuition for those credit hours. Once again, this policy was enacted by the state legislature to encourage students to enter college, settle into a major, and graduate with a Bachelor's degree rather than simply accumulating a mass of credit hours from many different areas that do not result in earning a college degree.

This policy should not discourage a student from taking a few courses that they are interested in or exploring different majors. Students need to be aware that if they are not successfully completing the coursework for a given major that they may need to consider changing their major (or making the proper life adjustments) sooner rather than later to avoid the financial implications of this policy.

MIDTERM PROGRESS REPORTS

At UT Arlington, new freshman students, in addition to other special populations of students, will receive progress report grades during their first fall and spring semesters. Emails are sent to your UT Arlington MavMail account indicating that progress report information is available online in the MyMav Student Services Center. Academic advisors also receive information about your performance in class. If you have any concerns about your academic performance, it is important that you meet with your professor to verify your grade and what you need to do to improve your performance in the course. You should also meet with your academic advisor, who can put you

in touch with resources on campus to help you deal with the issues that may be impeding your performance.

6.5 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: WHY DOES IT MATTER SO MUCH?

The University of Texas at Arlington understands and values the hard work and effort you put into earning your degree. It is that understanding that makes the faculty and administration committed to ensuring that your degree has value when you enter the career of your choice. This commitment underscores our policy on scholastic dishonesty and academic integrity. It is our expectation here at UT Arlington that Mavericks use their own minds. As such, faculty and staff have a no tolerance policy when it comes to violating our scholastic dishonesty policies. It is important for you as an incoming student to understand the policies so that you know how to avoid placing yourself in violation.

Student Code of Conduct

The University policies on scholastic dishonesty can be found in the Student Code of Conduct (Chapter 2 of the Handbook of Operating Procedures).

Specifically the policy on Academic Integrity prohibits students from engaging in the following behaviors:

- Cheating on an examination or an assignment, which could include:
  - copying the work of another; allowing someone to copy; engaging in written, oral, or any other means of communication with another; giving aid to or seeking aid from another when not permitted by the instructor;

  - using material during an examination or when completing an assignment that is not authorized by the person giving the examination or making the work assignment, including, but not limited to, electronic or digital devices such as calculators, cell phones, camera phones, scanner pens, palms, or flash drives, etc.;

  - taking or attempting to take an examination for another, or allowing another to take or attempt to take an examination for you;

  - using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of an examination or work assignment that is not provided for your use by your instructor;

  - any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such an act.

- *Plagiarism*, meaning the unacknowledged incorporation of the work of another in work that is offered for credit.

- *Collusion*, meaning working with another student on homework or other assignments that are offered for credit when the faculty member hasn't given permission to do so.

Each class you attend at UT Arlington will have a syllabus that outlines the expectations of your work as a student in that faculty member's course. Included on each syllabus will be a statement regarding the expectations for academic integrity in that specific course. It is important for you to read this policy and to ask clarifying questions of your faculty member. Some faculty members will encourage working with others to problem solve homework, whereas some faculty members have strict policies against discussing homework with other students. Each course will be different, and it is your responsibility to be certain you know and abide by the policies in each of your classes.

Unfortunately, as a student at UT Arlington you may face obstacles that provide challenges to your academic integrity. Many students find they are pressured by a friend who hasn't prepared appropriately for class to share their assignments. Others find themselves stressed due to procrastination, and still others are pressured to maintain the highest grade marks and so make the decision to cheat, plagiarize, or collude to overcome those obstacles. What you must understand is

that the consequences to cheating, plagiarizing, and colluding far outweigh any temporary benefit you may receive.

It is the hope of all faculty and administrators at UT Arlington that you have a successful tenure as a Maverick and this includes maintaining your integrity in the classroom.

Academic Integrity – **uta.edu/conduct/academic-integrity**

Plagiarism Tutorial – **library.uta.edu/plagiarism**

UT Arlington Writing Center – **uta.edu/owl** **(Located in the Central Library; can provide assistance on written assignments)**

Activity 6-2:

Discuss the following case studies with a classmate or faculty member.

Case Study A

A student is in a class that is held in a computer lab. All the tests are computer-based. In preparation for the midterm examination, the professor gives several old versions of her tests for the students to use for practice/ study material. One student responds to all of the practice tests in electronic format and saves them on his desktop.

The midterm exam date rolls around and the professor indicates that the test will be open book. When the exam is passed out the student realizes that it is identical to one of the practice tests that the professor distributed for study material. The student pulls up a folder on his desktop marked Study Test Responses and copies and pastes his answers from his practice test directly to his examination.

Has the student committed scholastic dishonesty?

What would your response be if you knew that the student was a part of a study group and that they answered the practice test questions as a group?

What if the student and another student who was a part of the group both used the "group responses" in their examination?

Case Study B

A student submits a paper on the "History of Nursing." The student cites all her sources in a references page and does an in-text citation for any direct quotes. One section of the student's paper is below:

According to Wikipedia, "Nursing comes in various forms in every culture, although the definition of the term and the practice of nursing has changed greatly over time." One of the oldest definitions of the word from the English language is a woman who is hired to suckle and generally care for a young child. Later, this developed into the concept of looking

after someone, not just meaning a woman looking after a child. Nursing has developed into this later definition, although the concept of nourishing in the broadest sense refers to present day nursing and the promotion of quality of life.

When the professor goes to check the student's sources she stumbles upon this Wikipedia article:

*Nursing comes in various forms in every culture, although the definition of the term and the practice of nursing has changed greatly over time. The oldest sense of the word in the **English language** is a woman employed to suckle and/or generally care for a younger child. The former being known as a **wet nurse** and the latter being known as a dry nurse.[1] In the 15th century, this developed into the idea of looking after or advising another, not necessarily meaning a woman looking after a child.[1] Nursing has continued to develop in this latter sense, although the idea of nourishing in the broadest sense refers in modern nursing to promoting quality of life.*

Has the student plagiarized?

Why or why not?

CHAPTER 7: HEALTHY LIVING

7.1 EXERCISE AND DIET

IS GAINING WEIGHT PART OF THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE?

Is it true that freshmen gain up to fifteen pounds in the first year of college life? The "Freshman 15" is the popular belief that most college students will gain 15 lbs of weight in the first year of college. Vella-Zarb and Elgar (2008) found that when pooling the results of 24 studies and 3,401 subjects, the mean weight gain was 3.86 lbs. Approximately 36% of U.S. college students are estimated to be currently overweight or obese (American College Health Association, n.d.). Boyle and Larose (2008) surveyed 169 students and found that among healthy-weight students, greater self-efficacy (i.e., a personal evaluation about their abilities and skills to successfully complete a task) was associated with more physical activity and healthier diets. Of the 65% of Americans that are overweight, the greatest increases in weight gain occur in persons between the ages of 18–29 years. Adams and Cloner (2008) analyzed data from 40,209 college students that completed the American Health Association-College Health Assessment. They found relationships between physical activity, perceived health, sleep, self-care behaviors, and grades and the intake of high fruit and vegetable intake for men and women. In other words, your health is tied in with your college success in many ways.

You are in control of what happens during your college days. Sure enough, college is new and exciting with many changes and disruptions from familiar and stable conditions at home. Racette, Deusinger, Strube, Highstein, and Deusinger (2005) studied 764 college students during their freshman and sophomore years. They found that at the beginning of the freshman year 29% of the students reported not exercising, 70% ate fewer than five fruits and vegetables per day, and more than 50% ate fried or high-fat fast food at least 3 times during the previous weeks. By the end of their sophomore year 70% of the 290 students reassessed had gained weight. There are many things that you can do to ease the transition to college life while enjoying a healthy lifestyle. Why is it necessary to have a healthy diet? A healthy diet will result in a healthy body and this will ultimately result in good grades and decreased stress.

Students consider their choices at Connections Café in the University Center.

WHAT IS A HEALTHY DIET?

A healthy diet can be incorporated in a lifestyle at college whether you are living at home, in a residence hall, or sharing a home with roommates. In order to maintain a healthy diet, you must understand what constitutes a healthy diet. At ChooseMyPlate.gov, you are able to enter height and weight and get a plan for a non-therapeutic diet according to the current dietary guidelines. You will

receive a customized food guide. The site also has topics related to physical activity, sample menus, tips for eating out, vegetarian diets, and healthy holiday eating. You can also follow ChooseMyPlate tip daily or follow ChooseMyPlate on Twitter©.

ChooseMyPlate.gov hosted by the United States Department of Agriculture
choosemyplate.gov

When you are at college, you have opportunities to socialize and that often means opportunities for dining out. Luckily, most restaurants are now providing calorie counts for items on their menus. As a supplement to these, you can access virtually any restaurant and the nutritional facts on the menu items at the USDA's FoodData Central.

USDA FoodData Central

https://fdc.nal.usda.gov/

Your living situation will affect your plans and access to a healthy diet. You may be eating on campus most of the time, or you may be cooking for yourself for the first time. Regardless of your living arrangement, the key to a healthy diet is planning for your snacks and meals. The food plans on the ChooseMyPlate.gov site suggests three meals per day plus two snacks are satisfactory. (While you work to maintain healthy eating habits, it's important to remember that skipping meals is not recommended as it can result in binge eating, as well as low blood sugar levels that contribute to lower levels of concentration, dizziness, weakness and crankiness.) The on-campus dining facilities make it a point to offer a number of healthy meal and snack options.

If you live off-campus, though, you can prepare your own foods and may be tempted to be less than healthy. To help ensure a proper diet, it is helpful to make a list of what you would like to purchase when going to the grocery store and following through with that list. Create a list that includes mostly fresh and unprepared foods. Purchasing less prepackaged food is not only more cost effective, it provides a healthier diet. Also, you can cook meals ahead of time and freeze them or plan to eat them for the week in order to save time. However, remember that even if you live off-campus, you can purchase an on-campus meal plan for the Connection Café and let them plan your breakfast and lunches for you. For those who live on-campus, the key to eating on campus is to make healthy choices. If you have a meal plan at the cafeteria, remember that there are many foods from which you can choose— you can choose to eat pizza or you can choose to eat baked chicken and a vegetable. In addition, on-campus housing may permit the use of a refrigerator. If not, always be prepared with snacks that do not require refrigerating or heating. Some examples of these snacks are fruit cups, fresh

fruits, nuts, and peanut butter and crackers. If you are faced with choosing a snack from the vending machines, your choice for healthy foods is more limited.

Depending on your circumstances, you may have to prepare your own meals. If you have not done this before, then you will need some help. Some suggestions are investing in crock pot cooking and purchasing a recipe book that demonstrates quick and healthy meals within minutes using less than five ingredients. Remember to double the recipe so that you can have leftovers for those times when you are busy studying for exams or writing papers.

HOW MUCH WATER SHOULD I DRINK?

Total water intake includes water in drinking water, beverages, and water contained in food. Adequate water intake was derived from U.S. survey data (U.S. Departments of Health & Human Services & Agriculture, 2005), and adequate intake for young men and women aged 19 to 30 years is 3.7 L to 2.7 L respectively. The Beverage Guidance system has recommended that water intake be limited from high-calorie beverages to very low-calorie beverages to ensure healthier living and to combat the obesity epidemic.

WHAT ABOUT EXERCISE?

A freshman faces many challenges, and incorporating exercise can be difficult with a change in lifestyle and schedule. However, the benefits of exercise outweigh the complications of including it in your routine. For instance, it has been shown that exercise can decrease blood pressure, stress levels, and risk of osteoporosis in women.

You can be successful with the inclusion of an exercise regime in your new life, but it is very important to find an activity that you like. Setting a schedule is advisable for success in your program. Also, doing a variety of activities will result in less boredom, and incorporating fun activities with family and friends can be very encouraging. The Maverick Activities Center (MAC) offers a wide range of exercise options from free-play sports, exercise equipment, swimming, indoor track, etc. Getting

involved in intramural sports can also increase your activity level while meeting some social needs. Also, you will have the opportunity to walk on campus to contribute to your exercise activity, so don't be so concerned with finding the closest parking spot available.

When considering exercise, keep some things in mind. First, it is important to remember that before embarking on any exercise program, you should be cleared by your physician. Also, make sure you have the correct equipment, clothing, and gear to prevent injuries. If you plan to cycle or jog, caution is urged to prevent injuries due to accidents on campus and in the city. Knowing the rules of the game is also essential to prevent injuries.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

health.gov

healthfinder.gov

Type in "Activity" in the search box to find charts on exercise activities and levels of exertion.

Also, for the most benefit, exercise at least a few times a week. The American College of Sports Medicine (ASCM) and the American Heart Association (AHA) recommend that adults under the age of 65 do moderately intense cardio 30 minutes a day, five days a week, or vigorously intense cardio 20 minutes a day, three days a week. The AHA and ASCM also recommend 8–10 strength-training exercises, 8–12 repetitions of each exercise twice per week.

American College of Sports Medicine acsm.org
Type in "Strength-Training Exercises" in the search box to find information on different types of exercises and guidelines for starting a program.

Now that you are armed with resources and information to develop and/or maintain a healthy lifestyle through diet and exercise, you are sure to be successful as you embark on the career that you desire. Live, laugh, and learn while maintaining optimum health.

7.2 SLEEP AND SLEEP HABITS

In addition to exercise, sleep is an essential part of your daily routine. Sleep allows your brain to "reset" and your body to remain healthy. The sleep-wake cycle consists of roughly 8 hours of nocturnal sleep and 16 hours of daytime wakefulness. This cycle is controlled by two internal influences: sleep homeostasis and circadian rhythms. More than 25% of the U.S. population report occasionally not getting enough sleep. Nearly 10% have chronic insomnia (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2009). These can be serious problems for a college student.

Catch a snooze where you can, but make sure you are achieving quality sleep in your bed as well.

WHY IS SLEEP IMPORTANT?

Sleep loss results in a "sleep debt." Sleep debt is the accumulated loss of sleep that is lost due to poor sleep habits. Like any other debt, sleep debt must eventually get repaid, or there will be consequences to personal health and well-being. For example, staying awake all night results in a sleep debt of 7 to 9 hours. Our bodies will demand that this debt be repaid by napping or sleeping longer in later cycles. Even loss of one hour of sleep over several days can have a negative effect. Insufficient sleep is

associated with a number of chronic diseases and conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and depression. Daytime sleepiness can affect mood, performance, and memory, and insufficient sleep leading to daytime drowsiness is responsible for injury and death resulting from lapses in attention and delayed response (National Sleep Foundation, 2006). At least 100,000 police-reported motor vehicle accidents each year, killing more than 1,500 Americans and injuring another 71,000, are caused by drowsiness or fatigue. More specifically, drivers aged 25 and younger (the typical college-aged student) are involved in more than one-half of fall-asleep motor vehicle crashes (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2009).

HOW MUCH SLEEP DO I NEED?

The National Sleep Foundation recommends adolescents and young adults aged 18–25 years sleep 8.5 to 9.5 hours of sleep every night. As indicated in Table 7-1, adults should sleep 7–9 hours every night (National Sleep Foundation, 2009). The National Sleep Foundation has many resources including sleep facts and tips for restful sleep.
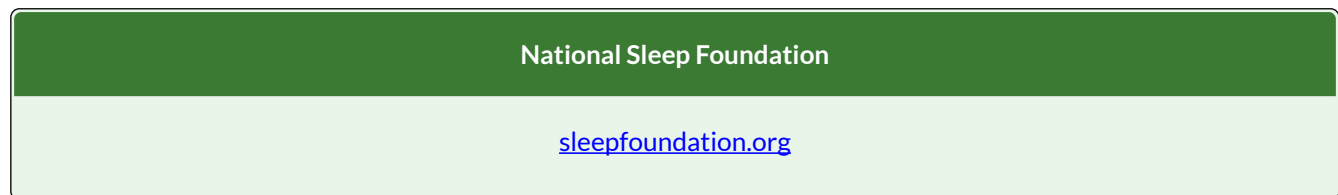
National Sleep Foundation
sleepfoundation.org

Table 7-1. Sleep Requirements – How much sleep do you really need?
National Sleep Foundation, 2009.

Age	Sleep Needs
Newborns(1-2 months)	10.5-18 hours
Infants (3–11 months)	9–12 hours during night and 30 minutes to 2-hour naps, one to four times a day
Toddlers (1–3 years)	12–14 hours
Preschoolers (3–5 years)	11–13 hours
School-aged Children (5–12 years)	10–11 hours
Teens (11–17)	8.5–9.25 hours
Adults	7–9 hours
Older Adults	7–9 hours

SLEEP HYGIENE TIPS

1. Avoid caffeinated drinks after lunch.

2. Go to bed at the same time each night and rise at the same time each morning.

3. Avoid bright light in the evening. Make sure your bedroom is quiet, dark, and relaxing.

4. Avoid arousing activities around bedtime such as heavy study, text messaging, prolonged conversations, and heavy exercise.

5. Avoid large meals before bedtime.

6. Avoid pulling an "all-nighter" to study.

7. Sleeping in on weekends is okay. However, it should not be more than 2 to 3 hours past your usual wake time to avoid disrupting your circadian rhythm.

National Sleep Foundation, 2009

7.3 STRESS AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

You are now in college, and you are experiencing a transition in your life. With life transitions, there are many new challenges. How you deal with these challenges will determine your success at college. Very often, we do not know the type of stressors that we face and how to deal with them. During the freshman year you will encounter new life circumstances and firsts such as independent living, management of finances, and a testing of your decision-making skills (Darling, McWay, Howards, & Olmstead, 2007). The American College Health Association (ACHA) and National College Health Association (NCHA) reported in 2007 that one of the top five impediments to academic performance included stress, and in self-reported data by 23,863 college students, the ACHA and NCHA found that the number one impediment to academic impairment of a total of ten impediments was stress. In this section you will be able to determine the stressors that you may face and how to deal with them.

WHAT IS STRESS?

The UT Arlington Health Center and the University Stress Planning Group have discussed stress. Stress is a response to a demand that is placed on you. You need a certain amount of stress for action, but it is short term, and once the activity is over, you can relax. During periods of stress

you experience physiological changes such as increased heart rate, higher blood pressure, and muscle tension. If you are unable to return to your original state, then these physiological effects build and eventually lead to mental and physical exhaustion and illness.

In a sample of 249 undergraduate students, Misra and McKean (2000) found that time management behaviors had a greater buffering effect on academic stress than engaging in leisure activities. Freshmen and sophomore students had higher reactions to stress than juniors and seniors. A survey by the ACHA (2007) of more than 165,000 students found that 33.7% students reported stress interfered with academic performance and resulted in missing classes, receiving lower grades, and dropping courses, and stress and maladaptive coping strategies were associated with physical and mental illnesses. Ross, Niebling, and Heckert (1999) gave the Student Stress Survey to 100 students and found five major sources of stress. The five sources were change in sleeping habit, vacations/breaks, eating habits, increased workload, and new responsibilities.

Experience Inc., a for-profit provider of career services to students and alumni, did a recent survey on more than 300 students and found that many college students experience stress. Twenty-three percent of respondents reported that juggling work and school created the most stress in their lives. Scott (2009) notes that academic stress is caused by the different workload in college, challenging classes, and an independent learning structure. Freshmen face social stresses such as a new social network, less parental support, being away from home, living with a roommate, part-time jobs, and the dynamics of relationships. Other stresses include day-to-day chores, time management, and the developmental tasks of young adulthood. If not managed, stress can result in feelings of being overwhelmed, which can result in unhealthy habits like heavy drinking, weight issues, and possibility of dropping out from college.

