

ACCEPTED!

NOW WHAT?

TXGU'S GUIDE TO ALL THINGS COLLEGE



COLLEGE.

IT'S FINALLY HAPPENING. CAN YOU EVEN HANDLE THE EXCITEMENT?
THREE THINGS TO KNOW...

**1. IT IS GOING TO BE AS AMAZING AS YOU HOPED.
PROBABLY EVEN A LITTLE MORE AMAZING.**

**2. THERE ARE A LOT OF DETAILS THAT YOU
NEED TO KNOW TO START YOUR COLLEGE
LIFE WITH A BANG.**



3. OF COURSE, WE GOT YOU COVERED.

(kidding!)

This is your guide to the many things you need to do, anticipate, realize, question, smell, learn, complete, and understand to fully rock your first year in college. All the info is split into two sections: stuff you need to do before the first day of classes, and stuff that takes place after classes start.

Explore it all, and use the guide often as you prep to make your first year utterly epic.

ACCEPTED! NOW WHAT?

TXGU's Guide to
All Things College

04

BEFORE CLASSES START

30

AFTER CLASSES START

05

ACCEPT YOUR
OFFER

06

LOCK DOWN THAT
FINANCIAL AID

07

PRE-CLASS
MUST-DOS

11

GET CREDIT-CARD
SAVVY

12

BUDGET-MAKING
101

14

PAY THE BILLS

16

TOP 10
COLLEGE SPOILERS

17

REGISTRATION
CRASH COURSE

20

GETTING
A JOB

21

SPECIALTY CAMPUS
SERVICES

22

WHO'S THE BOSS?

25

HEADS-UP FOR
COMMUTER STUDENTS

26

DEGREE PLANS &
GRADUATION ROADMAP

28

SOLVING THE
MYSTERY OF MAJORS

31

BURNING
COLLEGE QUESTIONS

36

SYLLABUS
SNEAK PEEK

40

WHERE TO FIND
HELP ON CAMPUS

41

HOW TO
SCORE DEALS

43

DECODING YOUR
COLLEGE BILL

44

CHEATING IS
SERIOUS BUSINESS

45

HOW TO KEEP
PAYING FOR COLLEGE

46

STAYING ELIGIBLE
FOR FINANCIAL AID

47

DROPPING CLASSES:
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

50

GET ON A
HEALTH KICK

52

DORM-ROOM
CUISINE

55

DITCH THE
CLASSROOM

56

GET INVOLVED

57

THE MENTOR HUNT

58

SCHOOLWORK/
SOCIAL LIFE BALANCE

59

HOW TO LIVE
WITH STRANGERS

61

BEING HOMESICK
IS OKAY

63

(ANOTHER) HEADS-UP
FOR COMMUTER
STUDENTS

64

LET YOUR FREAK
FLAG FLY

66

STAY SAFE
ON CAMPUS

68

BE YOUR OWN
HERO



Brought to you by the mad
geniuses at Texas GEAR UP

www.texasgearup.com



**BEFORE
CLASSES START**



BUT FIRST...

SAY YES!

The absolute first (and probably most important) thing you need to do to start your college experience?

Accept your admission offer! Decide before May 1st which school is going to be lucky enough to get you, and then give them the awesome news. Every school requires something different—either a deposit or notification form—so find out what your future college needs and submit it.

And DO NOT miss the May 1st deadline, because it's set in all kinds of stone.

LOCK DOWN THAT FINANCIAL AID



HAVEN'T APPLIED FOR FINANCIAL AID YET

Dude, fill out your FAFSA right now. Ask your GEAR UP advisor or your future college's financial aid office for help. Otherwise, that money's a definite no-go.

Bask in the magical glow of having that mega-task done.



ALREADY APPLIED FOR FINANCIAL AID

GOT YOUR AWARD-NOTIFICATION LETTER?

GO, YOU!

Most colleges require you to accept their financial aid award online, so head to the school's site for all the must-read instructions.

GOT PICKED FOR VERIFICATION?

Don't freak out. That just means your eligibility hasn't been determined yet. You'll need to submit more documents to confirm the info you already gave. Each college has its own process, so check with their website or financial aid office for the specific details. And breathe...

IF YOUR AWARD INCLUDES WORK-STUDY

You'll likely need to scope out the jobs and apply online. Get the full scoop on your college's website.

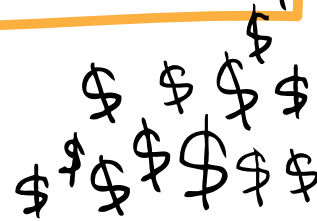
IF YOUR AWARD INCLUDES LOANS

Remember, you don't have to accept ALL of the loan amount—you can accept a partial amount of only what you need.

You'll need to fill out loan applications and promissory notes (a.k.a. legal docs where you promise to pay back the money). Be totally sure to read all the fine print.

You may also need to do entrance counseling, which teaches you how to manage your student debt and provides repayment options.

SUPER important: All this loan prep needs to be done at least 3-4 weeks before the first day of class to make sure you get your money in time.



GET YOUR HANDS ON YOUR BUCKS



ACCEPTED YOUR FINANCIAL AID AWARD?

Financial aid funds could be available up to 10 days before classes start or not until enrollment is locked (around 12 days into the semester). Find the specific details on your school's website, and start counting down the days...

Funds are applied first to tuition and fees, then to dorm costs and meal plans. Sometimes you can even pay for textbooks with aid funds. (That's a big deal—you'll see.)

Take care of any holds on your record—they can be financial (outstanding balance), academic (haven't declared a major), or administrative (missing documents, like a final transcript).

Then be sure you enroll in enough credit hours to stay eligible for aid. Got burning questions? Ask your college's financial aid office.

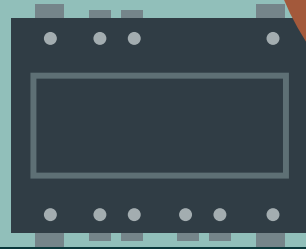
Refunds are issued by paper check, direct deposit (if you provide your bank account info), or student debit card—it depends on the school.

