

Studying Public Health *in the USA*



A Guide for International Students

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[**I**ntroduction]

The number of international students studying in the United States continues to grow year after year. According to the Institute of International Education, more than 760,000 international students came to study at colleges and universities in the U.S. in 2011, many of them at schools of world renown schools of public health. International students come from all over the world – Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, Africa and Europe. With so many students coming from a broad range of backgrounds and cultures, it is more important than ever for students to receive some guidance on American culture, including the rules and expectations for university students.

This guide is designed for you, the international student. The purpose is to provide information and tips that help you feel more comfortable in your new surroundings and better able to reach your personal, academic and career goals in the U.S. **Welcome!**



Getting Ready to Go

Before coming to the U.S., there are a few things you can do to prepare yourself and make the initial transition go more smoothly.

Improve Your English Language Skills

Although your English language abilities will improve considerably over time through living and studying in the U.S., the better your ability to communicate in English when you arrive, the easier it will be to make the adjustment and immediately begin to participate in university life. Two of the most useful things you can do to enhance your English skills in the weeks and months before your trip are to:



Read books/newspapers/magazines/websites in English

Reading in English is one of the best ways to encounter new words and expand your vocabulary. It is especially important to read materials other than textbooks so that you are exposed to more authentic language and widen your vocabulary. Reading magazines, websites and newspapers also provides the opportunity to learn about current events and issues of interest in the U.S. In addition, if you pay attention to grammar, word choice and other aspects of the language while you read, you can use these materials as models for your own writing.

Watch TV/movies/videos in English

Watching TV series, movies or online videos in English will go a long way in helping you understand everyday spoken English. You will find that Americans' speech is often full of slang (very informal speech) and native speakers vary greatly in terms of accent, speed, and level of clarity, among other things. Therefore, international students who have spent a great deal of time listening to a variety of native English speakers on TV and in movies generally have an easier time understanding Americans once they arrive. And just like reading magazines and newspapers, watching the news, TV series or other programs will help you become more familiar and comfortable with American culture.

Obtain Proper Documentation

There are also many forms that must be filled out and submitted in order for you to safely and legally travel to and live in the U.S.

Forms I-20 and DS-2019: To obtain a visa authorizing you to enter the U.S., you must obtain a *certificate of eligibility for nonimmigrant student status* from the university to which you have been accepted – **Form I-20** or **Form DS-2019**.



SEVIS: The form you receive also includes your *Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)* student tracking number. With this number, you must go online to pay the **SEVIS fee**, fill out the visa application forms, and schedule your visa interview.

Student Visa:

To study in the U.S., you must obtain a student visa from the U.S. government – usually an **F-1** or a **J-1 visa**. **F-1 visas** permit international students to pursue education (academic studies and/or language training programs) in the United States. **J-1 visas** permit visitors participating in programs that promote cultural exchange to obtain training in the U.S. Students must be sponsored either by a private or a government program. Make sure to take your I-20 or DS-2019 form and Sevis receipt to the U.S. embassy or consulate where you have your interview, and be prepared to answer questions about yourself, including your academic background and the program to which you have been admitted, your English language skills and proof of your ability to support yourself financially while living in the U.S.

Locate Housing

Wherever you live during the time you are earning your degree in public health will be your “home away from home,” so you will want to make sure to find a place that meets your needs. Most graduate students live in apartments near campus and can make those arrangements online at the apartment’s website. Whenever possible, it is very helpful to secure housing before coming to the U.S., so you can move into your new home as soon as you arrive. When making arrangements for housing, it is a good idea to get answers to these questions:



- **Rent:** How much is it? What day of the month is it due? What happens if you are late paying the rent?
- **Furnishings:** Is the apartment furnished or unfurnished? If it is furnished, what are the furnishings?
- **Laundry Facilities:** Is there a washer and a dryer in the apartment? If not, is there a laundry room in the apartment complex/building? Is there a cost?
- **Security Deposit:** Is a security deposit required to move in? If so, how much is it, and how do I get it back?
- **Lease:** How long is the lease (rental contract)? Six months? One year? What happens if I want to move out before the lease ends?
- **Utilities** (water, electricity, gas, landline telephone): Are utilities included in the rent? If not, how much are they each month typically? How do I get the services connected?
- **Internet:** How do residents connect to the Internet?
- **Cable TV:** Is cable included in the rent? What company is used?
How much is the monthly fee?
- **Proximity/Transportation to Campus:** Is the apartment close to campus? How do students usually get to campus from this apartment complex? Is parking available?
- **Security:** What kind of security measures are there at the complex to keep residents safe?

Tip for Success: You will be spending a lot of time typing papers in graduate school so, make sure your typing skills are in good shape!

Another key question is: **“When can I move in?”** If you arrive before the date you are permitted to move into your apartment, you will have to find a temporary place to stay, such as a hotel, and this can be expensive and inconvenient.

Plan Your Arrival



When you get off the plane in the U.S., you will be tired and anxious, so you will want to know how you will get from the airport to your new home. Write down the address of your new home and make sure to find out what your options are (taxi, shuttle, subway) or arrange for a pick up before you leave.

Part I

Cultural **A**daptation



Making the Adjustment

In addition to the academic work, as an international student in the U.S. you will be faced with adapting to a new culture. The ways that people interact and communicate, the unwritten rules of behavior, and the expectations placed on you may be very different from those in your home country. This will add to the amount of stress you will experience as a graduate student. However, understand that you are not alone and that adjusting to a new culture is a normal process. With some flexibility and openness to new ways of doing things, you can be successful in making the transition. This unit is intended to help you recognize the stages of adaptation and to adjust to your new surroundings.



In this section, you will find information on:

- *Culture Shock*
- *U.S. Culture*
- *U.S. Holidays*
- *Meeting People*

Culture Shock

Living abroad for an extended period of time often results in an experience of "culture shock." There is a series of natural stages of adjustment to a new environment.

Studying in a foreign country generally means being cut off from one's family, language and culture, and as a result, students often find themselves experiencing feelings of isolation, sadness, anxiety and depression. These emotions can be symptoms of homesickness and "culture shock." This is especially challenging in an environment, such as a university, in which there is an expectation that you will meet constant deadlines and produce high-quality work.

Symptoms of culture shock include:

- **Withdrawal**
- **Crying**
- **Inability to Concentrate**
- **Too Much/Little Sleep**
- **Too Much/Little**
Eating/Drinking
- **Anger/Irritability**
- **Illness**

In addition, if family members accompany you to the U.S., the change in environment and added stresses can result in conflicts among family members. Spouses and children can experience depression, anxiety and homesickness as well, and that can add to a student's stress.



**Remember: Adjusting to a new culture is not a one-time event, but a process that takes place over time.
Here are 4 common stages of student adjustment:**

Stage 1: Fun and Excitement

Sometimes called the "honeymoon period," the first few days or weeks in a new country are often full of fun and excitement. For many, just the relief that you are finally here can be a great feeling. Students come with great expectations about the experiences they will have, including the knowledge and skills they will gain, the friends they will make and the pleasure they will have seeing and doing new things. At this point, everything is new, fascinating and exciting.

Stage 2: Irritation and Hostility

Often, when the excitement of arriving in a new country fades, the focus can change to differences between the home culture and the new one. It is easy to become frustrated by the differences and to feel bewildered by all of the new systems, rules and expectations. Students who were at the top of the class and accustomed to success in their home countries now often feel inadequate, less productive and unsuccessful.

Stage 3: Acceptance

Over time, you will begin to adopt some of the local values and customs and feel less isolated. As life becomes "normal," you will find that your confidence increases, and you learn to function well under the new conditions.

Stage 4: Biculturalism

Finally, international students find increased enjoyment in the new environment and an ability to function in both the old and new cultures with confidence. In fact, some of you will find that life is just as good as or better than before, and that there will be things you will miss when you leave.

Tips for Overcoming Culture Shock

1. Create new support systems

When you are in your own country, you have friends and family around to support you in times of stress, depression or anxiety. In the U.S., you may feel that you lack that type of assistance just when you need it most. So it is important to identify ways that you can get the emotional support you need. This may mean scheduling a regular time to communicate with friends and family back home. However, it is even more important to form relationships with people here (roommates, neighbors, classmates) with whom you can spend time relaxing and having fun. With your new friends, you can share any feelings of sadness, loneliness or frustration that you are experiencing and get the support you need.

2. Participate in social activities

Although it sometimes takes some effort to get out of the house, sitting at home alone usually makes the feelings of isolation or stress that come with culture shock even worse. Joining clubs, studying in groups and engaging in other social activities will help you to make new friends and provide you with a sense of belonging that is key to overcoming culture shock.

3. Get some R & R (rest and relaxation)

Think about the things you did to relax at home in your country; you can do these same things to help you handle the stress of living and studying in the U.S. Whether it is taking hot baths, going for a run, doing yoga, reading novels, watching movies or some other activity, take the time to do these while you are in the U.S. This will help you to and feel more comfortable have a sense of a "normal" life.

4. Experience popular culture

The more you know about what is going on around you, the more you will feel at home and enjoy your experience in the U.S. Going to movies, watching TV shows, reading American magazines and websites – all of these activities will help you understand what Americans are interested in and give you things to talk with them about. Learning about the day-to-day culture of a country is one of the advantages of living abroad. Plus, doing all of these things goes a long way in improving your English!



5. Explore your surroundings

There are many things to see and do in the U.S. and you will want to take advantage of your time here to expand your horizons! During weekends visit local attractions, such as parks, museums and theaters. During longer breaks, travel to national sites; exploring new places can be fun and be a great way to clear your mind of thoughts of homework and tests!

6. Be patient!

The most important thing to do is to give it time; adaptation is a process. Remember that what you do in the U.S. is an investment, and while it may be quite a challenge now, there will be a payoff in your future!

U.S Culture

Although the United States is an immense country made up of millions of individuals, there are some general cultural values, attitudes and behaviors that typify U.S. culture.

Control of the Environment/Self-Help

While many cultures attribute circumstances more often to "fate" or other controlling elements, Americans tend to feel that, as individuals, we have a large degree of influence over what happens to us and that we have the power to change our lives and the world around us. This view contributes to an ongoing desire to improve ourselves; bookstores in the U.S. are full of "self-help" books on topics from how to have a better marriage, to how to get rich, to how to improve our health.

Change/Mobility/Future Orientation

Related to our desire to control our circumstances and improve our lives, Americans move around a lot and see change as evidence of progress, whether at school, work or home. We focus on the future, and see new things – such as new technologies, environments or jobs – as contributing to improvements in our lives.

Time/Efficiency

"Life is short" and "Time is money" are typical expressions in the U.S. Americans believe it is important to be on time and expect others to do the same. We see time as valuable and do not like to "waste" our own or other peoples' time. Americans fill up their days with things they need and/or want to do (as evidenced by our reliance on agendas and calendars), and seek to accomplish as many tasks as possible in limited time. Being a "multi-tasker" (someone who can manage two or more tasks at one time) is valued in the U.S. because it means a person is both productive and efficient.

Equality

Although there continue to be inequalities throughout all aspects of American life, equality in terms of race, religion, age, sex, and sexual orientation continues to be a common goal and a shared value in the U.S. This idea of equality also contributes to the idea that everyone, no matter what their circumstances at birth, can reach their goals and achieve "the American Dream."

Independence

Because independence is highly valued in the U.S., as a student, you will be expected to demonstrate independence as well. That means, for example, identifying and using resources like the Internet to find information you need. "Go to the website" and "Google it!" are common phrases in the U.S. nowadays, because practically any and all types of information can be found online, from directions to the nearest coffee shop to answers to questions about English grammar.



Work

"What do you do?" is often the first question Americans ask each other when they meet for the first time. As a student, you can respond to this question by talking about what and where you are studying. While in other cultures, people may think about themselves and others in terms of family relationships, Americans spend a lot of our time both at work and talking about work and can even be said to define ourselves by the work that we do.

Informality

Over the last few decades, Americans have become more and more informal in the way we dress and communicate. Some of this informality, such as the way we usually address each other by first name, is related to the desire to show equality among individuals. Also, Americans generally like to be as comfortable as possible, both physically and socially, and tend to wear more informal clothing than people in other countries. This is especially true for on a school campus, where it is not uncommon to see students wearing shorts, t-shirts and flip flops, especially when the weather is warm.

Directness/Openness

Americans like to "get to the point" and be efficient, even in communication. However, keep in mind that while Americans value honesty and directness, we value politeness and courtesy as much, or even more. That is to say, we make an effort not to seem rude or disrespectful to others. While we tend to say what is on our minds, in day-to-day interactions, it is more important to avoid hurting someone's feelings or offending them.

Consumerism

There is some truth to the stereotype of Americans focusing a lot of time on both making and spending money. Part of what drives the consumer culture is access to *disposable income* and a desire to acquire the latest and greatest version of items, from clothes to cars to electronic devices. Also, while in the past there was an effort to repair objects when they were broken, nowadays Americans are more likely to throw something away and buy a new one. However, while shopping is a pastime for many, the U.S. has a large middle class and most Americans are also concerned about how to manage their personal finances and save for the future. This has especially been true since the financial crisis of 2008.



Family Life in the U.S.

One of the most difficult aspects of American culture for many international students to understand has to do with American families. Generally speaking, Americans are not family oriented in the way that people in most other countries are. In fact, while uncles, cousins and grandparents are considered close family in other cultures, in the U.S., extended family members ("relatives") are not considered part of one's "nuclear family" and may not interact with each other on a regular basis, especially if they do not live nearby. This has more often the case in urban areas than in rural areas, where extended family members may live in the same area and see each other regularly. Children move away from their parents' home as early as age 18, even when they are not married, which seems to many non-Americans as evidence that Americans do not value family relationships. However, it may help to keep in mind that, to Americans, one of the greatest things that a parent can do for a child is to raise her/him to be independent. Living away from parents is not necessarily a reflection of negative feelings, but of the strong role that independence plays in the life of American adults – both of adult children and their parents. At the same time, Americans place a high value on friendships, and are often more likely to spend time with friends than with family.



More Notes on Culture

Names

In the U.S., people generally have three names in this order: **first name, middle name and last name.**

For example: **Holly Rebecca Patrick**

(first) (middle) (last)

First name: This is the name that people usually call you.

Middle name: Generally speaking, this is part of your *full name* but is not used often. Some official documents or forms will ask you to include your middle name or the initial of your middle name.

Last name: Also known as a *surname* or *family name*, a person's last name has typically been passed down from the father, and women have traditionally taken the last name of their husbands when they get married. However, in recent years, many women have chosen to keep their last name after marriage or to "hyphenate" their last names (e.g., *Patrick-Jones*). For their last names, children are usually given either the last name of their father or the hyphenated last name.

Note: *To avoid confusion and potential problems, it is important to write your name the same way (in the same order and with the same English spelling) every time on all documents.*

Visiting a Home

Because Americans tend to live a busy lifestyle, we usually make special arrangements for spending time with friends and family, rather than just "dropping by" or meeting spontaneously. If you are invited to an American's home for dinner, it is polite to bring something like a bottle of wine, dessert or flowers. When you enter the home, it is not expected that you will remove your shoes. If you invite an American to your home and would like them to remove their shoes, simply ask them politely to do so.

Tipping

People employed in service industries in the U.S. usually depend on tips for a large portion of their income; therefore, **it is important to leave a tip for those who provide you with a service** – such taxi drivers, restaurant servers and hair stylists/barbers. When there is a receipt, there is usually a space to write the amount of the tip and add that to the total you are paying. It is customary to leave a tip of 15% to 20% of the total cost; however, if you are unsatisfied with the service, it is acceptable to leave less.



Personal Hygiene

Different cultures have different ideas about personal hygiene; as a general rule, Americans bathe and apply deodorant every day and brush their teeth two or more times a day. It is also common to use mouthwash to ensure fresh breath. Perfume or cologne is sometimes used but, especially at work or at school, is not strong.

Conversation Topics

Some international students are concerned that they may ask a question of an American or make a comment that will be offensive. Many have learned that Americans are sensitive about many subjects, but that is not, in fact, the case. Overall, Americans are fairly open about talking about a range of subjects. The only questions that are generally considered inappropriate are related to questions about money, such as "How much money do you make?" or "How much did you pay for that shirt?"

Meal Times

People in the U.S. generally eat meals earlier than in other countries. During the week, Americans typically eat a light breakfast before going to work, and have lunch around noon. Dinner, which is usually the largest meal of the day, is usually anywhere from 5 to 8 p.m. On weekends, and especially when going out to eat, Americans may eat dinner a little later, but most restaurants close around 10:00 or 11:00.

Arrival Times

In many countries, it is customary to arrive late to social events like dinners or weddings. This is not true in the U.S. If a dinner invitation says **6 p.m. to 8 p.m.** for example, guests are expected to arrive around 6 p.m. There is more flexibility for more informal occasions like parties; if a party is to start at 8 p.m. with no ending time, for example, it is acceptable to arrive at 8:30 or later.

U.S. Education System

Below is a chart outlining the US education system:

Level	No. of Years	Degree
Kindergarten	1	---
Elementary School	6	---
Middle School	2	---
High School	4	High School Diploma
University / College	4	Bachelor's Degree
Graduate School	Generally 1.5-3	Master's Degree, JD
Post-Graduate School	Variable	PhD

Major

In undergraduate school (or "college"), students choose a major, which is the academic discipline in which they specialize. Students take a number of courses in this subject. Students pursuing a master's in public health have generally had a variety of majors in undergraduate school – such as biology, political science, or pre-med. In college, some students also "declare" a minor, which is a subject they also take several courses in, although not as many as in their major.

Public vs. Private Schools

In the U.S., there are public and private schools. Public schools are run by the government and provide a free education from elementary through high school. Private schools are generally considered to provide a higher quality of education, but they are expensive. At the university level, public schools are not free (students pay for tuition, books and other expenses), but they are usually not as costly as private universities.

Dormitories

Many undergraduate university students live in buildings called *dormitories* ("dorms") while they are in college, especially if the school is far from home. Others choose to live in apartments, or, if they are close enough to home, to live with their families.



U.S. Holidays

Americans celebrate holidays throughout the year. Institutions such as banks and post offices are closed on federal holidays. Universities are closed on some holidays, depending on the school's schedule. Some holidays are always on the same day each year; others vary according to the calendar.

Holiday	Day/Month	Holiday	Day/Month
New Year's Day*	Jan 1	Labor Day*	September
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day*	January	Columbus Day*	October
Valentine's Day	Feb 14	Halloween	Oct 31
Presidents' Day*	February	Veteran's Day*	November
St. Patrick's Day	March 17	Thanksgiving*	4 th Thursday in November
Easter	March/April	Hanukkah	December
Mother's Day	May	Kwanzaa	December
Father's Day	June	Christmas*	Dec 25
Independence Day/ Fourth of July*	July 4	New Year's Eve	Dec 31
Memorial Day*	August	*Federal Holiday	



Martin Luther King, Jr. Day became a federal holiday in 1983 and commemorates King's birthday. The holiday celebrates this civil rights hero who championed nonviolent activism in the civil rights movement, which, among other actions, protested racial discrimination in federal and state laws. Many Americans celebrate the holiday with marches in support of peace and human rights or by doing volunteer work in their communities.



The Fourth of July or *Independence Day* celebrates America winning its independence from Great Britain in 1776. Americans celebrate with picnics, parades and fireworks.



Halloween is an especially fun holiday for children, who dress up in costumes as witches, ghosts, super heroes and other characters. Parents take their children from house to house, and the children knock on doors asking for candy by saying, "Trick or treat!" Adults often dress up in costumes and go to parties, and families carve pumpkins into "jack-o'-lanterns."



Thanksgiving commemorates the meal celebrated by the Native Americans and the Pilgrims, who were the early settlers in present-day Massachusetts, to give thanks to God for guiding them safely to the New World. Families come together to eat a large meal that traditionally includes turkey and other dishes, such as mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie.

Climate

In the U.S. temperature is measured in degrees Fahrenheit. The calculation from Celsius is: $^{\circ}\text{C} \times 9/5 + 32 = ^{\circ}\text{F}$. Generally speaking, the temperature in Fahrenheit can be thought of like this:

Hot	80s-100s
Warm	70s
Cool	50s-60s
Cold	Below 0-40s



Making Connections

Meeting new people is one of the benefits of studying abroad and is key to building a new social support system. However, knowing how to get to know people can sometimes be a challenge for international students.

Making *small talk* is one way to begin conversations with classmates and other people with whom you interact. Small talk is very general, light conversation. Making small talk on a regular basis with the same person can help you to begin to get to know them. Some common topics in the U.S. are:

- Weather
- News/current events
- Sports
- TV shows/movies
- Music/concerts
- Travel
- Shopping
- Food/restaurants

One of the best ways to get to know classmates is to study together.

If you are not already part of assigned to work on a group project, consider asking a student if she/he wants to study with you. Other ways you can get to know classmates is to invite them to join you for coffee or lunch. This does **not** mean that you are obligated to pay for the food or drinks; in the U.S., friends and colleagues usually pay separately.

Frequently Asked Question: Why Is It So Hard to Make Friends with American Students?

At some point you may feel frustrated because, while you would like to make friends with American students, you have the impression that they are not interested in being friends with you. You may even say to yourself, "If these students came to *MY* country, we would immediately reach out and try to get to know them." While it is true that Americans may be less apt to go out of our way to welcome visitors in the warm and generous way that is typical of many other cultures, there are other, less obvious reasons that may explain what appears to be a less-than-welcoming attitude of American students.

They don't know what to talk to you about.

Many Americans, especially those who have not traveled abroad, may be hesitant to ask you about yourself because they may not know anything about your country or your culture. They may not know what to say or what questions to ask. Instead of revealing their lack of knowledge or risk saying something that might sound dumb or offensive, they may choose not to say anything.

They are more comfortable spending time with people like themselves.

