

University 102 – A Recap

January 21st, 2021

University 102 will focus on goal setting and services to help you excel both inside and outside of the classroom.

Introduction

Hello and welcome to University 102! This is the second of three sessions this month to support first year students as they navigate their first or second semester as a Gryphon.

Today's Topics

Today, we're going to be talking about different services that can help you be successful both inside and outside of the classroom. Last week we focused on wayfinding and an introduction to academic related services. The University 100 is a series of sessions designed to help first year students learn more about useful university resources, and help you prepare for the semesters ahead.

Take a moment and think about who your one main support person is when you have a super amazing thing happen or a not so great thing.

Having a go to person is really helpful throughout University. That person may change semester to semester or maybe even weekly. We'll come back to this in a moment. But first, Goal Setting.

Goal Setting

Goal Setting is something a lot of us have done. Whether it's been super publicized like writing it down on paper and sticking it to the fridge for your family to see, or something that only you know about such as writing in your journal, goal setting is useful in many situations.

Whether you've had previous success with goal setting, or many setbacks with goal setting, it's always worth taking another go at a new goal and seeing what's possible.

SMART Goals are a great way of getting detailed about the goal that you're setting. Learning how to set goals takes thought, effort, and practice. Often students will set vague goals such as "wanting to do well in my classes" or "Improving my overall average". While these goals carry genuine intentions, motivation is often lost early on because the goal lacks clarity. SMART Goals are **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely**. SMART goals help to provide focus and can increase feelings of productivity and accomplishment.

- 1) Specific: What exactly are you hoping to accomplish?
- 2) Measurable: How will you know when this goal has been reached? Can you think of ways to break down the goals into smaller tasks?
- 3) Achievable: Do you have the resources/support needed to meet this goal? If yes, what are they? If no, how will you find or access them?
- 4) Relevant: Why is this goal significant to you? Can you foresee any barriers to achieving this goal?
- 5) Timely: When do you hope to achieve this goal? If relevant, when will smaller tasks be completed?

So, SMART Goals are nice if you can quickly identify the five different aspects and the goal has a clear direction etc. However, sometimes it's nice to not be stuck to a model and not having to find answers to exact questions. Other methods of goal setting include exploring your motivation by using a series of prompting questions. It's a bit more flowy and for people who don't like being restricted, can be helpful. Here are some suggested prompts you ask yourself when setting goals.

- 1) Where do you see yourself in three years?
- 2) What are your reasons for wanting to work towards this goal?
- 3) What steps do you need to take to move towards your goal?

- 4) Are there any obstacles that exist in your life right now that you think get in the way of your motivation? Is there anything you can do to overcome these obstacles?
- 5) Are there any tangible reminders you can use to stay motivated?
- 6) How will you reward yourself and when?

So, now that you have two potential methods to set a goal, think back to the person you thought of earlier. When you set your next goal, I encourage you to share some or all about that goal with your person. They can be your cheerleader and provide additional motivation and support for when you're rocking your goal or needing help getting back on track.

If you can't think of a person you already know who can be your cheerleader and support, we have programs on campus where you get one-on-one support from upper year students to help you through your goals and time as a Gryphon.

Upper Year Student Led Support

At the UofG, we're proud to have so many student led programs. There's something unique about having services led by upper year students who have been recently in your shoes, are also experiencing midterms, assignments, and the struggles of being students, and someone who is generally closer to your age and life experience than a staff member on campus. Three of our one-on-one or small group programs that are popular with new students include:

- 1) **Bounce Back:** In Bounce Back (also known as STARTonTrack), you'll be paired with an upper year student who will be your guide through the semester. You identify what support you need, and they'll provide suggestions and guidance throughout the semester. You call the shots and decide on how often to meet, what meetings should focus on etc. They will guide you in the right direction if you want to spend your entire meeting talking about Mac & Cheese and bring it back to a more relevant topic.
- 2) **Gryphons Nest:** Every first year Gryphon is placed in a Gryphons Nest community. In these communities, an upper year student (Online Community Mentor) will share information and build community with you. If you can't find your Gryphons Nest community, email start@uoguelph.ca
- 3) **SLGs (Supported Learning Groups):** For those of you in the large first year classes who are looking for a bit of extra help or want concepts to be explained differently, SLGs (Supported Learning Groups) are a great choice. An upper year student who took the class and did well in it leads weekly study groups/discussions about the material learned. They sit in on all your classes so they know what the prof has just shared with you. An added bonus of SLGs is that you can find other students in your class to study with!