Any money left over is a "refund," which can be used for other education-related expenses—and just general living costs while you're in college.

Do All This Before Your First College Class

Send your final transcript

Before you can enroll for college classes, you need to make sure your high school sends an official version of your final transcript. Double-check with your school registrar that they sent it, then check on your college's student web portal (or even call the admissions office) to confirm that it indeed showed up.

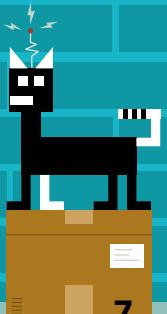


And if you took dual-enrollment courses in high school (like a rock star), the college also needs a transcript of that so you can get all those credits you worked hard for. So be sure you also send your final high-school transcript to your dual-credit college so they'll send THEIR final transcript to your new college. We swear that really does make sense.

Send your AP test scores

If you didn't opt to send your scores to your college when you took the AP exam(s), you'll need to do it now at collegeboard.org.

Make the request ASAP, because some schools have July deadlines for the scores. Just consider it an official humblebrag.



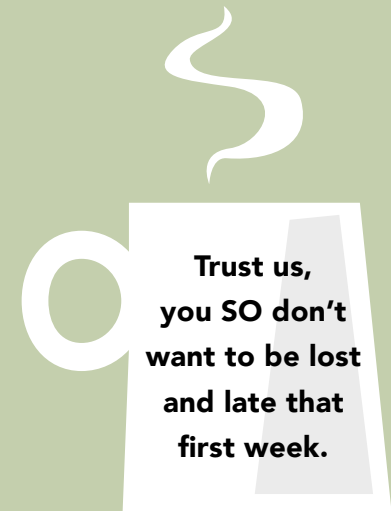
Check your email regularly

Colleges may send important notices and reminders to the email address you put on your application. Make sure you're checking it on the regular so you don't miss anything!



Map your classes

Before the first day of school rolls around, map out the exact location of each of your classes—using the building name and room number. (And if your college has multiple campuses or locations, pay extra attention to that.)



Prove you've gotten your shots

Most colleges require incoming students to provide proof of certain vaccines and immunizations—and your school immunization record doesn't count.

You'll need to submit a copy of your official immunization record, which you can get from your personal doctor or your county health department.







Choose your meal plan





If your college offers meal plans (unlimited cereal FTW), you'll probably pick one when you're making your housing choices. Odds are that there'll be a variety of plans, so make sure you select one that actually lines up with your wallet—and your stomach.

Do some advance grub-planning to make sure you have the number of meals you need, and to avoid spending more than your budget allows...





Estimate how many meals per week to plan for.

-  How many meals do you typically eat at home each week?
-  On school days, do you eat breakfast every morning, or is lunch your first meal?
-  On weekends, do you end up eating only two meals a day because you sleep in?
-  If you eat three meals per day Monday-Friday, but only eat twice a day on weekends, you should plan for 19 meals per week.

What are the meal plan options offered by your college?

-  Campuses with cafeteria-style facilities offer plans with various numbers-of-meals-per-week options.
-  Other schools may offer a campus card that can be used at coffee shops and fast food locations throughout the campus.
-  Some colleges may actually offer a combination of both.
-  Info about specific meal plan options can be found on the student portal or on the school's main website.

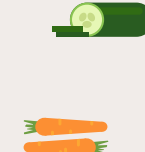
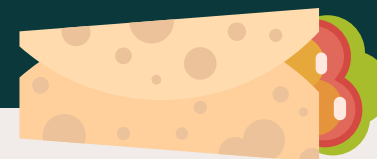
Where you spend your time each day will also impact how you plan for meals.

-  Your class schedule will help you guess where you're most likely to eat.
-  Your housing arrangements will be another giant consideration.
-  Will your dorm/apartment have kitchen facilities?
-  How many meals can you realistically expect to eat in your dorm/apartment?



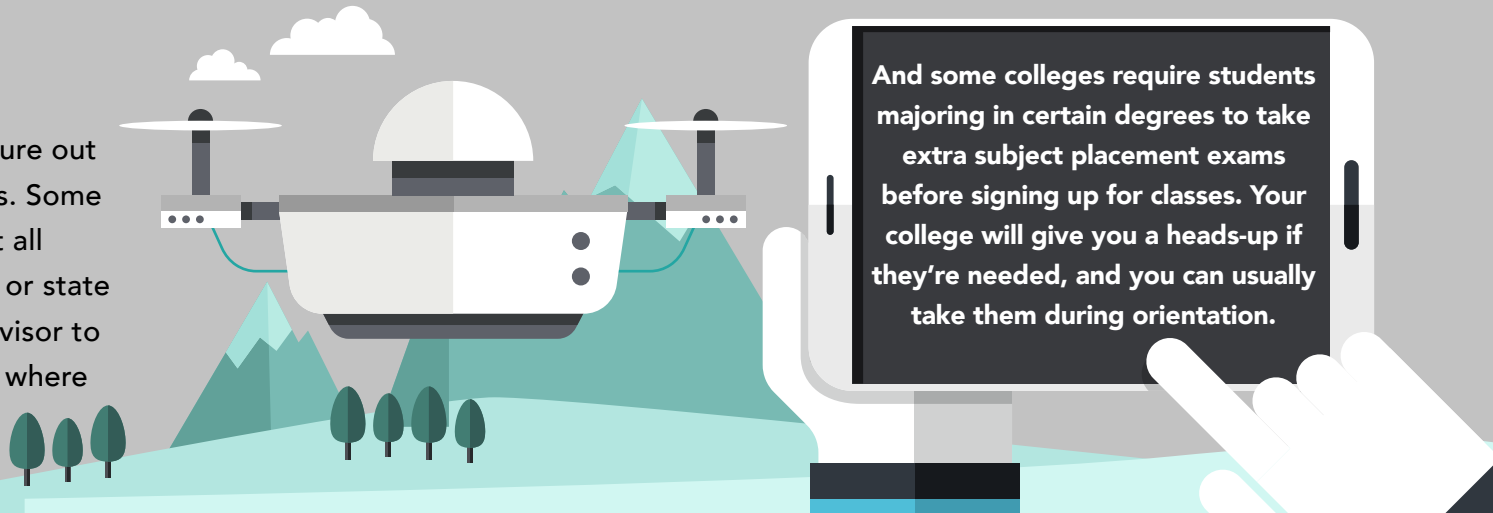
Remember, it's pretty hard to get it exactly right on your first semester, so it's best to err on the side of caution—meaning it's definitely better to have a few too many meals than not enough. (Hangry studying never ends well. Trust us.)