It is human nature to be attracted to people like you and to make friends with people with whom you share a common background. This is why American students tend to make friends more readily with other American students, while international students tend to make friends with other international students, especially others from their same country.

They don't know that you are interested in meeting them.

Keep in mind that, unlike many other countries, the United States is made up of a very large, diverse population. In addition, many universities are located in large urban areas that are more likely to be home to people from around the world. Therefore, as an international student, you may not "stand out" as someone who is new to the U.S. or in need of support. On campus, they may assume that you already have your own group of friends and prefer to spend time with them. In addition, because American culture has been shared with the world for decades – primarily through movies and TV – American students may not realize that living in the U.S. is very much a change in culture for international students.

They are uncomfortable meeting new people.

No matter where you go, you will find that some people are more outgoing, friendly and interested in meeting new people than others. In order to make friends with American students, it may be necessary to look for those who seem more sociable and extroverted. It is important for you to make an effort to reach out yourself as well.

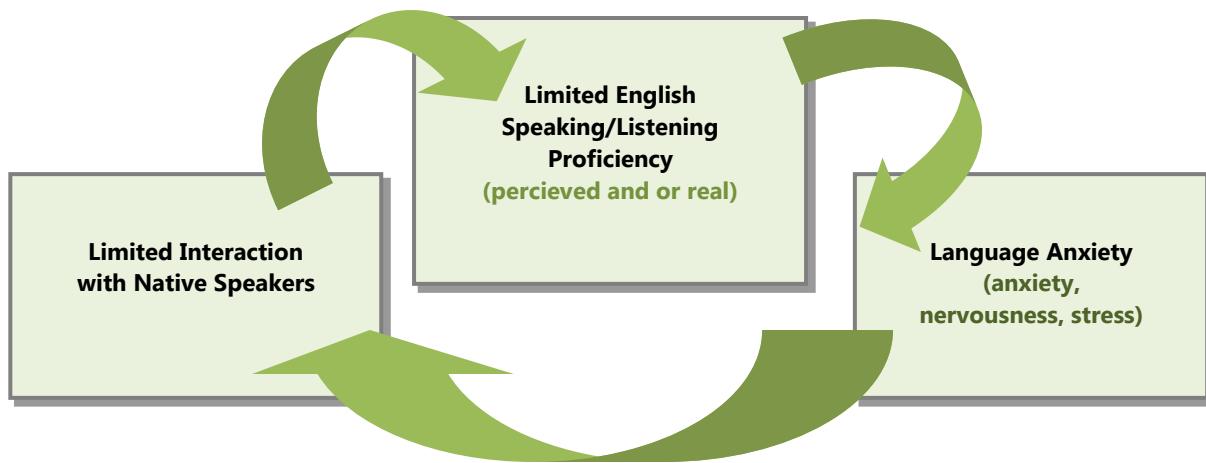
Like you, they are very busy.

American students are constantly doing something; whether it is studying for a test, doing homework, researching a paper, or meeting with a study group, Americans students are just as occupied with academic work as international students are. In addition, they may have family obligations, part-time or full-time jobs, or other outside responsibilities that keep their free time to a minimum. This is life in a university environment, and unfortunately, it may make it doubly difficult to form friendships with American students. Just remember, in this sense, you are all in the same situation!

Language Anxiety and Learning Shock

Language Anxiety

Attempting to communicate effectively in a foreign language often causes discomfort and stress, sometimes known as "language anxiety." In the U.S., it is not uncommon for newcomers to feel anxious when speaking English, and international students often feel that their English language skills are being judged by their professors and the other students. In reality, your instructors and classmates are much more interested in what you have to say than how you say it, and are not particularly attuned to the mistakes you make. However, language anxiety is common and often creates a negative cycle, in which nervousness about speaking means your interact little with native speakers, which further limits your ability to improve language skills:



The only way to break the cycle is to make every effort to interact with native English speakers on a regular basis. Making English speaking friends may take extra effort, but it is the best way to practice conversation in English in a comfortable, low-stress environment.

Learning Shock

In addition to culture shock, international students frequently experience what is known as "learning shock." Learning shock causes feelings of confusion and uneasiness by students faced with new and different ways of teaching and learning. For students from countries where learning occurs exclusively through taking and memorizing lecture notes, the more interactive and communicative nature of American classrooms can cause anxiety. Some of the types of activities that are considered "best practices" in adult learning in the U.S. – open discussions, critical argumentation and group work – can be challenging at first for those with limited experience in them. However, within a short time, students usually grow accustomed to these types of tasks and learn to participate more actively in the classroom.

Making a Good Impression

Although it may be intimidating, one of the best ways to be successful in a graduate program is to get to know your professor and teaching assistants.

At the beginning of each term, introduce yourself personally to the instructor and/or teaching assistant. As you get to know them and they get to know you, they can provide support.

Also, to make a good impression:

- **Arrive for class on time**
- **Sit near the front of the room**
- **Pay attention to the speaker**
- **Participate actively**



Remember, just as you notice the behaviors of your professors, your professors observe your behavior as well, and it influences their impression of you. Showing respect and interest can make a difference, especially when it is time to ask for assistance or recommendations from faculty!

Important Note: Making Appointments

It may be customary in many countries to come to an office unannounced to visit or meet with a university professor or staff member. However, in the U.S., unless a professor specifically announces she or he has "drop in" hours, you are expected to make an appointment in advance.

Teaching Assistants (T.A.s)

T.A.s, or *teaching assistants*, are people who provide assistance to a professor through tasks such as teaching classes and grading assignments. In some cases, T.A.s are the "eyes and ears" of the professor in the classroom.



Electronic Devices in the Classroom: Unless it is necessary to use your computer or other electronic device for classroom work, it is better not to use them during class time. Although many students believe they are able to "multi-task," paying attention to your device instead to the instructor may make a negative impression because you are not giving them your full attention.

S_taying H_{ealthy}

The change in environment, as well as the stress of school, can lead students to experience mental and physical health problems. It is a good idea to become familiar with university resources to address these issues.

Student Counseling Services

Being far away from family and friends means that many international students do not feel they have the support system they need to deal with all of the changes in their lives that come with studying in the U.S. Fortunately, most universities offer free or low-cost counseling services to students. Students can talk with counselors about feelings of homesickness, anxiety and depression, as well as other problems, such as an inability to concentrate or a lack of energy or motivation. While University websites will have information on how to contact student health and counseling services.



Fitness

Despite your busy schedule, staying physically active is important for relieving stress, staying fit and maintaining good health while in school. Generally, universities in the U.S. have extensive resources to meet these needs, including gyms, swimming pools, and tracks, as well as classes in yoga and other stress-relieving activities.

Remember, feeling homesick and stressed out is normal, and while accessing counseling services may feel uncomfortable at first, having someone to talk to can be very helpful when you are feeling isolated or stressed out.

Health Insurance

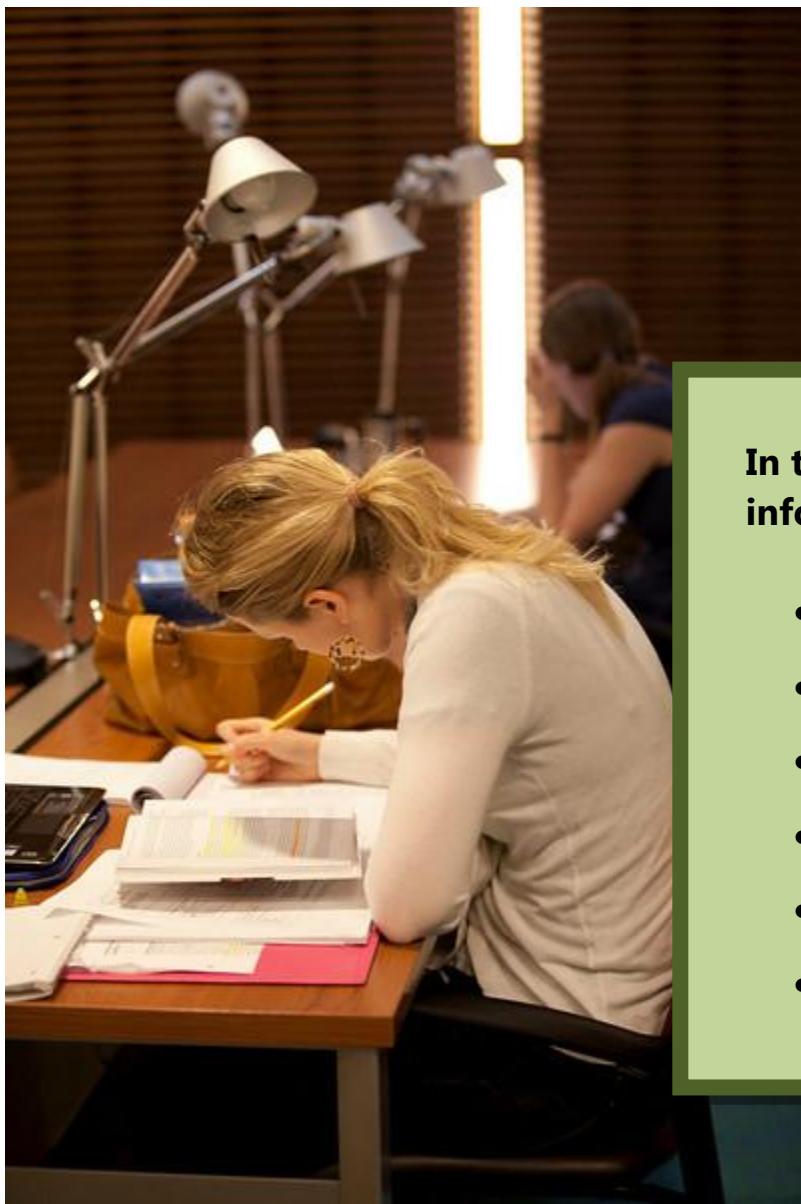
While you are in the U.S., it is important to have medical insurance to help cover the cost of any healthcare needed during this time. Many universities offer health insurance plans to students, and in some cases students are required to show that they are covered either by the school's plan or a private health insurance plan.

Because the U.S. healthcare system is different than systems in other countries, international students are sometimes confused by the healthcare terminology, particularly terms related to payment for services. Here are a few terms that are important to know:

- **Co-Pay:** The payment paid by the patient each time a medical service is provided.
- **Deductible:** The amount of expenses that must be paid by the patient each year ("out-of-pocket" cost) before an insurer will begin to pay any percentage of the expenses for a visit to a healthcare provider or for a procedure.
- **Premium:** The amount paid, often in installments each month, to maintain an insurance policy.
- **Primary Care Physician:** A physician who provides both the first contact for a person with an undiagnosed health concern as well as continuing care of varied medical conditions. In other countries, this doctor is often known as a "general practitioner."

University Life

University life in the U.S. presents unique challenges and opportunities for international students. From making new friends, to eating new foods, to studying in new ways, it may seem that every facet of your new life is different from what you have experienced before. This unit identifies some of the elements of university life that may present a particular challenge and ways to meet those challenges.



In this section, you will find information on:

- *Academic Challenges*
- *Time Management*
- *Reading Assignments*
- *Honor and Conduct Codes*
- *Classroom Participation*
- *Getting Involved*

Academic Challenges

Among the tasks required for university study, there are a few that present a particular challenge for all students, and for international students in particular.

1. **Writing:** You will spend a great deal of time writing papers that require you to do research, synthesize and think critically about the information you find, as well as express your understanding of the information in your own words in a clear and organized way. This process involves more than just writing; it includes planning your writing before you begin, as well as editing your papers before turning them in.
2. **Avoiding Plagiarism:** To avoid plagiarizing in your writing, you will need to understand intellectual property rights and how to correctly cite references in papers and presentations in accordance with appropriate academic styles.
3. **Understanding Instructions:** Limited English proficiency often makes it difficult to interpret professors' written and oral instructions for assignments, tests, etc. Reviewing the syllabus several times at the beginning of the term and becoming familiar with the different types of tasks can help you understand what you are expected to do.
4. **Getting to Know Classmates:** Again, while getting to know the other students and interacting with them frequently may seem daunting at first, your classmates can be an invaluable source of personal and academic support, as they are going through the same experience as you. Making friends with English speakers also goes a long way in helping to improve language skills and cultural understanding.
5. **Participating in Class:** In university settings in the U.S., students are expected to be assertive and participate actively in class. One thing international students often say is that "American students are so talkative!" In this environment, successful students generally sit in the front of the class, ask questions and engage in conversation.
6. **Working in Small Groups:** Because fields such as public health require a great deal of collaboration, instructors often require students to work in small groups on papers, projects and presentations. This type of interaction may be unfamiliar to international students, and can even be challenging for students more accustomed to this type of work. However, working well on a "team" is a highly valued skill in the U.S. workplace, so acquiring the skills of patience, effective communication and task management required by group work is very important.
7. **Managing the Workload:** Especially for students from countries in which academic requirements beyond attending lectures are uncommon, the workload of daily homework assignments, frequent quizzes, midterm exams, group projects and other tasks can feel overwhelming. As a graduate student, you will probably spend hours every day after class engaged in a number of activities, including: reading; doing online research; reviewing notes; doing homework assignments; creating presentations; writing and editing papers; reviewing material for tests; meeting with other students.



Tip for Success: Many students take more classes than they can handle because there are many subjects they are interested in. It is important to create a schedule that is not overwhelming, and in some cases there is an opportunity to review the syllabus and feedback from previous students of each class to help you decide which classes are the best for you.

Time Management

Because graduate students have so many classes and assignments to manage, time management is very important.

Here are some strategies for successfully managing your time:

Create a calendar

At the beginning of each term, look though all of your syllabi/assignment lists and put each assignment and test on your calendar/agenda.

Schedule your assignments

At the beginning of each week (such as every Sunday night), look at what assignments are due that week and make a schedule for completing them. Schedule blocks of time (1-3 hours) each day to study.

Prioritize your assignments

When you sit down to study, begin with the most difficult subject or task. You'll be fresh and have more energy to tackle the hardest activities at first, and will feel you accomplished something when you are done.

Make "To Do" lists

Writing down everything you need to do in, for example, the next day or week, will help ensure you do not forget anything and help you manage all of your tasks. Plus, crossing off each task gives you a sense of accomplishment.

Avoid procrastination

Procrastination is putting off tasks that need to be done until the last minute. This will only add to your stress. Begin assignments as early as possible; then, if you have questions or have to edit or redo something, you will have time to do this before the assignment is due.

Use your free time wisely

When you have short periods of time – while riding the bus to campus, for example – take advantage of the time to do things that can benefit you, such as reviewing notes or completing short reading assignments.

Review notes and readings just before class

Reviewing class information just before class begins will refresh your memory and help put new information in context.

Review lecture notes immediately after class

Reviewing a lecture right after class will help you to remember key information.



Reading Assignments

One of the biggest challenges for students is doing the amount of reading required for all of your courses.

The reading workload is especially an issue for international students who are reading in a second language. Here are a couple of suggestions to help you manage the reading workload:

1. Take notes and highlight information as you read. Taking notes is a great way to keep focused, especially when you are feeling sleepy or having trouble staying focused. Highlighting key words, phrases and sentences also helps you to go back and find key information when you need it for your assignment.
2. Look at the class assignment before you begin reading. Ask yourself: "What will I be asked to do with the information in the reading?" For example:

Will I be asked to...

- Answer specific questions?
- Discuss the information in a small group?
- Get a general overview of a topic?
- Write about my opinion about an issue presented in the reading?
- Write a paper describing the pros and cons of an issue discussed in the readings?
- Synthesize information from different readings in a paper?

When you have determined what you will be asked to do with the information in the readings, let that guide the way you read the material. For example:

- If you are going to present your opinion in writing, think about and note your own views about the information in the materials while you read.
- If you just need to get the general idea, you can focus on reading any summary or abstract that may be provided or skim the materials for the main topics.
- If you will be answering a list of questions, you can scan for the information you will need to provide the answers.



Two Reading Techniques:

Skimming is used to get the general idea from the materials. You can usually get the main idea of a text by reading:

- The first sentence of each paragraph
- The first and last paragraphs of the document
- The title, headings and subheadings

Scanning is used to find particular pieces of information. You can use headings and subheadings, the table of contents, or the index to help you locate the specific information you are looking for.

Honor and Conduct Codes

Both undergraduate and graduate schools in the U.S. have honor and/or conduct codes to ensure personal responsibility and professional standards.

Violations of an academic honor code usually include any action by a student demonstrating dishonesty or a lack of academic integrity. Because these codes are such a fundamental part of university culture and may relate to actions that are not considered inappropriate or unethical in other cultures, it is important for international students to be familiar with what activities are generally considered violations of an honor code. Here are some examples:

Cheating: Seeking, acquiring, receiving or passing information about the content of an examination prior to its authorized release or during its administration, or attempting to do so; and seeking, using, giving, or obtaining unauthorized assistance in any academic assignment or examination, or attempting to do so.

Plagiarism: Presenting as one's own work the expression, words or ideas of another person, whether published or unpublished (including the work of another student) without proper acknowledgment.

Falsifying research data: Creating information not actually collected or altering information and/or data.

Falsification and forgery of academic documents: Knowingly making a false statement, concealing material information, or forging a university official's signature on any university academic document or record, including transcripts, add or drop forms, identification cards, requests for advanced standing, requests to register for courses, financial aid forms, academic-standing verification letters, and student recommendation letters.

Facilitating academic dishonesty: Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

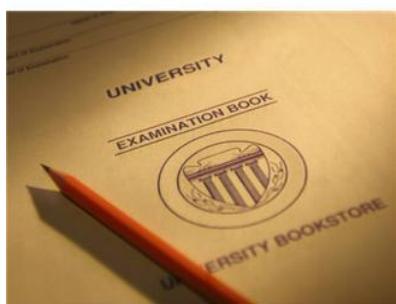
Providing false evidence: Giving false information in any honor council hearing or refusing to give evidence when requested by an honor council.

Misrepresentation of self: Misrepresenting or withholding of pertinent factual information in personal dealings with other students, faculty or staff of the university, or organizations or agencies of the university, including falsification of information for the purpose of admission to a university.

Sexual harassment and sexual assault: Committing sexual harassment, including making unwelcome sexual advances, requesting sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that involves sexual contact that is forced on someone without his/her consent.

Response to Honor Code Violations

Different schools have different protocols for responding to cases of honor code violations by a student, but the process usually involves the student going before an honor code committee made up of staff and students. This committee considers the case and makes a determination about whether or not a violation was committed. If a student is found guilty of an honor code violation, the consequences generally range from receiving a failing grade on an assignment to expulsion from school. Again, violations of the honor code are taken seriously by universities in the U.S., so it is critical that all students know what the rules are and follow them.



Class Participation

Participating in class and small group discussions is an essential part of the study of public health in the U.S.

At the university level, you are often expected not just to listen to the instructor, but to do some of the talking as well. In many classes, a part of your grade will be based on "participation," that is, for taking an active part in class discussions. Participation includes:

- Asking and answering questions from the teacher and other students
- Reporting to the whole class on a small-group discussion
- Making comments and giving your own opinion:

Why is participation so important?

In American universities, active participation by students is encouraged because:

- 1) By discussing, sharing and comparing their ideas and understandings in class, students can:
 - deepen their own understanding of what they are learning, and
 - learn from each other, as well as from the teacher and the textbooks.
- 2) Participation helps instructors know if:
 - the students understand what is being taught, or if
 - they need further explanation or help.



Tips for successfully participating in classroom discussions:

Before the Discussion

Read in advance

Ensure that you do the reading early, so that you have time to think about and understand what you have read before class.

Prepare responses and questions

When you do the reading for the class, try to engage with the ideas critically and actively and make a note of any ideas about which you have opinions, positive or negative. Think about how you would express these ideas in the class. Make a note of anything you are not clear about, and prepare a question to ask early in the class to clarify your understanding. This will demonstrate your interest in the topic, and indicate to the instructor that you have done the required reading.

Get to know your classmates

Make a conscious effort to get to know some or all of the other students in the class, as well as the professor. It is much less intimidating to speak in front of people you know than in front of an "audience" of strangers.

During the Discussion

Comment on what a previous classmate said

Think of a discussion like a tennis match, in which you can “return” a comment or opinion expressed by another participant. It is good to link to what has already been said – for example, by agreeing or disagreeing with a previous speaker.

When you are **agreeing**, you don't want to simply repeat word for word what a previous speaker said, but add something about your own experience or viewpoint. You can use phrases like:

“That was a really good point. I have found a similar thing to be true in my experience at...”
“I agree with you about...” “I have also read that...”

When you are **disagreeing**, you don't want to be rude, but again, simply share how your own experience or viewpoint is different. You can use phrases like:

“I think you made an interesting point about that, but my experience has been different...I have found that...”
“I see what you are saying, but I see things differently. I think that...”

Demonstrate curiosity

Despite what some international students think, classroom discussion is not all about showing what you know. Acknowledging your **lack** of familiarity with a specific subject and asking questions of the instructor and other students demonstrates your interest in learning about the subject and is a legitimate aspect of “participation.”

Remember there is not always a “right” answer

In an academic discussion there is often not a right or wrong answer. Rather, there is an expectation that a range of ideas will be discussed and that they will be supported with reasons and evidence. However, even if there **is** a right answer, and you get it wrong, the instructor will still appreciate your effort in contributing to the discussion.

Ask for a repetition

If you don't understand something the instructor says, ask her/him to (“please”) repeat it. Asking for something to be repeated can actually have a positive effect. It shows the instructor that you have been listening to the discussion and are interested. It is likely that the repetition will help other students as well!

Expect to feel a little nervous

Almost everyone feels nervous speaking in front of others – particularly in a foreign language. Some students worry about making errors in their speech; they don't want to express their ideas unless they are confident that they can do so without making mistakes. But the truth is that, except perhaps for an English class, the instructor and other students are much more interesting in the content of what you have to say than about the way you say it. Practice helps; the more you participate, the more comfortable you will feel doing it.