While these are just three services identified, you'll find upper year students in a variety of roles on campus that are help focused. You'll also start to meet upper year students when you join clubs. They may not be in official helping roles, but they do have information to share with you and will gladly lend a hand if they can.

Health Services

Student Health Services offers a variety of health services that are available to you as a student. All of their information can be found on their website: <https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/health>. Below is information on some of the core programs so you know where to start!

1. **Student Wellness Navigators:** These folks are your first point of contact. When you reach out to the main Wellness contact you'll be put in touch with a Navigator to talk about what you need. They can connect you with the best resource for you, and refer you to the supports that are going to work for you.
2. **Wellness Education & Promotion Centre:** These are the people that run the majority of Wellness Programming. If you're searching through the Mobile App or GryphLife.ca and find any Wellness events, they were planned by the Wellness Education & Promotion Centre. They cover so many different health topics from stress and mental health to alcohol and substance use and a lot more.
3. **Counselling Services:** You can sign up to receive one-on-one or small group counselling with a counsellor for free. You'll get paired with a counsellor who can best support you and the topics you wish to discuss. Online meetings are available so that you can meet from the comfort of your own home.

4. Student Support Network: At SSN you can sign up for a peer to peer counselling session with a trained upper year student. They have booking times from about 3pm – 10pm daily. SSN is a great place to go to talk about whatever is on your mind. The fact that the SSN volunteers are also students is an added bonus!
5. SHINE: Shine is a neat program run by Wellness that helps you through the transition to university. The transition for many is exciting, overwhelming, fun, and stressful. Joining Shine means you get some extra tools to help you take care of yourself.

Student Experience Advisors

Within the Student Experience Department, there are 7 different advisors who are there to support you with your UofG journey. So, what exactly do they each do?

1. Cultural Diversity: Tameera
 - a. Advising and support for students who are racially or culturally diverse, including students who self-identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) or identify as racialized and/or as an ethnic or cultural minority.
2. Indigenous: Rosemary
 - a. Advising and personal wellness support for diploma, undergraduate, and graduate students who self-identify as First Nations (status & non-status), Métis, and Inuit.
3. International: Pugaleni & Matt
 - a. Advising and Immigration support for International Undergrad and Graduate students looking to navigate and transition to life on campus and in Canada.
4. New Student: Andrea
 - a. Advising and support for new students, for a transition to U of G fostering academic and non-academic success.
5. Off-Campus: Katie
 - a. Lease Reviews, support with tenancy issues, landlord disputes, or roommate conflicts. Support in finding off-campus rentals.
6. Sexual & Gender Diversity: Jarred
 - a. Advising and support for students who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Two-Spirit, Intersex, Asexual, and other identities that fall outside of heterosexual and cisgender paradigms.

Each member of our advising team is awesome! They all have been involved with the UofG community for years – at least two of them did their undergraduate degree here – and are available to help you get the best experience at UofG. Reach out to them early, check out events that they're hosting, and don't be afraid to be in contact no matter how big, small, or silly your question or situation may seem.

Finances

As a student, thinking about your finances can be stressful, but it doesn't have to be. U of G offers resources to help you learn about everything related to finances, jobs, and how you approach money as a student. You should be thinking about how you are paying for university. Plan ahead, budget, and know when to ask for help.

To help new students plan their finances, Student Financial Services has created a Student Financial Success Guide. It's a really handy guide that you should check out to learn at

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/studentfinance/sites/studentfinance/files/docs/student-financial-success-guide.pdf>

The best place to start if you have no experience budgeting or paying for university is to create a budget.

Step 1: List the money you will have.

Include all income resources available to you, such as savings, government assistance (loans and grants), support (e.g., family assistance), scholarships and bursaries. Will you have a job while in school as income? Search out all possible sources of funds available. The Student Financial Services website is a good place to start.

If someone is supporting you financially, it's important to make sure you both agree on the following:

- What does supporting you mean?
- Who is paying for what, and for how long?
- What are the expectations around this or because of this, both ways?

If you haven't already had a conversation with them about these things, it is a good idea to do so sooner rather than later.