HOW CAN I MANAGE STRESS?

UT Arlington provides several resources to help students manage their stress. For example, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers 6 free counseling sessions per semester and Therapy Assistance Online (TAO), a platform with more than 150 sessions related to mental health topics, including stress management. However, there are additional quick tips that can help lower stress.

Therapy Assistance Online (TAO)

UTA Counseling and Psychological Services – Scroll to the TAO section to learn more how to sign up for this service.

QUICK TIPS FOR STRESS REDUCTION

In order to reduce stress, the following tips and techniques may be helpful (Scott, 2009):

1. Create a good study space and environment.

2. Decrease caffeine intake.

3. Make your deadline for projects and assignments one week before the actual deadline.

4. Know your learning style.

5. Be optimistic.

6. Develop and maintain healthy sleeping habits.

7. Manage your time effectively.

8. Practice visualizations on what you want to achieve.

9. Maintain a good diet and exercise regularly.

In conclusion, you are in control of your destiny, so ensure that you will have a successful college experience.

7.4 MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is not just an absence of mental illness. Mental health is a combination of mental wellness and mental fitness that allows you to flourish. Persons with mental health are able to enjoy life and all that life has to offer. Positive characteristics of mental health include courage, optimism, hope, honesty, interpersonal skills, a positive work ethic, and perseverance. Other key characteristics include high self-esteem, positive body image, managing stress and sadness, and respecting yourself and others (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2010).

WHAT IS SELF-ESTEEM?

Self-esteem is the manner in which you view yourself. It is important to view yourself as a worthwhile and special person. It is not unusual to feel bad about yourself sometimes, especially when triggered by a negative event. Occasional negative feelings are normal. However, chronic low self-esteem is not normal or healthy. Persons with chronic low self-esteem are more likely to experience negative

thoughts (see Table 7-2), depression, anxiety, phobias, and psychosis. If you feel that you have chronic low self-esteem, it is important to seek help. Talk to your doctor, a counselor from UT Arlington Counseling Services, or visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Web site (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services, n.d.).

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services— Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services
samhsa.gov

Table 7-2. Negative vs. Positive Thoughts
From U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services, n.d.

Negative Thought	Positive Thought
I don't deserve a good life	I deserve to be happy and healthy
I am stupid	I am smart
I am not worth anything	I am a valuable person
I have never accomplished anything	I have accomplished many things
I always make mistakes	I do many things well
I am a jerk	I am a great person

HOW DO I BUILD SELF-ESTEEM?

Try these tips to build your self-esteem. Remember to include friends and family in the process.

1. Pay attention to your own needs and wants.

2. Take good care of yourself.

3. Participate in activities that you enjoy.

4. Take the time to accomplish goals you have set, even small ones.

5. Reward yourself and treat yourself well.

6. Keep your living space neat and tidy. Fill it with items you love.

7. Take the opportunity to learn something new and share your talents.

WHY IS BUILDING POSITIVE BODY IMAGE IMPORTANT?

A positive body image means feeling happy about your body in shape, size, strength, stature, and appearance. It means knowing what your body is really like and accepting your unique body (see Table 7-3). Being unhappy about your body can affect how you think and feel about yourself. Poor body image can lead to emotional distress, anxiety, depression, isolation, or eating disorders (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2009).

Table 7-3. Negative and Positive Body Image
National Eating Disorders Association, 2005

Negative body image is . . .	Positive body image is . . .
A distorted perception of your shape—you perceive parts of your body unlike they really are	A clear, true perception of your shape—you see the various parts of your body as they really are
You are convinced that only other people are attractive and that your body size or shape is a sign of personal failure	You celebrate and appreciate your natural body shape and you understand that a person's physical appearance says very little about their character and value as a person
You feel ashamed, self-conscious, and anxious about your body	You feel proud and accepting of your unique body and refuse to spend an unreasonable amount of time worrying about food, weight, and calories
You feel uncomfortable and awkward in your body	You feel comfortable and confident in your body

HOW DO I BUILD A BETTER BODY IMAGE?

Some of the tips are similar to building self-esteem. Overall, you should take care of yourself and honor who you are. Participate in activities that you enjoy and make yourself feel good. More specifically, consider:

1. Eating healthy foods and exercise for the benefit of feeling good.

2. Listing 5–10 special qualities about yourself, such as intelligence, sensitivity, or imagination.

3. Wearing clothes that are comfortable and make you feel good about yourself.

4. Actively choosing to take care of yourself.

From U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse, and Mental Health Services, n.d.

WHAT ABOUT MENTAL ILLNESS?

Mental disorders affect an estimated 26.2% of Americans ages 18 and older (1 in 4 adults). Mental disorders are widespread. The most common mental disorders are mood disorders, such as depression and anxiety disorders. Approximately 9.5% (20.9 million) of American adults ages 18 and older have a mood disorder. Depressive disorders include major depression and dysthymic (mild) depression and others. These disorders often occur along with anxiety disorders and substance abuse (National Institutes of Mental Health, 2009). Students, who may come to college under treatment for a mental illness or who may develop one while in college, need to be sure that they seek regular treatment for those illnesses to be effective in college given the typical stressors and pressure.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I AM DEPRESSED?

Not all persons experience the same symptoms. Symptoms of depression vary in severity, frequency, and duration. Use the following list of symptoms guide. Talk to your doctor or counselor for more information.

1. Persistent sadness, emptiness, or anxiety

2. Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism

3. Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness

4. Loss of interest in usual activities that were once pleasurable

5. Irritability, restlessness

6. Fatigue, decreased energy, wanting to sleep all the time

7. Difficulty concentrating, making decisions, or remembering details

8. Insomnia or early-morning wakefulness

9. Overeating or undereating

10. Persistent aches, pain, cramps, headaches, or digestive problems unresolved with

treatment

11. Thoughts of suicide or suicide attempts

From National Institutes of Mental Health, 2009

WHAT DO I DO IF I THINK I AM DEPRESSED?

Everyone feels sad or blue once in a while. Depression occurs when these feelings do not go away on their own or recur for an extended period of time. The first thing you should do is contact your health care provider for help. Depression can be treated with medication, therapy, or other means. Getting help is important (National Institutes of Mental Health, 2010, Depression).

WHAT IF I OR SOMEONE I KNOW IS IN CRISIS?

If you are thinking about harming yourself, or know someone who is, tell someone who can help immediately.

- Call your doctor.

- Call **911** or go to a hospital emergency room for immediate help or ask a friend or family

member to help you do these things.

- Call the toll-free, 24-hour hotline of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by dialing **988** or **1-800-273-TALK** (1-800-273-8255);

For TTY dial **1-800-799-4TTY** (1-800-799-4889) to talk to a trained crisis counselor.

- Make sure that you or the person in crisis is not left alone.

National Institutes of Mental Health, 2010, Suicide Prevention

7.5 ALCOHOL, DRUGS, AND TOBACCO USE

Alcohol use is highest among young adults. According to the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse & Alcoholism, 2005), 70% of young adults in the United States consumed alcohol in the previous year. Research shows that young adults not only drink more often but are more prone to binge drinking and heavy drinking (see Figure 7-1). Binge drinking is defined as drinking many drinks in a row at least one time during a month. Heavy drinking is defined as drinking five or more drinks in a row at least five times in one month. Drinking is detrimental to health and leads to alcohol-related traffic fatalities. In 2003, 32% of young drivers involved in fatal traffic accidents had measurable alcohol in their blood. Fifty-one percent of drivers aged 21–24 who died tested positive for alcohol (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, 2008).

WHAT CONSTITUTES "ONE DRINK"?

The amount of one drink is different for each type of alcoholic beverage. All of the following are one-drink equivalents.

12 oz beer = 8 oz malt liquor = 5 oz table wine = 1.5 oz of 80 proof liquor

Note that one drink can contain multiple servings. For example, a 40 oz bottle of beer contains 3.3 drinks, and mixing liquor to make one cocktail can add up to more than one drink (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse & Alcoholism, 2005).

Figure 7-1. Percentage of Current Drinkers in College Who Attended Various Places to Obtain Alcohol, by Age: Texas, 2005
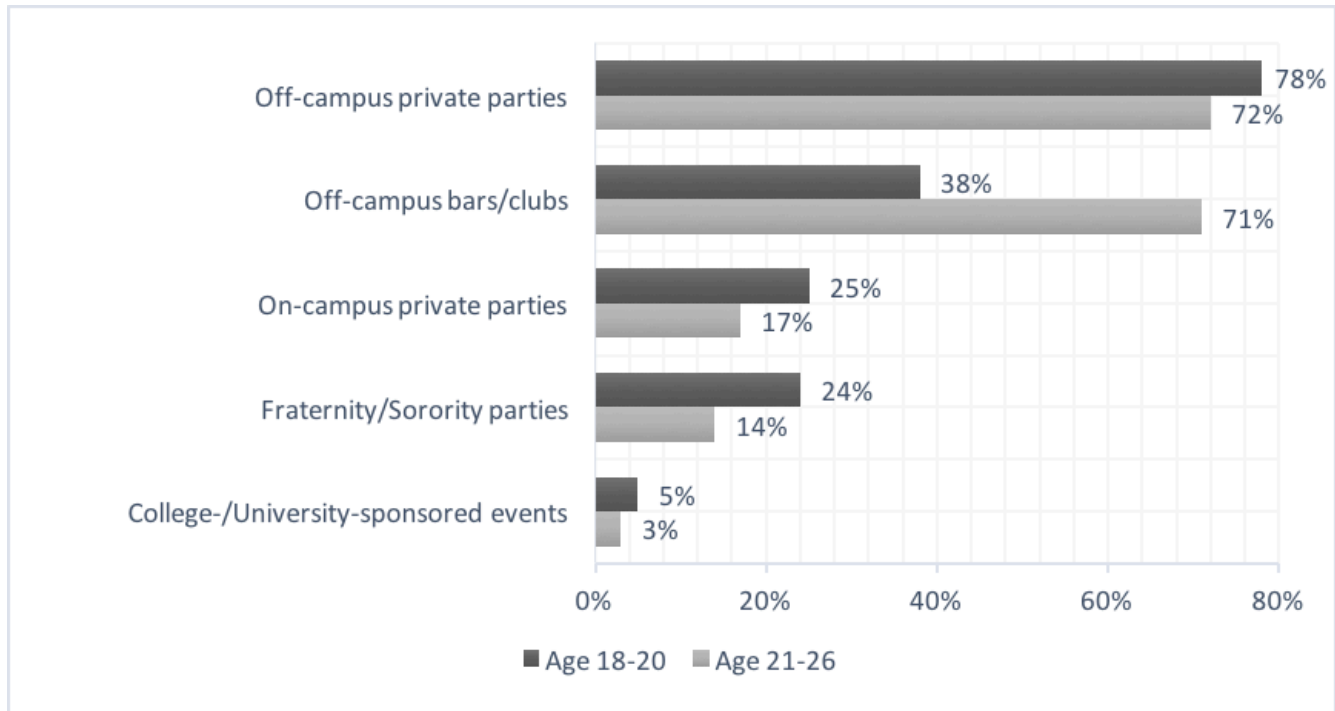
WHY IS BINGE DRINKING A PROBLEM?

Binge drinking may appear harmless but the consequences are very serious. Binge drinking is defined as drinking five drinks in a row for males or four drinks for females. Binge drinkers are eight times more likely to miss class or get behind in schoolwork. Binge drinking can lead to "blackouts" or not remembering what happened during drinking. Binge drinkers are also much more likely to drink and drive.

The most serious side effect of binge drinking is alcohol poisoning. When an excessive amount of alcohol is consumed, oxygen is not delivered to the brain. The lack of oxygen will cause bodily functions to shut down, much like an overdose. These symptoms are serious and can lead to death. Call emergency services (911) if alcohol poisoning is suspected. Symptoms of alcohol poisoning include:

- Vomiting

- Unconsciousness

- Cold, clammy, pale, or bluish skin

- Slow or irregular breathing (less than 8 breaths a minute or 10 or more seconds between breaths) (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, 2008)

ISN'T DRINKING ALCOHOL JUST PART OF THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE?

Research shows that drinking alcohol is prevalent for persons in their twenties, regardless of student status. Yet surprisingly, persons in their twenties who attend college tend to drink less often overall and in less quantity. Students who finish college are less likely to continue drinking past early college years. Rates of alcohol dependence are lower in 18–24 year olds who attend college (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, 2008). So, to answer the question above, just because you are in college does not mean you need to feel pressured or obligated to drink.

AM I DRINKING TOO MUCH?

A useful short assessment to determine if you think you should talk to someone about your drinking is the "CAGE" questionnaire (Ewing, 1984).

• Have you ever felt you should cut down on your drinking?	YES	NO
• Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?	YES	NO
• Have you ever felt bad or guilty about your drinking?	YES	NO
• Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning (an eye opener) to steady your nerves or get rid of a hangover?	YES	NO

Answering with even one "yes" answer suggests a possible problem with alcohol. More than one "yes" answer means that it is highly likely that a problem with alcohol exists.

WHAT DOES ALCOHOL DO TO THE BODY?

The effects depend on how much someone drinks and for how long. Short-term effects of alcohol that occur after only one to two drinks are difficulty walking, blurred vision, slurred speech, slowed reaction times, and impaired memory. These effects resolve after drinking stops. Misuse of alcohol affects every part of your body, including your kidneys, liver, central nervous system, and brain. Long-

term effects of persistent drinking include impaired kidney function, cirrhosis of the liver, nervous disorders, and brain damage (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse & Alcoholism, 2005).

A study by the Harvard School of Public Health (Wechsler & Nelson, 2008) found that negative effects of alcohol occur even at small levels. Alcohol can reduce cognitive and psychomotor performance which can lead to negative health consequences. The number of drinks consumed at one time significantly increases your risk of alcohol-related injury, such as falls and motor vehicle accidents.

CAN DRINKING AFFECT MY SCHOOLWORK?

Wechsler and Nelson (2008) from the Harvard School of Public Health concluded that drinking alcohol, either routinely or binge drinking, can negatively affect school performance. Academic performance is affected by skipping classes, risk-taking behaviors such as academic dishonesty, ignoring deadlines, and spending fewer hours studying resulting from drinking. Alcohol consumption can also affect social relationships, including relationships with peers and faculty.

WHAT ABOUT DRUGS?

In 2005, the Texas Department of State Health Services conducted a survey of substance abuse among college students (Liu, 2007). Although drug use was found to be lower than alcohol use, many college students use drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, stimulants, sedatives, and others (see Figure 7-2). In 2005 (Liu, 2007), 23% of all students used an illicit drug within the previous year. Thirteen percent used within the previous month. Male students were much more likely than female students to abuse drugs. Drug use increased among students who were members of a fraternity or sorority, and drinking alcohol was more common with students who used drugs.

Figure 7-2. Lifetime and Past-Month Use of Selected Substances among College Students: Texas, 2005
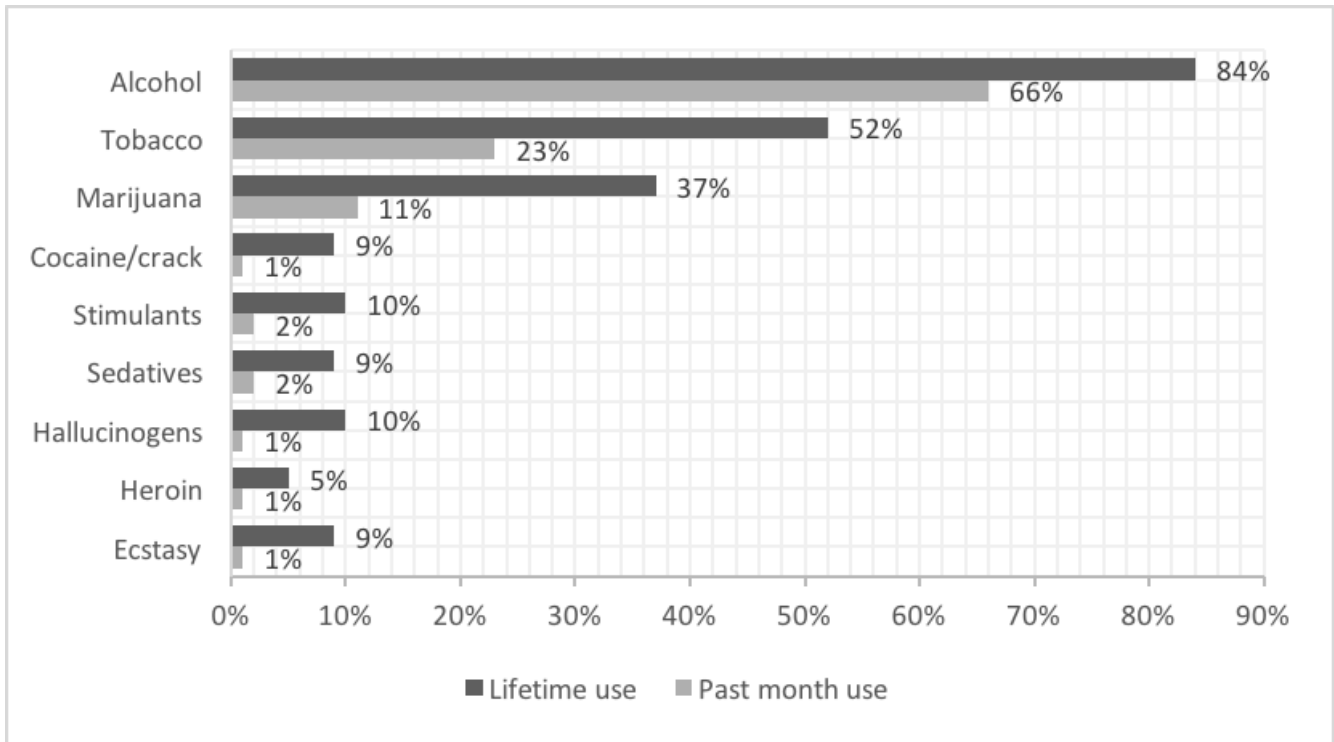
Alcohol — Lifetime use: 84%, Past month use: 66%
Tobacco — Lifetime use: 52%, Past month use: 23%
Marijuana — Lifetime use: 37%, Past month use: 11%
Cocaine/crack — Lifetime use: 9%, Past month use: 1%
Stimulants — Lifetime use: 10%, Past month use: 2%
Sedatives — Lifetime use: 9%, Past month use: 2%
Hallucinogens — Lifetime use: 10%, Past month use: 1%
Heroin — Lifetime use: 5%, Past month use: 1%
Ecstasy — Lifetime use: 9%, Past month use: 1%

■ Lifetime use   ■ Past month use

Illicit Drugs	Routes for Use	Effects of Drug	Effects on Health	Effects on Brain
Marijuana	Smoking, ingestion	Silliness, rapid heartbeat, rapid pulse, dry eyes, dry mouth	Lung disease, depression, anxiety, decreased fertility	Loss of memory, learning problems, loss of attention
Cocaine	Intranasal, smoking, injection, ingestion	Euphoria; alertness; increased talking; increased sensitivity to touch, light, and sound; increased temperature, heart rate, and blood pressure	Changes in heart rhythm, heart attack, stroke, seizure, headaches, abdominal pain, nausea, coma, sudden death	Irritability, restlessness, paranoia, psychosis
Inhalants (amylnitrite, benzene, butane, freon, methylene chloride, nitrous oxide, toluene, trichloroethylene)	Inhalation	Euphoria, slurred speech, dizziness, lightheadedness, reddened eyes, runny nose	Irregular and rapid heart rhythms, fatal heart failure, asphyxiation, suffocation, seizures, choking, coma, fatal injury	Nerves are stripped which leads to problems with cognition, movement, vision, and hearing
Methamphetamine	Smoking, ingestion	Euphoria, rapid heartbeat, alertness, increased talking	Anxiety, confusion, hallucinations, severe dental problems, weight loss	Psychosis, mood disturbances, paranoia, violent behavior, deterioration of emotional response, reduced memory, molecular changes of brain tissue
Ecstasy	Ingestion	Mental stimulation, emotional warmth, empathy, sense of well-being, decreased anxiety	Heart failure, kidney failure, hyperthermia, dehydration, high blood pressure, irregular heart rhythm, blurred vision	Confusion, depression, impaired memory, reduced attention, poor cognition, reduced motor function
Heroin	Ingestion, inhalation, injection, smoking	Euphoria, slowed reaction time, slowed thinking, slowed memory, drowsiness	Restlessness, liver disease, kidney disease, clogged blood vessels	Changes in neurons and cells in the brain, impaired learning, impaired memory, convulsions, coma
Club Drugs (GHB, Rohypnol, Ketamine)	Ingestion	Loss of muscle and motor function, increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, drowsiness, unconsciousness	Seizures, coma, high blood pressure, fatal respiratory problems	Increased sleep, coma, amnesia, feelings of detachment, impaired attention, decreased learning ability, poor memory

Thought Question

How can using drugs impact your ability to learn in college?