Getting Involved

In the U.S., being a student means more than just going to class; it means getting involved in extracurricular activities and making connections with others inside and outside the university community.

In many countries, the absolute priority for students is to earn the highest possible grades. Although achieving a high grade point average (GPA) is also a priority in the U.S., **participating in activities outside the classroom is considered important** as well. These activities provide both the opportunity to meet people involved in the study and practice of public health, as well as to obtain and strengthen key skills that will be of interest to potential employers. Involvement in activities provides evidence to others of your ability to:

- Assume a leadership role
- Take on additional responsibilities
- Deliver on commitments
- Contribute to teamwork
- Set priorities
- Balance tasks and responsibilities
- Communicate effectively with a variety of people

Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities are those activities that take place within the university community but outside the classroom. Examples of organization that you can participate in include:

- Student government
- Student clubs
- Sports teams

Volunteering

One of the best ways to gain practical experience in public health, as well as to make connections with others working in the field, is to do volunteer work. Volunteering is a common activity in the U.S., and there are thousands of nonprofit organizations offering volunteer opportunities all over the country. Volunteer activities can range from cleaning up a hiking trail to tutoring children in reading to visiting elderly residents in a nursing home. Volunteering is a great way to meet people and get involved in the community, and volunteering with a health-related organization also offers an opportunity to strengthen your knowledge and skills in this field.



Some national organizations that offer volunteer opportunities include:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| • Habitat for Humanity | habitat.org |
| • Points of Light Institute | pointsoflight.org |
| • Volunteer Match | volunteermatch.org |

Networking

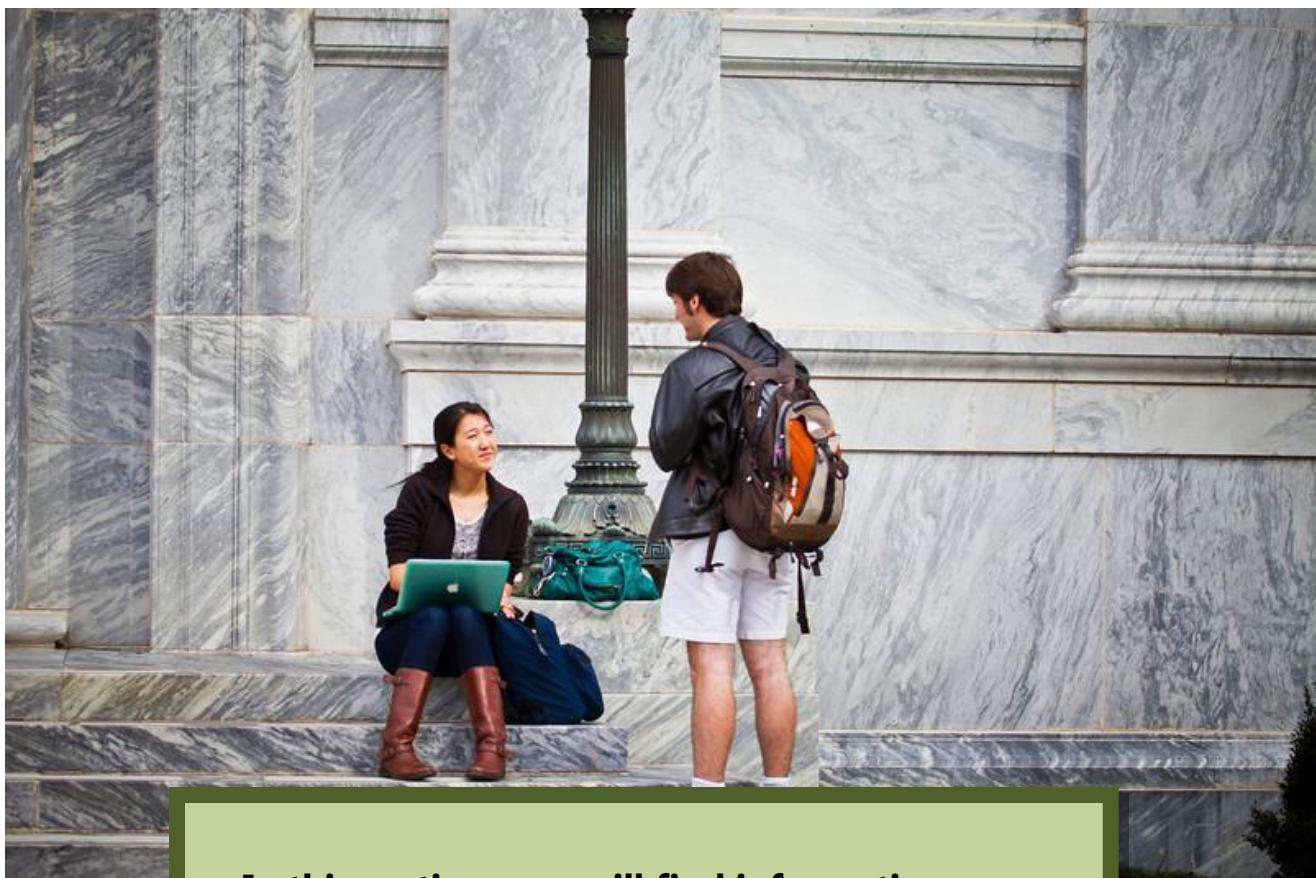
You will hear a great deal about networking during your time in the U.S., as it is a critical part of achieving personal, academic and career goals. Networking simply means meeting people and making connections that create a network of people who can serve as resources for finding opportunities, especially employment opportunities. One of the best ways to engage in networking is through participating in extracurricular activities and volunteering. These activities provide a natural setting for meeting people and therefore make it easy to make new connections.

A Note about Networking:

In the U.S., as in many places, it is "all about who you know." You will often find out about jobs, internships, etc., through classmates and friends. Therefore, the more people you know, the greater the chance you will hear about an opportunity for you!

Effective Communication

Ways of communicating effectively and politely differ among cultures. It is often only by living and studying in another country that one is able to recognize the cultural norms around communication there and learn to interact with others in ways that are considered respectful and appropriate. This unit is intended to help you understand how best to communicate verbally and in writing with university students, professors and staff, as well as other friends, colleagues and acquaintances in the U.S.



In this section, you will find information on:

- *Day-to-day Interaction*
- *Informal Emails*
- *Common Idioms*
- *Courtesy*

Day-to-day Interaction

In every culture, there are unwritten rules about how to interact with others. Knowing what these American cultural norms are facilitates daily life in the U.S.

Introductions

When meeting someone for the first time, it is appropriate to firmly shake hands.

Both men and women shake hands firmly when we meet someone new. The most common phrase to use when meeting someone for the first time is, "Nice to meet you." The appropriate response is, "Nice to meet you too."

Telephone Communication

When calling someone on the phone, there are a few key phrases to use:

When the person you are calling answers the phone, say:

Hi. May I speak to (name)?

When the person you want to speak to answers, say:

This is (your name). How are you?

After they respond, you can begin your conversation.



If the person you are calling does not answer, leave a message with your name, telephone number and reason for calling. Give the person at least 24 hours before you try calling again; students, staff and faculty at universities are generally very busy and return phone calls as soon as time permits.

When writing your telephone number, it is a good idea to write it in the format traditionally used in the US:

(area code) three digits – four digits

Example: (678) 555-5555

Responding to Invitations

Invitations often include "**RSVP**," which stands for "Répondez, S'il Vous Plaît," a French phrase that means **Respond Please**.

When you see RSVP on an invitation or announcement, you are required to contact the host of the event and let them know you will be attending. In addition, if you realize that you will not be able to attend the event after you have "RSVP-ed," you must contact the host again and let them know as soon as possible that you will not be attending. This is very important because the host of an event will have spent a great deal of time planning and organizing the event, as well as spending money (on food, for example) based on the number of people who will attend.

Time

Keep in mind that, in the U.S., the 24-hour clock is rarely used. For example, on appointments and invitations and schedules, Americans write "2:00 p.m." not 14:00.



Informal E-mails

There are a few common phrases you can use when communicating informally by e-mail with friends, colleagues, professors (whom you already know) and others in English.

General Tips

- Write words or phrases in the *subject line* that make the topic of your e-mail clear.
- Use standard spelling, punctuation and capitalization.
- Write short, clear paragraphs that are direct and to the point.

Salutation

- Dear Dr. Chu,
- Hi Ms. Livingston,
- Hey Scott,

Note the period after abbreviations like Ms. and Dr.



Getting Started

- How are you doing?
- Did you have a good weekend?
- I hope you are doing well.
- I hope you had a nice weekend.
- I hope you enjoyed the holidays.
- I enjoyed your lecture this morning on...
- Thank you for your help with...

Scheduling

- Are you free on Monday at 10 a.m. to meet about...?
- Do you have any time on Thursday?
- Are you available this week to talk about...?
- Are you free for lunch/coffee?
- Would you like to have lunch on Wednesday?
- What time would you like to meet?
- What day/time works for you?
- Does that work for you?
- I am available after 2 p.m. on Thursday.
- I will have to check my schedule.
- I will be out of town this week, but would be happy to meet next Thursday at 1 p.m.
- I will let you know ASAP. (as soon as possible)
- Sounds good!
- That works for me!

Asking for Help

- Would you have time this week to look over my paper?
- Could you forward that email to me?
- Can you send me the information you mentioned?

Closing

- See you on Monday.
- Thank you.
- Thanks for your help!
- Thanks so much!

Common Idioms

Here are a few of the most common expressions, or idioms, used in informal communications, both spoken and written.

- **Be right back (to go and return immediately)**

Can you stay here while I go get my bike? I'll be right back.

- **Catch up (do tasks that were not done at the original time)**

I didn't do homework for a week. Now I have to catch up.

- **Catch on (understand)**

At first I didn't understand the assignment, but now I am starting to catch on.

- **Check it out (investigate)**

I think that movie got good reviews. I'll have to go on line and check it out.

- **Fill in (provide missing information to someone)**

I missed the meeting this morning. Can you fill me in?

- **Find out (discover information)**

I'd better find out what time the class starts or I may be late.

- **Get back to (communicate with someone at a later time)**

I'm afraid I don't know where the meeting is. I'll ask my secretary and get back to you as soon as I can.

- **Go over (review)**

Let's go over the instructions again; maybe this time it will be clearer.

- **Hold on (wait)**

Hold on. I need to get my jacket before we leave the house. My class is always very cold.

- **In time (by the deadline)**

If you don't leave now, you will not get to the airport in time and you will miss your flight!

- **Let (one) know (give information)**

She said she will let us know as soon as the grades are posted.

- **Look into it (investigate something)**

I didn't know about the new class that is being offered. I will look into it and see if I can register for it.

- **Make it (attend)**

If I don't have any meetings this afternoon, I should be able to make it to your presentation.

- **Make up (do uncompleted work)**

I have to make up a lot of assignments because I was in the hospital last week.

- **Move up/back (change the time)**

Can we move our meeting up to three p.m. so I can leave early?

- **On time (punctual)**

If the shuttle is on time, it should be here in five minutes.

- **Stop by (visit for a short time)**

He said he will stop by my office at 2:00 to see if I am finished yet.

- **Turn in (submit)**

It is time to turn in your papers, even if you are not finished.



Courtesy

Beyond "please" and "thank you," there are a number of phrases English speakers use to ensure we are polite and courteous in our interactions.

Polite Expressions

Using the following introductory phrases helps to ensure that you sound polite when speaking to others.

- **I'm afraid that...**

I'm afraid that you will not be able to register for classes until next week.

I'm afraid that we will be late if we don't leave right now.

- **It would be great if you could...**

It would be great if you could send me that file.

It would be great if we could meet early next week.

- **Would you mind...?**

Would you mind explaining that problem again?

Would you mind if we changed the meeting time to 3 p.m.?

- **Would it be possible to...?**

Would it be possible to go at 2:00 instead of at 3:00?

Would it be possible to get a copy of the syllabus for the class?



Descriptions of People

Age

Avoid using the words *old* or *elderly* when describing a person. The terms **senior** or **older adult** are preferred.

Race: The terms *African American* and *black* are used interchangeably, though **African American** is generally considered the preferred term. The terms *Hispanic* and *Latino* (or *Latina* for a woman) are also often used interchangeably, though **Latino/Latina** is generally considered the preferred term. **White** and **Asian** are also accepted terms for describing race.

Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity: A homosexual man is generally referred to as **gay man**, while a homosexual woman is a **lesbian**. Other commonly used terms are **bisexual man/woman** and **transsexual**.

Cultural Note

The term "Native American" refers to a member of a group of people who are indigenous to North America. They are also known as "American Indians." When referring to a person who is from the U.S. and whose native language is English, an appropriate term is "**native English speaker**."

Although people from the U.S. are generally known as "Americans," this term can also refer to people from other parts of North America, as well as from Central and South America.

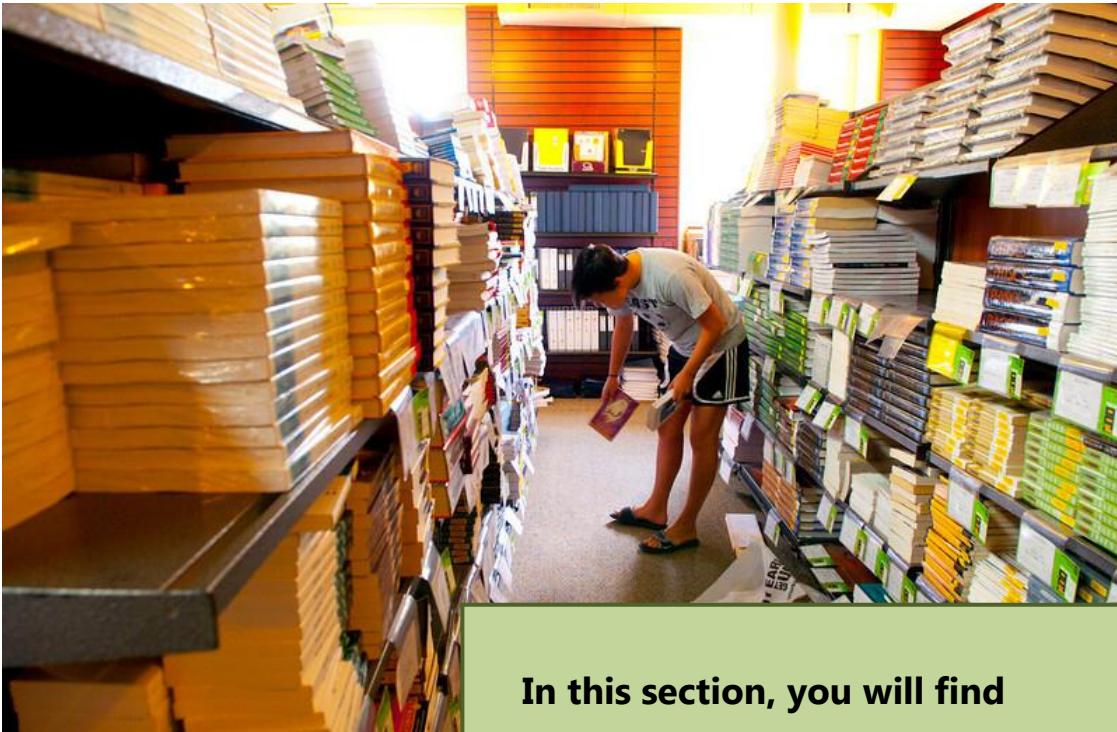
Part II

A_{cademic} S_{kills}



Avoiding Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of presenting as one's own work the expression, words, or ideas of another person, whether published or unpublished. Plagiarism is a serious issue in the U.S., and learning to avoid it is critical for a student's success. In fact, possible consequences of plagiarism include expulsion from a university and loss of a job. While avoiding plagiarism is a challenge for all students, it is particularly challenging for international students because concepts and norms regarding intellectual property rights vary among cultures. This unit is intended to help you avoid plagiarism by consistently and accurately crediting the source whenever using information from another's work.



**In this section, you will find
information on:**

- *Understanding Plagiarism*
- *Citations and References*
- *Parenthetical Citation*
- *Reference Lists*
- *Paraphrasing*

Understanding Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious issue in U.S. academia, but it is sometimes a new and confusing topic for international students. Therefore, it is important to learn as much as possible about how to avoid it.

Some clear examples of plagiarism are:

- Buying, stealing, copying or borrowing a paper (including copying an entire paper or article from the Internet)
- Having someone else write your paper for you
- Copying sections of text from a source without quotation marks or proper citation

To avoid plagiarism, make sure to track your sources as you do research, and when you write, give credit where it is due for anything another person said, wrote, designed or drew, including:

- Words or ideas presented in a magazine, book, newspaper, song, TV program, movie, web page, computer program, letter, advertisement or any other medium
- Information you gain through interviewing or conversing with another person, face to face, over the phone or in writing
- Exact words or a unique phrase
- A reprint of any diagrams, illustrations, charts, pictures or other visual material
- Reuse or repost of any electronically available media, including images, audio, video or other media

Using Direct Quotations

A direct quotation (often called a *quote*) is a word for word reproduction of an author's writing or speech. It is recommended that only the quotations that will have the most impact in your paper be used; too many direct quotes from sources may indicate that you have not thoroughly read and understood the material yourself. Generally, it is better to include only quotations of words or short phrases from a source, instead of entire paragraphs.

When you use a direct quotation:

- Keep the source author's name in the same sentence as the quote (e.g., *Martin Luther King Jr. said, "I have a dream."*)
- Put the quoted material in quotation marks
- Use ellipsis points (...) to indicate any omitted text



Citations and References

There are several different styles used for citing sources of material in academic papers.

Citation

When you use information from journals, books, websites and other sources for your papers, you will need to cite those sources. **APA (American Psychological Association)** is the style commonly used in the field of public health. This style uses parenthetical citation, which as its name suggests, places source information in the text inside parenthesis. Here are some examples from an article in the journal *Health Promotion and Practice*:

As the name reflects, CERC seeks to merge the traditions and best practices of risk communication into those most often associated with crisis communication (Seeger & Reynolds, 2007).

Influenza remains a leading cause of death among the elderly and the very young (Elledge et al., 2008).

Other citation styles include: **MLA**, **AMA**, and **Chicago**. Because AMA (American Medical Association) style is often used in medicine, health and biological sciences, professors of subjects such as epidemiology may prefer that students in those classes use AMA style.



References

In addition to citing sources within the text, you will need to include a full list of the sources you used at the end of your papers. The format of the references depends on the citation style. Here is an example from an APA style reference list:

Reynolds, B., Hunter-Galdo, J., & Sokler, L. (2002). Crisis and emergency risk communication as an integrative model. *Journal of Health Communication*, 10, 43-55.

Rogers, E.M. (2003). Diffusion of innovations (5th ed.). New York: Free Press.

Sandman, P. (2002). "Fear is spreading faster than SARS" – And so it should. Retrieved May 4, 2003, from <http://www.psandman.com/col/SARS-1.htm>.

Each style has its set of very specific rules about the use of punctuation, capitalization, spacing and fonts that must be followed. These rules can be found in published materials – such as the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* and the *Concise Rules of APA Style*.

Parenthetical Citation

APA style is the style commonly used in the field of public health. Below are the guidelines for citing references in a paper using APA style.

1. Only use the last name(s) of the author(s).

There is debate among researchers about whether cultural or linguistic skills contribute more to the successful adjustment of international students (Brown, 2008).

2. When the author's name is mentioned in the text, follow it with the year of publication in parentheses.

Brown (2008) argues that high level language proficiency, by itself, will not ensure the cultural adjustment of an international student.

3. If the author's name is not mentioned in the text, put the name in the parenthesis followed by a comma and the year of publication.

Alumni can play an important role in efforts to recruit international students (Ramachandran, 2011).

Note: If the same source is cited a second time in a paragraph, the year of publication may be omitted.

4. When using a direct quote, include the page number(s) in the parenthetical citation. *Note the correct spacing and punctuation.

"Factors such as language barriers, lack of familiarity with conventions and practices, and a fear of being ignored encourage international students to form smaller groups based on language and cultural background, even within large gatherings " (Ramachandran, 2011, p. 206).

5. If there are 2 authors, always cite both names. In the text, connect the names with the word and; in the parenthetical citation, connect the names with the symbol &.

Cheng and Erben (2012) recommend helping students to be more conscious of their language anxiety and offering them opportunities to feel more comfortable with American culture.

"For most participants, one of the primary goals for them to come to the United States to study was to improve their English and to enhance their awareness of the American culture" (Cheng & Erben, 2012, p. 490).



6. If there are 3, 4 or 5 authors, cite all of the authors the first time. In the text, connect the final name with a comma and the word and. In the parenthetical citation, connect the final name with a comma and the symbol &. In all subsequent citations, include only the name of the first author followed by et al.

Wan, Chapman, and Biggs (1992) found that programs designed to assist international students' adjustment to graduate school depend on the aim of the intervention; that is to say, whether it seeks to reduce stress or to strengthen students' capacity to cope with that stress.

The authors contend that "the two most promising interventions are to strengthen students' perceived English-language skills and their social support networks" (Wan, Chapman, & Biggs, 1992 p. 619).

Wan et al. found that students who believed they had a stronger support network felt more able to manage the stress of academic work (Wan et al., 1992).

7. If there are 6 or more authors, cite the last name of the first author followed by et al. in all citations:

Wang et al. (2012) looked at how self-esteem, problem-solving, and perfectionism acted as predictors of cultural adjustment.

The results indicated that self-esteem, problem-solving, and perfectionism acted as predictors of cultural adjustment (Wang, et al., 2012).

8. When citing two or more sources by different authors in the same citation, put the authors' names in the parentheses in alphabetical order, followed by a comma and the year of publication. Separate the citations with a semicolon.

"The military, the national security apparatus, and increasingly the public health sector have instead found simulations—real time, in-the-field drills in which emergency situations are enacted by real people—to be a more effective way to train and test capacity" (Crichton, et al., 2000; McConnell& Drennan, 2006; Perry, 2004).



