

A letter to incoming Freshman in College,

Welcome to college little ones.. Well not quite yet. But, the start of your college career is just right around the corner. I am writing this letter to you this far in advanced to get you the rest of the summer to let my advice sink in. The point of writing this article is to welcome you into the next chapter of your life by sharing advice I wish an upperclassman would have shared with me before I began my freshman year of college. Okay so here we go:

My first piece of advice is to **Cherish the time you have left at Home**. Spend every waking moment with your family, because I promise even though you think you're "so ready to be on your own" you will miss them, and you will miss them a lot. You will miss your parents bothering you, the home cooked meals, you will miss the comfort of your own bed, and most importantly you will miss your dog.

To go along with that, **Cherish the time you have left with your high school friends before parting ways**. You will say your goodbyes with every intention of visiting each other "like every single weekend" but the fact of the matter is you will get busy in college, and your schedules will most likely only link up over winter and summer breaks. And even if your BFFs plan on attending the same university as you, still take this advice to heart because chances are you will have different classes, you'll make new friend groups, and you'll be way busier than you ever were in high school.

My next piece of advice is to **set goals for yourself**. Whether its academic goals, physical goals, or social goals, having a list of goals is a great way to start out your freshman year. it doesn't matter what types of goals, honestly it doesn't even matter if you reach them or not. If you do, that's fantastic and you should really be proud, and if you don't reach them, at least you will get a good laugh out of it at the end of the year. I know I did.

My next bit of advice is to **start really thinking about what you want to pursue a degree in**. Now I know it's a lot of pressure for an 18-year-old to choose what they want to be for the rest of their life, and don't worry, I'm going to be junior and I still have no idea, but I want to encourage you to do some research on the matter. Meet with an adviser, or take advantage of a major exploration class if your university offers one. Basically, take it seriously when deciding and really think it through. If you are unsure- TAKE GEN EDS or freshman level intro courses. and with that being said- take them seriously. They are meant to boost your GPA not hurt it.

Next I'd like to encourage you to **take your school work seriously**- if I could slap my freshman year self I would. If someone hasn't told you already, college is a lot harder than high school. You will have more homework, more reading assignments, and more pop quizzes and more exams. And on

top of that, you will have no one reminding you to do any of it. Keep yourself accountable and stay on top of your assignments and due dates.

Now this one is important: **Go to class**- the first time you miss class and realize no one is going to yell at you and you aren't in trouble, its easy for this to become a habit. Especially when the weather is yucky out and you got no sleep for whatever the reason. But try not to get in that habit from the get-go. Get it in your head now that class attendance is important- because it is. Your classes will be much harder in college. The first step is physically be present, but to go with that make sure you're mentally present as well. To do so practice tips such as: sitting in the front, taking notes, and asking questions. Also, don't be afraid to go to office hours and get extra help from your professor. The majority of your professors or even TAs will be more than happy to assist you and it'll ultimately benefit you in the long run if you end with a border-line grade.

Okay, so now that I am done lecturing you on how important the school aspect of college is, here is my advice about the fun stuff- the social aspect of college. The number one thing I'd like to say when it comes to this category is to **Branch out**- if you plan on living in the dorms this one is important. The people on your hall may very well end up being your best friends. Don't be afraid to ask someone across the hall to lunch, or ask someone you sit next to in class to meet up at the library to study. It doesn't matter who it is, or what it is- make the extra effort. I promise you everyone else is just as nervous and scared as you are. If you go into the freshman year with this mentality, you're opening all sorts of doors to new possible friendships.

Next I'd like to encourage you to **get involved on campus**- from the get go I would say join at least two clubs on campus. Now, that doesn't mean you have to be super involved and become president of these clubs one day- but one thing I regretted was not doing this my freshman year. Campus activities are another great way to meet new people, not to mention they're great resume builders as well!

I also think its important for you to understand from the beginning that **It's okay to miss a party**- especially a frat party. I promise you there will be another. In fact, probably the same exact one, with a reoccurring theme such as Hawaiian or the oh-so-fratastic jersey theme. It will also probably have the same punch made with ever clear and delicious burnets to master taking shots. And we can't forget about the overplayed songs- my freshman year it was a lot of Riff Raff. It is okay to miss a party to catch up on homework, or sleep.

Stay active- the freshman 15 is almost inevitable. But, if for some reason you are reading this and want to take this advice to heart- maybe it'll spare you gaining the entire 15. Whether you're super fit, or nice and plump, if you're looking to maintain your figure, keep moving as much as possible. Go to the gym as much as you can, or if that's not your thing you can stay active by doing little things

such as taking the elevator, walking to class not getting a ride, or for you sporty readers- play intermural!

Take care of yourself- both mentally and physically. For those of you living in the dorms- whatever dorms they may be, please take note that they are most likely disgusting. It is extremely easy to get sick in a dorm-style living space and if you're lucky enough to live in a tiny dorm it makes it that much easier for not only you to get sick, but for you to take down your roommate with you, or vice versa. So be sure to eat right, get enough rest, and be aware of how your body is feeling and cater to it.

Well, that sums up just about all the advice I can think of. I really hope this article helps at least one person out. I can not wait for each and every one of you to begin your freshman year of college, I promise it will be the best year of your life!