Marijuana is the most popular illicit drug. About 37% of college students reported experience with marijuana. Males were twice as likely to use marijuana as females. Many students (61%) believe

marijuana to be harmless (Liu, 2007), but it can cause depression, anxiety, and personality disturbances. Marijuana limits the ability of the user to learn and remember information, and it can also affect social skills and daily life functioning (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2010). Research has shown that marijuana's effects on memory and learning lasts many days or weeks after the effects of the drug wears off (Block & Ghonheim, 1993). Students who smoke marijuana, even occasionally, get lower grades and have difficulty with registering, organizing, and using information (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2010).

WHAT ABOUT TOBACCO?

We have long known that tobacco (cigarettes and chewing tobacco) is detrimental to your health. Still, tobacco use is common among college students. Studies show that college students use tobacco when stressed or when friends use tobacco (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, 2008). Nationally, 27% of persons aged 12 and older used tobacco in 2002–2003 (Office of Applied Studies, 2008). Tobacco contains nicotine, an addictive substance, and addiction can occur after smoking as few as 100 cigarettes (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2009).

Figure 7-3. Percentage of College-Aged Students Smoking Habits
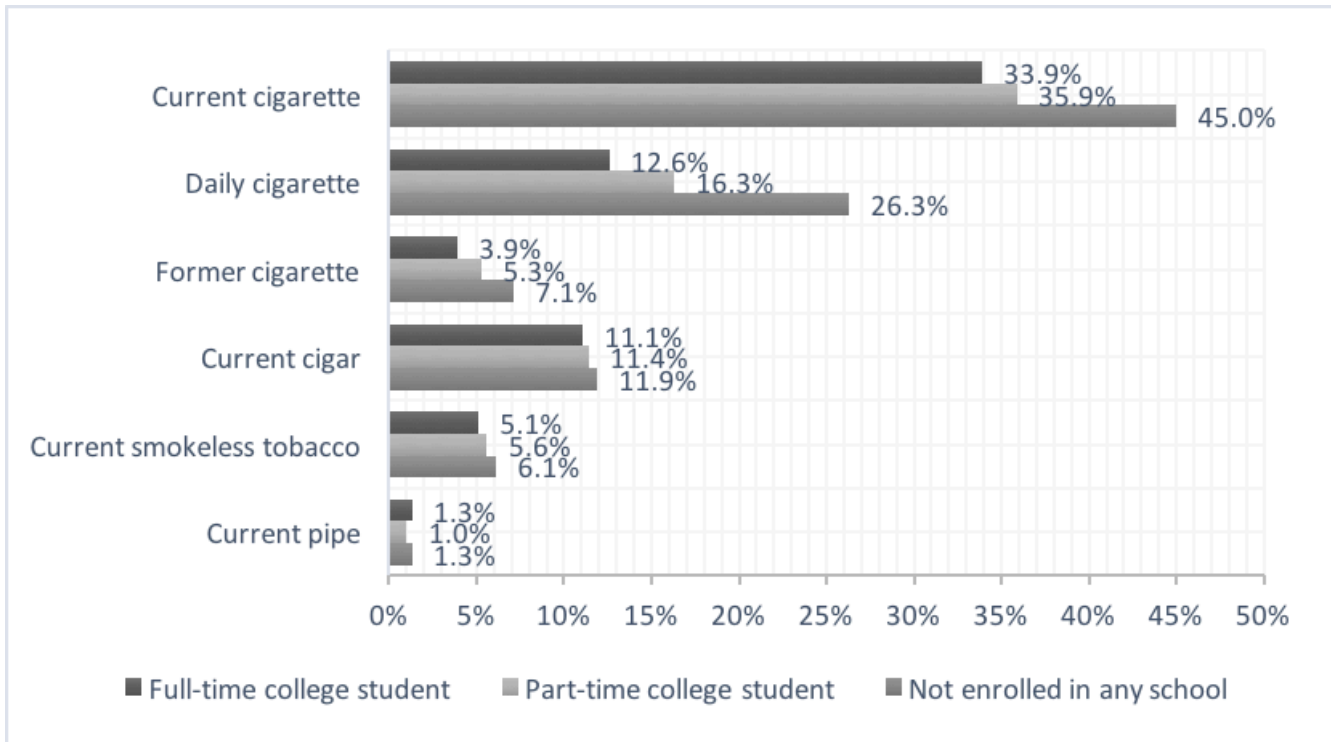
Tobacco can affect your health on a long-term basis. Smoking is the leading cause of lung cancer, and it can also affect your mouth, throat, bladder, pancreas, and kidneys. Cigarette smoking accounts for 44,000 U.S. deaths each year (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2009). Similar to drinking, some college students develop smoking habits in college thinking it is part of the college experience. Given the long-term health ramifications and addictive nature of smoking, think twice about starting a habit with such consequences.

7.6 SEX AND SEXUAL HEALTH

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010) define sexual health as overall well-being in relation to sexuality. It is not merely the absence of disease, but physical, emotional, mental, and social wellness as each relates to sexual relationships.

Sexual intercourse should occur only when you are ready. Sexual activity includes not only sexual intercourse, but also oral sex, anal sex, and vaginal sex (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2008). A positive attitude and respect for you and your partner will lead to improved sexual health. Sexual activity should occur only when you are ready—and not merely on a whim— given the consequence of poor decisions.

Although sexual intercourse is a natural expression of sexuality, poor sexual practices can lead to unwanted consequences, such as pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Compared to older adults, sexually active adolescents and young adults are at a much higher risk for sexually transmitted infections. In 2007, fewer than half (48%) of high school students reported having sexual intercourse at least once. Males are slightly more likely to have had sexual intercourse than females, and males usually begin having sex at younger ages. The median age for sexual debut (first time) for males is 16.9 years of age compared with 17.4 years of age for females. Males aged 20–24 are also more likely to have four or more partners than females (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2008).

WHAT IS RISKY ABOUT ORAL SEX?

Each sexual situation carries its own risk. Many young adults engage in oral sex. Approximately half of young adults have engaged in oral sex and consider oral sex a less risky alternative to vaginal or anal sex, but oral sex can lead to infections of the mouth if your partner has a STI such as chlamydia or gonorrhea. However, not all STIs will cause an oral infection (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2008).

WHAT ARE STIS?

STIs are Sexually Transmitted Infections. In 2008, approximately 22.1 million persons aged 15–24

were infected with one or more STI, including chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), trichomoniasis, genital herpes, and Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV).

HOW WILL I KNOW IF I HAVE A STI?

Each STI has unique symptoms. A quick overview is provided. Routine checkups with your health care provider should be scheduled at least once yearly. Checkups will include a general health survey. Ask the UT Arlington Health Services or your regular health care provider for a STI screening, including physical exam and laboratory collection (blood drawn) with your yearly checkup and any time you are concerned about illness.

STI	Infection Location	Signs and Symptoms
Chlamydia	Mouth, throat, vagina, penis, anus, urethra	**Women:** abnormal vaginal discharge, lower abdominal abnormal pain **Both:** rectal pain or rectal bleeding (if anus infected), sore throat (if mouth infected), burning with urination **Men:** discharge from penis, burning or itching at penis opening
Gonorrhea *Note: Symptoms MAY NOT occur until late in illness (>30 days)*	Mouth, throat, eyes, vagina, penis, anus, urethra	**Women:** increased vaginal discharge, vaginal bleeding between periods Both: burning with urination; anal itching, soreness, bleeding or painful bowel movements (if anus infected); sore throat (if mouth infected) **Men:** white, yellow or green discharge from penis; painful or swollen testicles
Syphilis *Note: Symptoms MAY NOT occur until late in illness (10–90 days)*	Mouth, lips, vagina, penis, anus, rectum	Signs and symptoms occur in stages. The symptoms of the primary (first) stage may not appear for many days. These can persist for 3–6 weeks before progressing into the second stage. Only the primary stage symptoms are listed. **Primary Stage:** Appearance of a small, single sore (chancre) on the infected site. The sore is small, round and painless.
HPV *Note: Symptoms MAY NOT occur until late in illness (weeks to months)*	Vagina, penis, anus, throat (rare)	Most DO NOT develop symptoms. Small bump or cluster of bumps in the genital area can occur. Bumps are small or large, flat or rough. Bumps are resolved within 2 years.
HIV	Blood	Signs and symptoms occur in stages. No symptoms may be present for weeks to months after infection. Symptoms persist but may be intermittently improve. **Early infection:** fever, headache, sore throat, swollen glands, rash **Later weight infection:** Swollen lymph nodes, diarrhea, weight loss, fever, cough, shortness of breadth
Genital Herpes	Mouth, lips, vagina, penis, anus	Painful sore at the location of illness
Trichomoniasis	Vagina, urethra	**Women:** frothy, yellow-green vaginal discharge; strong or foul vaginal odor; discomfort during sexual intercourse, discomfort during urination **Men:** Symptoms may not occur at all; irritation to the inside of the penis; mild discharge from penis; slight burning after urination or ejaculation

UT ARLINGTON SERVICES FOR HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Health Services
605 S. West Street
817-272-2771
click to visit Health Services

The University of Texas Arlington Health Services is an outpatient (ambulatory) facility open 12 months a year, Monday through Friday, with a Saturday medical clinic during the Fall and Spring terms. The facility is staffed with physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, pharmacists, and lab and x-ray technicians. General medical care, women's health, and mental health are provided. In addition, health promotion and substance abuse education are available. Services include immunizations allergy shots, a highly complex medical laboratory, a Class A Pharmacy, and a diagnostic radiology department.

Counseling and Psychological Services
303 Ransom Hall
817-272-3671

212 Maverick Activities Center (MAC)
817-272-1888

MavsTalk 24-Hour Crisis Line: 817-272-TALK (8255)
click to visit CAPS

Counseling Services assists students with issues related to academic, career, and personal problems. The focus is on working with students who can benefit from a short-term counseling model. Students may be referred to other appropriate services if treatment is required beyond the scope of Counseling Services. Personal, group, and career counseling is provided, as well as personal growth seminars. Examples of available seminars include, but are not limited to, stress reduction, learning strategies, time management, assertiveness training, anxiety management, anger management, and getting connected on campus.

Campus Recreation
Maverick Activities Center (MAC)
817-272-3277
click to visit Campus Recreation

The MAC is a 190,000-square-foot recreation center that includes both indoor and outdoor recreational activities. Students are welcome to drop by the Maverick Activities Center and create their own fun. They may choose from a variety of activities including basketball, table tennis, racquetball, weight lifting, volleyball, badminton, and so on. In addition, exercise classes, personal training, and massage therapy are also offered. Students who want to improve their health with a more nutritious diet can participate in the "Nutrition Check Up" program.

Relationship Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Program (RVSP)
301 Ransom Hall
817-272-3947
[click to visit RVSP](#)

RVSP supports and advocates for students who have been impacted by sexual violence and provides referrals to other support services. In addition, it promotes campus education related to sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking.

CHAPTER 8: SELF- AND CAREER EXPLORATION

8.1 ASSESSING YOUR STRENGTHS AND LEARNING STYLES

During the college years, young adults often test and solidify their own set of values and determine what direction they want to take in life. While it is commonly recognized that this self-reflection can be a lifelong process, the college years can be a time when students can develop directions in life based on information gathered in systematic self-exploration opportunities. Understanding more about what you value in life, what interests you, your general personality characteristics, your preferences for methods of learning, your strengths, and your weaknesses can better inform you about the directions that may lead to a more fulfilling life.

GENERAL SELF-EXPLORATION

According to Clifton and Anderson (2002), successful people leverage their strengths in order to be successful in life. Investigating your strengths can be simply reflecting on those situations in your life in which you felt successful and what contributed to that, or it could be something like a formal assessment that provides you with a profile of yourself. If you joined a Learning Community or enrolled in a freshman seminar, you may have taken the CliftonStrengths assessment that provided you with your Top Five Strengths. Often, our students take the Myers-Brigg Type Indicator (MBTI; offered in workshops offered by UT Arlington's Counseling and Psychological Services) or a similar tool like the Kiersey Temperament Sorter®, offered free online as a means of assessing personality characteristics that may indicate how they interact with the world.

StrengthsQuest® – strengthsquest.com

Kiersey Temperament Sorter® – kiersey.com

Reflecting on life experiences can inform students about their values and about what interests them. Think back to those activities that you remember enjoying vividly. Consider what aspects of those activities contributed to the enjoyment. For instance, if you loved to play a sport growing up, was it the competition that you enjoyed? Was it being outside? Was it working with a group of people? Was it how the physical exertion made you feel? Was it the recognition you received? More structured assessments can also be found for interests and values. Counseling and Psychological Services offers

the Strong Interest Inventory in regular workshops that would help you hone in on your basic life interests and how those interests might relate to professionals in certain careers. Other tools could inform you more about your core values and what you might prefer in a work environment. Overall, engaging in these types of self-exploration activities can inform so many aspects of students' lives—what to major in or how to specialize in a given major, what types of co-curricular activities they might enjoy, the environments in which they might like to learn, and career options.

Activity 8-1:

Take the Kiersey Temperament Sorter II online at kiersey.com by clicking the "Start" circle. Are you an Artisan, Guardian, Rational, or Idealist? Is this consistent with how you see yourself? How might this impact the way you think about college, studying, or choice of major or career?

LEARNING PREFERENCES

In college, faculty members implement many different ways of sharing material with their students—through readings, class lectures that may or may not include PowerPoint slides or handouts, class discussions, online interactions, and assignments. Think about a student who likes to take in the world visually. For this student, a book without graphs, charts, and pictures and a lecture with a professor simply talking about the information would be less appealing than a book and lecture environment full of visual images. Situations like the one described points to learning preferences—the way that a person learns best—sometimes also referred to as a learning style.

Common scales of learning preferences tend to categorize students into visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners. The VARK also includes Read-Write as a style. Other scales consider other factors such as how students interact with information in terms of their thinking, feeling, and methods

of experiencing the world, such as with the Index of Learning Styles Questionnaire. It is no secret that there is disagreement in the academic community regarding how and what should be measured regarding learning preferences (Coffield, Moseley, & Ecclestone, 2004), but what is important is that college

students engage in opportunities to learn more about themselves and how they learn.

Students who are more informed about their learning preferences can act more proactively. In some cases, students who know how they like to learn can seek out majors and professions that may suit their styles. They can also select professors who may be more likely to teach a course in their preferred method. The question that you should be asking your classmates is not, "Is that professor easy?" The question you should be asking is, "How does that professor teach the course?" and "What methods do they use to teach the material?" A professor who teaches a course only by talking about the material will be a more difficult class for a visual learner in comparison to a professor who uses more visual elements to teach the same material.

Unfortunately, students do not always have the ability to select a professor that suits their learning preferences, and students cannot expect a faculty member to adjust their teaching style to suit the needs of one individual student. Students who are successful in college are able to adapt material to their own learning preferences. For instance, if you are a visual student, create ways to turn lecture notes into visual materials using the visual organizers discussed in Chapter 5.

Table 8-1. Activities for Different Learning Preferences
Adapted from the University of Western Ontario Student Development Centre (2009). Learning Styles.
Retrieved from sdc.uwo.ca/learning/index. html?styles on March 24, 2010.

Auditory Learners	Visual Learners	Kinesthetic Learners
Read out loud.	Create charts and diagrams of concepts.	Ask questions in class or discuss material in a study group.
Talk about the main points that are being expressed in diagrams and pictures.	Review all of the pictures and charts while reading and relate the visuals to what you are reading.	Engage in lab classes or courses in which service learning is an option as a way to "live" what you are learning about.
Sit in front in class so that you can hear clearly.	Avoid busy visual environments while concentrating, as they are distracting.	Have something small that you can play with in your hand while concentrating or take notes on a laptop.

Activity 8-2:

Take the VARK Learning Styles Inventory online at:
vark-learn.com/english/page.asp?p=questionnaire

Are you multimodal, or do you have a single strong preference? Go to the help sheets for your learning preferences to find out more about the learning strategies you can implement given your learning preferences. Read through them and commit to trying a couple of the strategies in your next study session and reflect on how those strategies worked for you.

To get another point of view on your learning preferences, take the Index of Learning Styles Questionnaire online at:
engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html

What did you learn about your learning preferences? What activities can you engage in while studying that will help you learn new information?

8.2 CAREER AND MAJOR EXPLORATION AS A PROCESS

Let's start this section with a brief activity about your thoughts on major and career exploration.

Activity 8-3:		
Determine if the following statements are true or false.		
Most students select a major based on solid research and information gathering about the field.	TRUE	FALSE
Once students declare a major, they will stick with it.	TRUE	FALSE
Students should choose a major based on the current job market.	TRUE	FALSE
Students should choose a major directly related to their chosen career.	TRUE	FALSE
Once students commit to a major, they will be stuck in that career for life.	TRUE	FALSE
A student with a liberal arts degree will not be qualified to get a really good job.	TRUE	FALSE
Students only need a high GPA to improve their chances of career success.	TRUE	FALSE

In the past, young adults simply followed in their parents' footsteps taking over the family business or farm. However, in the beginning of the 20th century, Frank Parsons in Boston began to assist disadvantaged youth in choosing careers. His emphasis on matching self and job traits has remained at the core of the development of career decision-making programs (Baker, 2009). Today, students are entering a workplace unlike the generations before them, given the impacts of globalization, downsizing, re-engineering, and changing organizational structure of the workplace (Gordon, 2006). Students need to make a conscious effort to prepare themselves for this changing world to be competitive and ultimately find their own happiness.