Placement of Citations for Quoted Materials:

The location of the parenthetical citation depends on the placement of the quotation in the sentence:

- 1. If the quotation appears in the middle of the sentence, follow the final quotation mark with the parenthetical citation and then complete the sentence.**

One of the challenges was the "lack of fit" (Brown, 2008, p. 23) between their English language proficiency and the academic demands that students had to contend with.

- 2. If the quotation continues to the end of the sentence, follow the final quotation mark with the parenthetical citation and the final punctuation mark.**

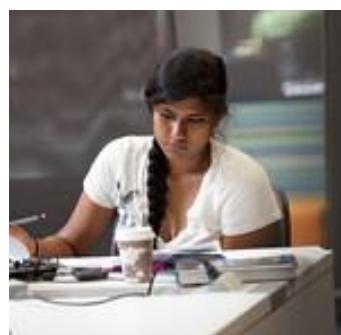
Portnoi and Kwong (2011) contend that "developing a culture of support that both embraces these students and celebrates their accomplishments would supplement the services that many institutions already provide for FGU students" (p. 423).

Other administrators contend that "developing a culture of support that both embraces these students and celebrates their accomplishments would supplement the services that many institutions already provide for FGU students" (Portnoi & Kwong, 2011, p. 423).

- 3. If the quotation is long (40 words or more), it should be formatted as a block quotation, and the parentheses with the page number(s) should appear after the final punctuation mark.**

Ying and Liese (1994) concluded:

The overall level of initial adjustment of Taiwanese students appears to be moderately high. Whether this represents an initial euphoria that will be followed by a decline in adjustment level or if adjustment will rise over time as the students develop more effective coping mechanisms will be assessed in later reports, as these students are followed longitudinally. (p. 476)



P araphrasing

Paraphrasing means putting another's idea into your own words and is one of the key ways to avoid plagiarism.

Paraphrasing is the process of putting a passage from source material into your own words. It is an important skill in academic writing, because one of the most frequent tasks in your coursework will be reading academic research articles, understanding and synthesizing the information, and expressing it in your own words. Even when paraphrasing, however, the source of the information must be cited. The most effective way to paraphrase is to:

1. Read the original material as many times as necessary to ensure that you understand its meaning.
2. Write down your version of the information. Make sure to use quotation marks to identify any unique term or phrase that comes directly from the source.
3. Check your version with the original to make sure that you have accurately expressed all the key information.
4. Correctly cite the source in your paper and add the reference (in the correct format) to the reference list at the end.

Below are some examples of original passages and their paraphrased versions:

Original:

The vast majority of parents in the United States get their kids vaccinated, but a persistent minority decline to do so. Their reasons vary: Some continue to worry about a link with autism, even though research supporting a connection has been completely discredited. Others are concerned about side effects, or say they don't believe that the diseases the vaccines prevent are really all that serious. Persuading recalcitrant parents is a problem that public health advocates continue to wrestle with.
(Michelle Andrews, Washington State Raises Bar for Parents to Skip Kids' Vaccinations, National Public Radio, September 27, 2011)

Paraphrase:

Public health officials continue to face the challenge of making sure that all parents have their children immunized. While most parents in the U.S. get their children vaccinated, a small percentage of parents refuse to do so due to a number of concerns, such as a possible connection between vaccines and autism, or a sense that the diseases that the vaccines prevent are a not real health threat.

Original:

Nine national medical groups are launching a campaign called Choosing Wisely to get U.S. doctors to back off on 45 diagnostic tests, procedures and treatments that often may do patients no good... Harvard economist David Cutler estimates that a third of what this country spends on health care could safely be dispensed with... "That's certainly the number we use," Dr. Steven Weinberger, CEO of the American College of Physicians, says. "Most of us feel something like \$750 billion or so could be eliminated from the system out of the \$2.5 trillion or so that we spend on health care. (Richard Knox, Doctors Urge Their Colleagues to Stop Doing Useless Tests, National Public Radio, April 4, 2012)

Tip: Cite as you Write!

Make sure to cite your sources as you write. If not, you may find that you do not have all the information you need for correct citation when you finish your paper!

Paraphrase:

The "Choose Wisely" campaign has identified 45 tests, procedures and treatments that are considered unnecessary and sometimes even harmful. By eliminating these tests and treatments, the campaign hopes to eliminate avoidable healthcare costs estimated at \$750 billion (Knox, 2012).

Original:

The quest for the world's first malaria vaccine appears to have taken a big step: A study in Africa shows experimental shots cut the risk of disease in young children by half. The initial results from a final stage of vaccine testing were released Tuesday, and the vaccine's developers called it a milestone in helping to tame one of the world's most devastating killers. However, the vaccine won't be available for at least three years, as crucial further testing must be completed to see how well it works in infants and how long protection lasts....Globally, malaria kills nearly a million people annually. More than 90 percent of them live in Africa, and most are young children and pregnant women...The new vaccine targets a malaria parasite found in sub-Saharan Africa.

(Mike Stobbe, Study: Vaccine Reduces Malaria in African Children, The Guardian, October 18, 2011)

Paraphrase:

Last month, results were released from studies in Africa on the world's first malaria vaccine. Testing of the vaccine showed that it reduced the risk of malaria in young children by 50 percent. The new vaccine goes after a malaria parasite found in sub-Saharan Africa, the home of most of the victims of the disease – young African children and pregnant women. Unfortunately, the vaccine won't be available for at least three years, due to the need for further testing on its efficacy in infants and its length of protection (Guardian, 2011).

Original:

Companies nationwide are looking to trim their health insurance costs by combating chronic diseases — such as diabetes, obesity and depression — in their employees, corporate and government officials say. The need for such steps was amplified again Tuesday as a new survey from the Kaiser Family Foundation showed that health insurance premiums for families of four increased 9% this year.

(Kelly Kennedy, To Cut Insurance Costs, Companies Help Workers Get Healthy, USA Today, 2011)

Paraphrase:

A recent survey from the Kaiser Family Foundation indicates that the cost of health insurance for families continues to rise. Businesses are looking for ways to cut these costs; one strategy is to reduce the incidence of common chronic diseases, such as diabetes (USA Today, 2011).

Using a Thesaurus

A **thesaurus** is a list of synonyms (words that have the same meaning as other words) and is very useful for increasing variety in your writing. It is an essential tool for effective paraphrasing for native English speakers and non-native English speakers alike. A thesaurus has traditionally been in book form, but is now in electronic form as well.

In the examples of paraphrasing shown here, a number of synonyms were used to help put the information in the writer's own words, including:

Original	Synonym
believe	think
half	50 percent
targets	goes after
companies	businesses
showed	indicated
trim	reduce

Vocabulary

A wide and varied vocabulary makes your writing richer and more native-like. However, knowing vocabulary is more than just knowing the word's meaning or meanings. To really **know** a word means that you also know what type of word it is (e.g., verb, noun), how it is spelled and pronounced, and how formal or informal it is. To be able to use the word correctly and effectively, it is also necessary to know its collocation (words that are commonly used with a word (e.g., *a hidden agenda* – **not** *a secretive agenda*). Some words have special characteristics (e.g., regular verb vs. irregular verb, count vs. noncount noun) and many can be used in different ways by adding prefixes and suffixes (e.g., *harm, harmful, harmless, unharmed*). While ongoing reading and listening in English is the best way to learn vocabulary, this section is intended to offer some tips on certain aspects of vocabulary, especially as related to public health.



In this section, you will find information on:

- Common non-count nouns
- Collocations
- Word choice
- British English vs American English
- More Idioms

Common Non-count Nouns

These commonly used words in the study of public health are non-count nouns that should be expressed in the singular, NOT in the plural.

1. Advice

*I am applying for an internship in Bangladesh this summer. Do you have any **advice** on how to write a cover letter?*

2. Evidence

*The recommendations are based on **evidence** from a number of studies on ways to encourage women to access antenatal health services.*

3. Feedback

*The evaluation surveys provided valuable **feedback** for improving the quality of the program.*

4. Funding

*We hope to receive **funding** for the project from both the WHO and USAID.*

5. Homework

*I have a lot of **homework** to do this weekend.*

Note: "Homework assignments" can also be used (e.g., "That professor gives a lot of homework assignments.").

6. Information

*Where can I find **information** on the prevalence of malaria and tuberculosis in Ethiopia?*

7. Knowledge

*It is critical that **knowledge** from epidemiological studies be shared with those working in the field.*



8. Literature

*I have read all of the **literature** on those programs and have not found any evidence of successful outcomes.*

9. Research

*Dr. Barker has done **research** on vaccine promotion programs in Sub-Saharan Africa for more than 30 years.*

10. Surveillance

***Surveillance** of the most common contagious diseases has improved over the last decade in many countries.*

11. Understanding

*The speaker has a profound **understanding** of issues related to mental health problems among returning veterans.*

***Experience** Although **experience** can be used as a count noun, when describing a person's background, it is better to use it as a plural, noncount noun.

*Example: I believe my **experience** in the field of infectious disease control will prove to be beneficial for this project.*

Collocations

These commonly used nouns in public health are often used with the given verbs.

achievement(s) accomplish/identify measure/recognize promote	funding/fund(s) access/appropriate decrease/eliminate ensure/increase/obtain provide/request	obstacle(s) assess/identify/minimize overcome/remove	progress achieve/assess/encourage enhance/ensure further/limit maintain/make maximize/measure	stigma combat/decrease fight/minimize reduce
analysis (analyses) carry out/conduct perform	goal(s) accomplish/achieve attain/develop establish/evaluate expand/focus on identify/meet/obtain promote/reach/review	outcome(s) achieve/affect/assess enhance/focus on identify/improve maximize/measure promote/strengthen weaken	project(s) cancel/create/develop design/evaluate implement/improve manage/monitor oversee/plan/supervise	strategy(ies) create/design develop/employ use/utilize
behavior(s) accept/adapt/adopt characterize/classify control/develop encourage/influence manage/modify/observe predict/recognize	impact achieve/assess/attain broaden/decrease diminish/enhance/ensure evaluate/examine/improve lessen/maximize/measure promote/reduce/strengthen	partnership(s) create/develop/establish enhance/expand/identify maintain/manage improve/promote strengthen	regulation(s) apply/approve create/develop/design enhance/evaluate implement/improve monitor/review strengthen	study(ies) carry out/conduct design/evaluate perform/plan publish/review
campaign(s) adapt/design/direct enhance/evaluate expand/guide/improve implement/initiate launch/lead/plan	information disseminate/examine handle/manage/obtain offer/provide/publicize review/utilize	plan(s) adapt/affect/carry out confirm/create develop/establish expand/implement make/monitor/propose	quality achieve/assess/attain enhance/ensure evaluate/guarantee improve/maximize measure/promote/raise strengthen	survey(s) administer/conduct develop/design evaluate/review
cost(s) assess/calculate/curb decrease/estimate examine/increase incur/limit/minimize manage/offset/raise recover/reduce/share	intervention(s) plan/design/develop implement/carry out strengthen/weaken assess/expand/scale up review/enhance/improve	finding(s) assess/examine/look at support/review/publicize publish/review/share show/support/verify	result(s) assess/achieve/examine look at/obtain/prevent provide/publicize/ publish/review/share show/support/verify	surveillance carry out/expand implement/improve strengthen
data acquire/analyze/assess disseminate/evaluate examine/explore investigate/look at obtain/review/share use/utilize	law(s)/legislation amend/approve/create design/develop/enact evaluate/expand implement/introduce promote/review strengthen/support weaken	policy(ies) adapt/adopt/administer affect/amend/analyze create/design/develop eliminate/establish evaluate/implement oppose/promote/shape strengthen/support	research do/conduct/engage in expand/evaluate look at/oversee/plan publish/review	system(s) adapt/adopt/affect broaden/build create/establish expand/evaluate improve/look at maintain/monitor strengthen
deadline(s) confirm/create/establish meet/postpone	level(s) assess/attain/decrease improve/increase maintain/obtain raise/reduce	priority(ies) adapt/adopt/balance change/establish/identify promote/review/specify	resource(s) acquire/divert/expand identify/invest/offer maintain/obtain/provide restrict/strengthen/waste	theory(ies) adapt/adopt/apply develop/examine expand/strengthen test
experiment(s) carry out/conduct/design implement/plan	objective(s) accomplish/achieve adapt/attain/establish expand/further/meet/obtain review/strengthen	program(s) assess/carry out/create design/develop/evaluate expand/implement monitor/operate	stakeholder(s) engage/identify influence/persuade	timeline(s) create/establish extend/follow review

Word Choice

Choosing the right word is part of good writing, but it is often a challenge to determine which word is best in each instance.

Formal vs Informal Words

One of the key elements of formal (business and academic) writing is the use of formal vocabulary.

Contractions

In informal writing or speaking, for example, native English speakers often use contractions (e.g., can't, isn't, hasn't); however, it is better to avoid using contractions in academic writing.

Phrasal Verbs

Also, refrain from using phrasal verbs (two or three-word verbs) in formal writing; instead choose one-word verbs. For example:

ask for (request)	put up with (tolerate, handle)	figure out (determine, realize)
set up (establish)	deal with (manage)	talk about (discuss)
find out (discover, ascertain)	come up with (devise)	look into (investigate)

Here are more words and phrases that have the same meaning but different levels of formality. Choose the informal version for speaking and the formal version for writing.

Informal	Formal	Informal	Formal
about, around	approximately	get	obtain
a lot of	a great deal of, many	later on	later
besides	in addition to, apart from	so	therefore, thus, as a result
but	however, nevertheless	since	because
enough	sufficient	start	begin
finish	complete	think	believe
go up	rise, increase	wipe out	eliminate
hard, tough	challenging, difficult	work	operate, function
in addition to that	in addition	wrong	incorrect

Informal Abbreviations

Informal abbreviations, such as those below, should be used only in ***informal writing***.

b/c: because

FYI: For Your Information

w/: with

w/o: without

Abbreviations frequently used in **texting**, such as *OMG* or *LOL*, should only be used for text messages.



Words That Are Often Confused

adopt/adapt: **Adopt** means to take on something, while **adapt** means to change.

*The council will vote tomorrow on whether or not to **adopt** the new policy.*

*You will have to **adapt** the program to better serve your target population.*

advice/advise: **Advice** is a noun meaning suggestions or recommendations, while **advise** is the verb meaning to suggest or recommend.

*My professor gave me some very useful **advice** about how to start my paper.*

*I **advise** you not to take too many classes next semester.*



affect/effect: **Affect** is a verb and **effect** is a noun.

*How will the cutbacks in funding **affect** services?*

*The **effects** of the cutbacks will be felt most by the patients.*

between/among: **Between** is used with two items, and **among** is used with three or more.

*The minister of health is sitting **between** the director and the secretary.*

*We must choose from **among** a number of possible intervention strategies.*

elicit/illicit: **Elicit** is a verb meaning to evoke or draw out. **Illicit** is an adjective meaning forbidden by law or customs.

*The professor tried to **elicit** an answer from the students, but everyone was silent.*

***Illicit** drug use is common in some communities.*

force/enforce: **Force** as a verb means to cause a change or action through the use of power. **Enforce** is similar, but is usually followed by *law, rule or regulation*, and the actor in the sentence is usually an official person or body.

The new rules force everyone to wait 90 days before re-applying to the program.

The FDA is responsible for enforcing the new cigarette marketing regulations.

insure/assure/ensure: **Assure** is something you do to people to remove doubt or anxiety. **Ensure** is something you do to guarantee an event or condition. **Insure** is to limit financial liability, usually by obtaining an insurance policy.

*I **assure** you that there will be enough chairs for all the workshop participants.*

*To **ensure** that all the children receive the vaccine, health workers will visit every school.*

*If you fail to **insure** your car, you will not be allowed to drive.*

review/revise: To **review** is to look at something or look at it again. To **revise** is to change or edit something.

*The professor said she will **review** my paper and give me feedback next week.*

*I think you need to **revise** your timeline; you haven't allowed for enough time to conduct the surveys.*

sever/severe: **Sever** is a verb that means to cut apart or cut off. **Severe** is an adjective that means very serious or intense.

*The doctor hopes not to **sever** the nerve during the procedure.*

*The weather near the project site is expected to be **severe** for the next few days.*

Public Health Terms

Below are some terms often used in public health whose meanings are related yet distinct:

1. **Efficacy/Effectiveness:** **Efficacy** means working successfully under ideal, highly constrained conditions; **effectiveness** means working successfully under usual or real-world conditions that may be less than ideal.
2. **Equity/Equality:** **Equality** means everyone experiences the same outcome or condition without regard to individual differences. **Equity** means everyone is able to experience the same quality of outcome or condition, based on their specific different needs and circumstances. When equity is achieved, everyone has access to equal opportunity, and barriers to economic and political opportunities, education, health and basic services are eliminated.
3. **Elimination/Eradication:** **Elimination** is the reduction of an infectious disease's prevalence in a regional population to zero, or in the global prevalence to a negligible amount. **Eradication** is the reduction of an infectious disease's prevalence in the entire global population to zero.
4. **Ethnicity/Race:** **Race** refers to a person's biological features, while **ethnicity** relates to cultural factors, such as nationality, culture, ancestry, language and beliefs.
5. **Pandemic/Endemic:** An **epidemic** affects a very large proportion of a specific population, community, or region. A **pandemic** occurs over a very wide geographical area and affects an exceptionally high proportion of the population.
6. **Prevalence/Incidence:** **Prevalence** is a measure of the total number of cases of disease in a population, while **incidence** is the rate of occurrence of new cases.
7. **Sensitivity/Specificity:** **Sensitivity** measures the proportion of actual positives that are correctly identified as positive (e.g., the percentage of sick people who are correctly identified as having a condition). **Specificity** measures the proportion of negatives that are correctly identified as negative (e.g., the percentage of healthy people who are correctly identified as not having a condition).
8. **Sex/Gender:** **Sex** refers to biological and physiological characteristics, while **gender** refers to behaviors and roles in societies. Sex can be described as male or female, while gender is masculine or feminine.
9. **Reliability/Validity:** **Reliability** refers to the confidence we can place on the measuring instrument to provide the same value every time the measure is repeated on the same object. **Validity** means that the measuring instrument is, in fact, measuring the property it is intended to measure.



More Idioms

The best way to learn idioms is through extensive exposure to the language. However, some students feel it is helpful to study idioms independently, so below are a few of the most common.

Actions

- **bend over backwards:** to make an extreme effort

Kim bent over backwards to finish the homework assignment in time, but she couldn't do it.

- **bite off more than (one) can chew:** to engage in something that is too difficult

I thought I could take a higher-level biostatistics class, but I think I bit off more than I can chew!

- **bite (one's) tongue:** to refrain from saying something

Ron was going to tell his girlfriend that he she was late again, but to avoid a fight, he bit his tongue.

- **blow it:** to make a big mistake or ruin an opportunity

I think Max got nervous during the job interview; I hope he didn't blow it.

- **break up:** to end a romantic relationship

Ismael and his girlfriend decided not to break up, even though they had a fight.

- **chew (one) out:** to yell at someone

When Lindsey wrecked her brother's car, he chewed her out for 20 minutes.

- **cost (one) an arm and a leg:** to be very expensive

Greg shouldn't have bought that motorcycle; it cost him an arm and a leg, and he can't afford it!

- **crack (one) up:** to make one laugh

Dr. Robinson cracks me up; he is always making jokes in class.



- **cross that bridge when (one) comes to it:** to address an issue at a later time when it becomes necessary

I don't have the money to buy a car after graduation, but I'll cross that bridge when I get to it.

- **cross (one's) finger:** to hope for a positive outcome

I am crossing my fingers that I get a scholarship for next year.

- **cry over spilled milk:** to be upset about something unimportant

If I got upset about missing the party, I would be crying over spilled milk.

- **cut corners:** to do something poorly in order to save time or money

The roof of the new clinic is already starting to fall in. I think the builders cut corners when they constructed it.

- **cut to the chase:** to come to the important information when speaking

I don't have time to listen to you all day; please cut to the chase!

- **drive (one) crazy/drive (one) up the wall: to severely annoy someone**

My roommate drives me crazy when she has friends over to hang out late at night!

- **drop by: to pay someone a visit**

My professor said I could drop by her office any time this afternoon to discuss my paper.

- **get rid of: to eliminate or throw away**

Now that I am finished with the class, I can get rid of all my old notes.

- **go back to the drawing board: to begin something again**

That experiment did not work, so now Linda has to go back to the drawing board.

- **go the extra mile: to do more than is required**

To earn extra credit in this class, you have to go the extra mile. You must lead discussions and do extra assignments.

- **have it both ways: to have two things at the same time when it is not possible to do so**

You can either be a part of the project or take the summer off, but you can't have it both ways.

- **hit the books: to study**

Barbara said she had to leave the party early to go home and hit the books.

- **keep an eye on: to monitor**

Can you keep an eye on my laptop while I go to the bathroom?

- **keep in mind: to remember**

You must keep in mind that the due date for the application is in two weeks.

- **let (one) down: to disappoint someone**

My sister really let me down when she didn't help me move this weekend.



- **make a long story short: to condense a story to save time**

Grace had an accident on the way to class. To make a long story short, she is fine but will miss a week of school.

- **make one's day: to make someone feel good**

When I got a good grade on the test, it really made my day!

- **mean business: to be serious about something**

When the professor said she would fail anyone who talked during the exam, it was clear that she meant business.

- **play it by ear: to do something without planning ahead of time**

We don't know what movie we will see tonight; it depends on what's on at the local theater. We can play it by ear.

- **put one's best foot forward: to present oneself in the best way**

When you go to the interview, make sure to put your best foot forward by wearing a nice suit and sitting up straight.

- **raise eyebrows: to cause disapproval or shock**

Chang raised eyebrows when he refused to wear shoes to the graduation ceremony.