Meal plans are typically chosen during registration every semester through the student portal. So what you learn this first go-round will help you plan better for future semesters. **Now, who's hungry?**



Take placement tests

All colleges use placement tests to figure out if you're ready to tackle certain classes. Some people are exempt from some tests (it all depends on scores from the SAT, ACT or state exams)—check with your GEAR UP advisor to figure out what you need to take, and where you can take it.



Sign up for and go to summer orientation

Most colleges ask incoming freshmen to attend an orientation (or Fish Camp) during the summer. It's a perfect time to calm your nerves, learn your way around campus, hang out with other newbies, meet with your academic advisor, and even register for class.

You can also meet professors before you're facing them in an intimidating classroom, hear about different student organizations, find out the full scoop on all the campus services offered, and get legit advice from current students.

PRO TIP:

The earlier you attend in the summer, the better off you'll be.

Some colleges also offer a summer bridge program, which is basically a more in-depth intro to college life, with academic help and assistance in picking a major and/or a career.



Send your dorm deposit

If you're planning on living in a residence hall your freshman year, definitely do NOT miss your college's dorm-deposit deadline.



Because if you do, there may be no room left for you, and then you'll be incredibly stressed and/or bummed and have to scramble to make other arrangements (which could involve pricier off-campus housing).

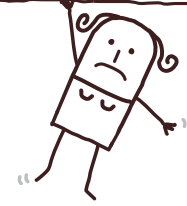
Some schools may waive this deposit if you used a fee waiver to apply—check with the college and your GEAR UP advisor to see if this is an option.





MEET Becky WITH THE Bad Credit

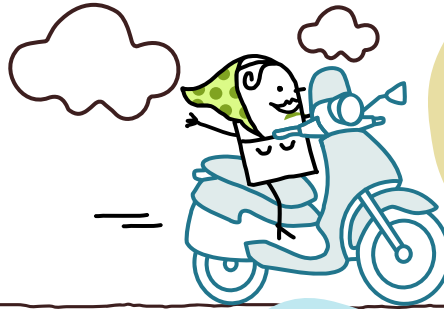
Becky was not savvy when she started using credit cards in college. Now Becky's credit is wrecked. Don't be like Becky.



Debit cards are the smartest thing to use because they ensure you don't spend more than you have.

(Just always know your account balance so you don't get hit with painful overdraft fees.) But if you do want to get an actual credit card, only get one so you don't wind up going crazy with the plastic.

And NEVER sign up for a credit card just to get a free t-shirt, people.



Always try to pay more than the minimum amount due on your credit card each month so you can pay off your balance faster. Take it from me—ruining your credit can literally take years to fix, and it can totally mess with you buying a car or a home in the future.

No joke.

Now Becky says...



Be super careful to only charge what you need (and can pay off quickly) on your credit card so you don't build up a huge balance.

Trust me, I know.

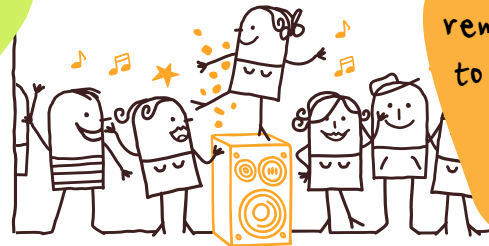
Now Becky says...



Before you sign up for a credit card, compare interest rates and fees for different card options to see which one offers the best deal. Basically, shop around before you go shopping.

If only I had...

Now Becky says...



Stay under your credit card limit, and always pay your bill on time to avoid massive late fees.

Look into electronic reminders or auto-pay to make sure you don't miss your payment deadline. Seriously.

Now Becky says...



#Don'tBeLikeBecky

DIY BUDGET

A man with a mustache, glasses, and a gold chain is smiling while talking on a rotary phone. He is wearing a white turtleneck and a brown corduroy jacket. The background is wood-paneled. The text 'DIY BUDGET' is written vertically on the left side in a gold, glittery font. There are also some sparkles scattered around the text.

You'll need to create a real budget before you start college to make sure you're spending wisely—and not ending up totally broke.

So get ready to do some adulting...

DIY BUDGET

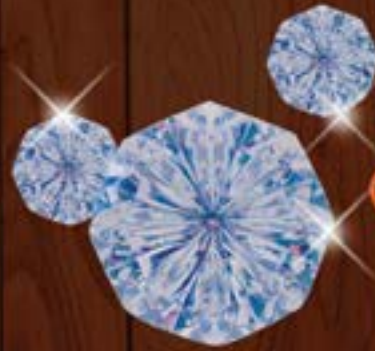
Step 1

Check out online budgeting tools like mint.com or simple.com (or whatever your bank may offer).



Step 2

Estimate your monthly income (from your financial aid refund, other scholarships, or your job).



Step 3

Estimate your monthly expenses: **Fixed expenses** are things like insurance, car payments, housing or tuition (if not covered by financial aid), and **variable expenses** are stuff like entertainment, travel, personal items, and credit card payments.



Step 5

Review your budget each month. If your income or expenses change (up or down) during the year, adjust the budget appropriately.