When you were a young child, it was fun to think about being an astronaut, a veterinarian, or a firefighter. Many people also imagined being in a cool career that was portrayed on television—a forensic scientist from CSI, an emergency doctor like in ER, or lawyer from Law and Order. However,

as you come closer to entering the workforce, you may be feeling more anxiety about your career, major choice, or have absolutely no idea what you want to do with your life… and that is perfectly natural. According to Beggs, Bantham, and Taylor (2008), statistics vary, but up to 50% of students enter college undecided. Those students, who have selected a major, ranked "information search" last in importance in selecting a major, indicating that decisions may have been made without critical information about themselves and the field. Allen and Robbins (2008) reported that 75% of students change their major at least once in college.

If you think back to the academic journey discussed in Chapter 2, you may recall that there are many different pathways to get from Point A to Point B. Likewise, your career path will merely be a continuation of your academic journey, and it may take you in different directions at different points in your life, possibly even bringing you back to school or to another type of formal training when new jobs are created. Whether you have a major identified or not, engaging in major and career exploration in your first year in college could help direct you toward a more satisfying academic and career path more quickly and save a lot of heartache in the long run.

Career exploration during college is also important because you will change and grow tremendously during this time according to your experiences and studies. Beyond studying one subject, you will make new friends, explore new ideas, find mentors, and have chances to study abroad and complete internships. All of these experiences will inform your choice of a major and career.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MAJORS AND CAREERS

Today, the college degree is the entrance ticket to the workplace. Students need to understand the importance of completing their degree while learning as much as they can along the way. A student's persistence in completing a degree is an indicator of many of the qualities that employers are looking for in a new hire: strong work ethic, motivation and initiative, problem solving, etc.

Some professions require certain degrees, such as nursing and engineering, which require professional examinations for licensure. However, your college major does not necessarily define your career path. For instance, students do not necessarily have to major in the sciences in order to apply to medical school as long as the proper prerequisites and MCAT test scores have been attained for admission. Liberal arts majors develop many of the skills that employers are seeking in new hires, so it is plausible for those students to enter a wide variety of fields, such as business and helping professions. Not only attending to learning the material in courses, but also reflecting on the development of transferable skills is crucial. It is ultimately more important to study subjects you are interested in and successfully graduate than to focus on a major that you think you have to have for a particular career path.

TOP TEN QUALITIES/SKILLS THAT EMPLOYERS SEEK

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers Job Outlook 2010 Report, employers are looking for the following skills and qualities in their new hires:

1. Communication Skills—written and verbal

2. Strong Work Ethic

3. Motivation and Initiative

4. Interpersonal Skills—relating well to others

5. Problem-Solving Skills

6. Teamwork Skills

7. Analytical Skills

8. Flexibility and Adaptability

9. Computer Skills

10. Detail Orientation

THE CAREER EXPLORATION PROCESS

According to Gordon (2006), "choosing and maintaining a career is a life-long process" (p. 15). Just as students change their majors in college when they realize the fit may not be optimal, people change their careers or directions within the same career. Donald Super proposed that career development activities were related to an individual's self concept (Career Services, 2010). According to Super, self concept changes throughout life based on a person's experiences. Not surprisingly, students of traditional high school and college ages fall into the Exploration stage (refer to Table 8-2).

Table 8-2. Super's Five Life and Career Development Stages

Stage	Age Range	Characteristics of the Stage
Growth	Birth-14	Development of self concept, attitudes, needs, and general world of work
Exploration	15–24	"Trying out" through classes, work experience, and hobbies. Tentative choice and skill development occurring
Establishment	25–44	Entry-level skill building and stabilization through work experience
Maintenance	45–64	Continual adjustment process to improve position
Decline	65+	Reduce output and prepare for retirement

Developing career exploration skills can be beneficial throughout life.

Thought Question

How might a person continue to use career development skills during the Establishment and maintenance stages?

In general, students need to engage in a process of collecting information—though what information they need to collect would depend on what questions a student may have (refer to Figure 8-1).
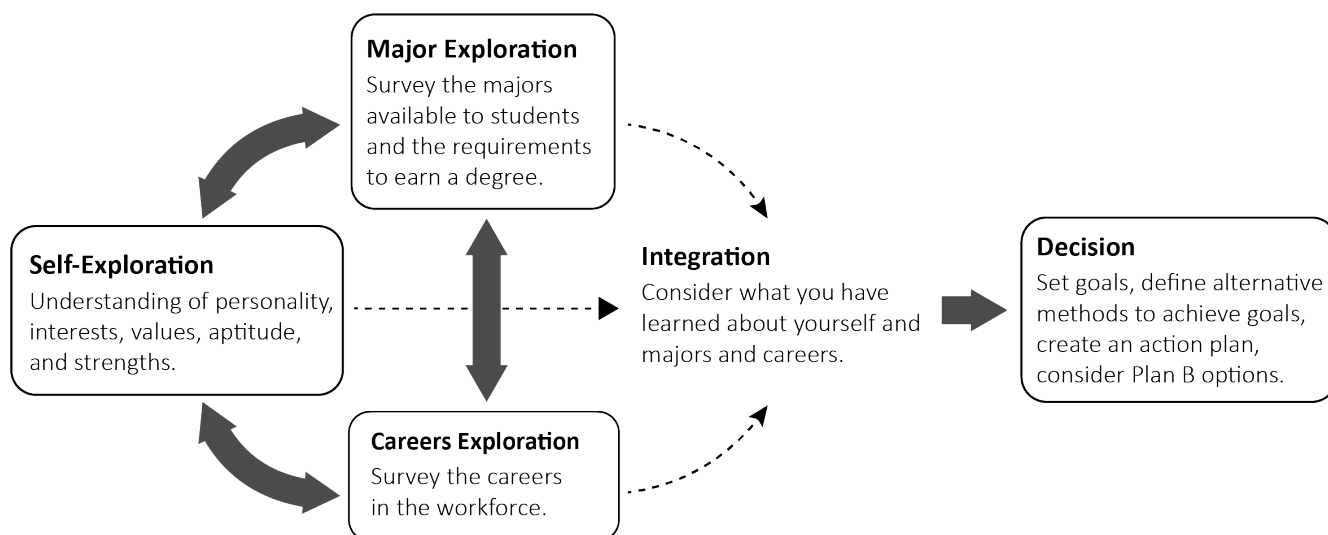
Figure 8-1. A Proposed Career Exploration Process
Adapted from Gordon's 3-I Process (2006).

Even if you think you know what your major and career path may be, it helps to gain more information about the selected major to ensure your strengths and abilities match with the major and determine if that major will help develop skills needed for a career. It is also helpful to know more about how your values and personality might align with a particular major and career path.

Careful research can be done using a variety of resources including services on campus, Web resources, and experiential learning opportunities (see Table 8-3).

Table 8-3. Resources for Exploration Activities

Self-Exploration	Major Exploration	Career Exploration
UT Arlington Counseling and Psychological Services CAPS Workshops and Events Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Group Interpretation Seminar	**UT Arlington Undergraduate Catalog** UTA Course Catalog Listing of majors offered at UTA	**Occupational Handbook** Bureau of Labor Statistics
Lockheed Martin Career Development Center LMCD Self-Guided Resources Focus 2 online tool to help identify interests, values, and skills	**Experiential Major Maps (EMMs)** Experiential Major Maps Guide	**Lockheed Martin Career Development Center** UTA Career Development Center
Kiersey Temperament Sorter® kiersey.com Available for free online	**UT Arlington Academic Departments** UTA Schools and Colleges Listing of academic departments on campus	**Volunteer** **Join UTA Volunteers; Take a class that offers a Service Learning Component** Center for Service Learning
Grades in introductory major-based courses	**Informational Interviews** Talk with professors in the department of interest or advanced students from that major. Refer to "How to Conduct an Informational Interview."	**Informational Interviews** Talk with professionals in a field of interest. Refer to "How to Conduct an Informational Interview."
Reflection on hobbies that you enjoyed and subjects you performed well in high school	Enroll in an introductory major-based course	**Internships** Handshake, UT Arlington's job and internship search site LMCD Handshake Resources

Who Can Help You Integrate the Information Collected in Your Research?

- Academic Advisor from Division of Student Success or a major department

- Counselor from Counseling and Psychological Services

- Career Counselor from the Lockheed Martin Career Development Center

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HOW TO CONDUCT AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Informational interviews can be tremendously useful for various reasons. An informational interview can help you decide on a career path, verify that you are on the correct career path, or help you possibly identify professionals that could be of assistance in finding a job or internship in the future. Also, talking with someone in a position that you would like to have someday can inform you on what experiences and courses may increase your probability of success in a particular career path.

1. One of the most difficult aspects of conducting an informational interview, beyond finding the courage to talk with a complete stranger, is to find the appropriate people to interview. Ask people you know to see if they might have a "connection." You can also contact staff members at UT Arlington's Alumni Association or the Career Center.

2. Once you find someone and schedule a meeting to last approximately 15–30 minutes, research the organization that employs them. It might give you ideas on questions that you might ask.

3. Develop a list of questions for your interview. Consider these sample questions:

   ◦ What is the title of the interviewee's current position in the company?

   ◦ How did the interviewee get to his/her current position?

   ◦ What type of job tasks does the interviewee perform in this job?

   ◦ What does he/she enjoy/dislike about the current job?

   ◦ Does he/she know of similar careers that also use these job skills?

   ◦ What is the interviewee's work history and how does he/she think that has impacted his/her current position?

- What is the interviewee's educational background?

- What are the top five skills that the interviewee believes have been important to his/ her job life?

- What five things does the interviewee believe have been most important in his/her overall life?

- What advice would the interviewee give you?

4. On the day of the interview, dress well and arrive early. A good first impression sets the stage for a good interview... and you never know if this person might someday have an opportunity for you.

5. During the interview, record the answers to your prepared questions.

6. Once you have completed the interview, send a thank you note to your host in appreciation for his/her time and expertise.

Once the exploration process has been completed, the information collected needs to be compiled for integration and interpretation of the options available to a student. The decisions and next steps that a student would take depends on what he/she may be ready to take on at that moment. In some cases if a student is completely undecided upon entering college, finding a major is a good first step and career exploration can continue to occur. If a student has decided on a major, information may confirm that staying with that major is a good decision or that changing to another major may be warranted given that interests and strengths do not align well. It could be that it was discovered that the career of primary interest is highly competitive and preparation for a "Plan B" needs to be considered. Circumstances change constantly so considering the information presented at each juncture is very important.

Once a particular decision has been made, the next steps include developing a set of goals and action steps that will help you achieve those goals. Revisiting the goal-setting process discussed in Chapter 4 can help you manage that process and adjust as circumstances change.

In conclusion, remember that you are right where you need to be according to Donald Super's Life and Career Developmental Stages (Career Services, 2010). This is the time for major and career exploration. (Refer to Career Planning Timeline for more information.) What better place to explore than a great university? Take advantage of the resources that we have highlighted in this section and all that is offered on this campus. Remember that if what you choose fits your skills, interests,

personality, and passions, it is probably a good fit. Remember also that you are not stuck with that major or career for the rest of your life; career development is a lifelong project.

8.3 EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: ROUNDING OUT YOUR COLLEGE CAREER

What is experiential learning? Very simply, it means learning from your experiences. In this section, you can read about learning from your experiences outside the classroom. You need to ask this question of yourself: How can I have the college experience of a lifetime?

At UT Arlington, you have many opportunities to make your college experience exceptional, unforgettable, and (dare we say?) sensational. Engaging in opportunities outside of the classroom can inform your major and career exploration process and open your eyes to things you have never experienced.

CAREER PLANNING TIMELINE

During your freshman year...

- Meet with an advisor in the University Advising Center to discuss a schedule of classes that will fulfill the university's core requirements or help you explore majors.

- Take a class on Major Exploration if you are undecided.

- Research the services available from the Lockheed Martin Career Development Center.

- Attend at least two academic seminars put on in the colleges you are interested in.

- Take career assessment inventories online and receive counseling to interpret results that can help you plan your career.

- Visit the Career Center and become familiar with job listings, some of which may relate to your career plans.

- Participate in student organizations to develop your leadership skills.

- Attend the Job Fair.

During your sophomore year...

- Continue working with your advisor or a career specialist in the Career Center regarding how interests and aptitudes relate to potential career choices.

- Obtain information and begin the registration process for relevant work experiences, such as cooperative education opportunities and internships.

- Keep a list of all of your projects, activities, committee memberships, and honors, as well as a portfolio that can be used for a résumé or during an interview.

- Join at least one professional or honorary organization to begin networking.

- Participate in at least two academic and career seminars (i.e., Test Taking, Job Search).

- Attend the Job Fair.

- Apply and become accepted officially into your major department.

During your junior year...

- Attend at least two career seminars (i.e., Résumé Preparation, Interview Skills).

- Register for internship or cooperative education positions with the Career Center or your academic department.

- Develop an effective cover letter and resume that have been critiqued by the Career Center.

- Attend the Job Fair.

- Assume a leadership position on campus.

- Conduct at least two "informational interviews" with professionals in your area of interest. Refer to "How to Conduct an Informational Interview."

- Become familiar with at least three career options related to your major.

- Become familiar with the Career Center on-campus interview and resume referral processes.

- Make an appointment each semester to discuss progress toward graduation with your academic advisor.

As a senior/graduate student consider the following steps...

- Complete the Graduation Checklist (Office of the Registrar) and apply for graduation and graduate school.

- Attend a Career Center orientation and other career seminars sponsored by the Career Center, and register with the Career Center job listing service if you have not already done so.

- Talk to the Career Center staff to ensure you are utilizing the various job search strategies and resources.

- Conduct three "informational interviews" with professionals in your career field.

- Learn about current salary levels for occupations you are considering.

- Develop a realistic budget analysis and determine your salary needs.

- Check with the Career Center for information about companies interviewing on campus.

- Talk to recent graduates concerning the employment market in your field.

- Learn how to research companies using the Internet and the UTA Central Library.

- Attend the Job Fair.

WHAT'S A MAVERICK TO DO?

Begin thinking now of strategies you can use to make sure you have at least one of these "value added" experiences:

UT Arlington Links to Experiential Learning

Apply for an internship	UTA Internship Resources
Research experience with a member of the faculty	UTA Research Overview Undergraduate Research Opportunities
Take a study abroad trip	UTA Study Abroad Program
Service learning experience	Center for Service Learning

Internships can provide you with the practical, "real world" experience you need to be competitive in today's job market. Internships also provide you with a new network of people, individuals outside of the University setting, who can provide mentorship and companionship to you. At a minimum, an internship will allow you to evaluate how well you "fit into" a career culture. For example, you may love information technology (IT) and, through an internship experience, find out that you are also well-suited to the pace and excitement of the IT field.
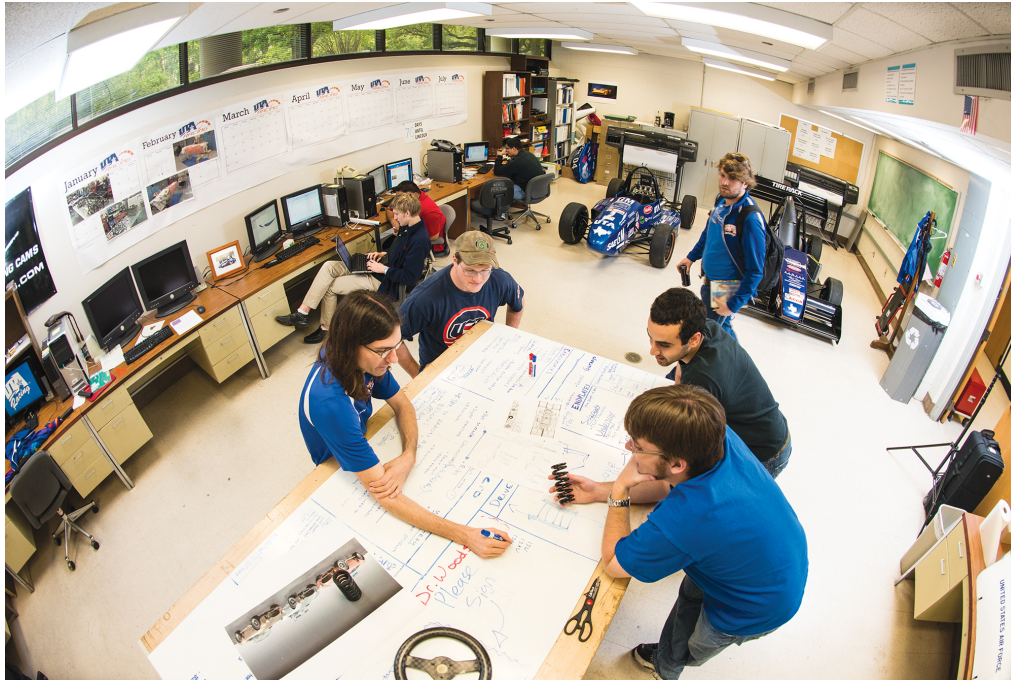
Research experiences with particular faculty, research groups, and Centers for Excellence are important to consider especially if you plan to further your education beyond your undergraduate degree. Is it too early to begin thinking of advanced degrees? Absolutely not. Most students who are in graduate schools today began their research careers as undergraduates. They acted as "apprentices" to a faculty member and worked with members of the faculty's team: graduate research assistants, post-doctoral researchers, and collaborating colleagues. Such experiences can also teach you transferable skills like project design and management, goal setting, and communication skills that can be used wherever your career may take you.

Becoming involved in research may seem intimidating, but UT Arlington provides resources to help you engage with professors and research topics you are interested in. The Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) offers tools to help you identify your research interests and manages several programs that pair you with a faculty member on a research project. You can also get involved with research by talking with your professors; they are often working on a research project you could help with, or they may know a different faculty member who is directing a project more closely aligned with your interests and academic and professional goals. Note that research is not limited to sciences like chemistry and biology – research occurs in every discipline on campus.

Be sure to talk to your advisor about taking a readings or research class with a faculty member of your choice. You need to work this experience into your roadmap for success. It is important to contact the faculty member well in advance to be sure that he/she has room in the laboratory or research group for you in a given term.

Study Abroad Opportunities are another way to make your college experience exceptional. Travel broadens you in so many aspects – you can develop new friendships while exploring different cultures of the world and earning college credit. UT Arlington offers hundreds of programs across more than 40 countries; check out the website below to see which programs interest you.

Funding is available from many sources. You can meet with a study abroad staff member from the Office of International Education (OIE) to discuss funding opportunities to lower the cost of your trip. Again, planning ahead is key, so after reviewing your study abroad options, visit with your advisor to be sure you can plan for study abroad in your academic plan.

Have you ever done some volunteer work? Do you want to be of service to others during your college years? **Service learning**, organized by the Center for Service Learning, provides the ways and means for faculty and students to "learn from doing"—doing community service as part of your coursework, and learning as you go. Course credit is given for service learning activities. When you visit the center online, look at some of the courses offered. Faculty are increasingly adding service learning components to their classes. UT Arlington boasts having 790,516 logged hours of service in recent years.

Center for Service Learning
[Center for Service Learning](#)

Service learning is not just for people thinking about careers in public service. These experiences help you integrate what you are learning in the classroom with "real world" problems and needs. You can build your civic and leadership skills through many community activities and share your reflections on these experiences with others. Scholarships are available, too.

So let's return to the question: How can I have the college experience of a lifetime?

Round out your roadmap with an internship, research participation, a study abroad trip, or service learning—or all of these. Experiential Major Maps (EMMs) suggest ways that you can participate in experiential learning opportunities – find the EMM for your major or a major that you are interested and see how you can apply the information you are learning in class to life outside the classroom. Afterwards, engage in some of these experiences and write about them. Who knows? These experiences may lead to new opportunities in your future.