- **rule out: to eliminate an option or possibility**

Carmen doesn't think that Lisa will break up with her boyfriend, but I wouldn't rule it out.

- **run into someone: to see someone unexpectedly**

When Kelley ran into her friend Liz on the way to the library last night, Liz looked very tired.

- **show up: to appear somewhere**

Celia showed up late to the movie and missed the best part!

- **start from scratch: to start again at the beginning**

We realized our data was flawed after three weeks of collecting it, so then we had to start from scratch.

Descriptions

- **all in the same boat: to share a similar experience**

I know that test was hard for you, but everyone in this class is in the same boat.

- **black and white: having two sides that are extremes**

That is a very complex issue, so we need to talk about our options. It's just not black and white.

- **(a) blessing in disguise: something that seems negative but is really positive**

Getting in that accident was a blessing in disguise for Muhammad, because now he has a new car!

- **(a) four-letter word: a curse word**

When Sheila is angry, she has to make sure not to use any four-letter words around the kids.

- **hands down: definitely**

Tom said, "This is, hands down, the best pizza I have had in my life!"

- **in over (one's) head: in a situation that is overly demanding**

I thought I could take an advanced biostatistics class, but now I think I am in over my head!

- **no strings attached: without commitments or conditions**

I like this new cell phone plan; it comes with no strings attached. I can cancel any time with a charge.

- **off the top of one's head: without thinking**

Off the top of my head, I can't remember where the conference will be next year. I'll have to check the website.

- **on the fence: undecided**

Are you still on the fence about where to go to get your PhD, or have you decided?

- **on the go: busy or without stopping**

Amy only has five minutes between classes. She will have to eat lunch on the go.

- **on the house: paid for by the provider**

Since he spilled her drink on my shirt, the server said my dinner was on the house.

- **right around the corner: very soon**

Graduation is right around the corner. Do you have a job yet?

- **right away: immediately**

If Frank doesn't send in his application right away, he may miss the deadline.

- **(an) uphill battle: a difficult challenge**

He may pass this class, but it will definitely be an uphill battle.

- **under the weather: sick**

If Nancy is still under the weather on Monday, we will have to cancel the meeting.



B ritish vs A merican E nglish

Many international students have studied British English, which can cause some confusion upon arriving in the US, especially in terms of vocabulary and spelling.

Here are some examples of words that are different in British and American English:

British English	American English	British English	American English
Autumn	Fall/Autumn	Mobile	Cell Phone/Mobile Phone
Barrister/Solicitor	Attorney/Lawyer	Mum	Mom
(Bathing) Costume	Bathing Suit/Swimsuit	Maths	Math
Biscuit	Cookie	Motorbike	Motorcycle
Bill (Restaurant)	Bill/Check	Notice Board	Bulletin Board
Bonnet	Hood (Car)	Pants/Underpants	Underwear
Boot	Trunk (Car)	Pavement	Sidewalk
Car Park	Parking Lot	Petrol	Gas/Gasoline
Chemist's Shop	Drugstore/Pharmacy	Post, Postbox, Postcode	Mail, Mailbox, Zipcode
(The) Cinema	(The) Movies	Pub	Bar
Crisps	Potato Chips/Chips	Public School	Private School
Chips	French Fries	Public Toilet	Public Bathroom/Restroom
City Center	Downtown	Queue	Line
Cooker	Stove	Railway	Railroad
Dustbin/Rubbish Bin	Garbage Can/Trashcan	Rubber	Eraser
Engaged (Telephone)	Busy	Rubbish	Garbage/Trash
Film	Movie/Film	Rucksack	Backpack
Garden	Yard/Lawn	Shop	Store/Shop
Ground Floor	First Floor/Ground Floor	Sweets	Candy
Handbag	Purse/Handbag	Tap	Faucet
(To) Hire	(To) Rent	Telly	TV
Holiday	Vacation	Timetable	Schedule
Hoover	Vacuum Cleaner	Torch	Flashlight
Jumper	Sweater	Trousers	Pants/Trousers
Lift	Elevator	Tube/Underground	Subway
Lorry	Truck	Wardrobe	Closet
Mad	Crazy/Insane	Zip	Zipper

British vs. American Spelling

- British spelling sometimes uses **t** for the past tense, whereas American spelling uses **ed** (learnt, learned).
- British spelling sometimes uses **double m** and **e**, whereas American spelling uses just **m** (programme, program).
- British spelling uses **our** in words (labour and behavior), whereas American spelling uses **or** (labor, behavior).
- British spelling uses **s** in words (randomise, organise), whereas American spelling uses **z** (randomize, organize).

Academic Writing

As a public health student, much of your time will be spent writing about various aspects of the field, such as epidemiological studies, theories of behavior change, design and management of health interventions, and public health policy. As international students, both reading and writing in English will be a slower and more challenging process than it is in your native language. However, given how critical writing is in both the study and professional practice of public health, it is necessary to focus effort on improving these skills. This unit identifies some common academic writing tasks you will be assigned and recommendations for completing those tasks.

In this section, you will find information on:

- *Preparing to Write*
- *Academic Writing Tasks*
- *Expressing Opinion*
- *Making Transitions*
- *Using Quotations*
- *Parallelism and Consistency*
- *Numbers and Percentages*
- *Capitalization Rules*
- *Writing Checklist*



P_{reparing} to W_{rite}

Before beginning to write, there are a few steps you can go through to ensure that your writing meets your instructor's requirements and represents your best effort.

Step 1: Make sure you understand the instructions. Ask your instructor, teaching assistant or another student to help you if you do not understand what you are supposed to do (unless you are instructed not to consult with anyone, such as on an exam.)

Step 2: And ask yourself these questions:

- Who is the audience?
- What is the purpose of the document? (e.g., inform, persuade, describe, explain)
- What is the required/appropriate format and length?

Step 3: Look for good examples of the type of writing you are doing.

Use them as models for your writing.

Type Styles
This style is
"italics" and **this**
style is "bold."

Step 4: Create an outline of your document. This will help you to make sure your ideas have organization and flow logically from one to another.

Formatting Tips

Document format: Typically, academic and professional documents use the following formatting:

- 12 pt. type
- Times New Roman
- 1 inch margins

Word spacing: There is one space between words and two spaces between sentences and after a colon.

Line spacing: Line spacing can be single, one and a half or double spaced. (Follow the professor's instructions).

Indentation: The first line of each paragraph is indented (moved) to the right five spaces.

Bullet Points
are used for lists:

- Item 1
- Item 2
- Item 3

Page numbering: It is a good idea to put your name and the page number on every page. You can do this in the header (top of the page) or footer (bottom of the page).

Headings: If you have titles, headings or subheadings, capitalize the first letter of all words except articles (a/an/the and prepositions).

Punctuation Marks

Brackets []

Exclamation Mark/Point !

Question Mark ?

Colon :

Hyphen - (within a word)

Quotation Marks ""

Comma ,

Parentheses ()

Semicolon ;

Dash – (between words)

Period . (known as a "full stop" in British English)

Ellipsis ...

A_{cademic} W_{riting} T_{asks}

There are a few different types of academic writing assignments that are commonly required in public health courses.

Generally speaking, responding to a prompt means restating the prompt and expanding on it. Here are some examples:

1. Describe

Q. Describe the types of educational programs the NRVV offers on topics related to maternal health.

A. The three types of maternal health education programs that NRVV offers are...

Q. Describe the population targeted by this awareness campaign.

A. This awareness campaign targets ...

2. Define

Q. Define "internal validity" and "external validity."

A. Internal validity is... External validity means...

Q. Define "behavioral determinants."

A. Behavioral determinants are...

3. Argue/Defend a Position

Q. Describe the pros and cons of using data from prenatal clinics for surveillance purposes.

A. There are several pros and cons to using data from prenatal clinics for surveillance purposes. The advantages are...The disadvantages are...

Q. Smith argues that cell phones are more effective than more traditional methods for alerting residents of an emergency. Defend your position for or against his argument.

A. Using cell phones to alert residents of emergencies is more effective than the more traditional methods because...

4. Explain Concepts

Q. Explain the theory of planned behavior and how it was applied by project staff in this intervention.

A. The theory of planned behavior is...In this intervention, the project staff applied the theory by...

5. Provide Examples

Q. Give two examples of ways in which iphone "apps" were used to monitor the health status of participants.

A. Iphone applications were used to monitor the health status of program participants in two important ways. The first was...The second was...



6. Compare and Contrast

Q. Compare and contrast the approaches to improving mental health of the two NGOs in the report.

A. The approaches to improving mental health of the X Foundation and the Y Foundation are similar in terms of...However, the two organizations' approaches also differ in many ways. The X Foundation...while the Y Foundation...

Expressing Opinion

Among the commonly assigned writing assignments in public health courses are op/eds and policy briefs, both of which are used to express an opinion on a public health issue.

Op-Ed

An op-ed* is a short article that expresses an opinion about a current topic of interest. It is usually addressed to the general public and published in newspapers. Here are some tips for writing an effective op-ed:

1. Focus on one specific issue or idea.
2. Have a clear viewpoint that is strongly on one side of the issue, and use facts, statistics and studies to support your arguments.
3. Make it clear to readers why they should care about the issue.
4. Educate your reader, but don't "talk down" to them.
5. Use clear, powerful, direct language.
6. Use plain language that is free of jargon (highly technical or academic vocabulary) that the average reader won't understand.
7. Identify the arguments on the other side of the issue, and refute those arguments with facts.
8. Use active (not passive) verbs.
9. Give specific examples to illustrate your points, and use anecdotes (personal stories) when appropriate to enhance understanding of an issue.
10. Offer specific recommendations for action/change.

*Op-ed originally meant "opposite the editorial page" of newspapers, but is often considered an abbreviation for "opinion-editorial."

Policy Brief

A policy brief is a short, focused document intended for a decision-makers that outlines the rationale for choosing a particular policy alternative or course of action in a current policy debate. A policy brief may be "objective," outlining current alternatives without arguing for a particular one, or the brief may advocate for a particular alternative after presenting the options. The purpose is to serve as an impetus for action. Steps for developing a policy brief may include:

- Selecting a policy issue that is unresolved and/or contentious or controversial and that requires some action on the part of public decision-makers at the global, national, regional or local level.
- Stating the policy issue succinctly and in compelling language.
- Providing a short overview of the root causes of the problem.
- Listing and briefly assessing current policy options or approaches.
- Selecting one option and providing an assessment of the feasibility of adoption by the relevant policy decision-makers and potential pitfalls and trade-offs.

Making Transitions

Transitional words and phrases improve connections among ideas, sentences and paragraphs, helping your writing read more smoothly and enhancing organization and understandability.

Below are examples of different types of transitions with words and phrases used to make them.

Addition: furthermore, in addition, moreover, as well as

- The researchers in the study did not make a sufficient effort to control for bias, nor did they address the issue in their report. **Furthermore**, when members of the committee asked about potential bias, the researchers offered no response.
- The study looked at the effects of the medication in men, women and children. Specifically, they wanted to see if there were any immediate side effects. They also examined how the drugs affected these patients in the long term to see if there were any negative effects that occurred months or years later. **In addition**, the researchers compared the relative effectiveness of the medication in each of the three groups.
- Many of the children who need the vaccine live in remote areas. Reaching these children requires several days of travel and few health workers have enough time or funds to make the journey. **Moreover**, many of the roads that health workers have to travel are unusable and make safe passage impossible.
- Eating more fruits and vegetables, **as well as** including more whole grains in your diet, will help you improve your overall health.

Consequence: as a result, consequently, for this reason, hence, therefore, thus

- Many younger residents in the metropolitan area do not have landlines. **As a result**, researchers were not able to include those residents in the survey.
- Only a small number of the participants in the focus group attended the session and none had read the instructions. **Consequently**, we had to reschedule the session for next month.
- Rumors were spreading among the villages that the vaccine was dangerous; **for this reason**, the organization launched a campaign to educate the public about the safety of the vaccine.
- Many believe that depression is caused solely by a chemical imbalance and can only be treated with medication. **Hence**, many mental health professionals find it difficult to convince people to participate in behavioral therapy to address the problem.
- This state adopted seatbelt laws earlier than many other states; **therefore**, the rate of car accident fatalities in the last several decades has been lower here than in other parts of the country.
- The Millennium Development Goals address very complex and systematic problems in developing countries. **Thus**, reaching these goals will present enormous challenges for health workers worldwide.

Contrast and Comparison: by contrast, conversely, in contrast, rather, yet, however, on the one hand...on the other hand, still, nevertheless

- The two-week intervention program did not produce significant behavior change in any of the participants. **By contrast**, results from the six-week program showed that the majority of participants made meaningful and lasting changes in their behavior.
- A poor diet and a sedentary lifestyle will eventually result in an increase in one's body weight; **conversely**, consistent exercise and a good diet will help one to maintain a healthy weight.
- Few employees signed up for the "heart health" class last year. **In contrast**, the "lose weight fast" program was very popular.
- It is not recommended that seniors begin an exercise program that is very demanding; **rather**, doctors suggest starting slow and increasing the degree of difficulty over time.
- The anti-smoking program participants appeared pleased with the workshops, **yet** the evaluations showed that many of them did not believe they would stop smoking.
- None of the studies showed a cause and effect relationship between the two dependent variables; **however**, several of the researchers found sufficient correlation to merit further investigation.
- **On the one hand**, the hospital found that patients felt the renovations made the hospital environment more comfortable; **on the other hand**, many patients worried that the costs of the renovations would be reflected in their hospital bills.
- The health department is concerned that the number of children who were vaccinated was inflated in the report. **Still**, it is clear that vaccination coverage last year was much greater than any of the previous years.
- The organization has been working in that community for many years. **Nevertheless**, very few of the residents are aware of the services it provides.



Emphasis: above all, chiefly, especially, particularly

- The authors of the study made many recommendations for improving the intervention; **above all**, they said, the program period must be extended.
- The physician offered many reasons that the medication should not be recommended for infants; **chiefly**, that its effects have not been studied in children under five.
- The training was very important for the volunteer birth attendants, **especially** those who had limited experience in the field.
- Providing a clean water source is critical for decreasing the incidence of diarrheal disease, **particularly** for schoolchildren.

Exception: aside from, except, excluding

- **Aside from** providing more training to the staff, there are few options for improving the quality of care in that program.
- All of the proposals seek to improve access to healthcare, **except** the last one, which addresses quality of care only.
- **Excluding** those who arrived late, all of the workshop participants indicated that their level of knowledge had increased.

Exemplification: for instance, namely, specifically, such as, including, for example, specifically

- There are many ways that the surveillance system can be improved. **For instance**, the communication system linking the labs with the field office can be strengthened.
- There are two groups that are most interested in this program: **namely**, the funders and the beneficiaries.
- The committee agreed to fund only one of the proposals, **specifically**, the proposal to renovate the existing hospital.
- There are a few theories that could be used as a framework for this study, **such as** social learning theory and the theory of planned behavior.
- All of the policies introduced this year will lower costs in the long term, **including** those that may actually increase costs in the short term.
- New technologies are helping healthcare providers to communicate better with their patients. **For example**, texting allows physicians to remind patients about appointments or about taking their medications.
- The researchers noticed an interesting behavior change during the second phase of the program. **Specifically**, they observed that many of the participants were arriving earlier and earlier to the sessions.

Generalization: generally, generally speaking, ordinarily, usually

- **Generally**, doctors in that practice prefer to see their cardiac patients once a week.
- **Generally speaking**, eating fruit in moderation will not significantly increase one's sugar intake.
- **Ordinarily**, insurance companies will reimburse patients for medical expenses within 90 days.
- **Usually**, customers must pay more for organic fruits and vegetables.

Similarity: likewise, similarly

- Some of the teens stated that they did not want to participate in the study; **likewise**, many of those who participate in the beginning dropped out after a short time.
- Small nonprofit organizations are struggling to continue their work as despite reduced donations; **similarly**, large NGOs have had to cut costs due to decreased funding for ongoing projects.

Restatement: that is to say, in other words

- Behavior change is difficult without a sense of self-efficacy; **that is to say**, without the feeling that one is capable of making the desired change.
- Identifying men in the community to participate in the women's empowerment program was a challenge, because many were reluctant to change long-standing norms and traditions. **In other words**, by helping to empower women, the men understood that they would have to accept new roles in the family.

Sequence: first...second, at the same time, meanwhile, simultaneously, next, the next step, in turn, finally, subsequently

Note:
The word **firstly** is not commonly used in American English.

- The results of the study are invalid due to a number of reasons related to sampling bias. **First**, the researchers asked for volunteers to participate in the weight-loss program, meaning that only those employees who were already motivated to lose weight were included in the sample. **Second**, because the program took place in the evenings, only those employees who worked the day shift were able to participate.
- All of the patients walked on the treadmill for 30 minutes. **At the same time**, doctors watched the patients' heart monitors to make sure that none of them was at risk for a heart attack.
- The first group will watch the video; **meanwhile**, the second group will listen to the lecture.
- The best way to lose weight is to increase exercise while **simultaneously** decreasing calorie intake.
- The researchers gave the patients a survey about their health history. **Next**, they weighed the patients and took their blood pressure.
- Researchers will measure the amount of each chemical in the water supply and determine the degree of contamination. **The next step** will be to give participants a survey about their tap water drinking habits to assess their degree of exposure.
- Health officials will train the volunteer community health workers (CHWs) on family planning methods. The CHWs, **in turn**, will teach women in the villages about the various family planning methods they can use.
- First, the students will read a number of studies on the disorder they have chosen to investigate. Then, they will spend six weeks observing patients with that disorder in one of the participating clinics. **Finally**, each student will deliver a presentation on their findings to their classmates.
- The teacher will provide instruction and practice in the various relaxation techniques. **Subsequently**, patients will be given a CD to take with them that they can listen to as they try the techniques at home.

Summarization: in summary, in conclusion

- **In summary**, the argument made by Johnson et al. was not convincing. They failed to show that...
- **In conclusion**, the new regulations will not prevent the pharmaceutical companies from marketing drugs on television because...

Using Quotations

There are a number of verbs and phrases commonly used with direct and indirect quotations.

When the source states a fact or when you are using a direct quote:

- Senator Montgomery **states** that she supports the passage of the legislation.
- Dr. Carter **says**, "Mosquito nets are not the only answer, but they have slashed malaria rates in some areas."
- As the author **notes**, "Two-thirds of the children survived when they were treated with intravenous fluids and peanut paste."
- John Klein **observes**, "We have known these things for years, but people don't want to be told what they can and cannot eat."
- The CDC **reports** that the rate has dropped since 2004.

When the source explains:

- The article **discusses** caffeine and its long-term effects.
- In the report, Dr. Epps **explains** that the data set is incomplete and that the results must be collected again.

When the source expresses an opinion:

- Friedan **believes** that taxes on cigarettes should be increased.
- The advocacy group **declares** that childhood obesity is out of control.
- Davidson **remarked** that fewer dollars should be spent on treatment.
- Dr. Woodward **warns** that the system is broken.
- **In Foster's opinion**, everyone should bike to work.
- **From the government's point of view**, vaccine refusal presents a health threat.



When the source presents an argument:

- The author **argues** that BPA is dangerous at any level.
- The Pediatrics Society **asserts** that male circumcision is the healthiest choice.
- Hoffman **claims** that the virus can be spread through saliva.

- Johnson **refutes** (disproves) that claim with extensive medical evidence indicating the contrary.
- The author **concedes** that fewer people would ride bicycles if helmets were mandatory.
- The doctors **demonstrate** that early intervention saves many lives.
- The results **suggest** that yearly prostate exams are unnecessary.
- The author **maintains** that the study sample was too small and that yearly prostate exams are worthwhile.
- The group's director **insists** that the CDC recommendation is outdated, explaining that the studies behind it were conducted in the 1970s.

When you interpret the source:

- **By saying that** hospitals are human laboratories, **the author implies** that doctors only see their patients as subjects.
- **The fact that** parental behavior has such a significant influence on childhood obesity **suggests that** we need to focus more attention on adults.

When you restate the meaning of the quote in your own words:

- **In other words . . .**
- **Rozo's point is that . . .**

When you analyze the meaning or implications of the quote:

- **This statement is significant because** no workplace smoking prevention program exists right now.
- **The CDC's recommendation implies that** primary care doctors have not been doing enough to control hypertension.



i.e. and e.g.

The abbreviations **i.e.** and **e.g.** are used frequently in academic and professional writing, so it is important to know their meaning and use them correctly.

The abbreviation **e.g.** means **for example** and is always followed by a comma.

Example:

*The project was implemented in several counties in metro Atlanta (**e.g.**, Fulton, Cobb) and was very successful.*

The abbreviation **i.e.** means **that is** (in other words/that is to say) and is also always followed by a comma.

Example:

*The meals consisted of unhealthy foods (**i.e.**, foods high in salt and fat) that will be eliminated from the menu.*

P_{arallelism} and C_{onsistency}

Parallelism and consistency are two important aspects of good writing.

Parallelism in writing means using the same pattern of words each time.

When you have a list, make sure to start each item on the list begins with the same type/form of word. For example: **The researchers found that the barriers to quality care were 1) long distances to clinics; 2) limited transportation; and 3) limited financial resources to pay for services.**

The three items listed here are all nouns (*distances, transportation, resources*).

Another example:

The strategies employed in the youth health campaign included: forming theater groups; organizing sports teams; utilizing volunteer peer counselors; and recruiting guest speakers for workshops and conferences. The three verbs here are all gerunds (*forming, organizing, utilizing, recruiting*).

This is also true for itemized lists.

All of these points start with a verb (the subject is *exercise*).

Benefits of Exercise

- Improves heart health
- Reduces stress
- Increases energy
- Strengthens bones

Consistency in writing means ensuring that certain elements (spelling, formatting, etc.) are the same throughout a document.

Spelling: When there is a term that can be spelled more than one way, choose one way and be consistent. For example, you can write health care, healthcare or health-care, but whichever way you choose to spell it, spell it the **same way** throughout your paper.

