

••• synergy •••

An approach to Interprofessional Education for all UTMB students

The University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) at Galveston is accredited to provide health care education by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. As part of our reaffirmation of accreditation process, we have developed a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The focus of the plan is Interprofessional Education and has been entitled “**synergy**.” **synergy** is designed to provide collaborative educational experiences for students in the School of Nursing, the School of Allied Health Sciences, the School of Medicine, and the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. We will build on the Institute of Medicine’s vision for improving the quality of health care delivered by interprofessional teams.

How will students benefit from **synergy**?

Students will develop skills and gain experiences working collaboratively across cultures with patients, patients’ families, other healthcare professionals, and community-based providers to enhance health care and wellness. Graduates of UTMB will be leaders and innovators, advancing collaborative interprofessional teamwork across every area of health care.

synergy Goals

*Goal 1: **Knowledge Acquisition.*** Students will demonstrate understanding of the knowledge, skills, and roles of healthcare-related professions.

*Goal 2: **Observational Learning.*** Students will observe interprofessional teamwork and identify barriers and facilitating mechanisms to development and operation of such teams.

*Goal 3: **Participatory Learning.*** Students will practice and demonstrate optimal interprofessional teamwork in the direct or indirect delivery of healthcare to patients.

*Goal 4: **Innovation Development.*** Students will acquire skills to develop, implement, and evaluate interprofessional projects aimed at enhancing health and wellness.

*Goal 5: **Leadership Building.*** Students will be equipped to provide leadership in formulation and work of interprofessional teams, including the elimination of barriers to success.

How can faculty become involved in **synergy**?

Faculty will develop and enhance interprofessional educational experiences in the hospitals, clinics, classrooms, and community to promote mutual understanding of professional roles, collaboration in planning health care, joint accountability for decision making and outcomes, and benefits to the patient. Faculty may take advantage of professional and activity development opportunities such as workshops and assistance from the **synergy** steering committee and **synergy** support team.

How will staff and administrators contribute to **synergy**?

Although UTMB has a history of offering interprofessional educational experiences, **synergy** brings commitment to a new level. To realize our vision, staff will be essential partners as we work together to offer resources and evaluate our progress.

What kinds of activities and experiences will **synergy** offer?

Small group experiences, practice and service learning opportunities, simulation activities and projects will be selected and/or enhanced as represented within our Model for Activity Selection and Enhancement.

Does **synergy** exemplify best practice?

A guiding framework represents a “chain of events” linking how activities are designed to implement theory driven goals. Activity-related assessments reflect student learning outcomes. Other evaluation instruments reflect satisfaction and effectiveness of service delivery. We plan to use the results from different kinds of instruments to inform decision-making about what constitutes best practice for interprofessional health education.