Experiential Major Maps (EMMs)
[Experiential Major Maps](#)

TIPS FOR REFLECTIVE JOURNALING

I never travel without my diary. One should always have something sensational to read in the train.

— Oscar Wilde

Students learn the most from their experiences when they take the time to think about them and write down their thoughts. Articulating your experiences this way also helps you practice articulating them to potential employers.

Consider including some of these items:

- Include key individuals and your exchanges with them.

- When examining your thoughts and feelings, do not censure yourself.

- Use "prompts"—key words, ideas, and pictures to keep the writing going.

- Don't forget your dreams and imagined scenes.

- Compare your new experiences to the old. How have you changed?

Thought Question

- This is a brainstorming exercise: Pair up and discuss (then share with another pair) the number of different ways that experiential learning "adds value" for us.

- Why are internships increasingly important? In the film The Pursuit of Happyness, the main character took an unpaid internship at great personal cost to himself. Why?

- Have you seen the film Pay It Forward? Would it be possible for this plan to work? How would you initiate this plan on a college campus such as ours?

Activity 8-4:

Interview a member of the Alumni at UT Arlington (and note that many work or attend graduate school here). Explore with them what made his/her experiences exceptional, unforgettable, or sensational. Ask how his/her experiences look in retrospect and find out if experiential learning opportunities would have benefited them in any way and why.

Activity 8-5:

Go online to explore if your favorite writers, historians, or other celebrities used reflective journaling to inspire their work. (For instance, Lewis Carroll of famed Alice's Adventures in Wonderland is one such person.) You may wish to begin your search with key phrases like "famous diarists" or read short biographies of the persons you selected. Write down the benefits enjoyed by these people who kept journals.

CHAPTER 9: FINANCIAL SELF-MANAGEMENT

Of the many skills you can learn in college, financial self-management is one of the most important. Having a sense of control over your finances is not only satisfying, but in the long term, reduces stress and increases your likelihood of completing a degree on time. As a first-year student, you may be independent from your parents for the first time in your life and solely responsible for managing your money. You may find this to be especially difficult since you have multiple obligations of your time, you may be unemployed, or only working part-time. This chapter will focus on money management techniques, so you can feel more confident about your ability to live within your means, develop a realistic budget, reduce debt, and protect your identity.

9.1: LONG-TERM BENEFITS OF A BACHELOR'S DEGREE

Receiving a college education can bring incredible rewards, both personally and financially. After graduation, many students hope to successfully compete in the job market, to secure high-paying jobs, and to improve their economic standard. While pursuing a college education can be expensive in the short-term (tuition costs, lack of employment while enrolled), the lifelong rewards are undeniable. Individuals with Bachelor's degrees, on average, earn a million dollars more in their lifetime than non-degree holders. In 2004, full-time workers with four-year college degrees earned approximately 62 percent more than full-time workers with only a high school diploma (The College Board, 2005). Now that's an incredible return on your investment. The attainment of additional degrees, particularly professional degrees, can increase your economic opportunities even further (Cheeseman & Newburger, 2003). To see how college can literally pay off for you, examine the annual earnings by degree type in Figure 9-1.

Figure 9-1. Earning Potential of Degree Holders
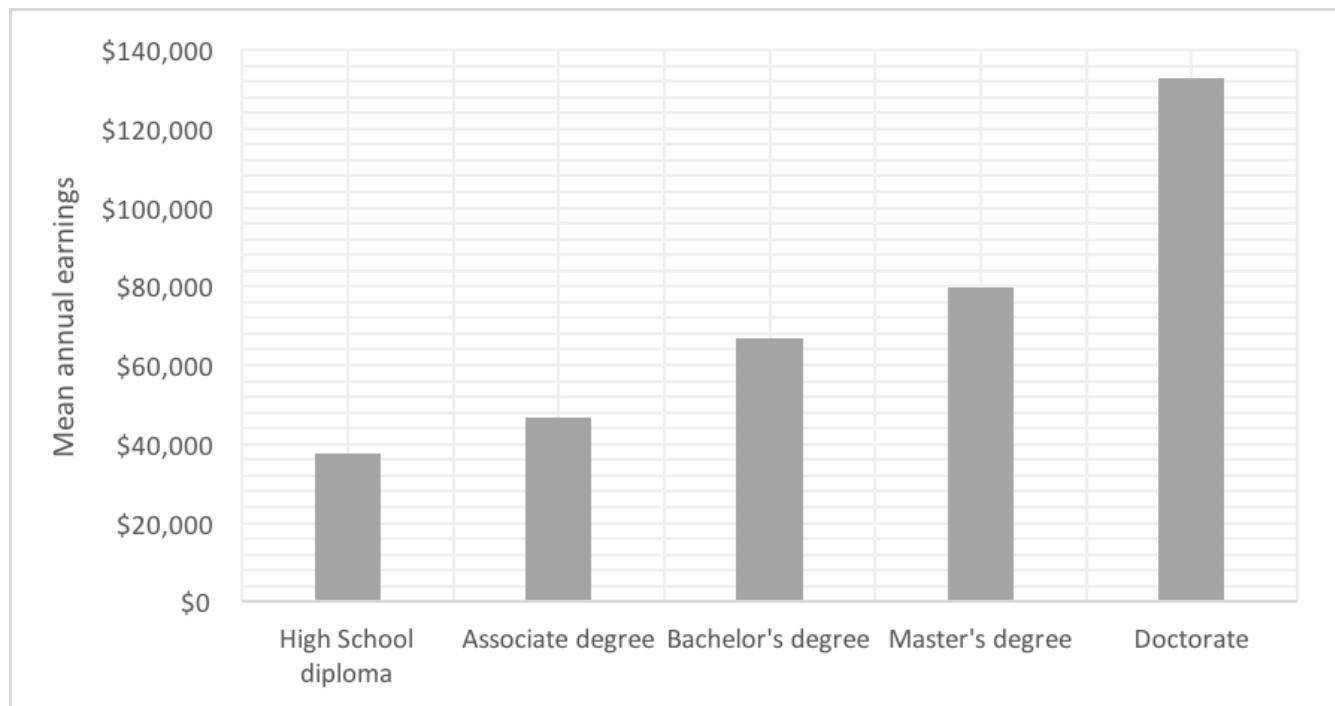
A 2004 study by The College Board indicated that individuals with college degrees not only earn more, on average, than non-degree holders but tend to be happier, healthier, and have greater job security. In 2009, the unemployment rate among college degree holders was 4.5% (see Figure 9-2),

significantly lower than individuals with a high school education or less (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009). According to the U.S. Department of Education (2008), about 90% of the fastest growing jobs require some post-secondary education.

Figure 9-2. The Jobless Rate for College Graduates
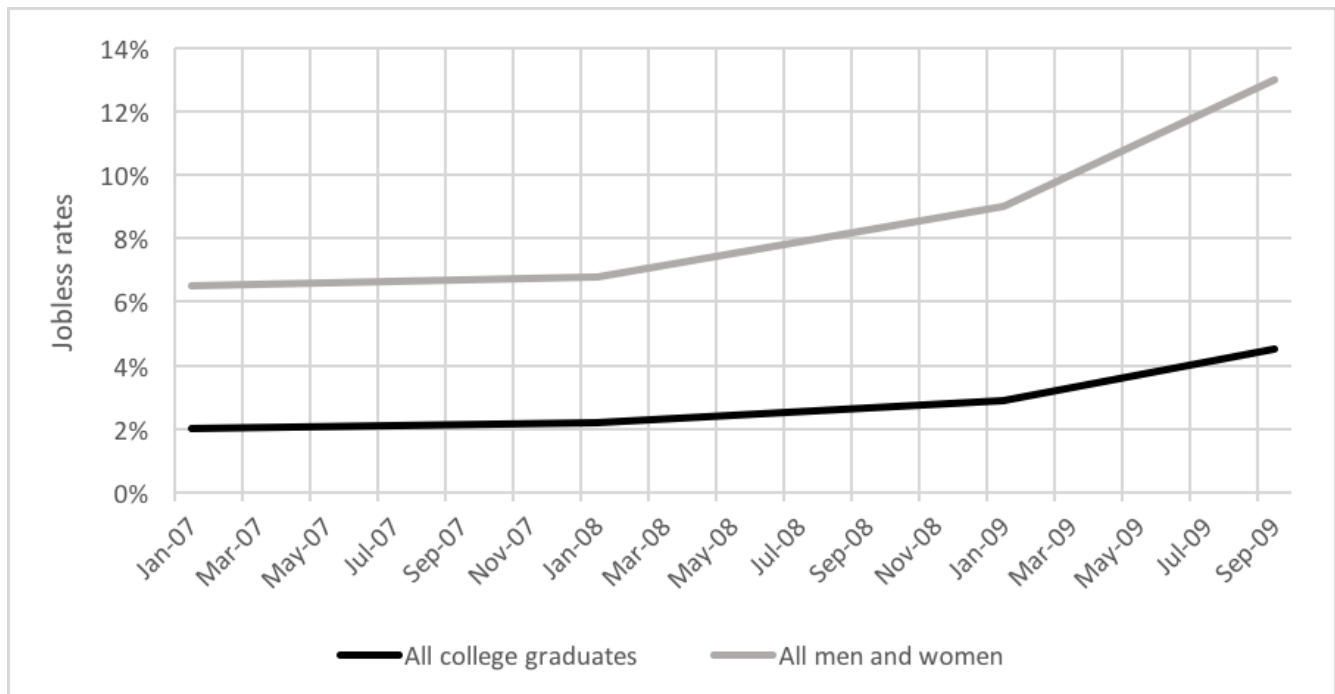
Now that we have examined the benefits of a college degree, let's review ways that you can pay for it.

9.2: PLANNING FOR THE COSTS OF SCHOOL

To reach your long-term goal of earning a college degree, you may need to make some short-term financial sacrifices along the way. With an average 4–6 year degree completion rate, your college education is an investment of your time, intellect, and finances. Attending college takes money, and the responsibility of paying tuition falls on you and/or your family. Speak openly with your family about how you plan to pay for your education now and in the future. When conversing with your family, make a clear determination of who will be paying which expenses. Also, remember that costs are not limited to tuition and housing (Education Financial Council, 2009), but also include:

- **Fees:** Fees include costs such as activity fees, parking, etc. Please check the Student Accounts Web site to obtain the most recent price of fees.

Student Accounts – uta.edu/business-affairs/student-accounts

Student Money Management Center – uta.edu/business-affairs/smmc/

- **Books and Supplies:** Books are surprisingly expensive, particularly if they are accompanied by a workbook or software. In 2006–2007, the national average cost of books was $1000 per year. Supply costs can include pens, pencils, USB drives, notebooks, paper, etc.

- **Equipment, housing materials, and miscellaneous items:** Equipment includes desktop and laptop computers, calculators, printers, etc. Housing materials include microwaves, refrigerators, toasters, pillows, comforters, etc. Miscellaneous expenses include clothes, cell phones, movies, etc.

Activity 9-1

COMPUTING COLLEGE EXPENSES

The first step toward managing your money is to create a realistic budget, followed by minimizing expenses and borrowing wisely. As a college student, you will have some expenses that occur intermittently (2–3 times per year) such as tuition, fees, and books. Using the College Expenses Budget worksheet below, compute your

college expenses by semester. After you have computed your semester costs, you will need to compare it to the total resources from grants, loans, and scholarships.

College Expenses Budget

Education Financial Council. (2009).
Make your college plan. Making College More Affordable.
Retrieved from efc.org

Expenses for One Semester	Semester Total
Tuition and Fees	
Books	
Parking	
Total Expenses	
Resources to Pay for College Expenses	
Scholarships	
Grants	
Student Loan(s)	
Veterans Benefits	
Money from Parents/Relatives	
Money from Employment	
Other	
Total Resources	

1. Subtract the Total Expenses from the Total Resources. If this is a negative number, you will need to find additional funds to cover college expenses. The latter part of the chapter will discuss means to secure additional funds.

2. If the difference between Total Expenses and Total Funds is a positive number, divide this number by 4 (the number of months in the semester) to determine the surplus amount of money you will have to help cover monthly living expenses.

Total College Expenses $ _____

Minus Total Resources $ _____ = _____

Positive Net Resources $ _____ ÷ 4 = _____

College expenses and financial aid resources only make up half of your total costs. Next, you will need to estimate your monthly living expenses to get a better idea of how your money is being spent each month.

LIVING EXPENSES BUDGET

After covering the costs of tuition, housing, books, and supplies, you will still need money to live on while in school. While you may not have as much control over your income and college expenses as you would like, you can control most of your living expenses by the choices you make. You will need

to map out your "cash flow": how much money is coming in (income) and where it is being spent (expenses) over a 12-month period.

Cash Flow
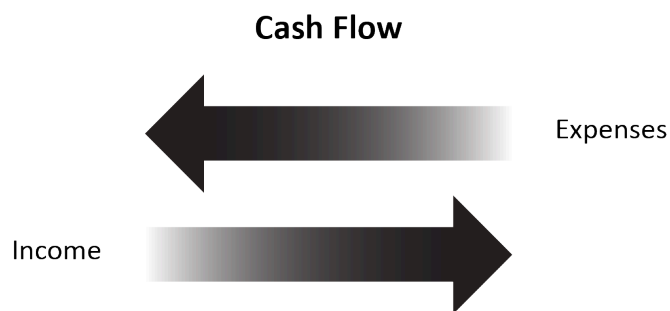
Expenses

Income

Regardless of the method used, the process of creating a budget is basically the same: Record monthly income, track and document monthly expenses, and, finally, make adjustments to balance the cash flow. With a budget, you can make informed decisions about spending and saving your money.

<table>
<tr><td>**Thought Question**</td></tr>
<tr><td>*You may have a general idea of where most of your money goes each month – housing, food, utilities, tuition – but can you account for every dollar?*</td></tr>
</table>

The first rule of budgeting is to track and document your monthly expenses. Recording your monthly expenses can be a daunting task, so it is always helpful to use an accurate budgeting tool to track expenditures. Take a look below and you will notice that expenses are broken down into three broad categories (Federal Trade Commission, n.d.):

- **Fixed Expenses:** Expenses that are typically the same each month, such as rent or mortgage,

car payments, childcare, credit card payments, and savings. Fixed expenses are generally the most difficult to change.

- **Variable Expenses:** Expenses that occur each month, but the amounts you spend on them vary from month to month. Examples include food, clothing, and utilities. Variable expenses generally have the greatest degree of flexibility.

- **Periodic Expenses:** Expenses that occur annually, semi-annually, quarterly, or seasonally. Such expenses include car registration, car or home maintenance, gifts, taxes, and insurance.

Complete the following activity to identify your monthly expenditures.

ACTIVITY 9-2:

Tracking Your Weekly and Monthly Expenditures

1. Gather information about how your money was spent during the past month from your receipts, credit card bills, online statements, and any other financial records you have. This will help you get the most accurate information.

2. If you do not have complete financial records for the past month, begin recording all expenditures for the next several weeks.

3. Transfer these daily totals to the Record of Weekly Expenditures worksheet.

4. Complete the worksheet after you have at least 30 days expenditure information.

The grand total in your "Record of Weekly Living Expenses" shows you how much money you spend or should set aside each month to cover your expenses. Once you have documented all of your expenses, you will be ready to compute your monthly income and compare it to your monthly expenses to determine, what, if any, changes are necessary to balance your budget.

Thought Question

Do you spend more than you earn each month?

RECORD OF WEEKLY LIVING EXPENDITURES

Month: _____

Year: _____

Variable Expenses

Expenses	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Totals for Month
Fixed Expenses					
Rent/Mortgage					
Gas/Light/Water					
Phone					
Life/Car/Health Insurance					
Car Payment					
Cell Phone					
Car Registration					
Cable/Satellite TV					
Internet Service					
Credit Card Payments					
Other Debt Payments					
Variable Expenses					
Savings					
Food at Home					
Food at Work/School					
Dinner Out					
Clothing					
Laundry/Dry Cleaning					
Gas and Oil					
Parking					
Barber Shop					
Beauty Salon					
Personal Care					
Donations					
Presents					
Newspapers/Magazines/Books					
Movies/Sporting Events					
DVDs/CDs/Video Games					
Hobbies					

Doctor and Hospital					
Periodic Expenses					
Club Dues					
Vacations					
Total					

COMPARE YOUR INCOME TO EXPENDITURES

To determine your monthly income, you will want to include your "take-home pay" (earnings from your paycheck after taxes are deducted) and any other forms of income. Subtract your total monthly expenditures from your monthly income. If the number is positive, you have a surplus income and are living within your means. If the number is negative, your expenses are exceeding your income and you will need to cut back on spending.

Total Income $ _____ – Total Expenses = _____

BALANCE YOUR INCOME AND EXPENSES

If your expenses exceed your income, you have three options:

- Increase your monthly income

- Decrease your monthly expenses

- Combine increasing income and decreasing expenses

As a college student, you may not be able to eliminate a cash shortage by earning a higher income. However, you can look for ways to decrease your monthly expenses without depriving yourself of things you really need.

DECREASE FIXED AND VARIABLE EXPENSES

There are fewer opportunities to decrease fixed expenditures than variable expenditures; however, some fixed expenses such as rent, car payments, and cell phone bills may be reduced through comparison shopping. While these steps may reduce your expenses, they can take time to complete and may result in additional charges.

Variable expenses, on the other hand, may be the easiest and quickest solution. Review your variable expenses with the intent of reducing the totals in some categories, rather than eliminating entire expense categories. For example, if you need to cut $200 from your budget and you usually spend $100 a month on cable television, would you be willing to decrease that by $50, thereby saving $50? Keep looking for places in which you can make similar, small adjustments until you have reduced your expenses by $200 (National Foundation for Credit Counseling, n.d.).

Use these pointers as you review your monthly expenses and continue to evaluate ways to cut back on any unnecessary expenses.

TIPS ON HOW TO TRIM UNNECESSARY EXPENSES

Shopping

- Don't shop when you are hungry or bored – you may spend more.

- Take advantage of sales, but do not buy items you do not need or items of poor quality.

- Do not buy on impulse. Think things over and make sure you really need the item.

- Compare unit prices to find the best deals. For example, it may be a better deal to buy an item in a larger quantity.

- Buy generic or store brands when you can. They are usually less expensive.

- Compare prices on items both within the store and at different stores. Try discount or thrift stores.

- Use coupons and rebates for additional items you need to buy.

- Make a list of what you need. Only buy what is on it.

- Keep in mind that nonfood items may be more expensive at supermarkets.

- Rent tools and equipment you will not use often instead of buying them.

- Beware of sales gimmicks. Don't lose sight of what you need.

Food

- Plan meals so you can shop with a list.

- Buy fruits and vegetables that are in season.

- Pack your lunches and snacks instead of buying them.

- Use cheaper cuts of meat than a recipe calls for or substitute a less expensive type of meat.

- Be careful when buying prepared foods. They may be faster, but they are usually more expensive.

- Eat out less.

Transportation

- Use public transportation when possible. Ask if reduced fares are available. For example, you may be able to buy a pass for several trips instead of paying for each trip separately.

- Have regular maintenance done on your vehicle to avoid costly repairs.

- Consider buying a used vehicle that is in good shape instead of a new one to keep monthly payment lower.

- Use the lowest octane gas recommended by your manufacturer.

- Compare fares on different airlines before purchasing tickets.