Capitalization: When writing lists, remember to be consistent with capitalization; either capitalize the first word of each item on the list, or do not capitalize any of the items.

For example:

The project team will recruit participants for the program from:

- schools;
- community sports teams;
- local churches; and
- youth centers. (None of the first words is capitalized.)

This is also true for **titles, headings** and **subheadings**. If you capitalize the first words in one, you need to capitalize the first words in all of them.

Formatting: Make sure to consistently use the same formatting throughout a paper, including fonts, indentions and spacing.

N umbers and P ercentages

Below are some rules for writing numbers and percentages.

1. In formal writing, spell out the numbers **zero** through **nine** in words; for **10** and up, use numerals.
2. Spell out numbers that start a sentence.

Example: Twenty-seven studies have been done on that topic in Europe and the United States.

If you prefer, you can also restructure the sentence so the number does not start the sentence.

Example: In Europe and the United States, 27 studies have been done on that topic.

3. When writing numbers with at least four digits, use comma (not periods).

Examples: 7,087 34,904 3,414,532

4. When writing percentages, you can use either the percent sign (%) or the word "percent." Then use the one you choose consistently throughout your paper.

*Example: The maternal mortality rate has increased by **12%** over the last five years, while the maternal morbidity rate has increased by almost **40%**.*

OR:

*The maternal mortality rate has increased by **12 percent** over the last five years, while the maternal morbidity rate has increased by almost **40 percent**.*



When writing the plural of numbers, add -s or -es without an apostrophe.

- in the 1970s
- adults in their 20s and 30s

Acronyms

As in many other professional fields, acronyms are frequently used in public health. Here is how acronyms should be used in academic and professional writing. An acronym is made up of the first letter of each key word in the name of an organization (e.g., USAID, WHO). The first time an entity is mentioned, write out the name and put the acronym in parenthesis. Afterwards, use the acronym consistently throughout the paper.

For example:

*The **World Health Organization (WHO)** issued a report on maternal mortality rates in Sub-Saharan Africa last year. However, the **WHO** report did not provide statistics for each province.*

Capitalization Rules

Many native and non-native English speaking students are unsure of when to capitalize the first letter of a word. Below are 10 basic rules of capitalization.

Capitalize:

1. The first word of a sentence

The class meets twice a week. It is required for your degree.

2. Proper nouns (formal names of people, places and entities)

*I have read all of Jonathan Haidt's books on social psychology.
While you are in Atlanta, you should visit the High Museum.*

3. Titles in front of names

The lunch is in honor of Dean Curran, who has worked in the field of public health for decades.

4. Days of the week and months of the year

This year, my birthday is on Monday, February 15th.

5. Titles of presentation slides, books, articles, movies, etc. (except short words like a, an, the, but, and, as, if, and or, as well as prepositions like with)

Have you read the book Gone with the Wind by Margaret Mitchell?

6. The words federal or state only when used as part of an official agency name or in government

Margaret works for the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigations.

7. The first word of a salutation and of a closing

*Dear Dr. Brachman,
Best wishes,*

8. Specific course titles

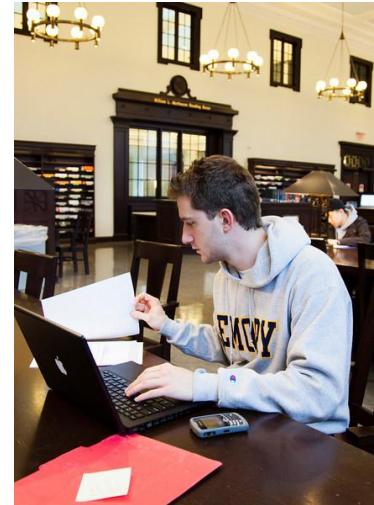
*This semester I will take the course **Fundamentals of Epidemiology**.*

9. Specific academic departments

*Saud is enrolled in Rollins School of Public Health **Department of Epidemiology**.*

10. Academic degrees

*Dexter has a **Master of Public Health**.*



Note:

The name of a disease is not capitalized unless it is derived from a proper noun.

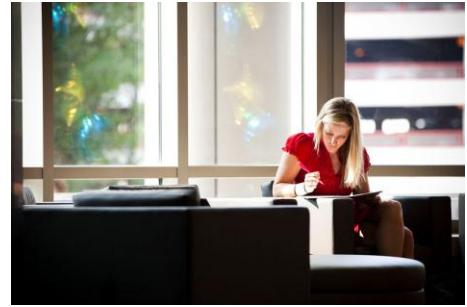
*Siriporn used to be involved in tuberculosis prevention, but now she is working on finding a cure for **Alzheimer's disease**.*

Writing Checklist

Before turning in a written assignment, you can use the following checklist to help avoid common mistakes.

✓ Spelling

Are all the words (including homonym, such as there and their) spelled correctly?



✓ Verb tenses

Are all the verb tenses correct?

✓ Verb forms

Are all the verbs formed correctly?

✓ Modals

Are the correct modals used to express intended meanings?

✓ Articles

Are the correct articles used where needed and left out where not necessary?

✓ Singular/plural

Are all nouns formed appropriately in the singular or plural?

✓ Capitalization

Have the rules of capitalization been followed? Is the first letter of each word (except prepositions and articles) capitalized in titles?

✓ Punctuation

Have punctuation marks (including commas and quotation marks) been used correctly?

✓ Organization

Do the ideas flow in a smooth and logical way? Are transition words and phrases used to move from one idea to the next?

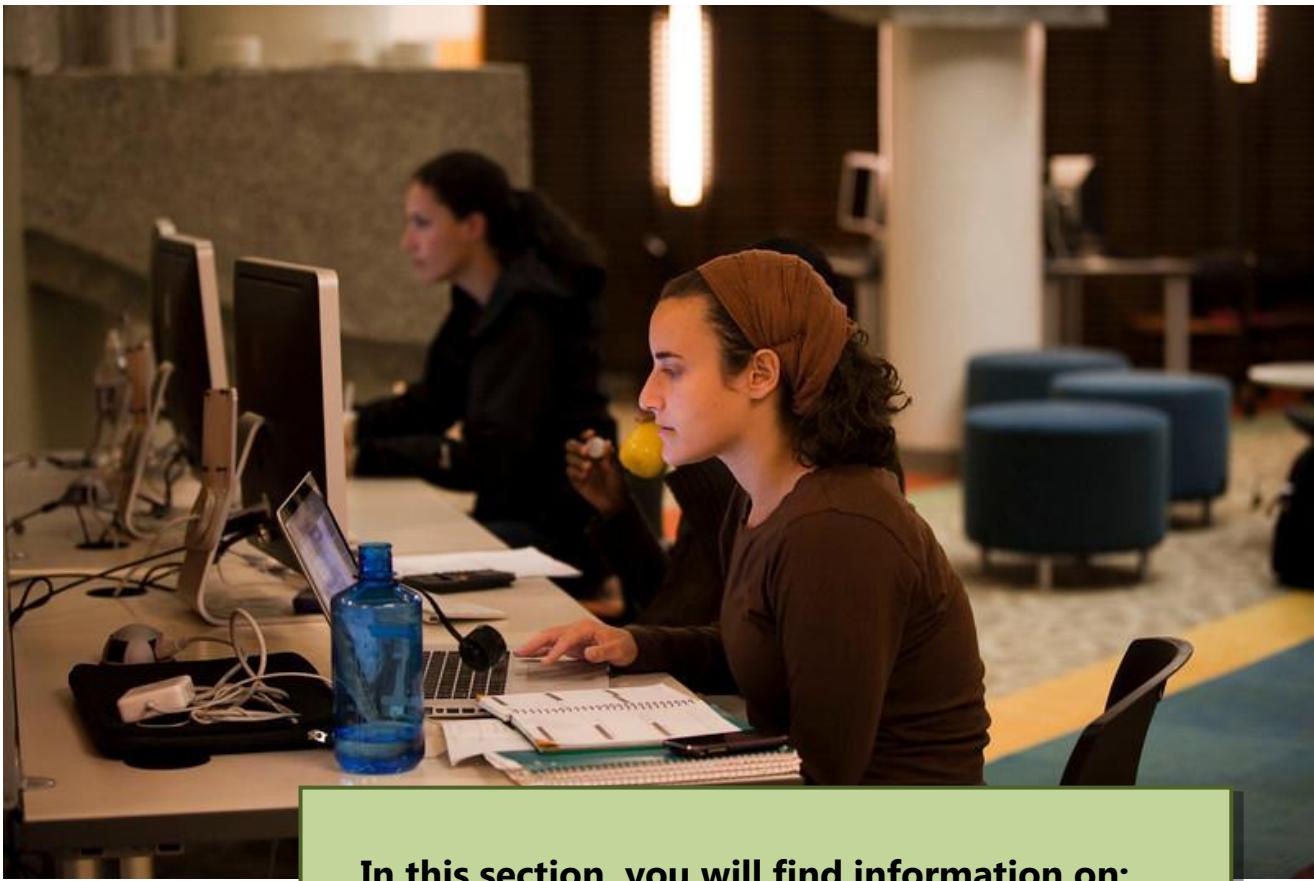
✓ Formatting

Are the beginnings and endings of each paragraph clear?

Does the document meet the requirements for the assignment in terms of length, pagination, font size/type, headings, etc.?

[Grammar and Punctuation]

Grammar comprises the rules that govern the language, and following these rules is particularly important in formal writing. Often, international students – who have typically studied English grammar for years before coming to the U.S. – know more about English grammar than native English-speaking students do. However, given the large number of grammatical items to consider when writing (e.g., word order, modals, prepositions, verb tenses), it can be useful to re-examine some key grammatical points. This unit is intended to provide a review of some aspects of English grammar and punctuation that are essential to good writing.



In this section, you will find information on:

- *Articles*
- *Prepositions*
- *Modals*
- *Quotation Marks*
- *Commas*
- *Colons and Semicolons*

A rticles

Choosing when to use an article (*a, an or the*) and knowing which article to use is a challenge for many international students. Below is a review of the general rules governing article use.

1. When the noun is unique/known/specified/identified, use the definite article **the**:

- Xu studies at **the** library every evening until midnight. (*There is only one library on campus, and Marla studies there.*)
- Dr. Ali prefers **the** textbook that has the answers in the back. ("That has the answers in the back" identifies the specific textbook he prefers.)
- Raj took a class in Arabic last year. **The** class was only six weeks long, but he learned a lot. (*In the second reference to the class, the has been used because it had been identified in the first sentence.*)
- **The** most popular class this semester is global health. (*The noun class is identified by "most popular" as unique.*)
- Barbara left her books in **the** lab. (*The lab is a place known to both the writer and reader.*)

2. When the noun is unspecified, singular **AND** countable, use the indefinite article **a/an**:

- Lu let me borrow **a** pencil for the biostatistics exam. (*It was not a specific pencil.*)
- The writer makes **an** interesting point in the first paragraph. (*The point has not yet been specified.*)

3. When the noun is plural **OR** uncountable, use **no** article.

- I prefer qualitative studies over quantitative studies. ("Studies" is a plural noun.)
- Dr. Sanford always gives me good advice about my career. (*Advice is noncountable.*)

Notes:

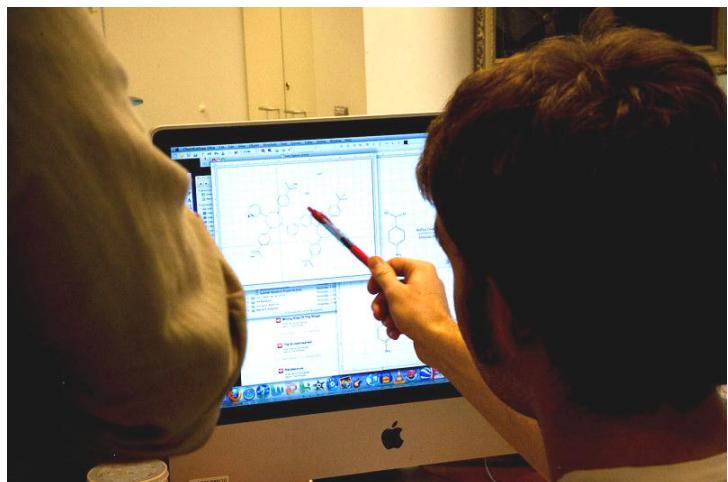
1. There are some common expressions that use the article **the**:

- On the other hand
- In the meantime

2. There are some common expressions that use **no** article:

- At night
- In class
- At school
- At home
- By plane/train/car

3. When writing the United States/U.S./U.S.A. as a noun, always use the article **the**.



P repositions

Although there are some general rules for the meaning of prepositions, correct preposition use is best learned through noting how native speakers of English use them.

Here are some of the typical uses of common prepositions:

Preposition	Examples		
In			
In a city/state/country	In Atlanta	In Georgia	In the United States
In a place	In the cafeteria	In the classroom	In the lab
In something	In my desk	In his car	In her backpack
In month	In January	In September	In April
In year	In 1968	In 1465	In 2015
In time of day (exception: <i>at night</i>)	In the morning	In the afternoon	In the evening
On			
On a surface	On the table	On the wall	On top of the refrigerator
On a street (without number)	On Peachtree St.	On Booker Ave.	On Elm Drive
On day	On Sunday	On Wednesday	On Friday
On date	On June 1 st	On December 12	On February 15 th
At			
At an address	At 344 Clifton Rd.	At 2151 Marshall Ln.	At 902 Collier Rd.
At a specific place	At a conference	At a meeting	At the store
At a specific time	At 4 a.m.	At 2:30 p.m.	At 10:15 sharp

*Note: Americans say: *at home* not *at the home*.

Remember: When talking about **school**, the following prepositions are used:

- **At** school
- **At** Emory University
- **At** Rollins School of Public Health
- **In** the department of epidemiology

When talking about **work**, we use the prepositions **at** or **for**:

*Sheila works **at** Children's Hospital.*

*Mark works **for** the Department of Health and Human Services.*

Note: While these examples are helpful, preposition use is generally idiomatic; through living and studying in the U.S., you will be exposed to them repeatedly in conversation and in writing. This is how you will learn when and how to use the use of prepositions.

Some phrases using prepositions commonly used in public health writing are:

- Aim **to**
- Interested **in**
- Responsible **for**
- Apply **for**
- Participate **in**
- Result **in**
- Compensate **for**
- Reason **for**
- Suffer **from**
- Focus **on**
- Refer **to**
- Talk **about**
- Have an effect **on**
- Respond **to**

Common verbs that are NOT followed by a preposition: discuss, emphasize, target, affect, investigate

M_odals

Modals are words like may, can and should. One of the most common errors non-native English speakers make with modals is not choosing the correct one to express the intended meaning.

Four of the modals most often seen in academic writing are **can**, **could**, **will** and **may**, and their uses are below:

Can

- **Present Ability**

Drinking many glasses of water throughout the day **can** reduce feelings of hunger.

- **Option/Permission**

Physicians **can** only prescribe that particular medication to patients who are at least 18 years old.

Could

- **Past Ability**

Those studies found that increasing exercise by 50% **could** reduce blood pressure significantly in older adults.

- **Past Option**

After hearing the researchers' presentation, the employees **could** choose between participating or opting out.

Will

- **Future Promise/Statement**

The control group **will** not be exposed to the anti-smoking campaign materials, while the intervention group **will** read pamphlets and watch videos.

May

- **Future Possibility**

The training **may** take place more than once a month, depending on the number of students who register.

- **Present Ability**

Putting signs near the elevators that point to the stairwell **may** increase the number of residents who regularly take the stairs.

Using the Modal Should

Many non-native English speakers incorrectly overuse use the modal **should** in speech. Native speakers generally limit the use of the modal **should** to expressing a **suggestion** or **expectation**.

Suggestion

If you want to see the presentation that starts in fifteen minutes, you **should** leave now.

Students who want to do well on the midterm exam **should** study both their notes and the textbook.

Expectation

The professor **should** have our grades ready by tomorrow.

There is a cold front coming in tonight, so the temperature **should** drop below freezing.

When expressing a necessity or desire, other modals should be used, such as need to, have to and want to.

Necessity

I **need to** meet with my professor after class to talk about the paper.

We **have to** finish the presentation by 2:00 p.m.

Desire

Dr. Rasul **wants to** change the class schedule next semester.

Quotation Marks

Quotation marks are used to indicate what a writer or speaker said verbatim. They must be used when citing the exact words of a speaker or writer.

When to Use Double Quotation Marks

Use quotation marks in your academic writing to indicate that the word or phrase is an exact copy of the original author's word or phrase.

Example

According to Dr. Martin, "New treatments for this disease have been one hundred percent effective."

When to Use Single Quotation Marks

Single quotation marks are used for a quotation inside a quotation.

Examples

The official said, "The crowds were shouting 'Go away!' so we left the premises."

In her paper, Fatima stated that "Mosquitoes are known as 'silent killers.'"

Use of Quotation Marks with Other Punctuation

- With Periods and Commas

Periods and commas go inside (before) the quotation marks

Examples

Dr. Wong said, "Many of you will find this course difficult."

The students then watched the movie "Contagion," which they found very interesting.

- With Colons and Semicolons

Colons and Semicolons go outside (after) the quotation marks.

Example

I didn't think it was the "best movie ever"; I thought it was depressing.

Here are some examples of "classic movies": *The Way We Were*, *Godfather II* and *Caddyshack*.

- With Exclamation Points and Question Marks

Exclamation points and question marks go inside the quotation marks when part of the quoted material and outside when they are not.

Examples

- I love this video!" Kadisha exclaimed.
- Hayat loved the article "Ten Easy Ways to Make a Million Dollars"!
- After class, Lu asked, "When is the next exam?"
- Did you see the movie "And the Band Played On"?



Commas

The appropriate use of commas is important for accurately expressing meaning and enhancing readability.

Use Commas...

- **In a series of three or more items**

We plan to record the age, ethnicity, employment status, and BMI of each participant. (*Note: In some styles, such as the one used in this book, the final comma is optional.*)

- **To separate independent clauses when they are joined by the coordinating conjunctions: *and, but, for, or, nor, so* and *yet***

Class was over, **but** the students wanted to stay longer.

Last night his roommates had a party, **so** he studied in the library.

- **After introductory clauses or words that come before the main clause, such as: *after, although, as, because, if, since, when and while, as well as introductory phrases***

While I was studying, my roommate went to a party.

Because her alarm clock was broken, she was late for class.

- **In the middle of a sentence to set off clauses, phrases, and words that are nonessential (nonrestrictive). A clause, phrase, or word is nonessential if:**

- You can leave it out and the sentence still makes sense.
- It interrupts the flow of words in the original sentence.
- You can move it to a different position in the sentence, and the sentence still makes sense.

Here are some example sentences with nonessential elements:

Clause: That Tuesday, ***which is after the semester ends***, is the best day for me to meet with you.

Phrase: The professor is interesting and has a great deal of experience in the field. The textbook, ***on the other hand***, is out of date and boring.

Word: I appreciate your hard work on this research paper. It seems, ***however***, that you didn't appropriately cite your sources.

DO NOT use commas to set off essential (restrictive) elements of the sentence, such as clauses beginning with *that*** (relative clauses).**

The textbook *that I borrowed from my classmate* is missing several pages.

Students *who miss many classes* will have a difficult time on the exam.

- **Between the main discourse and a quotation**

The professor said, "We will have a quiz tomorrow."

"I will not able to complete the assignment," he responded, "until I have more time."

- **To separate two independent clauses joined by a conjunction**

We were planning to leave for vacation tomorrow, but we have to wait until Monday.

DO NOT use commas between the two parts of a compound predicate (one subject with more than one verb)

The students attended orientation in August and started classes in September.

Semicolons and Colons

The correct use of semicolons and colons can enhance the quality of academic and professional writing.

Use Semicolons...

1) To connect closely related ideas

- Some people like to visit the doctor only when they are sick; others prefer to get regular checkups.
- The laws against speeding in that country are rarely enforced; as a result, many people drive too fast.

2) To list items containing commas

- There are three ways to get to the hotel: by walking through the park, which is pleasant but time-consuming; taking a taxi, which is fast but expensive; or taking the bus, which is cheap but uncomfortable.

Use Colons...

Between an introductory clause and words, clauses or phrases that provides examples or that illustrate, extend or amplify the introductory phrase

- The study participants were asked to eliminate the following items from their diet: eggs, meat, fish, fried foods and dairy products.
- We will have two items on the meeting agenda: introductions of new staff members and information on the upcoming staff retreat.

When using words like *however* and *meanwhile* to connect two independent clauses (subject and verb), use a semicolon before the word and a comma after the word.

Examples:

There is little time left to register for the class; however, if you give me your information, I will do it for you today.

The students will work together in groups to reach a consensus; meanwhile, the professor will observe their interactions and make notes.

***If the clause following the colon is a complete sentence, it begins with a capital letter.**

Dashes

Dashes are used to include a word, phrase or clause that emphasizes or clarifies information.

Examples:

Both of the studies – the 2007 study in China and the 2010 study in the U.S. – found that smokers were more likely to quit if they had a family member who had a smoking-related illness.

