

Going to College..... Things to Keep in Mind

Congratulations on all you've accomplished to get where you are, and also on being brave enough to step into the unknown to try something you've never done before. Freshmen often find things to be different than they had expected, so here are a few ideas to consider.

1. You will likely be homesick. No matter how ready you may think you are to be away from home, most students get at least a little homesick at college. Make an effort to meet people and get involved on campus.
2. Go to the orientation activities. This is not the time to be shy or think the events will be lame. What have you got to lose by going? If you are living in a residence hall, do things where you meet your neighbors. If you're a commuter, go to orientation events to make connections to the community.
3. Talk with your roommate about expectations at the beginning. Compromise and communicate.
4. Most people can be trusted, but not everyone. Safeguard your valuables and ID info. Avoid talking badly about people or committing to people or things too quickly.
5. Constantly talking to high school friends may make it harder for you to make college friends. Keep in touch with old friends but invest most of your time getting to know your new classmates.
6. Be patient with yourself and others. It can take time to make friends and to get used to a new school. Be open to new people and new ways of thinking and doing things.
7. Save yourself. You're not in high school anymore. A professor may not remind you about an upcoming exam or give you an extension on a paper. Read the syllabus. Keep reading the syllabus. Things can move fast. Don't get behind – it can be a lot of work.
8. Be prepared that balancing work and play in college can be very challenging. Don't underestimate how long assignments will take. Seat time is less, homework time is more than in high school. When you study, study. Work hard, play hard - but don't mix the two.
9. Seek help right away if you need it. Talk to your professors – they want you to succeed. Talk to the T.A. Find a tutor. EARLY. They won't be available a day before finals!
10. Sit in the front row. It forces you to stay awake - and your teachers notice you are awake too.
11. Take care of yourself. Eat well. Avoid getting sick. Get oxygen to your brain (i.e., exercise!). Have some fun (but not too much).

Some Ideas to Think About

Colleges will treat you as an adult. That means they will deal with you directly, not just about your classes or school events, but also about the business of attending college. **Keep your parents involved and informed**, especially during the next few months as you navigate orientation, registration, housing, finances, etc. - there is a lot to consider, with deadlines! Check your portal and email, communicate with your parents, **consider giving them access to your student portal because they will not have their own access to your records or communications from the college.**

From *How to Survive Your Freshman Year* by Silverman and Norcutt (Eds.), 2010:

“College is not high school; it requires you to think in very different ways than one is used to.”
Amy, Princeton University

“Go to office hours.” Evelyn Ocampo, UC Santa Barbara

“I thought that college would be what you learn in the classroom. But the real wealth of information is not from your professors: it’s from the other people you meet and the experiences you have.” Rene, Duke University graduate

“Don’t take yourself so seriously.” Trevor Amherst College graduate

“Free time: Use it. Don’t waste a drop.” Ariel Melendez, Princeton University freshman

“There’s less day-to-day work than you have in high school, so you think that you don’t have that much and you continue not doing that much. Then it hits you. It all piles up. That’s not good.” Lucy Lindsey, Harvard University

“My parents understand that this is my college experience and that I am legitimately doing my own things. Some parents that I know of are not quite as understanding, and it mostly seems like an inability to tell your parents, “This is my time. Let me have it. They’re my mistakes to make, not yours. It’s my turn.” Whether or not you’re actually making mistakes, parents need to understand that you can be on your own without them.” Barry Langer, Oglethorpe University Junior

“It’s hard to remember back to freshman year. There’s a lesson there: It will pass, good and bad.” Lindsey Shultz, Carnegie Mellon University Senior

**“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed
by the things you didn’t do than by the ones you did.**

**So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor.
Catch the tradewinds in your sails.
Explore. Dream. Discover.”**

Mark Twain