Entertainment

- Attend free events offered at UTA and in the community. Check the UTA Calendar of Events and the Arlington Chamber of Commerce for more information.

- Rent a movie or go to a matinee instead of paying full price.

- Visit the UTA Central Library or Arlington Public Library. They often sponsor events, and you can also check out books and other materials for free.

Phone Services

- Comparison shop for the best cell phone plan.

- Make calls when rates are lowest or free.

- Get rid of services you do not use that often.

Housing

- In warm weather, raise the thermostats of air conditioners when no one is there or at night when it is cooler.

- In colder weather, lower the heat when no one is home.

- Lower your water heater to 120 degrees.

- Look into energy-saving devices, such as energy-saving light bulbs and temperature control devices.

- Learn to make repairs yourself to save money.

National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC). (n.d.). Consumer Tools. Retrieved from nfcc.org

The budget allocation chart below shows the average percentage that families spend on certain budget categories. You will choose to spend money your own way, to meet your own goals as a student.

The amount you spend in each category will vary by person and income level. The less you earn, the greater the percentage you will spend on basic expenditures.

Figure 9-3. Model Budget Allocation
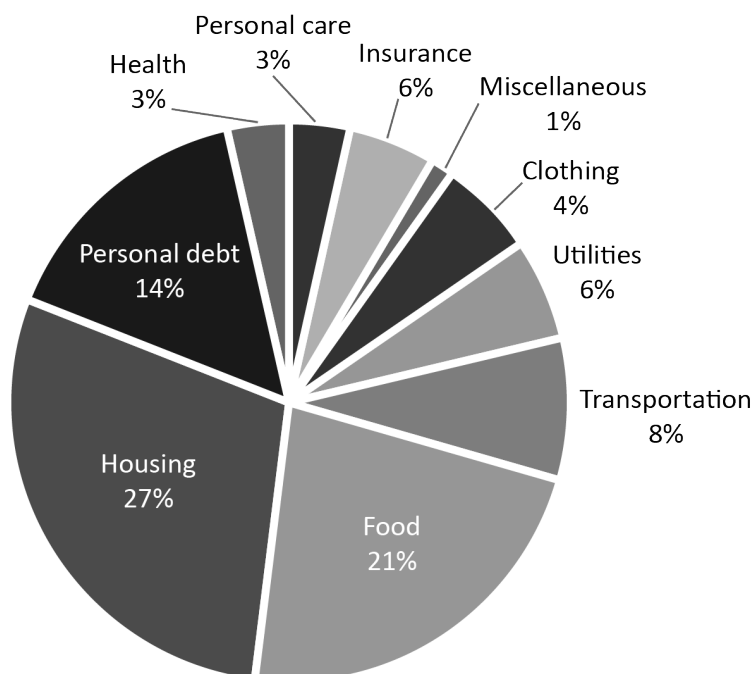
Budget Allocation

Thought Question

Have you established a system for paying your bills each month?

MANAGING CASH FLOW

Once you have enough money to cover all expenses, you may still find it difficult to pay your bills on time if due dates do not coincide with paydays. However, there are several tools available including the ones listed below. These methods help you to manage the flow of income and expenses in different ways (National Foundation for Credit Counseling, n.d.).

Envelope Method

- This tool is useful if you pay your bills with cash each month.

- Make an envelope for each expense category (rent, utilities, food, etc.).

- Label the envelope with the purpose, amount needed, and due date.

- When you receive income, divide it into amounts to cover the expenses listed on the envelope.

- Pay bills as soon as you receive them so you will not be tempted to spend the money on something else.

- If you prefer using a check to pay larger expenses, such as rent or car payments, you can write the check and place it in the envelope until the payment is due.

- Any excess income can be applied toward next month's expenses, other expenditures, or placed into a savings/emergency fund.

Calendar Method

- This method utilizes a monthly calendar.

- Record the income receipt dates and expense due dates on the calendar.

- It is helpful to use two different color pens when recording this information.

- This method gives you a visual representation of when you get paid versus when the bills are

due.

- Any excess income can be applied to next month's expenses, other expenditures, or placed into a savings/emergency fund.

Personal Financial Management Software

- This method helps you to organize income and expenses electronically, produce reports and graphs that compare data over any time period, and categorize spending to assist with tax preparation.

- There are many personal finance software products available on the market. You can find the products compared online.

- Before purchasing, try to sample several software programs to find one that meets your needs. For example, does the software allow you to access online banking, pay bills online, split bills and expenses when recording data, and meet other criteria important to you?

- Evaluate whether you have the time and expertise to use the features of the software program.

MONITOR YOUR PROGRESS

A workable budget can take anywhere from six months to a year to develop. Each week, record and document your income and expenses for that month. Then, evaluate the findings. If you consistently overspend in a budget category (such as eating out), you need to change the projected amount for that line. A purpose of a budget is to help you recognize what you can and cannot afford. If you find that you never have enough money at the end of the month, you may need to consider making some bigger changes.

Refer to the budget allocation guidelines in Figure 9-3, comparing what you spend in these categories with the suggested percentages. For example, if you are spending 35% on your car, could you consider trading your existing one for a less expensive, used, and more fuel-efficient model? If not, it may be time to consider increasing your income with an additional job, more hours on a current job, or a salary increase.

It is important to make a commitment to your established budget without too much focus on the temporary adjustments. If followed consistently, your budget will become an effective working tool that will help you take control of your finances (American Financial Services Educational Foundation, n.d.).

A realistic budget will help you:

- Live within your income

- Spend your money wisely

- Reach your financial goals

- Prepare for financial emergencies

- Develop intelligent money management habits

STUDENT LOANS

As you continue to pay for college, try to rely on sources that do not require repayment: scholarships, personal savings, summer work income, and prepaid or 529 savings plans. Like many other students, you may not be able to cover all expenses through these resources alone and must depend upon other avenues such as the federal government and institutional and state aid.

Students receive over $83 million yearly in federal student aid. To qualify for federal student aid, you must be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen with a valid Social Security number. In addition, recipients must maintain satisfactory academic progress once in school (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). Federal student aid can come in the following forms:

- **Grants:** Money that does not have to be repaid. Many students qualify based on demonstrated financial need.

- **Work-Study:** Students work while simultaneously paying for college expenses.

- **Loans**: Money is borrowed and must be repaid with interest.

As you plan for college, it is important to maximize sources of aid that do not require repayment.

Table 9-2. Maximize Sources of Aid
You Do Not Have to Repay U.S. Department of Education. (2008). Your Federal Student Loans: Learn the Basics and Manage Your Debt. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education

DO NOT HAVE TO REPAY	- Scholarships and Grants - Savings and Work-Study Earnings
CHEAPEST LOANS	Federal Loans
EXPENSIVE LOANS	- Private Educational, Home Equity Loans - Credit Cards

While it would be ideal to cover all expenses through scholarships, grants, and work-study, you may have to rely on private or federal loans to cover all expenses. It is wise to closely compare private and federal loans before making a decision on which to use. Federal loans have lower fixed interest rates, reasonable repayment options, no repayment penalties, and no credit checks (excluding PLUS loans) (U.S. Department of Education, 2007).

Private loans, in contrast, are considerably more expensive than federal loans because they have

higher, variable interest rates that increase with your repayment amount. Be careful: many private lenders aggressively market themselves through TV, radio, and on-campus solicitations.

Table 9-3. Federal Student Loans vs. Private Loans
U.S. Department of Education. (2008). Your Federal Student Loans: Learn the Basics and Manage Your Debt. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

Federal Student Loans (Loans from the government or guaranteed by the government)	Private Student Loans (Non-federal loans from a bank, credit union, or other financial institution)
You will not have to start repaying your federal student loans until you graduate, leave school, or change enrollment status to less than full-time.	Many private student loans require payments while you are still in school.
The interest rate on Stafford Loans is fixed, typically between 4 and 6 percent for subsidized and unsubsidized loans for undergraduate students. These interest rates are almost always lower than on a private loan—and much lower than on a credit card.	Private loans can have variable interest rates greater than 18 percent.
Students with greater financial need might qualify for a subsidized loan. The government pays the interest on subsidized loans while a borrower is enrolled in school at least half-time during certain periods.	Private student loans are not subsidized. No one pays the interest on the loan but you.
You do not need to pass a credit check to get a federal student loan (except for PLUS Loans). Federal student loans help you establish a good credit record.	Private student loans require an established credit record. The cost of a private student loan depends on your credit score, which you may not yet have as a student.
You do not need a co-signer to get a federal student loan.	You may need a co-signer to get the best possible deal.
Free help is available at 1-800-4-FED-AID.	You need to find out if there is free help.
Some interest is tax deductible.	Interest may not be tax deductible.
Loans can be consolidated into the Direct or FFEL Consolidation programs which have favorable repayment plans and other benefits. See govloans.gov for more information.	Private student loans cannot be consolidated into a federal loan consolidation program. They can only be consolidated into a private bank loan, if available.

APPLYING FOR LOANS

To apply for a federal student loan, you will need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA determines if you are eligible to receive federal grants, work- study, and state and institutional aid. The FAFSA opens on October 1st each year. Be sure to complete the application soon after it opens. State and institutional aid awards are granted on a first-come, first-serve basis, so apply as early as possible (U.S. Department of Education, 2008).

Have the following documents (if applicable) available at the time of submission:

- Your Social Security Number

- Your driver's license (if you have one)

- Your W-2 forms and other records of income

- Your (and your spouse's, if you are married) Federal Income Tax Return

- Your parents' Federal Income Tax Return (if you are a dependent)

- Your untaxed business records

- Your alien registration or permanent resident card (if you are not a U.S. citizen)

Even if you do not plan to take any federal student loans, it is always a good idea to complete the FAFSA anyway. In some cases, scholarship applications may require that students show financial need based on their FAFSA. And, you never know—the best-laid plans may change, and you may decide to take the federal aid mid-year.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

studentaid.gov

A NOTE ON INTEREST RATES

Like credit cards and private loans, educational loans have interest rates. Interest is "a percentage of the original loan amount (the principle) that is added to the total repayment amount" (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). Essentially, it is a charge for borrowing money. Not all federal loans are created equal, and some are attached with larger interest rates.

- **Unsubsidized loans:** Interest, which is your responsibility to pay, accrues from the time you receive the loan. You can repay the interest while you are attending school or you can allow it to accrue and be added to the principle balance, making it far more expensive.

- **Subsidized Loans:** The federal government pays the interest on the loan while you are still attending college.

9.3 USING CREDIT WISELY: THE CREDIT CARD TRAP

As a first-year freshman, you may not have a credit card, but you may graduate with at least one. While it is advisable to establish your credit history while you are in college, there are some stipulations to applying for and using credit cards in school. After all, a little careless spending over the next four years can accumulate to a mound of debt before reaching graduation.

It can be tempting to fill the gap between income and expenses with credit card purchases. However, expenses do not disappear once they are charged to your credit card—quite the contrary. Not only can expenses mound up quickly with the ease of using plastic, but you will end up paying the actual purchase charges plus interest.

It is wise to limit yourself to one major card and reserve it for emergencies only. Before you use the card, discern whether you really need the item(s) or service(s). Consider whether you will be able to pay off the monthly balance in full. Failing to pay off the monthly balance will result in interest

charges, which is essentially giving money to the credit card companies (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, 2005).

The terms and conditions of credit card agreements can be tricky and should be treated with caution. Credit card companies are in the business of making profits through high variable interest rates. In 2009, President Obama enacted several credit card reform laws known as the Credit Card Accountability, Responsibility, and Disclosure Act (a.k.a. Credit CARD Act). The legislation was created to prevent banks from using unfair measures to extract high interest rates from consumers. The Act, which went into effect in 2010, will implement many new changes, including:

- Credit card companies must give cardholders a 45-day notice of any interest hike.

- If a cardholder triggers a higher interest rate because their bill is 60 days late, the previous rate must be reinstated after six months of on-time payments.

- A ban on double-cycle billing—the calculation of interest over two billing cycles.

- ***People under the age of 21 must prove their income, have a co-signer, or pass a financial literacy course to get a credit card.***

- Credit card companies cannot charge over limit fees unless the cardholder has consented to exceeding their credit limit.

Although it is discouraged, if you find it necessary to apply for a credit card, you should take a few things into consideration (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, 2005).

- **Annual Percentage Rate (APR):** The APR or interest rate is the percentage you will be charged on the unpaid balance of a credit card. Shop for the lowest APR because a higher APR results in a higher monthly payment.

- **Default Rate:** The default rate is the new interest rate you will be charged if you miss a minimum payment, pay with a check that bounces, exceed your credit limit, or if you submit a late payment.

- **Credit Limit:** The maximum amount you can borrow at one time is your credit limit. Try not to exceed the credit limit by more than 50%. For instance, if your limit is $4,000, you will not want to cumulatively charge more than $2,000.

- **Minimum Monthly Payment:** The smallest payment your credit card company will accept is the minimum monthly payment. Avoid paying only the minimum payment, and pay off your balance in full each month.

- **Grace Period:** The number of days you have to pay off your bill before interest is charged is known as the grace period. If you carry a balance forward from the previous month, there is no grace period.

- **Over-Limit and Late Fees:** If you exceed your credit limit or submit a late payment, you will be

charged a late fee or over-limit fee. Most companies will waive one late fee per year, so contact your credit card company and ask for a waiver.

- **Cash Advance Fee:** The amount charged when you withdraw cash on your credit card. Interest rates on cash advances are usually higher and lack grace periods.

- **Transaction Fee:** A generic title for numerous fees, including late, over-limit, and cash advance fees. Be careful: some credit card companies charge a monthly transaction fee regardless of whether you use the card.

USING CREDIT MEANS GREATER COST

Making the minimum monthly payment on a large balance usually does not even cover the interest charged for the month. With compounding interest (interest that is charged on interest you've been charged), you can find yourself owing significant money before you even graduate from college. Small differences in monthly payments can mean big differences to the cost of credit and time needed to pay off a credit card balance.

For example, compare the time and cost of paying off a $1000 balance with an interest rate of 16.9% and two different monthly payment accounts. If you make a minimum monthly payment of $20, the total interest paid is $742 over a 7-year period. By increasing payments by only $25 per month to $45, you pay only $208 in total interest, requiring only 2 years and 3 months to pay off the balance (The Federal Reserve Board, 2008).

Credit Card Tips to Remember

- Consistently check your budget to ensure you have enough money to cover for planned expenses and credit card payments.

- Comparison shop for the best interest rates (APRs) among lenders and investigate for hidden fees and charges.

- Work to prevent finance charges by paying more than the minimum monthly payment.

- Contact the credit card company if you cannot make the scheduled payment time.

- Minimize the number of credit cards you have to one. Warning: Do not cancel credit cards without first paying off the balance.

- Do not be tempted to spend more than you can afford simply because a high credit limit will allow it.

- Use credit as a last resort. Opt to pay with cash, checks, or debit cards instead.

- Ensure that your monthly payments do not outlast the items purchased.

MAINTAINING GOOD CREDIT

Maintaining a good credit history is at the forefront of successful financial management. Of crucial importance is your credit or FICA score, which can be accessed through a credit report. A good or bad credit score can affect your ability to purchase a car, the amount of interest you will pay on loans, and your ability to get a job. Checking your credit score regularly is an added measure to prevent identity theft, which we will cover in a later section.

According to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)(2005), "a credit report is similar to high school and college grade transcripts. Just like poor grades can negatively affect your career and academic options, a poor credit history can have far-reaching negative consequences." Credit reporting agencies collect digital records of individuals' debt and bill-pay histories and dispense the information to their subscribers. The Fair Credit Reporting Agency protects the information collected by credit reporting agencies. You have the right to review your report at any time, but it's especially important prior to any major purchases (a house or car). Any business that reviews your score must have a valid reason, including:

- **For Credit Approval:** Creditors use the report to decide whether you will be granted credit, to create terms of the credit agreement, or to determine interest rates. The lower your credit score, the higher your interest rates.

- **Future Employment:** Employers may view a job applicant's credit report to determine if they are of good character. Some employers also access credit reports when considering someone for a promotion.

- **To Underwrite Insurance:** Many insurance companies now request your permission to obtain a credit report when you apply for insurance.

- **To Issue a Professional License:** Organizations that grant licenses for certain professions such as real estate, nursing, police officers, and others who require an employee to be bonded, may review your credit report upon permission.

- **For Review or Collection**: Creditors with whom you have already established a relationship

may view your credit.

FREE CREDIT REPORTS

The Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions (FACT) Act (2003) entitles you to a free credit report once a year from all three major credit bureaus through a centralized source that processes the requests. Your free report will not include your credit score, but you may purchase your credit score (explained later) at the time you order your report. You can order a free copy by choosing one of the following methods:

- Calling 877-322-8228

- Going online to AnnualCreditReport.com

- Mailing a standardized form to:

    ◦ Annual Credit Report Request System
    P.O. Box 05281
    Atlanta, GA 30348-5281

You may obtain a free credit report if you have been denied credit within the last 60 days. To receive the free report, call the toll-free number provided in the letter denying credit. You may send your request along with the letter to the credit bureau the agency used.

PURCHASING A CREDIT REPORT

You may purchase copies of your credit report from the three credit reporting agencies (listed below) at any time. You can purchase a single report from one bureau or a "tri-merge" report that allows you to view all three reports. The latter option will provide the best picture of your "credit health." Try to review your credit report(s) at least once a year.

When requesting a credit report, be prepared to provide the following information:

- Full name (including Jr., Sr., III)

- Date of birth

- Social Security number

- Current and previous address(es) from the last five years

- Daytime phone number

- Photocopy of letter from the creditor denying you credit (if applicable)

- A signature (if applying via e-mail)

- Photocopy of your driver's license or other picture ID, current billing statement, or other document showing your name and address (if you apply via mail)

Three major credit bureaus and their contact information:

Experian
P.O. Box 2002
Allen, TX 75013
888-397-3742
Experian.com

Equifax
P.O. Box 740241
Atlanta, GA 30374
800-685-1111
Equifax.com

TransUnion
P.O. Box 1000
Chester, PA 19022
800-888-4213
TransUnion.com

WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR CREDIT SCORE

Even if you have had difficulties in the past with credit, there are some steps you can take to improve your credit score (FDIC, 2005).

- Check for accuracy in your credit report. Your score will only be as good as the information in your report. Look for and correct the following issues:

    ◦ Accounts that do not belong to you

    ◦ Debts you paid that are listed as delinquent or past due

    ◦ Late payments that were actually paid on time

    ◦ Debts that are more than seven years old and should not be reported any longer

- Consistently pay your bills on time. A large portion of your credit score is based on your recent repayment history. Positive information, such as a history of paying your bills on time, is viewed favorably.

- Reduce balances on credit cards and keep them low over time. Be sure the balance on any account does not exceed 50 percent of the credit limit. Transfer balances above 50 percent to another card. Try to pay off balances in full each month.

- Beware of companies who claim they can improve your credit score for a fee. They cannot do anything that you cannot do yourself—for free.

In closing, there are obvious benefits to getting a credit card when you are in college. Having a history of dependable credit, especially making consistent, on-time payments, is necessary if you want to have good credit in the future. Credit agencies examine the length of your credit history when determining credit scores. In addition, having a credit card could be helpful when emergencies strike, especially if you are away from home. Develop the self-control to avoid needless purchases, and you will be on the path to a life of responsible credit use.

