



September 16, 2022

Dear parents, guardians, and students,

It is my absolute joy to share with you an innovative academic coaching program available through the UT-Tyler School of Education. On the next page, you will find answers to frequently asked questions about academic coaching, but I want to take a moment to quickly introduce myself. Prior to becoming a professor, I worked as a gifted and talented facilitator, and prior to coming to UT-Tyler, I worked as an academic coach and researcher for a medical school. Those experiences gave me the inspiration to start an academic coaching program for gifted and talent youth at the University Academy. Through this program, my goal is to provide your child with the knowledge and skills needed to take on increasingly challenging academic work and remain competitive for college admissions and academic scholarships in the fields of engineering and medicine.

On September 30, we are inviting all G/T students to attend an academic coaching seminar at UT-Tyler. At this seminar, we will introduce your child to academic coaching and give them an opportunity to meet the academic coaches. After that, you can expect to get a consent form that explains the research project associated with the academic coaching program. You will need to fill out this form to opt-in to the research project and provide your child the opportunity to participate in the academic coaching program. I have taken great care in recruiting some extremely talented academic coaches, and I expect to see great things from them and your students over the course of this pilot year!

If at any time you have any questions or comments about the program, please do not hesitate to contact me via email at BBRETL@uttyler.edu or by giving me a call at 903-566-7390.



Sincerely,

Dr. Brandon Bretl, PhD

FAQ: ACADEMIC COACHING

How is academic coaching different than tutoring?

Academic coaches give students the skills and knowledge they need to take learning into their own hands. Academic coaches help students to identify and apply effective learning strategies so they can succeed in any learning environment and take on increasingly challenging academic goals.

Who typically uses academic coaches?

Almost all medical schools in the US have full-time academic coaches on staff. Students in high-rigor academic programs such as medicine and engineering utilize academic coaches to optimize their learning and gain a competitive advantage for the next stage of their careers, e.g., residency placement. Increasingly, high school students are using academic coaches to develop solid learning habits and gain a competitive advantage for college admissions and beyond.

How do students meet with academic coaches?

Academic coaches post their available hours through our online scheduling system. Students can then make appointments with coaches of their choice. Currently, we are only offering coaching sessions virtually through Zoom to better accommodate the schedules of coaches and students.

What does a typical coaching session look like?

Academic coaches listen to understand your child's unique learning needs. Coaches will ask questions related to factors known to have an impact on academic performance, e.g., sleep habits, diet and exercise, mental health, and specific study habits and time management practices. From there, academic coaches will offer advice and formulate plans to address areas of need. Coaches then hold students accountable to those plans and help them track progress toward goals.

Have other questions?

Feel free to contact me anytime via email at BBRETL@uttyler.edu or give me a call at 903-566-7390.