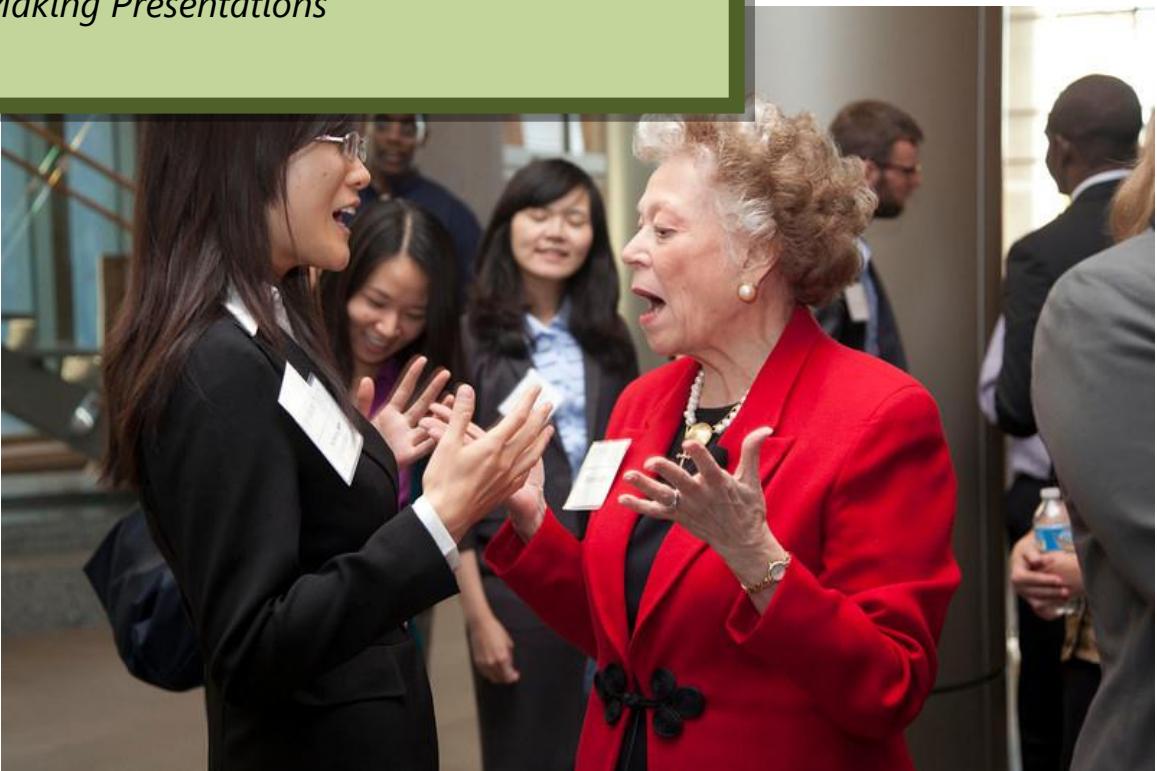
We have set up tents, so the blood drive will take place at the park on Saturday morning – rain or shine.

[***Speaking and Listening***]

Many international students come to the U.S. having spent many years studying grammar in their native countries; however, once they arrive, they find that they still have quite a bit of difficulty communicating with native English speakers. To study public health in the U.S., it is essential to be able to communicate verbally with university staff, faculty and other students. In class, you will need to listen to lectures and take notes, understand videos and presentations, ask questions and participate in discussions. You will work with other students in small groups, and interact with others in various settings, such as in the cafeteria, library and bookstore. This unit is intended to provide resources for speaking and listening practice as well as tips on improving pronunciation and doing presentations.

In this section, you will find information on :

- *Conversation Practice*
- *Pronunciation Issues*
- *Resources for Listening Practice*
- *Making Presentations*



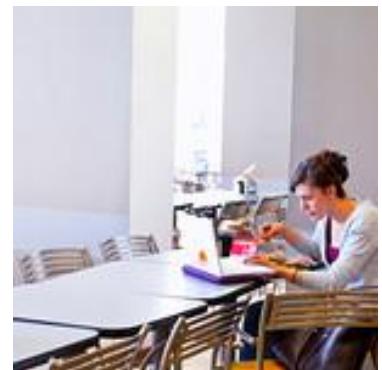
Conversation Questions

Conversation practice is an excellent way to improve fluency in English. Below are 50 questions that can be used to prompt conversation.

1. Have you ever forgotten an important date or event?
2. Has TV made society better or worse?
3. Where do you think you will live most of your life? Why?
4. Tell me about the best thing that happened this week.
5. Do you prefer big parties with music and lots of people, or small parties that are full of quiet conversation? Why?
6. What's your most valued possession? Why is it so important?
7. What do you do to encourage yourself when going through hard times? Does it work?
8. Have you ever changed your appearance a lot in a short time (for example, hair style, hair color or weight)?
9. Do you ever buy gifts for yourself? What do you buy? Do you generally spend more money on temporary things (a massage/food/a night out) or on physical objects (a car/a cellphone/a book)?
10. Have you ever broken any bad habits or started any new, good habits?
11. Do you like scary movies? Why or why not?
12. How do you feel about flying in an airplane? Do you know anyone who is afraid of flying?
13. Do you believe in having a "best friend?" If so, do you have one?
14. Should parents be held responsible for their children's behavior?
15. What is the last thing you bought? How much money did you spend yesterday?
16. Do you like to go to the dentist? Why or why not? How often do you go?
17. What is the best age to get married? Why?
18. Which family member do you enjoy spending time with the most? Why?
19. Have you ever ridden a horse? If so, how was your experience?
20. Do you like to go to (music) concerts? What singer/bands have you seen live?
21. There is a saying: "Money makes the world go 'round." Do you agree? Why or why not?
22. Do most people have pets in your country? What kind of pets?
23. If you had the opportunity to go to the moon, would you go? Why or why not?
24. Would you ever be a vegan (person who doesn't eat any animals or animal products, such as eggs and milk)? Why or why not?
25. Do most families in your country have a TV in the home? How many do they usually have?
26. What do you think is the worst job in the world? Why?



27. Are beauty pageants good or bad? Should children be entered into beauty pageants?
28. Have you ever been involved in a traffic accident? What happened? Whose fault was it?
29. Do you ever wish you were shorter, taller, younger, older or thinner or heavier? Why?
30. What jobs in your country are considered to be good jobs? Why?
31. Do you wear glasses or contacts? If so, how old were you when you first starting wearing them? Would you ever consider having eye surgery? Would you ever consider wearing colored contacts?
32. Do you get along well with your neighbors? Have you ever had problems with your neighbors? What happened?
33. Would you teach your child to "hit back" at school if somebody hits him or her?
34. What do you do when a beggar asks you for money?
35. When you are shopping, do you often haggle (negotiate) for a lower price?
36. Does physical beauty affect one's success in life? What are some of the drawbacks of being beautiful?
37. Does it annoy you when shop assistants try to sell you things you don't need?
38. Have you ever gone skiing, surfing, skateboarding or rollerblading?
39. How do you feel when you watch the news on TV and see all the terrible things happening in the world? How do you handle your emotions?
40. What do you do when you are waiting in a long line and someone breaks in line front of you?
41. Is it acceptable for parents to spank (slap on the bottom with a flat object or with the open hand for punishment) their children?
42. Have you ever embarrassed yourself in public?
43. At what age should a child get a cell phone? Why?
44. Can you remember doing anything that got you into trouble as a child? What was it? How were you punished?
45. What would you do if you saw somebody spanking their child for bad behavior?
46. Have you ever broken a bone? If so, how did it happen?
47. Should children be paid for household chores?
48. What factors may result in the breakdown of a good friendship? What things should friends never do?
49. Do you think video games are a bad influence on children?
50. Is it OK for little girls to wear makeup?



Pronunciation Issues

Good pronunciation is key to ensuring that you are understood when you interact with others.

Pronunciation is one of the most difficult parts of a language to master. For most adults, an easily understood, rather than *native-like* pronunciation, is a more realistic goal. Pronunciation involves more than individual sounds; in fact, being understood in a second language is closely related to:

-Sentence Stress -Intonation -Word Linking -Rhythm -Word Stress



The main characteristic of American English is that NOT all words in a sentence are stressed. The general rule is that only words that carry content or meaning are stressed in the sentence, while the other, function words are pronounced together with the preceding stressed one. Nouns, main verbs, adjectives and adverbs are usually stressed in a sentence. Words that are usually not stressed are: articles, determiners, particles, helping/linking verbs, modal verbs, prepositions, conjunctions and pronouns.

A student's age is a major factor in improving pronunciation. After many years of speaking a second language, a person's pronunciation becomes a habit. We call this **fossilization**, and it takes quite a bit of work to change. In addition, many language learners cannot hear the distinct sounds in the second language and, therefore, don't know when or how to make them. **Thus, the two skills that adult learners need to practice to improve their pronunciation are to learn to hear and imitate the sounds of native speech.** This is why the most effective way to acquire target pronunciation is to spend as much time as possible listening to and speaking with native speakers.

Phonological Sounds

The key pronunciation issues depend on the first language of the speaker.

/l/ and /r/

How to make the sounds:

To make the /l/ sound, place the tip of the tongue behind the upper teeth and pass the air along both sides of the tongue, then release your tongue.

To make the /r/ sound, bunch up the tongue at the back of your mouth with the tip pointing towards the top of your mouth without touching.

You can improve your pronunciation by practicing these words and phrases.

male mare	berry belly
lot rot	wall war
rake lake	raw law

1. Linda and Larry's lawyer rarely likes really lovely rain.
2. Please let Roy and Ron live their real lives.
3. A little lake to the left of Raleigh makes Ronnie leary.

/v/ and /w/

How to make the sounds:

To make the /v/ sound, put your upper teeth onto your lower lip and pass the air through the teeth and lower lip.

To make the /w/ sound, push the lips forward and say /u/ and let the tongue and lower lip drop while pushing air out.

You can improve your pronunciation by practicing these words and phrases.

vest west	vick wick
veil wail	wiper viper
vine wine	roving rowing

1. The white vest is in the river west of the wide valley.
2. If you whine, Will and Vicki will invalidate the winning way.
3. Roving through the vast wasteland, Valerie valued the rolling waves.

/th/

How to make the sound:

Place the tip of your tongue between your upper and lower teeth. Push the air through the teeth and tongue.

You can improve your pronunciation by practicing these words and phrases.

third	nothing
method	booth
mythology	think

1. Thousands of those things were found on Theo's roof.
2. Thieves who think of the theater deserve our thanks.
3. Three thieves found free teeth.

/p/

How to make the sound:

Place your top and bottom lips together and push the air out.

You can improve your pronunciation by practicing these words and phrases.

pipe	rope
pick	lap
apple	hip

1. Peter Piper picked a pair of pickled peppers.
2. People with pigs pray for pears on pizza.
3. Popular people produce pretty pictures.



Listening Resources

There are a number of resources for listening practice outside the classroom.

Finding opportunities to practice speaking and listening outside of class can help to improve these skills and improve day-to-day communication. Here are some resources for listening practice:

Radio

- **National Public Radio:** NPR.org
Programs include:
 - *The World*
 - *This American Life*
 - *All Things Considered*



Video

- **Ted Talks (talks by experts in a variety of fields):** Ted.com
- **YouTube Videos**

News

- **Sixty Minutes (news magazine):** CBSnews.com, click on *Sixty Minutes*
- **Sunday Morning (stories and information of general interest):** CBSnews.com, click on *Sunday Morning*
- **National News Websites:**
 - CBSnews.com
 - MSNBC.msn.com
 - ABCnews.go.com
 - CNN.com

TV Series

Watching TV series is also a great way to practice listening, especially because it provides the opportunity to hear a variety of people in natural conversation. If you find a show that you like, it is also a fun way to learn! You can watch it on TV or online.



Presentations

To help prepare you for your professional life, many of your classes will require you to develop and deliver presentations. You may be asked to create and give presentations alone or together with a group.

Slides

Below are recommendations for creating slides for presentations.

- Check your spelling and grammar. **Mistakes** are very easy to see when they are up on a screen in front of everyone!
- Be consistent; if you have information in bullet points, for example, start each statement with the same type of word (e.g., noun, verb)

Example:

Benefits of Exercise

- Improves heart health
- Reduces stress
- Increases energy
- Strengthens bones

The first words are all verbs.

- Use at least a 24-point font size and an even larger font (35-45 points) for titles.
- Capitalize the first letter of each word of a title (except very short words like *of, in* or *and*). Don't use **ALL CAPS** in the text.
- Avoid having more than **six** lines of text per slide.
- Use **dark text** on a light background or light text on a **dark background**.
- Use graphics that are appropriate for your audience and only when they relate to the topic of the slide. Use the same style of graphics throughout the presentation (e.g., all drawings or all photographs).

Useful Phrases

Below are a few phrases that can be used to help your audience follow your presentation and remain engaged.

- *As you can see...*
- *You can see here that...*
- *This slide shows that...*
- *In a moment I will talk about...*
- *The main point here is that...*



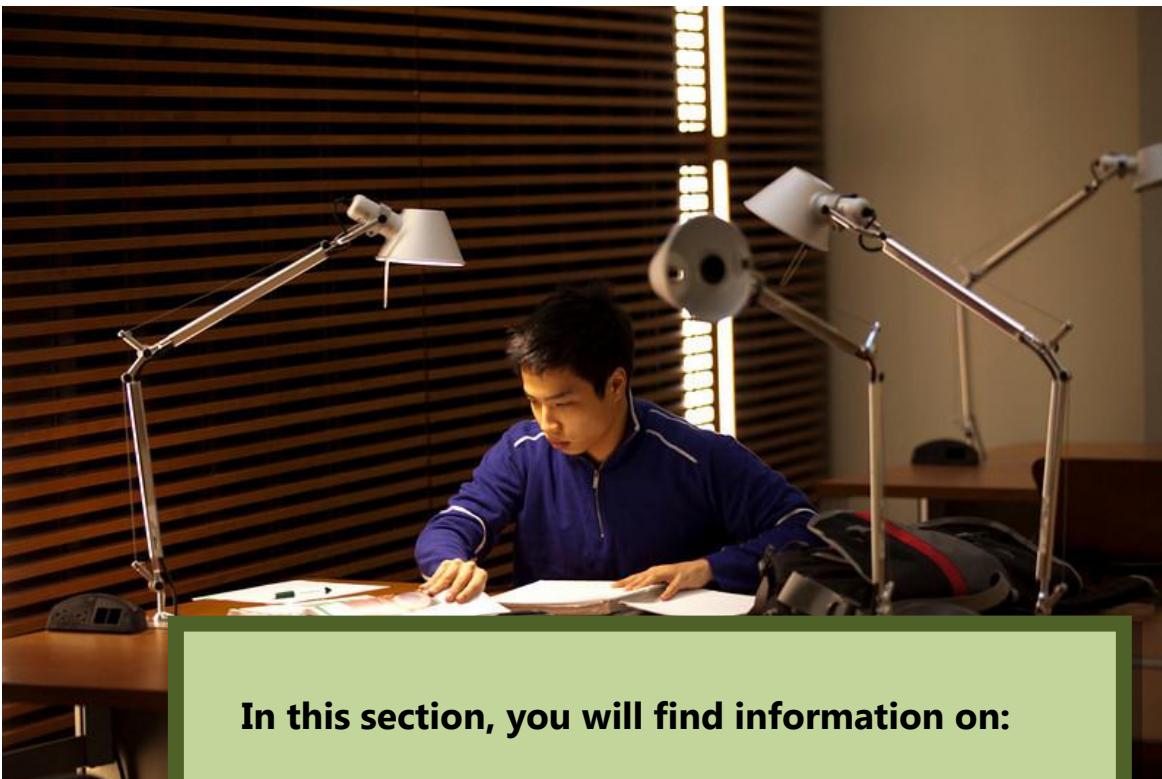
Delivery

The success of your presentation depends a great deal on how well you deliver it. Here are some tips:

- Practice beforehand and make sure you are prepared so that you sound natural when you speak
- Come early to set up so you are ready to go on time.
- Keep your head up and make eye contact with people in all parts of the room.
- Come out from behind the lectern if you can.
- Smile and use a tone of voice that shows you are enthusiastic about your topic.
- Talk at a normal pace (not too fast or too slow).
- If someone in the class/audience asks a question, repeat the question so that everyone can hear it before you answer.

Research Papers

A research paper requires a student to apply principles and methods learned in academic classes, demonstrate an ability to collect, synthesize, analyze, and interpret data from public health literature, and produce a logically structured and well-written document. Research papers can take the form of classroom assignments that require finding and reading a limited number of articles on a topic and writing a paper that describes the research findings and comments on that topic; or of a "thesis," which is a final paper that describes the student's own research and is divided into sections that include study methods, results and discussion. This unit is intended to look at these two types of research papers and related issues.



In this section, you will find information on:

- *Research Resources*
- *Annotated Bibliographies*
- *Literature Review*
- *Thesis*

Research Resources

There are a few key resources that public health students and researchers use to find information pertinent to their topics of investigation.

Citation Software

Citation software – also called bibliographic software, citation managers, or reference managers – makes citing references in research papers easier.

Uses of citation software include:

- Importing citations from databases and websites
- Building and organizing bibliographies
- Formating citations for papers

Different universities support different citation software programs, including: **EndNote, RefWorks, Zotero** and **Mendeley**.



PubMed

One of the most common databases used for public health research is *PubMed*, an online tool that primarily accesses the *Medline* database maintained by the United States National Library of Medicine at the National Institutes of Health.

Resource Librarians

University libraries have resource librarians who are experts in doing research. These staff members can help you narrow your search and find the sources you need for information on your topic.

Thesis Advisor

When writing a thesis, students have a thesis advisor who is usually a professor and expert in the thesis topic area. He or she can often point a student in the direction of sources to include in the literature review and to provide data for the paper.



Anotated Bibliography

An annotated bibliography can be used to organize sources used in a research paper.

An annotated bibliography is a list of brief descriptions of articles, books and other documents related to a topic that informs the reader of the relevance and quality of each source.

Some key questions to ask yourself when writing an annotated bibliography are:

- What is the point of this book or article?
- What are the main arguments? What topics are covered?
- Is it a useful source? Is the information reliable?

Format

There are two parts to an annotated bibliography:

Bibliographic Information: author, publication year, title, journal title, volume/edition, and page numbers (see example below).

Annotations: The summaries are written in paragraph form. If you are creating the bibliography as a way to organize sources, you can write as much as you find useful. (For a classroom assignment, ask your professor for a suggested length or for an example.)

Useful Phrases

There are some phrases that are commonly used in writing an annotated bibliography.

(Name of researchers)

- conducted a study to assess...
- sought to identify...
- analyzed data to determine...
- looked at the differences among...

The report/article

- explains...
- claims that...
- provides the most recent data on...

(Name of document)

- assesses the impact of...
- describes the factors that...

The results...

- showed that...
- indicated that...

Example

Zhang, X et al. (2007) Eye Care in the United States – Do We Deliver to High-Risk People Who Can Benefit Most From It? *Archives of Ophthalmology*, 125(3), 411-418.

This study by Zhang et al. study assesses the extent of health care inequalities related to eye health. The authors analyzed data from the 2002 National Health Interview Survey to identify the number of individuals who had had an eye exam in the previous 12 months, whether or not they were considered high risk, and their socio-economic status. Based on the results, the researchers estimated that 61 million people in America were at high risk for serious visual impairment. Of those, only half had undergone an eye exam in the previous year, and one in twelve could not afford to buy glasses. The probability of visiting an eye doctor increased with age and education, and those with health insurance were more likely to have an eye exam than those without.

Literature Review

A literature review is an overview of the significant literature (scholarly articles, books and other sources) on a topic.

A literature review surveys the research relevant to the subject of your paper and provides a description and critical evaluation of each study. It is important to show how the different studies relate to each other and to the subject of your paper. In general, the lit review: a) places each study in the context of its contribution to the understanding of the subject; b) puts your paper in the context of the existing literature; and c) points the way for further research.

Preparing to Write a Lit Review

Before you begin writing, you must:

- Find articles relevant to your topic;
- Determine which studies make a significant contribution to the understanding of your topic (your professor may ask you to include a specific number of articles in your review; if not, you will need to determine which/how many articles are necessary to successfully cover the pertinent literature); and
- Analyze and interpret the findings and conclusions of each article.

Grammar Note

"Literature" and "research" are singular, non-count nouns that refer to the entire group of articles/studies on a topic.

Do not write **literatures** or **researches**.

Incorrect: The literatures show that...

Correct: The literature shows that...

Incorrect: The researches indicate that...

Correct: The research indicates that...

Parts of a Lit Review

A literature review should comprise the following elements:

Grammar Note

Because "research" occurs over a period of time and into the present, use the **present perfect** form of the verb.

Correct: Research **has shown** that...

If the findings are from recent studies, use the **simple present** form of the verb.

Correct: Findings from studies released last week **show** that...

If mentioning a single study done in the past, use the **simple past** form of the verb.

Correct: The 2004 study **showed** that...

- 1) **Introduction:** An overview of the subject of the literature review
- 2) **Body:** A discussion of the relevant research
- 3) **Conclusion:** An explanation of what you have learned from reviewing the literature

The **body** may be organized in different ways, including:

Chronologically: Described in order of publication of the articles (shows process of increasing knowledge/information about the topic over time)

Thematically: Organized around specific themes or trends related to the topic (relates each study to the same theme, e.g., the theory or construct you are writing about)

T hesis

A thesis describes an original research project created and implemented by a student.

The Council of Education for Public Health, the body that accredits graduate programs in public health, requires an "integrative culminating experience" for all advanced degrees. Students usually satisfy this graduation requirement by researching and writing a thesis. This document usually consists of chapters covering the the following content:

Introduction

Depending on the type of research area (e.g., public health policy, epidemiology, behavioral science), many of the following elements should be addressed in the introduction:

- Problem being investigated
- Research hypotheses
- Project goals and objective
- Rationale for study
- Research questions
- Project assumptions
- Context/background of the problem
- Significance of the problem
- Relationship of problem to the field of public health

Literature Review

This section provides a thorough review of the literature on the research topic (see next page).

Methodology

This section should describe the study design and methodology, as well as a discussion of their strengths and weaknesses. This chapter typically includes the following:

- Population and sample
- Research design
- Procedures
- Instruments
- Plans for data analysis

This section also includes a discussion of the sources of the data used, as well as the the strengths and limitations of the:

- Data
- Databases
- Statistical methods
- Study results



Results

This section presents results based on the research hypotheses, questions or major findings.