Step 4

Subtract your expenses from your income to see if your budget actually balances. If your expenses are higher than your income, you'll need to live (and think) more cheaply. Focus on your variable expenses, which usually include both "needs" and "wants"—spend less on the non-essential "wants," and you can lower your expenses like magic. And if you absolutely can't cut back on your expenses, you'll need to figure out how to bump up your income. That may involve putting on your "proactive!" pants and going to talk to the financial aid office.



PAYING UP



BILLS. PAYING THEM IS ONE OF THE NOT-SO-FUN PARTS OF ADULTING. BUT THEY JUST KEEP COMING, SO YOU HAVE TO JUST KEEP PAYING. FIGURING IT ALL OUT FOR THE FIRST TIME CAN BE A BIT COMPLICATED.

BUT WE GOT YOUR BACK...



MAKE A PLAN OF ATTACK

Use a spreadsheet to keep track of your bills.

- Include minimum payment due and the due date.
- Know exactly how much money you need to pay bills every month.

Decide how you'll actually pay—by check or electronically. (Protip: Most banks offer a free bill-payment app.)

Make sure you have enough money in your bank account to avoid overdraft charges. **And yep, this is a rather important one.**

Decide what day(s) of the month you'll pay your bills.

- **Set aside a specific time** once or twice a month where you're exclusively all about paying bills.
- **Remember if you're making payments by check** to allow snail-mail time to avoid late fees.
- **Be super disciplined**—use a calendar app on your phone to remind yourself.

WHAT TO AVOID AT ALL COSTS (*PUN SO INTENDED)

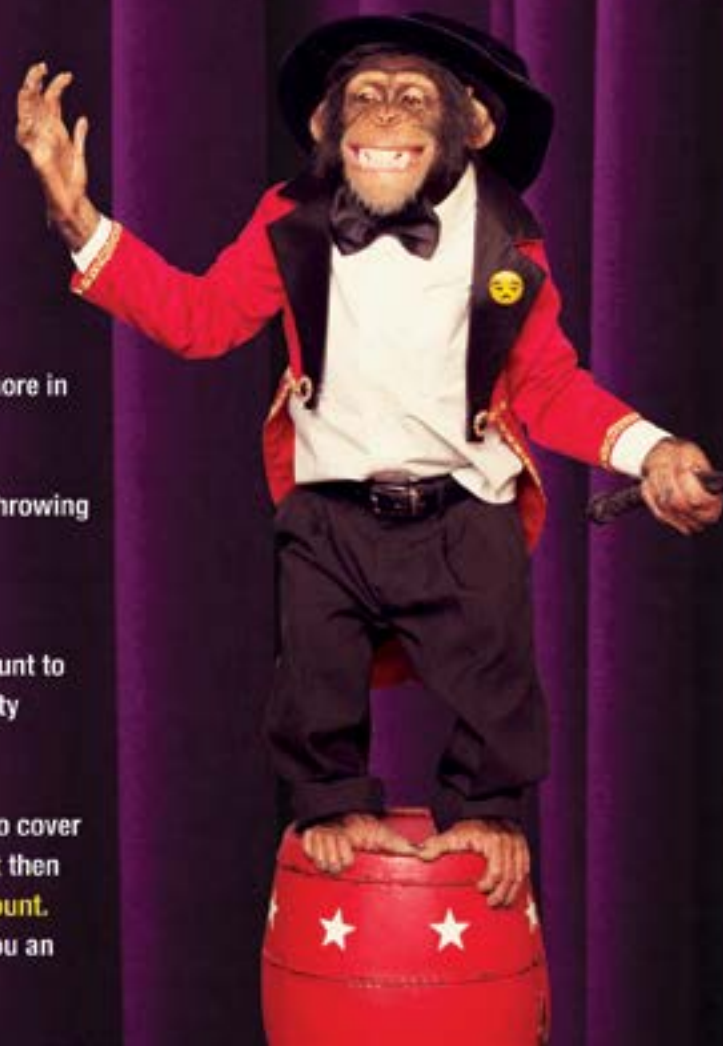
Spending more than you have and forgetting payment deadlines can add \$100 or more in expenses if you're not careful.

Most businesses charge a late fee for late payments—which is basically like just throwing your money off a cliff.

You can be charged for "non-sufficient funds" if you write a check or make purchases/payments with your debit card and you don't have enough in your account to cover the expenses. The bank will reject the charges and slap you with you a penalty fee—**AND they might also charge you a fee for the rejected payment transaction.**

Some banks offer overdraft protection for a monthly fee, which means they agree to cover charges or payments you make even when your account balance is below zero, but then **you're charged another fee for every payment you make without funds in your account.** Where the "protection" part comes in is that the business you paid won't charge you an extra fee because the bank has honored the payment.

Sometimes people pay bills with a credit card when they're short on money—which is a seriously bad idea because it adds to your debt, instead of reducing it. Credit cards also pile on to your debt with the high interest rates they charge. On top of all that, sometimes credit card companies consider bill payments a cash advance, **which means they charge even more fees. True story.**



TOP 10

1 Don't buy your books before class starts. This may be against what others will tell you about being prepared, but had I known to wait to buy my books after the first day of class, I would've saved myself at least \$100. Even then, I didn't need all those books. There's a huge difference between "required" and "recommended." But do figure out which books you need right away and get those on campus—then you can rent the rest or get them cheaper online (and have them shipped to you).



2 Cramming doesn't work here. Entering college, I thought it would be like high school where I could slack off and cram at the last minute, but that does not work. Poor grades don't get you too far in college. You can't settle for "okay." You need to set yourself apart from the crowd.

3 Start looking for internships your third semester. Use your first year to get in the groove of college. After you've settled in, apply for every internship that intrigues you. What's the worst that could happen? Don't wait until your last year to get internships. Future employers are looking for people who are experienced.

4 As corny as this sounds, put yourself out of your comfort zone. Some of my best accomplishments were done during moments where I was the least comfortable. Those moments led to even greater moments. For example, being on the radio terrified me. But overcoming that fear and putting myself in that position led me to interview people I idolize. You can't be afraid to fail or look stupid.



