College Checklist

In our first meeting my academic advisor told me to “take all the fuckin’ ice cream.” This man has advanced degrees from Columbia, MIT, and Harvard, and he was, in his way, trying to say something important: chill out. Calm down. Take it slow.

I was too impressed by “fuckin’ ice cream.”

That’s a good marker of how expectant and excited and naïve I was going into college—you will be too, no matter how jaded you think you are. You will be lost, mostly, but feel like you need to rush-party--reinvent—network and aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa.

Here are some aphorisms. May they be less cryptic, and sufficiently explained.

~+~

*College is [what you make of it.]*

*Professors are everything.*

They are no longer proxies for the same curriculum, with more or less efficacy.

*Ask questions. Ask for help. Advocate for yourself. Say no.*

*Take your time. Hurry up. The choice is yours, don’t be late.*

*Due diligence.*

Do your homework. This is a college lesson, but also a life lesson. Go to class. Talk with your professors after class. Use their office hours. Hang out with your TA.

*Read.*

Read your academic readings. Read the contracts you are asked to sign. Read books for fun—academic libraries, oof—hold on

*USE YOUR SCHOOL’S LIBRARY*

Audit and drop classes.

Do not be ashamed to admit that you need help, whether personal, academic, or otherwise.

*Asking will get you further than not asking, unless you suck at asking.*

Bend the rules. Know which ones to bend

Learning is about synthesis. Tracking is about specialization. Make friends who are outside.

Start your essay earlier than you think you should.

You are spending so much money. Take advantage of the facilities.

Get a laptop. Get a fake ID. Get a grip.

#YOLO is so 2011, but if the OO is endangering the YL, then it’s not logically worth it

No one will have a stable career anymore. There is opportunity for change. So much potential

TAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF.

Introverts: practice talking.

Extroverts: practice listening.

Keep a journal. You’ll find your previous selves charming, if not infuriating.

The best way to learn a skill is to practice, and the best practice is [tinkering? Making?]

Always reconsider. Think about your position. Go 180. Now 90. Now the other gradations we never talk about. Consider a perspective from 23, or in 3D or 4D.

Be happy.

Take care of your body.

DON’T START SMOKING

Discuss the material in class and in your head and with your friends who are pre-med and art history and economics and