PERSONAL INFORMATION SECURITY

Identity theft is a growing national problem, costing the United States an average of $56 billion per year. How common is identity theft? Every 79 seconds, someone's identity is stolen. Even more surprising is that 50% of victims' identities are stolen by close friends, relatives, and spouses (Federal Trade Commission, 2009). Identity theft "is a federal crime. It occurs when one person's identification (which can include name, social security number, or any account number) is used or transferred by another person for unlawful activities" (Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, n.d.). Personal data, such as your social security number, your bank account or credit card number, and other valuable identifying data can be used at your expense.

It only takes a few moments for a thief to steal your identity; however, the damage can be devastating and unending:

Identity thieves frequently open new accounts in your name. They often apply for new credit cards using your information, make charges, and leave the bills unpaid. It is also common for them to set up telephone or utility services in your name and not pay for it. Some victims have found that identity thieves applied for loans, apartments, and mortgages. Thieves have also been known to print counterfeit checks in a victim's name. Thieves also often access your existing accounts. They may take money from your bank accounts, make charges on your credit cards, and use your checks and credit to make down payments for cars, furniture, and other expensive items. They may even file for government benefits including unemployment insurance and tax refunds (Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, n.d.).

WHAT IS YOUR IDENTITY THEFT PROBABILITY SCORE (ITP)?

To help protect yourself from identity theft, take the following quiz to determine your Identity Theft IQ and your ability to recognize common mistakes made by potential victims.

Question	Yes or No	If you answered yes, put this number in the score column	Your Score
I pay bills with checks and place them in my mailbox or in a corner postal box.		5	
I do not use direct deposit or electronic transfer for paychecks, refund, or insurance claim checks.		10	
I have new boxes of checks mailed to my home.		10	
I have not "opted out" of my credit card marketing programs and receive convenience checks on my account in the mail.		10	
I carry a purse or wear my wallet in my back pocket.		10	
I use checks for shopping and carry my checkbook with me when in public.		10	
I have at least one item in my wallet that contains my Social Security number.		10	
I throw away my annual Social Security Earnings statement without reviewing it.		10	
I keep my car registration, insurance card, checkbook, and credit card receipts, or other identifying information in my car.		10	
I have not copied the contents of my wallet (including the front and back of each credit card).		5	
I do not shred banking/credit information before trashing.		10	
I use a shredder, but it is not a cross-cut shredder.		5	
I have not called the credit reporting agencies "Opt-Out" line to be removed from credit card solicitations (888-567-8688).		5	
I have not ordered copies of my credit report in over a year.		10	
I have not notified the credit report agencies of the death of a relative or friend (letter and copy of death certificate).		10	

I have responded to e-mails or telephone calls from my Internet provider, financial institution, airlines, or companies like eBay or PayPal requesting verification of account numbers or passwords ("phishing").		10	
I use e-commerce, but do not use a secure browser, or I have high speed internet but no firewall protection.		10	
My ITP Score			

Mark Putnam, National Council on Higher Education Loan Programs (NCHELP), "Identity Theft," Georgia Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators Spring Conference, Savannah Riverfront Hotel, Savannah, GA, 15 May 2006.

Scoring

80+ points: You are at high risk of being an identity theft victim.

30-80 points: You have an average risk for becoming an identity theft victim.

10-30 points: Congratulations! You are very knowledgeable of identity theft precautions.

What can you do to decrease your chances of identity theft?

CHAPTER 10: CAMPUS RESOURCES

10.1 ACADEMIC LEARNING CENTERS

ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTER

206 Ransom Hall & 415 Central Library
817-272-3685 & 817-272-2617
Division of Student Success

The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides academic services to help students achieve their academic goals. The ASC offers Academic Coaching to develop and implement strategies that encourage academic success. The ASC also offers tutoring services through online and in-person platforms, as well as through programs like Supplemental Instruction, Peer-Led Team Learning, and TRIO Student Support Services. Each program consists of individualized tutoring by high-quality tutors to students in a variety of subjects at no cost.

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is an internationally recognized student assistance program aimed at improving student performance in historically difficult courses. SI offers students regularly scheduled discussion sections led by specially trained upperclassmen and graduate students. These discussion sections are designed to help students master the concepts of an academic course and, at the same time, increase their competency in the learning strategies relevant to the course. Peer-Led Team Learning (PLTL) is a tutoring program in which groups of 8 students and a PLTL leader meet once a week to complete practice problems developed by their professors. This service is available for a select number of courses. TRIO Student Support Services (TRIO SSS) is discussed in a later section.

CHEMISTRY CLINIC

318 Science Hall
817-272-3171 [UTA Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry](#)

Operated by the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, this clinic seeks to support students in all chemistry and biochemistry courses.

ENGLISH WRITING CENTER AND ONLINE WRITING LAB

411 Central Library
817-272-2601
[UTA Library Writing Center](#)

The English Writing Center offers students both face-to-face tutoring offered in the Central Library and online meetings through video conferencing. Appointments may be made on the English Writing Center Web site where you will also find other tips and resources for improving your papers.

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION CENTER

307 Trimble Hall
817-272-3161
[Department of Modern Languages](#)

The Language Acquisition Center (LAC) is dedicated to helping students succeed as they seek to master languages other than their own. A multimedia center serving the UTA community, the LAC features iMac computers, a projector, and a whiteboard. The LAC also maintains an extensive collection of analog and digital media as well as course-related software and self-study software.

MATH CLINIC

325 Pickard Hall
817-272-3261
[Department of Mathematics](#)

MATH LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER

308 Pickard Hall
817-272-1749
[Math Learning Resource Center](#)

The Math Clinic and Math Learning Resource Center (LRC) are drop-in tutoring centers located in Pickard Hall that offer assistance for students in specific undergraduate math courses and final review sessions before exams. For a complete list of courses served by the Math Clinic and LRC, visit their Web site.

PHYSICS CLINIC

007 Science Hall
817-272-2266
[Department of Physics](#)

The Physics Department operates a clinic for students desiring help in solving physics problems, understanding physics concepts, and anything relevant to being successful in their physics courses at UTA. For much of the day during the school week, an advanced undergraduate student is available to provide individualized assistance with course work or assisting in the better understanding of course concepts.

SCIENCE LEARNING CENTER

106 Life Science
817-272-3491
[College of Science](#)

The Science Learning Center offers resource materials and study aids for students in Biology, Chemistry and Biochemistry, Mathematics, Physics, and Psychology classes. The center features lounge space, a computer lab, and information ranging from course-specific study materials to information about pursuing particular career paths in the sciences.

TRIO STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

206 Ransom Hall
817-272-3684
[Trio SSS](#)

TRIO Student Support Services provides free academic support to U.S. citizens or permanent residents who are either first generation, low income, and/or disabled. Free services include tutoring, counseling, advising, a private computer lab, seminars, cultural events, and a laptop, calculator, and textbook lending program.

10.2 UT ARLINGTON LIBRARIES

UT Arlington has three full-service libraries available for students to find research help, materials for classes, study spaces, and more.

CENTRAL LIBRARY

UT Arlington Library's largest facility.

- Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- Food and drink allowed in most places.

- Enhanced group study rooms with electronic white boards. Reservations required. Other group study spaces available.

- Quiet study floors on fourth and fifth floors.

- Research assistance on second floor.

ARCHITECTURE AND FINE ARTS LIBRARY (AFA)

- Located in room 104 of the CAPPA Building, serving students studying art, film, music, and design.

- Quiet study area.

- Conference room with electronic whiteboard and laptop hookups available for reservation.

- Home to a print collection and digital research resources.

SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING LIBRARY (SEL)

- Located in the basement of Nedderman Hall serving students studying sciences, math, and engineering.

- Enhanced group study rooms with electronic white boards. Reservations required.

- Quiet study space with individual study carrels.

FEATURES AND SERVICES

The Library sponsors a wealth of resources and information for you.

Library Borrowing Privileges and Loan Periods
libraries.uta.edu/services/borrowing/privileges

Computers

Hundreds of PCs available for student use, each loaded with Microsoft Office applications. To log in, use your NetID and password.

Laptops

The Library has a limited number of laptops available for students to check out at the circulation desk of any full-service library. Loan times vary. Laptops may leave the building and can access the campus wireless network.

Books

- With over 1 million books, the Library supports all areas of study.

- You can return books to any full-service library.

- A book return drop box is located behind the library on Planetarium Place.

- Your MavID card is your library card.

- Undergraduates can check out up to 50 books for 30 days.

- You may renew each item twice. Renewals can be done in person or online.

- Log in to your account through the catalog and see what books you have checked out.

Databases

The library offers hundreds of databases, each containing thousands of articles covering a range of subjects and eras.

- All databases are available on all library computers.

- To find a database relevant to your work, look at the subject guides on the library's home page.

- Use your NetID to access databases from home or elsewhere.

- Read many database articles online.

- Print, save, or e-mail articles from databases.

Additional Central Library Services

The Basement
libraries.uta.edu/locations/basement

The Basement, fittingly located in the basement of the Central Library, is a dedicated gaming space with PCs, XBox and Playstation consoles, and VR devices.

The FabLab
libraries.uta.edu/services/fablab

The FabLab is a workshop for students to create projects for their classes or personal use. The goal of the FabLab is to inspire innovation and collaboration through experiential learning. FabLab capabilities include 3D printing, T-Shirt design and printing, sewing, woodworking, and glass processing.

Office of Information Technology (OIT) Help Desk
oit.uta.edu/support/

The OIT Help Desk is located on the second floor of the Central Library and assists students, faculty, and staff with technical concerns.

Research Services
libraries.uta.edu/research

All UT Arlington libraries offer friendly, knowledgeable librarians available to help with finding and using appropriate print or electronic resources. Get research help in person, by phone, or online.

Phone: (817) 272-3395
Text: (817) 727-8395
Email: AskUs@uta.edu
Live Help chat: Available through the UT Arlington Library Web page.

The Studios
libraries.uta.edu/services/technology/studios

The Studios is a learning and multimedia production facility located on the first floor of the Central Library where students can access Adobe Creative Suite products and edit audio and video.

Writing Center

Located on the fourth floor of Central Library, the Writing Center helps students understand the writing process and become better editors of their own work.

10.3 STUDENT ENROLLMENT SERVICES

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

129 University Administration Building
817-272-3372
uta.edu/registrar

The Office of the Registrar provides UT Arlington students the means to register for classes, maintains student academic records, issues official transcripts, verifies enrollment for insurance, and processes students for graduation.

Services offered include:

- Changes to student records, including name changes, address changes, or emergency contact information

- Filing grade-exclusion paperwork or request a grade change

- Filing tuition or fee appeals

- Enrollment or degree verification

- Processing paperwork for graduation

- Other services are outlined on their website.

This office also offers a number of services online through your MyMav account, such as registering for classes or requesting copies of your transcript. You may access your MyMav account at any time from the UT Arlington home page, uta.edu.

STUDENT ACCOUNTS

130 University Administration Building
817-272-2172
uta.edu/business-affairs/student-accounts

Student Accounts, located on the first floor of the University Administration Building, is where students go to make payments for tuition, fees, and other payments that are required. Anytime a

student notices that a bill is due, they have several options for payment. They may visit the Office of Student Accounts, go online and pay via their MyMav account, or mail their payment to the university. It is always important to keep up with due dates for payments, so check your MyMav account regularly to see how much is due and when. If you have questions understanding any charges, the staff at Student Accounts are available to help.

FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS

252 University Administration Building
Financial Aid: 817-272-3561
Scholarships: 817-272-2197
[uta.edu/fao/](uta.edu/fao/)

The Office of Financial Aid provides you with useful information about financial aid programs offered at UT Arlington and the process to apply for and receive funding. The university offers a wide variety of scholarships, grants, work-study, and loan programs to assist with funding the college education of students and families of all income levels. To start the financial aid process, all students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, every year that they are in school. The form can be found online through the U.S. Department of Education. The form will require information about the income of both the student and their family and should be completed after your tax return has been submitted. This form is required to become eligible for any sort of financial aid and for many scholarships as well, and it is recommended that students complete their FAFSA as early as possible. Trained financial aid advisors in the Office of Financial Aid can help answer any questions about the FAFSA or any other paperwork required to secure funds.

10.4 CAMPUS HOUSING AND STUDENT AFFAIRS RESOURCES

HOUSING OPERATIONS

150 University Center (Middle Level)
817-272-2791
uta.edu/housing

Housing Operations will help you complete a lease agreement that will meet your housing needs in the residence halls or campus apartments.

APARTMENTS AND RESIDENCE LIFE

Arlington Hall—lower level
817-272-2926
uta.edu/campus-ops/housing/living-with-us

Once students have a lease agreement, the apartment and residence life staff will help you build a community and a new home-away-from-home.

CAMPUS ACTIVITIES AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

B140 University Center (Lower Level)
817-272-2963

Hone your leadership and get involved on campus with these great resources.

- **Fraternity and Sorority Life**
  uta.edu/student-affairs/fsl

- **The Follett Student Leadership Center**
  180 University Center (Middle Level)
  uta.edu/leadership

- **Student Organizations**
  uta.edu/studentorganizations

- **EXCEL Campus Activities**
  uta.edu/student-affairs/student-activities/programs/excel

CAMPUS RECREATION

Maverick Activities Center (MAC)
817-272-3277
uta.edu/campusrec

Getting involved on campus and staying healthy are important components of achieving success as a student. The Maverick Activities Center is a 190,000 square foot facility that features a full-service workout area, indoor track, climbing wall, group workout rooms, volleyball and basketball courts, indoor soccer fields, and more. Stop by and join in with an exercise class or sign up to get involved in one of UT Arlington's popular Intramural Sports programs. Admission to the MAC is free with your student ID card and serves as a great way to manage stress during those busy periods of the year.

MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS

B120 University Center (Lower Level)
817-272-2099
uta.edu/multicultural

Get involved with celebrating the rich diversity found at the University of Texas at Arlington by joining one of the programs offered by Multicultural Affairs. All students, faculty, and staff are welcome to benefit from the variety of learning opportunities including special performances, seminars, philanthropic events, and tutoring programs. Whether you are looking for leadership opportunities or just a unique way to interact with our diverse student body, here you will find a way to get engaged on campus and to help you build your resume.

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY STANDARDS

B150 University Center (Lower Level)
817-272-2354
uta.edu/student-affairs/community-standards

In accordance with the UT Arlington Handbook of Operating Procedures, Student Conduct educates the campus community on issues related to student conduct and delivers sanctions to students failing to meet the regulations put forth in "Chapter 2: Student Conduct and Discipline."

STUDENT ACCESS AND RESOURCE CENTER

102 University Hall
817-272-3364
uta.edu/student-affairs/sarcenter

For students with physical, emotional, or learning disabilities, the Student Access and Resource (SAR) Center is a primary resource for getting registered and securing any necessary accommodations. Whether you need extra time for exams, a sign-language interpreter, or even a special area for completing exams, this office is here to assist you with filing all the appropriate paperwork and advocating on your behalf to ensure that you have the maximum opportunity for success.

STUDENT GOVERNANCE

B150 University Center (Lower Level)
817-272-0556
uta.edu/studentgovernance

Student Governance serves as the voice of students in policy decisions on campus. In addition to debating new ways to improve the educational experience for students, Student Governance sponsors over 260 student organizations and numerous activities and events throughout the year. Getting involved with student government provides an excellent opportunity to build leadership experience and make a difference on campus. Elections are held every year for positions, or you can simply show up at any student organization's meeting to get involved with other students who share your interests.

Check out **MavOrgs**, a site with all of UTA's student organizations, below.
Which organizations are you interested in joining?
mavorgs.campuslabs.com/engage/

10.5 COMPUTER LABS AND WIRELESS ACCESS

COMPUTER LABS ON CAMPUS

UT Arlington has over 300 computers available for public use spread across campus. There are six primary computer labs available to students:

- 319 & 324 CAPPA (Architecture) Building: PCs only

- 336 COBA (Business) Building: PCs only

- 256 Engineering Research Building (ERB): PCs only

- 404, 411, 411A, 412, 412A Fine Arts Building: PCs and Macs

- Maverick Activities Center: PCs only

- 200 University Center (Upper Level): PCs and Macs

You can find maps of the computer lab locations across campus through the Office of Information Technology website. The slideshow on the webpage illustrates which computers are available and which are in use at each computer lab. You will also find computers and printers located in every residence hall on campus for students living in the hall and wireless internet capability in every academic building for easy connectivity anytime. Students can find both PC and Mac computers with software suites such as Microsoft Office (including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) and specialty software needed by specific majors at these labs.

Logging on to any UT Arlington computer or to the wireless internet service requires students to use their NetID and password. If you are unsure of your NetID or have not set up your password, you may contact the Office of Information Technology (OIT) Help Desk by calling (817) 272-2208 or by e-mailing HelpDesk@uta.edu. If you know your NetID and just need to reset your password, you may do so by visiting netidss.uta.edu/sspr/private/login.

Printing in OIT computing facilities is "pay as you go." Please check the following Web site for current processes and prices: libraries.uta.edu/services/technology/printing. Additionally, students needing to print large documents, such as posters, can do so in the Central Library.

10.6 COMMUNITY THAT CARES RESOURCES

UTA cares about the well-being of our students, faculty, and staff. It's up to all of us to make this a safe, secure, and supportive campus.

UTA HEALTH SERVICES

Provides quality, accessible, comprehensive, and cost-effective primary health care. In addition to a general medicine clinic, Health Services houses a pharmacy, laboratory, radiology department, women's health clinic, immunization clinic, and a health promotion and substance abuse prevention office.

605 South West St.
817-272-2771
uta.edu/student-affairs/health-services

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS)

Provides services to help students increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems, and make positive changes in their lives. CAPS offers counseling, psychological, and psychiatric services.

303 Ransom Hall & 212 Maverick Activities Center (MAC)
817-272-3671 & 817-272-1888
uta.edu/student-affairs/caps

MAVS TALK 24 HR CRISIS LINE: 817-272-8255

RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION

Committed to creating and maintaining an environment in which all members of the University Community can persevere academically, personally, and professionally in an equitable and safe manner, devoid of sexual and relationship violence.

301 Ransom Hall
817-272-3947
uta.edu/student-affairs/rvsp

BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION TEAM

A network of professionals from across campus that are committed to a caring, confidential program of identification, intervention, and response in order to provide students with the greatest chance of success and our community with the greatest level of protection.

University Center, Lower Level
817-272-6080
bit@uta.edu
uta.edu/student-affairs/dos/behavior-it

MAVS STAND-UP

Bystander intervention is recognizing a potentially harmful situation or interaction and choosing to respond in a way that could positively influence the outcome. Steps to Intervention: (1) Recognize, (2) Choose, (3) Act.

University Center, Suite B150
817-272-3135
bystander@uta.edu
uta.edu/student-affairs/dos/mavs-stand-up

PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

MavMover shuttle bus hours are 7:30 a.m.–9:00 p.m. Monday–Friday. See website for routes. Security/courtesy escort hours are 7 p.m.–3 a.m. every day during the semester. You do not have to pay for either of these services.

Office and Classroom Building, 710 S. Davis Dr.
817-272-3907
parking@uta.edu
uta.edu/pats/index.php

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FUND

The Emergency Assistance Fund (EAF) provides limited monetary help to students who are suffering temporary financial hardship due to a sudden emergency, accident, or unforeseen event that would otherwise jeopardize their ability to attend UTA. Students must complete an online application on the EAF website and provide proper documentation and receipts.