Discussion

In the final chapter, the writer identifies and discusses the major findings. This chapter should include:

- Summary of the study
- Conclusion
- Implications
- Recommendations

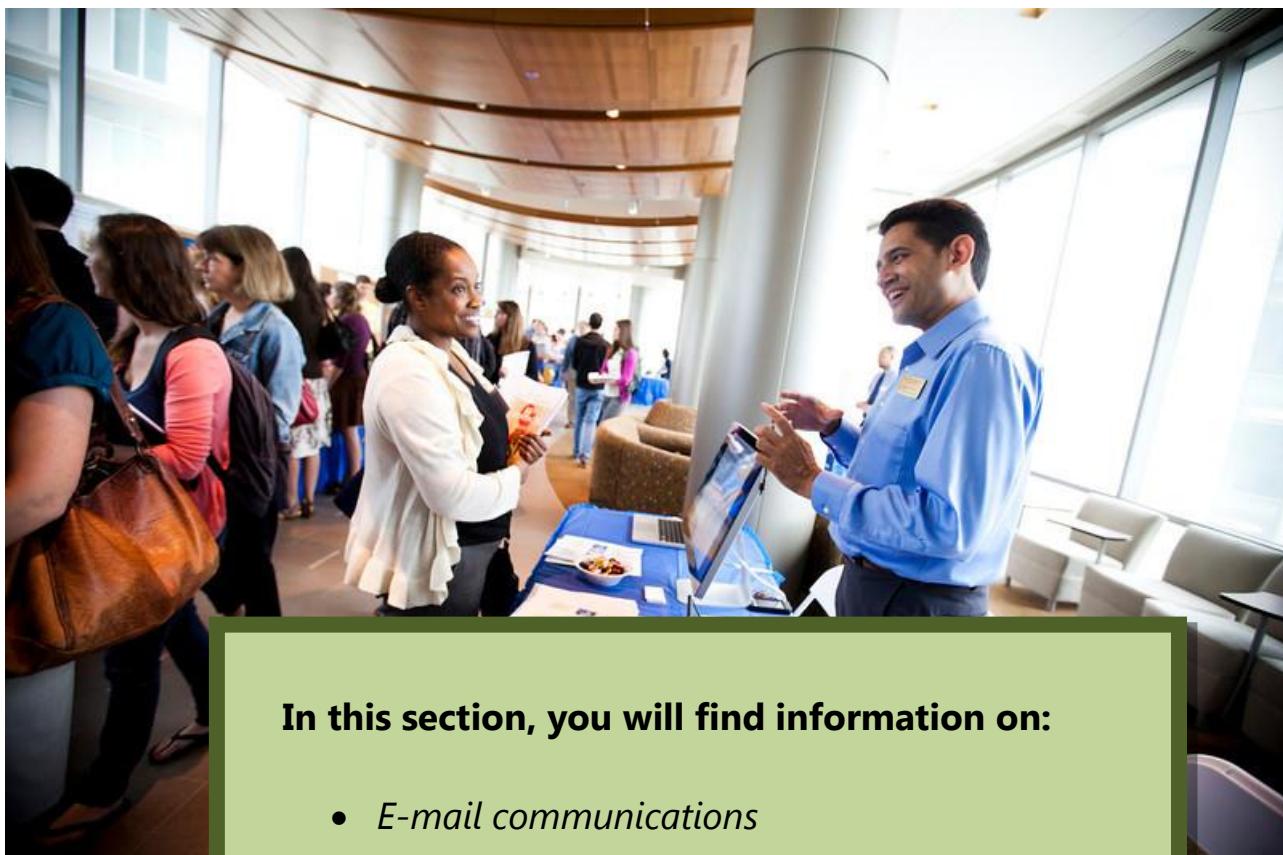
Part III

Career



Seeking Opportunities

Even before you complete your studies, you will want to begin searching for opportunities in the field of public health. Because the process can be long, it is a good idea to start as soon as possible. The process involves researching organizations, networking and identifying available positions. In order to be prepared when opportunities arise, job seekers be ready to present yourselves through résumés, cover letters and well-practiced interviewing skills. This unit is intended to provide instruction on how to communicate with potential employers about your knowledge, skills and experience both in writing and in person.



In this section, you will find information on:

- *E-mail communications*
- *Résumés and Cover Letters*
- *Statement of Purpose*
- *Public Health Organizations*

Formal E-mail Communications

Below are some phrases you can use in e-mail correspondence regarding internships, fellowships and employment positions.

Salutations

- Dear Dr. Smith, (*man or woman with PhD or medical degree*)
- Dear Mr. Chau, (*man*)
- Dear Ms. Perera, (*woman*)

Getting Started (to someone you have met)

- I hope you are doing well.
- Thank you for sending me the information last week. It was a pleasure meeting you at the conference last week.
- I hope you enjoyed the holidays.
- I hope you had a good trip to...

Introduction (to someone you have not met)

- My name is _____ and I am a student at Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University in the department of _____.

Request for information

- I am writing to inquire about the position of...
- I am writing in reference to the internship position in the department of...
- I am very interested in the position of _____ posted on your organization's website.
- I am very interested in the position of _____ that I learned about in an e-mail to Rollins students.

Offer to send information

- Should you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.
- If there is anything more I can do for you, please let me know.
- I would be happy to send you...
- If you require any further information, feel free to contact me.

Appreciation

- Thank you so much for your time.
- Thank you so much for your consideration.

The end

- I look forward to your reply.
- I look forward to hearing from you.
- I look forward to seeing you.

Closing

- Sincerely,
- Best wishes,
- All the best,
- Warm regards,

Résumés and Cover Letters

A résumés and cover letters are tools to market yourself to prospective employers.

Résumé

A résumé is a summary of your skills, experience and education. Your résumé should be tailored to the position for which you are applying and should highlight relevant skills based directly on the description of the position. Unlike a *curriculum vitae* (CV), which is a longer and more detailed synopsis, a résumé is brief and concise, typically no more than one to three pages. A résumé includes a summary of your educational and academic background, as well as work and research experience, publications/presentations, awards/honors, affiliations, volunteer work and special skills.

Sections of a Résumé

There are some standard sections included on all résumés. These include: **contact information, education and experience.** In addition, there are several optional categories, such as:

- Professional Memberships
- Publications and Presentations
- Honors and Awards
- Research
- Certifications
- Extracurricular Activities (e.g., 2012 University women's volleyball team)
- Skills (e.g., software, foreign languages)
- International (Travel/Work) Experience
- Volunteer Work

Note: In the U.S., it is not appropriate to list personal information – such as age, marital status, ethnicity or religious affiliation – on a résumé.

Volunteer Work

Keep in mind that "volunteer work" is **work that you have done to benefit those in need for which you do not get paid.** Volunteer work is usually done through a (religious or non-religious) nonprofit organization. Typical examples of volunteer work include:

- Cleaning up a local park
- Coordinating a fundraiser for a refugee agency
- Tutoring low-income school children in reading
- Building homes for needy families

Skills

The study of public health focuses on a set of skills or "competencies," and you can include those you have utilized in the descriptions of your education and experience. Examples include:

- Conducted (type of analysis) on...
- Utilized (epidemiological method) to...
- Analyzed the effect of the (health policy) on...
- Assessed the impact of (factor) on...
- Developed a grant proposal for...
- Developed proficiency in (software package), which I used to...
- Worked with a team to develop...
- Designed a (qualitative data collection instrument) to collect data on...

Verb Tenses

Use the *simple past tense* on your résumé for describing your previous experience. If you are currently working, use the *simple present tense* to describe your current work.

References

You should prepare a reference list with three or four references on a separate page that has the same header as your résumé. You may or may not be asked for a list of references by a potential employer, but it is a good idea to have it ready, just in case.

Formatting

Here are some guidelines for résumé formatting:

Font: 10 pt. to 12pt., Times New Roman, Sans Serif or Arial

Use bold and italics to highlight information and make your résumé easy to read.

Margins: Between 0.5" and 1.0"

Paper: For paper versions, use quality bond paper that is 8x11," white or off-white.

Length: 2 or 3 pages. If you have 2 pages, you must fill the 2nd page up at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way.

Name and Page Numbers: Put your name on the top of the second page and include the page number.

Submitting the Résumé

When you e-mail a résumé to an employer, it's important to follow their guidelines. Some organizations will indicate how they want the résumé sent – either in the **body** of the e-mail or as an **attachment**. When sending your cover letter and résumé via e-mail, make sure to clearly name them with your last name and the organization and position name.

Example: Wang_WHO_Research Assistant_Cover

Example: Wang_WHO_Research Assistant_Résumé

The body of the e-mail should include a brief note indicating why you're writing and that your cover letter and resume are attached, as well as your contact information. Here is an example:

Dear Dr. Robinson,

I am applying for the Research Assistant position in the Emergency Relief Preparedness and Response Unit at the Centers for Disease Control. Please find attached my résumé and cover letter.

Thank you,
Yu Wang



Sample Résumé

MARTA GARCIA

375 MORELAND WAY, NO. 456 • DECATUR, GA 30030 • PHONE: 404-555-5555 • m11mgarcia@gmail.com

EDUCATION

ROLLINS SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH, EMORY UNIVERSITY, ATLANTA, GA
Master of Public Health in Epidemiology (Cumulative GPA: 4.0)

EXPECTED MAY 2015

UNIVERSITY OF GUANAJUATO, GUANAJUATO, MEXICO
Bachelor of Science in Biology (Cumulative GPA: 3.5)

DECEMBER 2005

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

COUNCIL OF STATE AND TERRITORIAL EPIDEMIOLOGISTS INTERN, CSTE National Office, Atlanta, GA

5/06 – 8/06

- Created Access database to analyze portion of survey data from 2006 CSTE National Conference and created tables of results to be used for distribution to Executive Board for conference improvements
- Worked with team to complete 2006 Epidemiology Capacity Assessment by sending electronic and paper-based surveys to all 50 states, contacting state epidemiologists personally to receive updated data, and hosting conference calls to assist with survey completion, resulting in 100% response rate
- Involved with weekly/monthly conference calls: 2006 Mumps outbreak; HIV/AIDS Surveillance Coordinators; Public Health Informatics Network

PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE INTERN, Fulton County Department of Health and Wellness, Atlanta, GA

5/06 – 8/06

- Created Pandemic Bird Flu Q&A that was distributed to business, political, and public health leaders during Fulton County's Pandemic Influenza Committee Meeting
- Updated National Incident Management System (NIMS) training database for Fulton County
- Involved in various emergency preparedness meetings
- Completed NIMS 200 Level Course

STUDENT OUTREACH WORKER, Emory University – Briarcliff Campus, Atlanta, GA

9/05 – 12/05

- Located and scheduled follow up visits for participants of study ten years prior
- Administered informed consent and psychological questionnaires to assess home environment and behavior

RESEARCH ASSISTANT, Pennington Biomedical Research Center, Baton Rouge, LA 6/02 – 8/05

- Managed and recruited subjects and maintained IRB approval for National Institute on Aging-sponsored, 800 participant, multi-disciplinary, population-based, study examining determinants of aging in Louisiana population
- Facilitated communication between psychology, laboratory, ultrasound, data management and clinical departments to verify schedules and types of testing for over 500 participants on and off-site
- Developed technical visual aides to demonstrate progress of study recruitment to all primary investigators
- Administered physical activity and cognitive questionnaires to analyze patterns of longevity in groups aged 20-100+

COMPUTER SKILLS

Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, SAS, SPSS, EpiInfo

HONORS/AWARDS

- 2006 Georgia Public Health Association Conference Student Scholar
- Wrote proposal and successfully received over 400 donated information packets from the American Heart Association to use for event for 500+ community members. Information received used to increase awareness of heart disease, stroke, hypertension, and need for physical activity and healthy eating (11/06)

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- Assisted in leading exercise group and developing and evaluating curriculum for nutrition promotion and obesity prevention program for teens, Georgia Teen Center, 7/02-7/03

Sample Cover Letter

A cover letter accompanies a résumé in applications for paid employment, internships or fellowships. Here is an example:

Marta Garcia
375 Moreland Way, No. 456
Decatur, GA 30033
404-555-5555 (H); 77-555-5555 (C)
m11mgarcia@gmail.com

February 17, 2013

Brenda Smith
Health Initiative
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
4770 Buford Highway NE, Mailstop K10
Atlanta, GA 30341

Dear Ms. Smith,

I am writing to express my interest in the Public Health Fellow position with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Health Initiative. I possess a Bachelor of Science in Biology and I am a second-year Master of Public Health student at the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University, concentrating my studies in epidemiology.

Through my graduate and undergraduate coursework, I have gained a firm foundation in scientific and behavioral research, data analysis, and evaluation, while honing my communication, presentation and organizational abilities. I have applied these skills through hands-on experiences in both program coordination and research. In my current position as a Health Scientist Intern with the Coordinating Office for Global Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, I have had the opportunity to take on key leadership roles on a division-wide basis, including assisting the Deputy of the Office of Capacity Development with management activities and collaborating on the development of a divisional monitoring and evaluation plan. I have also had the opportunity to update the CDC Annotated Bibliography for Syndromic Surveillance, an information resource addressing syndromic surveillance associated with bioterrorism for public health practitioners.

My previous extensive applied research experiences at Johns Hopkins University allowed me to conduct and perform clinical, scientific, and epidemiologic research, much of it independently. I have had the opportunity to develop abstracts and a publication based upon my research and to present my findings in poster sessions at several symposiums. In addition, I gained excellent interpersonal communication skills through my research apprenticeship, in which I had frequent direct interaction with study patients. Due to my demonstration of strong research and interpersonal skills in my apprenticeship and subsequent summer internship, I was invited back to Johns Hopkins as both a Minority Summer Research Intern and as the recipient of a minority post-baccalaureate supplement from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

With my strong research, evaluation, and communication skills and my educational foundation in the biologic and epidemiological sciences, I believe I would be an asset to the CDC's Health Initiative. I would welcome the opportunity to further discuss my qualifications, and can be reached at (404) 555-5555 or via e-mail at m11mgarcia@gmail.com. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Marta Garcia

Statement of Purpose

When applying for doctoral and other programs, you may be asked to submit a Statement of Purpose (or "Personal Essay") that explains why you are applying for the program.

A statement of purpose should present a clear, positive picture of who you are and of how acceptance to the program will help you achieve your goals. The objective is to persuade an admissions committee that you are an applicant they should choose. You want to show that you have the experience, knowledge, skills and motivation to succeed in your chosen field.

Steps

Look at Examples: Read several examples (e.g., from the Internet) and pay attention to the qualities of a good essay. Use the good ones as models, not for content but for structure and flow.

Do Your Homework: Learn as much as you can about the program to which you are applying. If it is a PhD program, make sure you are familiar with the faculty that is doing work there in your area of interest, the projects that professors are working on and what other doctoral students in the program are doing.

Develop an Outline: Select the main topics you want to cover and list supporting material under each topic. Only include information about your past that helps to explain how you came to focus on your current interests and objectives. Below are some examples of relevant information:

- **Personal Background** (difficulties overcome; extracurricular achievements; unusual life situations that may have influenced your aspirations)
- **Educational Background** (relevant classes taken; specific projects undertaken; specific skills acquired)
- **Professional Goals** (why you want to be an health educator/epidemiologist/AIDS researcher; what specific area of the field you want to get into; what you plan to do with your degree)
- **Program Choice** (why you want to attend X university/program in particular; why you are a good candidate for this particular program)
- **Research Experience** (include title of project, collaborators, your responsibilities, outcome)
- **Work Experience** (include only work experience that is related to your professional interests; demonstrates knowledge of the field; and/or indicates interest in the work of those in the program/department to which you are applying)
- **Achievements** (prizes, awards, nominations, fellowships)

Write a Rough Draft: Transform your outline into a first draft. Consider the following when writing:

- **Beginning:** Start your essay with something that will grab the readers' attention and engage them, such as an anecdote (very brief story) or a question you want to answer.
- **Middle:** The entire document should flow together in a logical order (e.g., chronological; academic work first then applied work). Use transitions between paragraphs that contribute to the flow and organization of your writing (e.g., soon afterwards, as a result of, building on that experience).
- **End:** End your essay with a conclusion that restates the main idea in the first paragraph.

Edit, Edit, Edit: Put your draft away for a day or two, then reread it and edit it (as many times as possible). Send your statement to a native English speaker to give you feedback. Later, incorporate the changes and suggestions that you believe are useful and write your final version of the essay. Give it to a native English speaker for a final proofread (check for minor errors) before submission.

Public Health Organizations

Governmental Organizations

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Congressional Budget Office (CBO)
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA)
National Institutes of Health (NIH)
Office of Inspector General (OIG)
United Nations Agencies (WHO UNICEF, UNIFEM, USAID, etc.)
World Bank

Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs)

American Cancer Society
CARE
Carter Center
Center for Global Development
Concern Worldwide
Doctors Without Borders
Engender Health
Family Care International
Family Health International
GAVI Alliance
Global Bridges
Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
Health Right International
Helen Keller International
Institute for OneWorld Health
International Red Cross
International Women's Health Coalition
International Rescue Committee
Intrahealth International

There are numerous governmental and non-governmental organizations in the U.S. offering opportunities to engage in public health work.

John Snow, Inc.

MAP International

Marie Stopes International

Medshare International

Mercy Corps

Mothers2Mothers International

Oxfam

Partners in Health

Path International

Physicians for Peace

Plan International

Population Action International

Population Services International

Sabin Institute

Save the Children

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

Women and Health Alliance International

Women for Women International

Foundations

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Clinton Foundation

Kaiser Family Foundation

Rockefeller Foundation

Companies

Booz Allen

Danya International

Deloitte Consulting

Humana

INTEGRITY One Partners

Kaiser Permanente

McKinsey

PricewaterhouseCoopers, LLP

I nterviewing

The interview is a critical part of the selection process. Nowadays, interviews may take place by phone, in person or via the Internet. In any case, it is critical that you be prepared. As international students, it is a good idea to practice interviewing with an native English speaker with experience interviewing who can give you feedback on your performance both in terms of what you say and how you say it. Practice will also help to relieve some of the nervousness that naturally comes with the interviewing process. This unit is intended to offer assistance in preparing for interviews so that you have the best chance for a successful interview.

In this section, you will find:

- *Interviewing Tips*
- *Describing Yourself*
- *Sample Interview Questions*



I nterviewing T ips

**Interviewing in other countries may be different than in the U.S.
Because making a good impression is key, it is important to
follow these tips.**

Before the Interview:

- Practice answers to job interview questions.
- Get a haircut if necessary. (Men) Facial hair should be neatly trimmed.
- Make sure your suit is clean.
- Get a good night's sleep the night before.

Day of the Interview:

- Wear a formal business suit and dress shoes and (men) wear a traditional pattern tie.
- Make sure to take a shower, wash your hair and trim your nails.
- Use antiperspirant.
- (Women) wear light make-up.
- Brush your teeth and be sure that your breath is fresh.
- Do not display tattoos or piercings.
- Do not wear perfume/cologne.
- Bring 5 copies of your résumé.
- **NEVER BE LATE.**
- Turn off your cell phone before you go in.



During the Interview:

- Stay positive throughout the interview.
- Thank the interviewers and ask for the next step.
- Ask for a business card.

After the Interview:

- Send a thank-you note within 24 hours.

Sample thank-you note:

Dear Ms. Smith,

Thank you very much for meeting with me yesterday. I enjoyed learning more about X and having the opportunity to share futher details of my background in X. I am confident that my skills and experience in X, X and X match well with the position of X as you described it.

If there is any more information I can provide, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,
X

D_escribing Y_ourself

These phrases are useful for describing yourself and background. Note the correct use of articles and prepositions.

- I am a student in the department of (subject).
- I am a graduate/doctoral student.
- I am an MPH/a doctoral student (or "candidate").
- I am earning an MPH/a PhD.
- I am earning (or "pursuing") a master's degree/PhD in public health.
- I have a bachelor's degree in (subject).
- I have a Bachelor of Arts/Science in (subject).
- in class
- at (university)
- in (city)
- in (state)
- in the United States (Always use "the" with "United States.")
- at (school)
- I did my undergraduate studies at (university).
- I did my undergraduate studies in (subject).
- I studied (subject) in undergraduate school.
- I majored in (subject).
- My major was (subject).



Sample Interview Questions

Below are 20 questions that are often asked in job interviews. Thinking about how you would answer these questions before an interview can be useful.

1. What interests you about this position?
2. What skills and experience do you bring to this position?
3. What are your career goals?
4. Where do you see yourself in five years?
5. Why did you leave your last job?
6. What are your greatest strengths? What are your greatest weaknesses?
7. How do other people describe you?
8. How would you spend your first few weeks on the job?
9. How do you prefer to be supervised?
10. What changes can you envision making to (the organization)?
11. Describe your experience working on a team.
12. Describe your experience supervising others.
13. Tell me about a time when you made a mistake at work/in school. How did you handle it?
14. Tell me about a time when you had a teammate who did not do his or her share of the work or was always late with his or her part. How did you deal with it?
15. Tell me about a time when you felt overwhelmed by your class/work assignments. How did you manage it?
16. Tell me about a time when you started down one path but had to change course. How did you handle it?
17. Tell me about a time you had a disagreement with your supervisor. How did you deal with it?
18. Tell me about a time when you received negative feedback from a supervisor. What did you do with the information?
19. Tell me about a time when you had an important decision to make. How did you make it?
20. Tell me about a time when you did not have all of the resources you needed to complete a project or assignment.
How did you handle it?



Useful Resources

The Associated Press Stylebook

Association of Schools of Public Health

Concise Rules of APA Style, Sixth Edition

Institute for International Education

Writing Clearly, Third Edition by Janet Lane and Ellen Lange

Purdue Online Writing Lab



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Education USA. Your 5 Steps to US Study

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Culture Matters: The Peace Corps Cross-Cultural Workbook
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Rollins School of Public Health Student Honor and Conduct Code

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Park, David. Identifying and Using Formal and Informal Vocabulary. British Council

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