5 AP courses and dual-enrollment courses will really help out in the long run. I was told DE and AP courses would help prepare me for college, but no one really explained how. Or at least I never understood how. Basically, the more DE and AP you do in high school, the less classes you need to take in college. Because I did DE and AP courses, an entire year of college was erased off of my curriculum. Instead of graduating in four years, I will be a three-year grad.

6 Be young. Your high school relationship probably won't last, and that's for the better. I entered college with a high school boyfriend thinking we wouldn't break up. We broke up when I realized people change and I wanted to be young. People grow apart. You are young. Be young.

7 College is nothing like high school in that drama doesn't exist if you don't create it. High school is problematic and filled with drama. You feel like everything that's happening is the worst thing in the world. In college, no one cares. You'll find the perfect crowd and fit right in with people just like yourself.

8 If your writing skills aren't very strong, you may need to work on that. College is very writing-intensive, and you have to be prepared to learn MLA, Chicago and APA styles of writing.

9 Before you go out and buy a new wardrobe for college, know that no one cares.

10 Cram snacks, not studies

10 Be competitive and strive to be the best in high school, even if you think it makes you look lame. It'll work in your favor in the long run with all the acceptance letters you're bound to get.

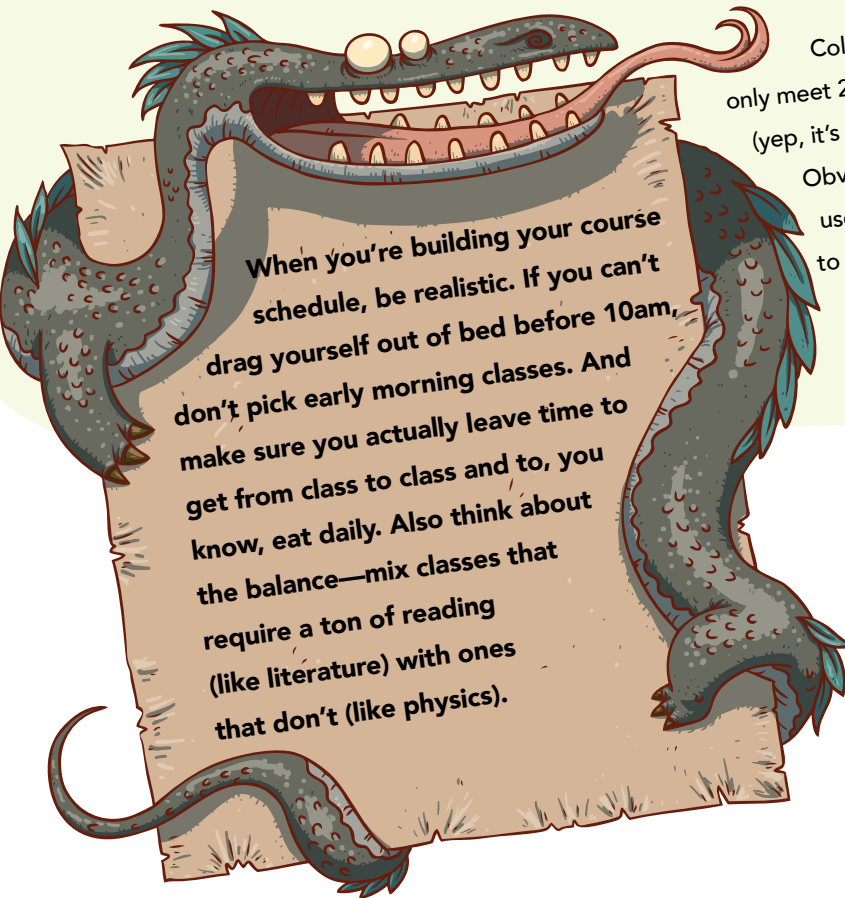
THINGS I WISH I'D KNOWN BEFORE STARTING COLLEGE




REGISTRATION CRASH COURSE

Before you even think about registering, meet with your academic advisor to figure out the classes you need to take. You'll probably want to enroll in 12 hours (a.k.a. four classes) your first semester. That's considered full-time—but be sure to check if any of your scholarships require more hours. Eventually you may want to take 15 hours, but for your very first semester, stick with 12 and allow yourself to adjust to college life.

College classes usually only meet 2-3 times each week (yep, it's a whole new world). Obviously, you'll want to use your non-class time to keep up with reading and assignments.



When you're building your course schedule, be realistic. If you can't drag yourself out of bed before 10am, don't pick early morning classes. And make sure you actually leave time to get from class to class and to, you know, eat daily. Also think about the balance—mix classes that require a ton of reading (like literature) with ones that don't (like physics).



AND ALWAYS SCHEDULE YOUR WORK HOURS BASED ON YOUR CLASS SCHEDULE—NEVER, EVER THE OTHER WAY AROUND.

I'VE TRIED LIVING LIFE BACKWARDS. IT DIDN'T GO SO WELL...

AFTER HAVING A MEETING OF THE MINDS WITH YOUR ADVISOR, YOU'LL REGISTER FOR CLASSES THROUGH THE STUDENT WEB PORTAL. YOU CAN REGISTER WHEN YOU'RE AT SUMMER ORIENTATION, WHICH IS A PRIME TIME TO DO IT BECAUSE THE CAMPUS IS CRAWLING WITH PEOPLE JUST ITCHING TO HELP.

IF YOU DON'T DO IT DURING ORIENTATION, YOUR ADVISOR WILL GIVE YOU A LIST OF CLASSES TO REGISTER FOR. SPOILER: CLASS NAMES WILL LOOK LIKE "ENGLISH 1301" (VERY FANCY). AND DON'T WASTE ANY TIME—COURSES FILL UP QUICKLY, AND YOU'LL HAVE FEWER CHOICES.



BUT I WANT WHAT I WANT!

