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2022

### Degree Works

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#### Recommended Citation

Reich, Victoria, "Degree Works" (2022). *COR 101 Slides*. 45.

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# Degree Works

**By: Victoria Reich**  
**Instructor: Jamie Lachell**

# Goals

The topic I chose to teach was “How to: Degree Works.” The reason I chose this topic was to help first year students become more familiar with how to navigate degree works and also become familiar with schedule builder. First year students don't often realize that instead of having an advisor make your schedule, like in high school, we as college students are fully responsible for making our own schedules. The transition from high school to college comes with a lot of responsibilities that many students didn't know about. “Gaining an understanding about the barriers facing the transition from high school to college is a crucial step” (Schneider, 2014). Now that COVID is coming to an end, that is another transition that students have to make and by having that guidance can really change a student's perspective. “Throughout my college years, I have entered a pandemic, have had to navigate through the pandemic, and have transitioned from online schooling back to in-person classes” (The Importance of academic advising in higher education, 2022) Many first year students get in a state of panic when they realize that there are hundreds of students registering before them, and they end up not getting into the classes they wanted. The goal of my lesson was to show my students how to see what courses are needed to take for their degree on degree works and also how to use schedule builder and creating their potential schedules for next semester.

# Methods

## Materials and Activities used:

1. The materials i used was a worksheet
2. The activities i used involved students making a mock schedule

## Strategies Used to engage students:

1. Questions were asked throughout the lesson to make sure students understood what was going on
2. At the end of the lesson, students were given a worksheet to fill out, based on course planning.

# How Active Learning Approaches Were Applied

1. To begin the lesson i started with questions like “has anyone been in contact with their advisor,” and “does everyone have a time and pin for registering?” It was surprising how many students had no idea what I was talking about. As a student facilitator i want to help them, so if they had no idea what i was talking about i told them they must email their advisors right in that moment. I then asked if anyone had registered already and a couple hands got raised, but a majority of the class had not registered.
2. During the lesson i went into my own degree works and explained to all the students what everything means. I then advised my students to go into their degree works and look through the options of classes and write a couple down that they thought they would be interested.
3. I then handed out a worksheet which was the course planning worksheet. It had course number and name, number of credits, why they are taking the class, day & time, alternate class and the day and time for that new class. I walked around the classroom constantly asking students questions, and if they were confused about anything.

# Worksheet

Academic Year Course Planning worksheet  
Spring Worksheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Course	Course Number	Credits	Why would you take this?*	Day & Time	Alternate Course (a totally different course)	Day & Time

\*For example, does it fulfill a GE? Is it required for your major? Are you exploring a major through this?

# Teaching Assistants Reflection

I believe that my presentation went really well and the students enjoyed it. They seemed very overwhelmed with all the information i was giving them, but after i went around to the students individually and got more of a one-on-one explanation with them, they seemed to get it. I should've had a powerpoint, but i do believe physically showing them live on the screen and talking through it, helped the students understand more. I was nervous going into the lesson because i thought i wasn't prepared but after i saw how successful teaching went, i am so confident in teaching another lesson like that.

# Student Reflection

In what ways has my presentation helped you?

1. “You helped me understand how i can find different classes in my degree.”
2. “When i went to register for my classes i knew what to do if the class i wanted was full.”
3. “ I will continue to use the worksheet that you gave me for further semesters.”



# Citations

Posted by U.S. Department of Education, & Education, U. (2022, August 09). The importance of academic advising in Higher Education.

Schneider, Barbara., et al. *Innovations in Improving Access to Higher Education*. Wiley Periodicals, Inc., 2014.