

Checklist for Graduate Student Success

Some students find that a checklist helps them simplify all the things they need to do get done. Here is a checklist with tips to use on your first semester or throughout your program.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY.

- Student Email Matters.** After being admitted, you'll need to activate your student email. All UTRGV emails will be sent to your student email so we strongly recommend you check your email at least once a day.
- Ask for Help.** If you have a question or did not understand an assignment, be sure to email your instructor for clarification.
- It's a Blackboard thing.** Your instructors post important assignments as well as the syllabus on Blackboard so it's a good idea to develop a habit of checking it once-a-day for any updates.
- Sick or Unable to Attend.** If you are unable to attend a class or will be running late, email your instructor right away.
- Different offices or departments.** If you have any issues and don't know which office to call, you can call GradCentral 1-833-UTRGV-GC, it's the Graduate College's in-house call center for graduate student needs and often open late and on the weekends.
- I have an advisor?** Yes, all graduate students are assigned a graduate program coordinator also known as an advisor. For a complete list, visit <https://www.utrgv.edu/graduate/contact-us/program-directors/index.htm>. Graduate Program Coordinators may change after a semester/module or during a semester/module so be sure to visit that webpage for the most current list.

BE PREPARED.

- It's on the academic calendar.** Important dates are all posted on UTRGV's academic calendar. This includes course drop dates as well as refund dates. It's a good idea to add the dates to your mobile calendar or keep a copy handy as needed.
- Is something due today?** We know you're busy which is why we recommend you keep a print copy of your syllabus (or keep an electronic copy in your phone) and enter any important due dates in your mobile calendar or agenda. Keep in mind to give yourself enough notice before a due date.
- Online isn't always easier.** Some students are often surprised by the number of papers that are required for an online course versus an on-campus course. Be sure to give yourself enough time to work on those assignments.
- Grades.** All grades are posted on ASSIST. It's important to note that grade requirements vary by program. For example, some programs only allow one "C" grade while others may state you must earn a "B" or better and anything below means you'll need to retake the course. Be sure you know the grade expectations in your program.
- What's my academic standing?** Academic standing is noted on your ASSIST account. The basic rule to remember is you must earn a 3.0 GPA to meet graduation GPA requirements. While probation is a warning to bring your GPA up, a suspension (or dismissal) means you have been dismissed from the program.

- **My class expired!** Unlike undergraduate students, the world of graduate education has expiration dates. The length of time to degree varies from university to university, but courses do expire which means they can't count on your degree plan. It also means you need to retake the course (s) and pay for the course (s) again. At UTRGV, master's students have 7 years to complete a degree (doctoral students have 10 years) and the clock starts once you complete a course.