Once you're officially in the portal,

look for the "Registration" tab. Search for classes by any of these options:

- **TERM** (fall, spring, summer)
- **SUBJECT** (like communications, math, biology)
- **COURSE NUMBER** (given to each class by the college)

Sometimes life is hard,

and the class you want is closed because it's full. If that happens, you'll just need to select the course at another meeting day/time. (If you're completely shut out of all meeting times for that specific class, ask your advisor for advice—and you may still be able to get into the class if people drop it after the first day.)

PAY LASER-SHARP ATTENTION TO THE MEETING TIMES, DATES, LOCATION, AND INSTRUCTOR FOR EACH COURSE—AND MAKE SURE NONE OF THE CLASSES OR REQUIRED LABS OVERLAP WITH EACH OTHER.



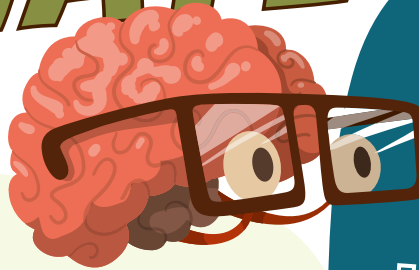
Totally Made-Up Sample College Schedule

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8am - 9am	X	X	X	X	X
9am - 10am	French		French		French
10am - 11am		English		English	
11am - 12pm	Algebra		Algebra		Algebra Lab
12pm - 1pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1pm - 2pm		History		History	
2pm - 3pm	Work		Work		Work
		Library		Library	

COLLEGE COURSES: TRANSLATED

In high school, a class is just a class. But in college, there are a bunch of different kinds of classes...

Types of Courses



Course Formats

- GENERAL REQUIREMENTS (a.k.a. CORE CURRICULUM)** Classes from different subjects (think math, humanities, science, or foreign language) that you're required to take as part of your degree plan.
- MAJOR REQUIREMENTS** Courses within your declared major or program that you need to take to earn your degree—like how history majors (unsurprisingly) have to take a certain number of history-related classes.
- ELECTIVES** Optional classes from outside your major that let you explore other interests and general cool stuff. Like "The Art of Walking" or "Introduction to Turntablism" (both 100% real classes at real colleges).
- PREREQUISITES** Courses that give you the background or skills needed to take a higher/harder class. Basically English I is a "prereq" for English II, and so on...
- DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES** These don't count toward a degree, but can be required based on placement scores. They help boost knowledge so you can successfully tackle a college-level course.



LABS – Usually paired with lectures, these sessions are all about hands-on learning tasks.



LECTURES – What you think of when you think of a college class: A professor speaks at the front of a big room and students take notes.



SEMINARS – These advanced courses usually focus on a specific topic, with professors or visiting experts lecturing and students having discussions and doing presentations.

STUDIO – Mainly for art and music, these classes often devote half the time to lecture and the other half to actually creating things (like drawing or photography).



ONLINE – Totally delivered over the internet, these classes of the future conduct all discussions via email, online academic portal, and/or live chat.



HYBRID – This up-and-coming course style is basically a mash-up of old-school classroom format and new-school online format, giving you a taste of both worlds.

THAT WORKING LIFE

PLANNING TO SNAG A PART-TIME JOB DURING COLLEGE? JUST REMEMBER THAT SCHOOL IS OBVIOUSLY YOUR TOP PRIORITY—SO THE NUMBER OF HOURS YOU WORK SHOULD BE BASED AROUND YOUR CLASSES AND STUDY TIME.



ON-CAMPUS JOBS

- Could be work-study or a regular part-time job (10-15 hours per week is recommended)
- Lets you build a "student-friendly" schedule around class times (and supervisors totally get that academics is the most important)
- Gives you connections to campus staff that can help you navigate the college system—and those staff relationships could even lead to mentoring and advocacy on your behalf

OFF-CAMPUS JOBS

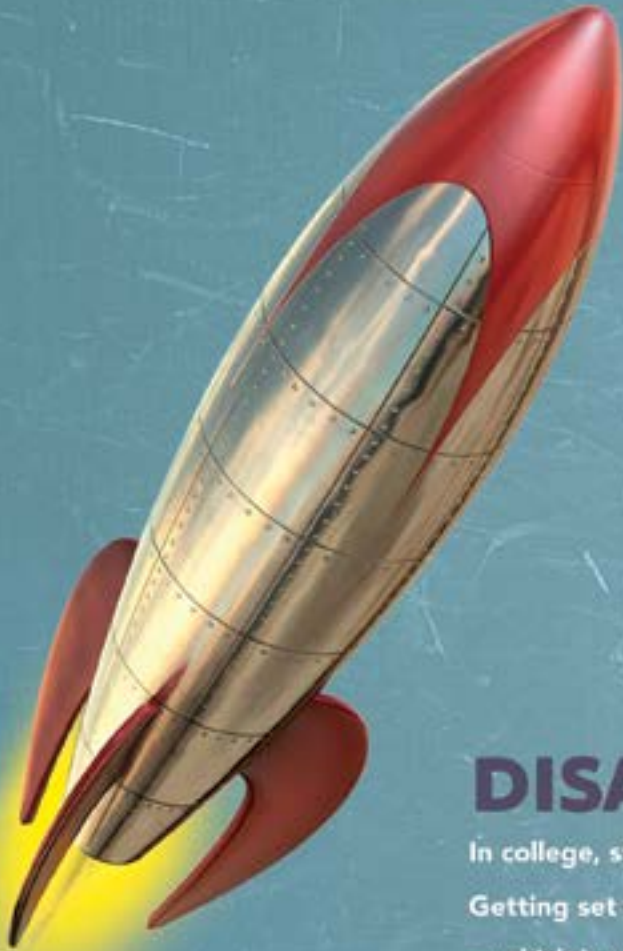
- BE CAREFUL NOT TO WORK TOO MANY HOURS EACH WEEK (NO MORE THAN 10-15) SO YOUR STUDYING DOESN'T SUFFER
- MAKE SURE YOUR WORK SCHEDULE ACTUALLY SUPPORTS YOUR ACADEMIC LIFE—LIKE DEFINITELY DON'T WORK LATE INTO THE NIGHT IF YOU HAVE AN EARLY CLASS THE NEXT DAY
- MAKE SURE YOUR BOSS KNOWS THAT YOU'RE IN COLLEGE AND THAT'S YOUR MAIN RESPONSIBILITY