University Center
817-272-7862
dos@uta.edu
uta.edu/student-affairs/dos/advocacy/emergency-assistance

UTA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Protects, serves, and cares for the campus community 24/7, 365 days a year. Conducts safety awareness, crime prevention, and rape aggression defense (R.A.D.) classes and assists in providing after-hours security escorts.

University Police Building, 202 E. Border St.
Emergency: 817-272-3003 or **911**
Non-Emergency: 817-272-3381
policedepartment@uta.edu
silentwitness-anonymous@uta.edu
police.uta.edu

TIPS TO KEEP YOURSELF SAFE

To help protect yourself from crime and theft, it is important to always be aware of your surroundings and to use common sense when considering personal property. Remember never to leave your property unattended, whether in a classroom, the library, or your residence hall. Keep emergency contact numbers programmed into your phone just in case you need to report any criminal activity, and follow these simple crime prevention tips when on campus:

- Look around and be aware of your surroundings when you enter or exit a building.

- Always tell someone where you're going and when you expect to return.

- Avoid walking alone at any time. Call for an escort or find a friend to accompany you to appointments or to your car. If you must walk alone, be alert and aware of who and what is around you.

- Avoid shortcuts and stay in well-lit areas with other people around.

- Carry your personal belongings in a backpack or bag that will enable your arms and hands to be free at all times.

- Do not post your whereabouts on social networking sites or places where people might be able to follow you.

- Always lock your car, apartment, or residence hall room when you leave it. Never leave your apartment or hall room door propped or open when you are away from your room, even for short periods.

- Hide belongings in your car when you park.

- If you see any suspicious activity or persons, contact the UT Arlington police right away via your cell phone by calling (817) 272-3381 or by using one of the blue Police call boxes across campus.

10.7 COVID-19 STUDENT RESOURCES

UTA is dedicated to delivering course instruction while protecting students' safety. Therefore, UTA continues to monitor official sources throughout the school year to ensure current procedures are conducive to a healthy and safe campus. You can read about UTA's Coronavirus response and current policies and procedures regarding COVID-19 at the link below.

uta.edu/announcements/coronavirus

FACE COVERING PROTOCOL

While wearing a face-covering at UTA is no longer required, the University encourages everyone on campus to wear a face covering on campus, regardless of their vaccination status. Face coverings are especially encouraged in spaces where it is difficult to maintain social distancing, for example, in student shuttle buses and faculty offices. You can visit the University Center Campus Information Desk, the Central Library, and The Commons Information Desk if you are in need of a face mask.

For more information, visit our COVID-19 Face Covering Guidance website.

DAILY HEALTH SCREENINGS

To keep one another safe, Mavericks must self-monitor daily for COVID-19 symptoms. All faculty, staff and students must perform a daily health screening, which includes a daily temperature check and self-monitoring report, which can be found at our Reporting and Daily Self-Monitoring website. Check for the following COVID-19 symptoms before reporting to campus each day:

- Cough

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

- Chills or repeated shaking with chills

- Muscle pain

- Headache

- Sore throat

- Loss of taste or smell

- Diarrhea

- Feverishness, or a temperature greater than or equal to 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit

ON-CAMPUS TESTING

Students can receive testing for COVID-19 at multiple sites on campus, free of charge. The most up to date information regarding testing locations can be found at the link below. If you have concerns or questions, you can contact UTA Health Services at 817-272-2771.

uta.edu/announcements/coronavirus/testing

COVID CONTACT FORMS

Report Personal Diagnosis

Fill out this form if you have been personally diagnosed positive for COVID-19: [Personal Diagnosis Form](#)

CAMPUS MAP

Click the Menu button for more options and filters.

> An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
> https://uta.pressbooks.pub/nolimits/?p=217#h5p-1

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Advanced Placement credit (AP credit)

Credit by examination for advanced coursework in high school that counts for college credit.

Academic Advisor

A professional staff person or faculty member who assists students in planning an academic program of study.

Academic Calendar

Official academic calendar of the University that lists registration dates, official holidays, important deadlines, final examinations, and commencement ceremony dates for a given session. Web site: uta.edu/academics/academic-calendar

Academic Continuance

Academic Standing message after a student has received an Academic Warning that signals that a student has met the minimum requirement of earning a 2.5 semester GPA but is still not within the Table of Standards. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog under Academic Regulations for more information.

Academic Dismissal: One Long Term

Also referred to as Dismissal One or DIS1. Academic Standing message that signals that a student is not within the Table of Standards and not allowed to enroll for one long academic term (Fall or Spring term). Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog under Academic Regulations for more information.

Academic Dismissal: One Full Academic Year

Also referred to as Dismissal Two or DIS2. Academic Standing message that signals that a student is not within the Table of Standards and not allowed to enroll for one full calendar year (entire Fall, Spring, and Summer term). Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog under Academic Regulations for more information.

Academic Probation

Academic standing message that signals that a student has less than a 2.0 cumulative grade point average but is within the Table of Standards for the current student classification. Academic Probation

reflects a level of academic standing that should not be confused with Academic Warning or Dismissal. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog under Academic Regulations for more information.

Academic Standing

A message that is placed on student's transcript after grades post at the end of a term that indicates his or her overall academic performance at the University. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog under Academic Regulations for more information.

Academic Warning

Academic Standing message that signals that a student has not earned a grade point average that is within the Table of Standards. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog under Academic Regulations for more information.

Add

The addition of a course to a student's schedule for a given session.

Advising hold

Standard Negative Service Indicator in MyMav that prevents enrollment in courses until students meet with an Academic Advisor from their major department to remove (or "clear") the hold when students have met their advising expectations.

Alum, Alumnus/a (Alumni, plural)

A graduate or former student of UT Arlington.

Auditing

Upon instructor and University permission, individuals can hear and observe a class for no academic credit. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog under Registration and Enrollment for more information.

B.A.

Abbreviation for Bachelor of Arts degree.

B.S.

Abbreviation for Bachelor of Science degree.

Bachelor's degree

Degree earned after completion of the required credit hours and courses within a particular field of study in addition to general requirement courses (i.e., core curriculum and electives).

Blaze

The name of the UT Arlington mascot.

Blue Books

A standard examination booklet used for essay exams. Available at the UT Arlington Bookstore and the Market in the University Center.

Census

The day at which class rolls are frozen, and students can no longer drop a class without receiving a grade of "W" on their transcript. State funding to the institution is based on the enrollment of students on census. Officially indicated in the Academic Calendar for the university.

Cheating

Copying another's test or assignment; communication with another during an exam or assignment; seeking aid from others when not permitted by the instructor; possession of unauthorized materials during a test; buying, using, stealing, transporting, soliciting a test, draft of a test, or answer key.

Classification

Level of a student in their undergraduate career based on the number of semester hours earned. Freshman < 30 hours, Sophomore 30–59 hours, Junior 60–89 hours, and Senior 90 or greater.

CLEP

A standardized test which grants credit by examination to a student record.

Colloquia

Presentations and discussions about current research conducted and related findings.

Collusion

Without authorization, collaborating with another when preparing an assignment.

Commencement

Graduation ceremonies held at the end of the Fall, Spring, and Summer terms. Officially indicated in the Academic Calendar for the university.

Commuters

Students who do not reside in campus residence halls, apartments, or houses.

Concurrent Enrollment

Enrolled at UT Arlington and another institution of higher education at the same time.

Cooperative Education Programs (Co-op's)

Programs that alternate periods of formal study at the university and periods of work under the supervision of a UT Arlington faculty member and work supervisor.

Core Curriculum

University and State mandated courses to ensure that students obtain a well-rounded education from English Composition, Literature, Liberal Arts/Humanities, U.S. History, U.S. Political Science, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Social/Cultural Studies, Fine Arts, and oral and computer proficiency. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog under the Degree Program Requirements section for more specific information.

Course Number

Courses at UT Arlington are designated with a standard prefix and number (e.g., ENGL 1301). ENGL is a course prefix and tells a student which department offers the course or names a cluster of courses. The standard list of UT Arlington prefixes can be found in the Undergraduate Catalog under Course Abbreviations. The course number denotes the level of the course, number of credit hours, and distinguishing number in a department. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog under the Undergraduate Admissions section for more specific information.

Credit by Exam

Academic course credit given to students based on performance on national standardized tests (e.g., AP, CLEP, IB, DANTES) or Advanced Standing Exams offered by some departments. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog under the Undergraduate Admissions section for more specific information.

Cumulative Grade Point Average

Overall grade point average for all classes taken at UT Arlington; see semester grade point average as well.

Dental Admissions Test (DAT)

A standardized test that helps dental schools assess the qualifications of a candidate applying for dental school.

Dead Week

Actually called Final Review Week at UT Arlington. Five class days prior to final examinations during the long sessions that allow students to prepare for finals. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog for more specific information.

Dean

Leading academic official of a school or college. Considered a member of the faculty as well.

Disciplinary Probation

A sanction given to students by the Office of Community Standards for offenses against the Code of Student Conduct.

Doctoral degree

Highest degree obtained in academics. Abbreviated Ph.D. A person with a Ph.D. is referred to as "Dr. So-and-so."

Drop

The deletion of a course to a student's schedule for a given session.

Drop for Non-Pay

A deadline prior to the beginning of a session in which students are dropped from their enrolled coursework if payment or arrangements for payment have not been made.

Elective

A course that student can choose freely from all departments on campus in a degree plan that counts toward the required hours to graduate with a Bachelor's degree. Should not be confused with a Major Elective that is a specified list of courses that a student can choose from in the major.

Expulsion

A permanent suspension from the university.

Faculty

The body of individuals that teach courses at an institution. Comprised of Professors, Associate and Assistant Professors, Lecturers, and Instructors including tenure-track and non-tenure track (sometimes also called adjunct faculty) faculty.

FAFSA

Abbreviation for Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Form that must be completed prior to receiving federal and state financial aid.

FERPA

Abbreviation for the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Policy that governs what student information can be shared with the public, including parents, spouses, siblings, etc. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog under Academic Regulations for more information.

Finals

Abbreviation for Final Examinations. Examinations given to students at the end of a session. Official final exam schedule can be found at the Office of the Registrar Web site, uta.edu/administration/registrar/calendars/final-exams. Officially indicated in the Academic Calendar for the University.

Financial Aid

Any loan, work-study employment, grant, or scholarships offered to help a student meet the cost of attaining an education and related expenses.

Fraternities

Organizations of men who seek to develop social, leadership, and service opportunities on and off campus to enhance their educational experience and contribute to their personal development.

Full-time Student

A student who enrolls in a long semester (Fall or Spring) for 12 or more semester credit hours. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog under Undergraduate Admissions for information on full-time status in short sessions.

Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)

Graduate students hired to teach courses or assist a professor teaching a course.

Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT)

A standardized test that helps business schools assess the qualifications of applicants for advanced study in business and management.

Good Standing

Academic Standing designation for students with a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

A four-point grading system, used to measure academic performance (4.0 = A, 3.0 = B, 2.0 = C, 1.0 = D, and 0.0 = F).

Graduate Record Exam (GRE)

A standardized test used by graduate level programs across the nation used to assess the qualifications of applicants for advanced study in higher education.

Grants

A form of financial aid that does not require the student to pay the money back upon graduation or leaving school.

Greek Life

Community comprised of four governing bodies that represents 25 fraternities and sororities on campus.

Handshake

Student employment website with internships and on and off campus job opportunities.

Harassment

Verbal or non-verbal conduct which creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

Hazing

Any action or situation that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health of a student for the purpose of initiation or admission into an organization. Hazing is illegal in the State of Texas. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog under the Student Involvement and Policies section for more specific information.

Independent Study

Course credit earned by students who work one-on-one with a faculty member completing research and projects on an area of interest to the student and faculty member.

Internship

Experiential learning opportunity in which students can receive college credit for work conducted in the workforce under the supervision of a UT Arlington faculty member and Work Supervisor.

Intramural Sports

Campus-sponsored recreational and competitive activities for men, women, and co-recreational teams.

Labs

Experiential class time often used to apply information and processes presented in lecture.

Last Drop Day

A deadline during a given session in which students can drop a course with the assistance of an academic advisor in their major department. Officially indicated in the Academic Calendar for the University.

Late Registration

Period at the beginning of each session for students who were unable to register during the regular registration period. Students often use this time period to add/drop/swap courses. Officially indicated in the Academic Calendar for the University.

Latin Honors

Honorable designation at graduation for students earning exemplary GPAs in a certain number of credit hours. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog under the Graduation section for more specific information.

Lecture

Oral presentation of critical information, history, background, theories, or processes by a faculty member.

Major

A field of study (i.e., body of coursework) determined by the faculty of a given area of study or department.

Major Course

A course that is required in order to earn a Bachelor's degree in that major.

Major Elective

A course that is offered in the major that a student can freely choose.

Master's Degree

An advanced degree obtained in academics. Abbreviated M.A.(Masters of Arts), M.S. (Masters of Science), M.B.A. (Masters of Business Administration), etc.

Math Placement Test (MPT)

Placement test given to incoming students to determine their readiness to complete certain levels of the UT Arlington math curriculum. Not to be confused with the GMAT or Miller Analogies Test.

Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT)

A standardized test that helps medical schools assess the qualifications of a candidate applying for medical professional school.

MavID Card

Photo identification issued to enrolled UT Arlington students. Used to access certain campus services as well as off-campus discount program.

Mavericks

Term used to refer to UT Arlington students.

Maverick Stampede

Events series to welcome students to campus at the beginning of the Fall term.

MavMail

UT Arlington e-mail account issued to all students, faculty, and staff and source of official communication from the university.

Minor

A field of study (i.e., body of coursework) determined by the faculty of a given area of study or department that requires less credit hours to complete in comparison to a major.

MyMav

Term used to refer to the campus student information system that students use to enroll in courses, check their grades, accept their financial aid, pay their tuition, etc.

Non-Degree-Seeking Students

A student who holds a Bachelor's degree from another accredited institution but is admitted to continue to take leveling coursework.

Overload

A course schedule that includes more than 18 semester credit hours.

Parking Permit

Online statement that allows for legal campus parking based on designation (student, faculty-staff, residential student, etc.).

Part-time Student

A student who enrolls in less than 12 semester credit hours in a given session.

Peer Academic Leaders (PALs)

Students assigned to the Student Success Course to assist new students in their transition to college life.

Ph.D.

Abbreviation for Doctoral degree; persons having earned a Ph.D. should be referred to as "Dr. X."

Plagiarism

Using someone else's work in your assignment without appropriate acknowledgement or making slight variations in the language and then failing to give credit to the source. An offense that constitutes the "stealing" of someone else's work or ideas.

Prerequisites

Courses that need to be taken before a student can be successful in a subsequent class or accepted into a degree program.

President

The Chief Administrator of UT Arlington.

Provost

Chief Academic Officer of the University who serves as a leader to the Deans and faculty on campus as well as academic support programs and student affairs at UT Arlington.

R

Abbreviation in the Schedule of Classes for Thursday.

Registrar

Maintains student records related to the process of admission to the university and enrollment in courses.

Registration

Period in which students can enroll in courses via the MyMav student information system. Officially indicated in the Academic Calendar for the university.

Resident Assistant (RA)

Student leader on campus that lives in the residence halls on campus and supports students within that living arrangement.

Rush

The opportunity to check out and join a fraternity or sorority.

SAP

Abbreviation for Satisfactory Academic Progress. Students receiving financial aid awards must complete a minimum number of hours based on classification. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog under Academic Regulations for more information.

Scantrons

A form used mainly for multiple choice exams in which students must fill in the circle of their answer. Can be purchased at the UT Arlington Bookstore or Market in the University Center.

Schedule of Classes

List of courses available for a particular session via the MyMav portal.

Scholarship

Funding offered to students to pay for educational expenses based on academic achievement or certain characteristics of the student.

Semester Credit Hours

Number of credit hours a student earns for taking a particular course. Often reflects the number of class hours a student will sit in each week for that class with the exception of classes with laboratory credit.

Semester Grade Point Average

Grade point average for only courses taken during a given session.

Seminar

Course taught by a faculty member on a special topic typically with a small class size to promote student-faculty discussion.

Service Indicator

A flag on a student record in MyMav that can provide information or block certain actions from occurring. Positive service indicators are marked by a "star" in MyMav, while negative service indicators are marked by a circle with a diagonal line through it. Negative Service indicators are often referred to as "holds."

Service Learning

Volunteer activity in which students earn assignment or course credit for reflecting or applying their experience to academic course content under the supervision of a UT Arlington faculty member.

Session

Period of time when academic coursework is offered and completed. There are seven distinct sessions that comprise the Fall, Spring, and Summer terms. Dynamic Dated Sessions are associated with all three terms.

Student Loans

Funding offered to students to pay for educational expenses based on the FASFA and available funding provided to the institution. Requires that the students repay the principal amount and interest.

The Shorthorn

Student-published newspaper at UT Arlington. Available in print and online.

Sororities

Organizations of women who seek to develop social, leadership, and service opportunities on and off campus to enhance their educational experience and contribute to their personal development.

Staff

University professionals who typically have a 12-month appointment and serve to support students or the normal functions necessary to maintain the university.

Student Accounts

Office on campus that is the point of payment and billing for tuition, fees, and charges. Also referred to as Student Financial Services.

Student Fees

Funding that students pay to the university that pays for the additional support services and programs that aid in their social, academic, and personal success.

Student ID

A ten-digit identification number issued to students that typically begins with 1000. Also can be referred to as the EmplID in MyMav or by the layperson as the "1000 number."

Student Money Management Center

Assists students with their financial needs. Provides a website full of resources, one-on-one counseling sessions, seminars and presentations. Educates students on budgeting, savings, and credit awareness. uta.edu/business-affairs/smmc/

Subplan

A specialization of course work in a major.

Suspension

Sanction given by the Office of Community Standards for students performing offenses against the Student Code of Conduct. Term often used interchangeably with Academic Dismissal.

Sustainability

The ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The practice of maintaining life and society through technologies, policies, and personal choices that help us use our planet's limited resources more effectively.

Swap

The changing of sections of a course to a student's schedule for a given session.

Syllabus

A document provided by faculty members to students which articulates the requirements for completing the course and grading and other policies and procedures related to the course.

Table of Standards

Level of performance required of undergraduate students based on their GPA and hours attempted in order to continue enrollment at the University. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog under the Academic Regulations section for more specific information.

Term

A combination of sessions that make up the Fall, Spring, and Summer terms (i.e., Summer Intersession, 11-week session, 5-week I, and 5-week II sessions equal the Summer term).

Texas Success Initiative (TSI)

State-mandated program to ensure that entering college students have the necessary skills to perform effectively in college coursework. Students must seek assessment before enrolling in college coursework and advisement into proper developmental coursework.

TSI Assessment

A standardized test that measures reading, writing, and math skills to determine if a student has the appropriate skill levels to complete college-level coursework.

The Trailblazer

A weekly student newsletter published and distributed via the UT Arlington student e-mail account.

Transfer Students

Students who enter UT Arlington and have already attempted more than 24 hours of coursework at another higher education institution.

UC

Abbreviation for the E.H. Hereford University Center.

Undergraduate Catalog

Publication that provides all of the rules and regulations regarding earning a bachelor's degree at UT Arlington given a particular date of entry to the University. The official Undergraduate Catalog is online at catalog.uta.edu/.

Division of Student Success

An administrative unit to serve new incoming students in their transition to the University.

Withdrawal

Dropping one or more classes in a given session. Designated on a transcript as a grade of "W."

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