[Step 2: List everything you'll spend money on.](#)

Include all your expenses, both for school and personal. Leave room for unexpected expenses. Remember your most expensive months will likely be the first month of each semester because of tuition, textbooks, and supplies. For a reminder of what tuition will cost, head to the Student Financial Services website.

[Step 3: Keep track and adjust.](#)

It is a good idea track everything you spend (even \$2 coffees) and compare them with your budget. Free expense tracker apps exist for your phone and computer to help track where your money is spent. Review your plan and adjust.

If you have tried creating a budget and either it's not working, or you want to get a second opinion, help exists! You can get help from U of G with managing your money and any other finance questions during university.

Student Financial Services has financial aid counsellors who can help you with budget counselling, OSAP appeals, bursary appeals, emergency funding requests, and more.

If something unexpected happens with finances at any time during school, reach out to Student Financial Services for help.

The University will not discuss your financial information with anyone other than you (the student) unless you give clear permission. If you want a parent or guardian to have access to your university finance information, fill out the "Release of Financial Information" form on WebAdvisor.

RBC on campus also offers free financial literacy resources to all students.

Don't forget to check your email often for due dates for when tuition is due, when scholarship applications are due, and information about any bursaries or loans you may have.

We'll talk more at the next University session about working as a student. But here are some basics:

- Throughout the year, on- and off-campus job opportunities are posted on Experience Guelph. As a new student, you gained access to Experience Guelph in September.
- Need help on your resume, cover letter, or interview skills? Visit the Experiential Learning Hub.
- If you are an international student, read more about working at U of G and Canada and consider speaking with one of our International Student Advisors.

[Work Study program](#)

Work Study is a part-time job program to assist students with demonstrated financial need to meet their educational costs by working part-time during their registered term. This program is available for eligible students after the approval of a Financial Need Assessment form. To determine if you are eligible for the Work Study program, look at the Student Financial Services' information on the Work Study program. Financial Needs Assessment Forms are now available for the fall and winter semesters. Submit the form to Student Financial Services to apply for an in-course bursary or for approval for the Work Study Program. The deadline to submit the Financial Needs Assessment Form is January 18, 2021.

Undergraduate Research Assistantship (URA) program

You may already be thinking about employment for the summer. The Undergraduate Research Assistantship (URA) program is a competitive program that provides paid summer research opportunities to undergraduate students with demonstrated financial need. Students gain invaluable research experience working under the direction of U of G faculty and may expand their knowledge and understanding of their current field of study. The URA application is available around December and the deadline is in February.

Undergraduate Student Research Award program

The Undergraduate Student Research Award (USRA) program is similar to the URA program but is meant to nurture your interest and fully develop your potential for a research career in, specifically, the natural sciences and engineering through full-time summer employment.

Co-operative Education

Co-operative Education is an opportunity available for students registered in a co-op degree program. Guelph's co-op programs integrate academic studies with related work experience. Co-op students complete paid work terms alternated with academic semesters throughout your degree following a sequence specific to your academic program.

Don't leave your budgeting and financial planning until the last minute. Check out the Student Financial Services website for more tips and info on how to get started.

Review

Take a moment to go through what was covered today and check-in with yourself to see if you have retained all that was learned.

Next this Week

Many students find that it can be hard to do non-academic or social activities during hectic times. However, it has been shown that students who do something outside of the classroom are more successful at time management and prioritizing their time than those who just do school. Since you have to fit multiple things in to your schedule, you're more likely to be focused and stay on track with each thing that you do. Now, this does not mean you should attend every event you can find. But adding in a social experience here and there is a great way to keep on track with academics while also taking a nice break.

- Today: Learn a Card Trick
- Friday: E-Sports Tournament – Street Fighter & Kahoot Trivia
- Monday: Time Management Tips
- Tuesday: STARTonCampus – Making Connections

Next week, University 103 (the final session) will take place on Thursday, January 28th from 11:00am – 11:45am. We'll be talking about getting involved with both the UofG community and with your own community.

Reach Out/Questions

If you have any questions, reach out to the START team at start@uoguelph.ca and we'd love to help you out with whatever questions you have.

You can also reach out to "The Student Transition Office" or "Student Experience Department" on the Mobile app or @UofGStudentExp on Instagram.