BIG HEADS-UP

- KEEP IN MIND THAT MONEY EARNED FROM A PART-TIME JOB MAY AFFECT YOUR FINANCIAL-AID ELIGIBILITY IN THE FUTURE
- THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT SINCE WORK-STUDY IS ACTUALLY PART OF FINANCIAL AID, ANY MONEY EARNED THAT WAY HAS NO IMPACT ON YOUR ELIGIBILITY

LOST FISH WARD IF FOUND





SPECIALTY CAMPUS SERVICES

NEED A LITTLE EXTRA ASSISTANCE IN COLLEGE?

Odds are good that your campus will have you covered. Do some research before the first day of class (protip: ask your advisor), and you'll have everything squared away when it counts.

DISABILITY SERVICES

In college, students have to identify their needs and ask for disability services (it's not automatic like in high school). Getting set up involves a consult with college staff, and access to services may require an evaluation or doctor's note—which is why you want to start the ball rolling as soon as you can. Also, college courses aren't modified due to disabilities. Instead students are given accommodations when available—like mobility or electronic devices and classroom support (note-taking help, extra time on tests, etc.) as needed.

DIVERSE POPULATIONS

Some colleges also provide specific support and services for undocumented students, migrant students, students of color, and first-generation students. Each school's offerings are different, but they may include anything from extra tutoring services to mentoring programs to graduation plans. Don't be shy about taking advantage of the support—it's there to help empower everyone to succeed.

**YOU'RE
THE BOSS
OF YOU**



College life isn't quite full-on adult life (which is a good thing), but it's a world apart from high school life. That means your relationship with your parents is about to change. They're not really in charge of you anymore. So figuring out what this next step of your dynamic is going to be can be tricky, and it'll definitely require adjustments that might take some time. But it's all totally doable!

It'll take a little while for everybody to get used to your redefined relationship, which is completely okay. Remember that your parents have made many of your decisions for you for the past, oh, 18-ish years. They absolutely want what's best for you, and this is likely to be a pretty emotional time for them as they watch you becoming more independent and heading off to college. **Happily, there are ways to make the whole process more painless...**



THE MUST-REMEMBER: Your parents will treat you as an independent adult if you act like one.

- If you run to them in a panic wanting them to solve your problems, they'll keep treating you like a kid.
- Independence isn't something you should turn "on" or "off" as your life plays out.
- Being independent certainly doesn't mean you totally end your parent-child relationship.
- Embracing independence doesn't mean you don't want your parents' support and assistance. You'll absolutely still need (and get) it.

TIMING IS EVERYTHING: You'll definitely want to have this crucial convo with your parents about what your new relationship may look like before classes start.

- Explain that you want them to be part of your college journey, but you also need space and independence.
- Make them understand that this is to help you be successful in college—and way beyond.



IF YOU'RE GOING TO COLLEGE OUT OF TOWN: Know that distance will change your relationship. But believe it or not, it can actually be a positive thing.

- Set up a regular check-in date and time to call, text, Skype or FaceTime, like every Sunday at 8:00 p.m.
 - It'll work wonders in establishing boundaries and independence.
 - Be sure to let your parents know that if there's an emergency at home, they should contact you immediately. (Give them an emergency contact number—like a roommate or your Resident Assistant—in case they can't reach you.)
- If you need to miss your regular check-in, let them know ahead of time.
 - Don't go more than a week without at least checking in quickly so they don't start to panic about you (because they so will).
 - You should also discuss what your parents should do if they don't hear from you within a specified timeframe. Specifically who they should contact to make sure you're okay.



IF YOU'RE LIVING AT HOME DURING

COLLEGE: Not surprisingly, it might be a little tougher to establish that total independence and space. But it's not impossible.

- Set a date and time to connect with your parents on a weekly basis (like Sunday nights).
- Create and share with your parents a schedule of when you'll be in class, studying, working, etc.
 - It'll prove that you're taking responsibility for yourself and setting your college education as a top priority. (Feel free to end the show-and-tell with a mic drop.)
 - Explain that the schedule may need to change due to exams or project deadlines.
 - You should "post" your schedule on your bedroom door or another unmissable place for your parents and other family members to see.
 - Include some time to clean your room, do laundry, and help with house chores, especially for the areas that you "share" with your family.
- To make sure you have enough time (and quiet) to study, read, and complete homework/projects, consider maximizing the amount of time you spend at your college's library or study areas. Your local public library could also work if the distance to/from campus is an issue.



SO, WHAT SHOULD YOU ACTUALLY SAY DURING THE WEEKLY

CHECK-INS? Your parents will want to hear the good AND the not-so-good.

- Tell them about your upcoming week—the academic, social, and personal stuff.
- Share with them your accomplishments (bragging fully allowed) and your challenges from the previous week.
- Use them as a sounding board for any complicated decisions you have to make. Even if they don't have direct experience with college, they may have more familiarity with budgets, banking, loans, etc.
- One of the most sensitive areas when it comes to parents and independence is your finances.
 - That's why it's majorly important to make and stick to a budget so you don't have to run to your parents because you have money trouble.
 - If you foresee that you may have some financial problems ahead, you'll be able to calmly discuss the situation and the help you may need.



PRE-CLASS TIPS FOR COMMUTER STUDENTS

Commuting in general can be way nerve-racking, so make life as easy as possible by planning stuff out ahead of time.



