Meet Roy Savage, a junior from Missoula, Montana, majoring in Community Health

Students take many paths toward their academic career at the University of Montana. For Roy Savage, his path first took him in service to America during the Gulf War. After returning, he attended UM during 1994-1995, but left after three semester. “I was having some adjustment issues and I ended up leaving,” he said.

Today, Roy is back at UM and his experience is different. Through Montana’s Vocational Rehabilitation and Blind Services, a program through the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Roy was referred to UM’s TRiO Student Support Services (SSS). TRIO SSS is funded by the U.S. Department of Education and offers a range of services aimed at increasing college graduation and graduate school enrollment for eligible students at UM. The program has been serving students at UM since 1979, and has funding to support 375 active students every year. TRio SSS offers academic advising, tutoring, career advising, financial aid and academic success coaching, but it was their course on Learning Strategies for Higher Education (C&I 160) where Roy began to build new habits for success academically. “I learned new strategies for note-taking, studying, and test preparation and, as I learned new techniques, I applied them to my studies to see what worked for me,” he said. Roy leaned about studying techniques such as “active recall,” “active retrieval” and “self-quizzing.” He began applying what he learned to his other courses to see what worked. As he continued to develop strategies and techniques, fellow student Isa Owre introduced him to Quizlet, a website and accompanying mobile app that allows users to create quizzes to help them study.

Roy described Quizlet as “like having flashcards without carrying around a stack of index cards.” He can design his own quizzes and upload information on his home computer and then, using the mobile app, study anywhere, anytime with his smartphone. “The study skills, note taking and other strategies I learned in C&I 160 – combined with Quizlet – has made the difference for me in terms of how I take notes in class, study materials and prepare for exams. Despite a challenging course schedule during fall semester, Roy earned a 4.0 for the term, thanks in part to these strategies and his discipline and dedication in using them to his advantage. He plans to use another resource offered by UM’s Office for Student Success soon: Study Jam. The free group-tutoring resource offers twice-weekly sessions for select courses throughout the academic year.