

Tips for Ph.D. in H.S. Success

Recent Ph.D. in Health Sciences graduates Hana Hinkle and Steven Hinojosa shared the following tips for successfully completing the program.

Round up support: “The flexibility and support of my employer made it possible. We set up a memorandum of understanding for data and information exchange,” said Hinojosa. “I have a good support system with a job and family that let me take the time,” Hinkle said.

Rely on your advisor: “My advisor was instrumental in helping me meet deadlines, timelines and targets,” Hinkle said of her advisor, Derryl Block, Dean, NIU College of Health and Human Sciences. “She pushed me in a positive way so I could improve as a student,” she added. “Our first face-to-face meeting helped develop a good relationship. If I had a question, she was responsive and supportive throughout my journey,” Hinojosa said about his advisor, Jinsook Kim, NIU associate professor, public health.

Lean on your cohort: “One of the biggest things I enjoyed was having face-to-face classes each semester. That made a huge difference and opened up opportunity for collaboration. We would create message groups and webcam meetings to ask questions and exchange ideas,” Hinojosa said.

Focus on the future: “This needs to be something you are passionate about doing,” said Hinkle. “It is very intensive. You have to live and breathe your topic while doing your dissertation. This is going to set you up in the future. It continues to motivate you to have an end goal.”

Get joe. “Coffee always helps,” Hinojosa said. “It can help make anyone an academic superhero.”