

Navigating Student Resources at UHD – Learning to Ask for Help

Learning Outcome: Students will visit and obtain information about organizations within UHD that are dedicated to promote student success.

Summary: The students are instructed to visit Student Success Initiatives, inquire about the services offered in each office, policies, and rules applicable to each office. The collected information is then presented as a written report to be graded for completion and accuracy. This activity encourages students to use the resources that are available to help them succeed in college. Writing, composition and self-management skills are practiced in this activity.

Procedure:

1. The instructor provides the Resources Report instructions, posts the information on Blackboard and explains the tasks to be completed.
2. The instructor explains the purpose of the report; it is vital to emphasize that this activity will benefit the students during the duration of their college years at UHD.
3. The instructor explains that the students will have 4-5 weeks to complete the assignment.
4. The students visit several academic services offices and other support initiatives, collect information and write a report.

Example Application: This exercise is useful to familiarize students with the multiple resources available at UHD, and helps them to navigate through the policies and processes applicable to each support office. This exercise was performed during the Freshman Seminar “Strangers among us: the microbiota” Fall 2014 semester (see attached Support Resources Instructions).

Outcome and Impressions: This was a very useful exercise; most students wrote in their reports that they had learned about offices and organizations that were new or previously unknown to them. Overall, they recognized the value of this exercise.

Additional Positive Experiences:

1. In another Freshman Seminar Course, students were assigned tasks for ten different resources on campus that are designed to help them be successful. The ten resources were: Lunch and Learn (attend 3); Career Workshops (attend 2); Library; Academic Support offices [The Center for Math and Statistics Support (C4MS2), The Writing and Reading Center, The Learning Connection, The Academic Computing Labs, The Science Learning Center, The Foreign Language Lab]; Financial Aid; Sports and Fitness; and Advising. The tasks assigned varied depending on the resource - students may have had to write a summary of a workshop, complete the Augmented Reality tour in the library, obtain a fitness class schedule, etc. After completion of each task, students completed a journal entry in Blackboard Learn. Students completed ten different entries, and could submit them in any order, allowing the professor to grade them as the entries were submitted. This assignment was extremely well received by students,

especially the Lunch and Learn, Career Workshop, and Library resources. Students reported that knowledge of these resources was extremely helpful.

2. The Jigsaw Puzzle activity was used to understand the various services available to students at UHD. Students were divided into groups of 6. The first person in each group was assigned to read and learn about one or more services: advising, writing center, career services, etc. The second person in each group was assigned the next set of activities and so on. After researching their topics, students assigned the same topic discussed the topic together and became “experts.” The students returned to their original groups and informed the group members about their assigned services. This application of the Jigsaw Puzzle activity worked very well – the students learned about the many services UHD provides. An individual student is not likely to investigate the services on her own and thus will be unaware of their benefits.

Example Instructions for 'Additional Positive Experience 1:'

UHD 1303 – Freshman Seminar Science- Strangers Among Us: The Microbiota

University Support Resources Report – Due October 2nd.

Write a report that describes support resources within the University and the College of Science and Technology. You will need to include location, phone numbers, the name of a person you have met in that office, policies and processes applicable to each support office. This report will be graded for accuracy and completeness.

1. Find the Science Learning Center, meet a Natural Science Tutor for a class you are taking now or will take in the near future. Ask them for tips on how to study and experiences they may have had while taking Science classes.
2. Find the Learning Connection, describe their services and name at least one contact person. Describe which service you plan to use to improve your learning habits.
3. Go to the Library, take a self-guided tour to learn about the library resources. Learn how to search and find web articles, printed materials and books.
4. Go to the Collaborative Learning Community Center and meet a math tutor. Ask them how to study math, how you can improve your grades or any other question that would help you to improve your success in math courses.
5. Visit the Financial Aid office, research at least three different scholarships that you may apply to in 2015. List the scholarships and their requirements, including deadlines. Then, do not forget to apply!
6. Attend at least three Lunch and Learn workshops. Describe what you learned in each one and which strategies you will put into effect from now on.
7. Find the Advising office; schedule an appointment with an Advisor to select the courses that you will take on Spring 2015.
8. Visit the Sports and Fitness center. Find an activity that will help you relieve stress.

Example Instructions for 'Additional Positive Experience 2:'

UHD 1303 – Freshman Seminar Science- Biology of Food

You will report on each of your 10 visits to some of the "student success resources" available to you on campus. Your resources for this report are:

L&L - Lunch and Learn (3) - Write a summary of each session you attend. Include the most helpful thing you learned from attending the session. What steps will you take as a result of attending these sessions?

Career - Career Workshops (in career services OR for the job fair) (2) - Write a summary of each session you attend. Include the most helpful thing you learned from attending the session. What steps will you take as a result of attending these sessions?

Lib - Visit to the UHD library - Take the AR tour and quiz. For the journal, describe at least 3 helpful features from this tour (or describe 3 things you learned, etc.).

AS - Find the following Academic Support offices. For each office, note its location and services available to you. You do not need to make an appointment for the purposes of this assignment. Report on your tour. Describe what was especially helpful.

- The Center for Math and Statistics Support (C4MS²)
- The Writing and Reading Center
- The Learning Connection
- The Academic Computing Labs (there are 3; visit at least 1)
- The Science Learning Center
- The Foreign Language Lab

Fin - Finances -

- Physical office is S330 but most info is now online at <http://www.uhd.edu/financial/>. Research 2 scholarships available to students and for which you are eligible to apply, and provide the information for each. Write out your plan for at least one application.
- Go to this web page: <http://www.uhd.edu/financial/index.html> and watch the "Financial Literacy - Advice for Students about Credit Cards" video (located on the bottom right). What is helpful in this video? Was anything not helpful?
- Visit this recent series on NPR about consumer and medical debt. <http://www.npr.org/2014/09/15/347957729/when-consumer-debts-go-unpaid-paychecks-can-take-a-big-hit> and <http://www.npr.org/2014/09/16/348709389/with-debt-collection-your-bank-account-could-be-at-risk>. Listen to the stories and write your impressions.

Fitness - Visit UHD sports and fitness - Get a class schedule and other information that interests you. Take a tour. Describe your plan to attend at least one fitness class at the UHD gym, another gym, or your other plans to exercise. Relate this to our 'Biology of Food' topic.

Advising - Visit the Advising Center and plan your schedule for Spring 2015 - (Note- we will have a discussion on registration in class on 10/28. Make your appointment with advising early to get your

choice of times; they will get busy towards the end of the semester.) Write a summary of your experience and post your Spring 2015 schedule. Post your first available registration date for Spring 2015.

DIRECTIONS - Create a NEW ENTRY for each of the 10 resources that you are going to report on. You can submit your entries in any order. Name each entry as "[descriptive header from above] Lastname_Firstname". By the report due date, you should have created 10 separate journal entries.

This report is due by November 18 at 8:30am. Individual entries can be completed and submitted at any time, but the deadline is 11/18 at 8:30am. **As these resources are designed to help you from the beginning of the semester and beyond, I suggest that you DO NOT WAIT to begin this assignment.**

You will be unable to edit or change your journal entry after submission. Consider composing your entries in MS Word or similar program, and utilize the "draft" feature until you are sure you are finished. Copy and paste your final entry into the journal submission (do not submit as an attachment). Grammar and spelling count for this!