If your campus requires a parking permit, get that sorted out early on



Figure out exactly how long it'll take you to drive to campus (make sure to factor in peak traffic times), find parking, and walk to class



Keep in mind that parking will be extra crazy the first couple weeks of class, so plan to get there even earlier than



Map out your classes to find the closest parking lots



PRO TIP

Parking availability will change from day to day—and even throughout each day (if you've got parking Spidey-senses, this is the time to activate them)

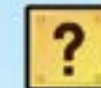


PRO TIP

Basically become a time-management ninja



If you live semi-near campus but it's too far to walk, check to see if your college has a bus system for students



If you're taking public transportation to campus, be sure to plot out your route with the exact trains or buses you'll need



Figure out a tight organizational system, because you'll need to bring all your books and materials for all classes on a specific day (spoiler: no lockers in college)

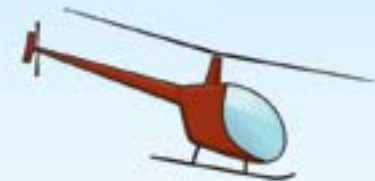



Hunt down areas on campus where you can hang out between classes




PRO TIP

The library is a great place and usually has computers you can use






Academic advisors are your key to graduating on time—they can help you build your degree plan, declare your major, and stay up-to-date on any graduation requirement changes that may impact your plan. (So basically, make them your BFF.)




A degree plan is a formal list of the required courses you need to complete to actually graduate.




When deciding which classes to take each semester, always try to balance more rigorous courses with ones you suspect may be easier. It'll definitely make life way, way less stressful.

DEGREE PLANS AND GRADUATION ROAD MAPS




Meet with your advisor to map out your classes each semester to stay fully on track. And ideally that meeting should be before registration time for the next semester.

You'll want to figure out your degree plan ASAP so you can avoid taking classes that don't count toward a degree. Because you don't want to delay your college graduation before you even start, right?



Warning: Taking classes not related to your degree or career interest simply to meet full-time requirements for financial aid isn't smart—then you're just wasting your time and money taking classes you don't need.



Find degree-plan details on your college's website in each academic department's section (for instance, if you want to be a teacher, look for the elementary education degree plan in the College/Department of Education's part of the site).

PLANNING TO TRANSFER FROM A COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO A FOUR-YEAR SCHOOL?

Some four-year schools actually have online resources that you can use to scope out the transferability of a particular community college course.

Your community college academic advisor can help create your transfer plan to make sure the classes you take now will count towards your degree later.

A transfer plan (or transfer agreement) lists the community college classes you'll take that'll transfer equally to your future school. And know that each transfer plan is specific to an exact university and exact degree—so if you decide to change schools or majors, the plan will need to be redone.

Warning: Not all community college classes may count toward a four-year degree—some classes may transfer, but not actually get you closer to that degree.

It's super important to declare your intent to transfer (and the school you want to transfer to) as early as possible in your first semester so you can maximize your number of transferable classes.



It's never too early to start figuring out what your college major will be.

Remember all those annoying "So, what do you want to be when you grow up?" questions that your aunts and uncles asked you over and over again? This is where that comes into play for real.

But where to even start?

Focus on the long game. Concentrate on the 40 years after college instead of the four years in it. First come up with your dream career, and then choose a college major that'll help you make it happen.



It's all about getting to know the real you. To pick the perfect career, you need to understand your goals, values, interests, skills, likes, and dislikes. Because **having a job you're legitimately into makes life way, way more awesome.** If you don't already have a specific career in mind, try taking a free personal interest inventory (like TXGU's Discover You quiz or the Texas Career Check) that uses questions about your hobbies and passions to match you to potential jobs. Some colleges also offer similar inventories either on their websites or in person at advising centers.



Once you pick a career, never stop learning about it. (Being just a tad obsessive is a good thing here.) Most colleges host career information sessions, so look into those. Hit up your advisor and professors for the inside track on any internship opportunities in your chosen field. Consider joining any relevant professional student organizations your campus may have (like the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers) to get in on their career-oriented activities and events.



Get the full scoop on possible future careers. You want to learn all about a potential job before you officially decide to devote years to studying for it. (Trust us.) Do the research and find out all the details on the super-important stuff:

- Job responsibilities
- Work environment
- Education/training needed
- Skills and experience needed
- Salary and future demand for this job



Take the right classes for your major. Meeting with your academic advisor is the surest way to make that happen. You'll be assigned an advisor, and he or she will use all kinds of sage wisdom to help you create a degree plan aligned to your major. And after you officially choose your major, you'll become a student under a specific department or program. Of course, the rest is sure to be history...



Find a major that leads to your dream career. Once you decide on your perfect job, you can "back up" to the majors that match it. (Protip: The College Board website can help with that.) Just keep in mind that several different majors can lead to a particular career. For example, if you're set on a career in music, you could potentially major in music, business management, public relations or sound engineering. Or if you're dreaming of a job in law enforcement, you might major in forensic science, psychology, political science or criminal justice.

The flipside is also true—a specific major can lead to a whole bunch of different careers. For instance, majoring in engineering could lead to a profession in engineering, medicine, law enforcement, criminal justice, education or the military. And a psychology major might wind up working in education, criminal justice, human resources, marketing, business or (you guessed it) psychology. So you've got options on top of options.

Still undecided? No need to freak out. There's still time—we promise. Some colleges require you to declare a major by a certain date, but those deadlines vary by school, so be sure to ask your academic advisor. In the meantime, you'll be able to hunt down expert advice from the university's career center or directly from your professors. You may also have the option to declare yourself a Liberal Arts or Multidisciplinary Studies major, which allows you to explore different interests through a variety of classes.



**AFTER
CLASSES START**



The

Inside

Scoop

Q: What actually is a syllabus?

A: It's basically the plan for the whole class, and the professor passes it out on the first day. It covers a ton of stuff:

- Goals for the class
(so you know what the prof is expecting)
- Grading policy
(so you know how everything's graded and how it all counts toward your class grade—like tests count for 20% of the final grade)
- Materials you need for the class
(textbooks, calculators, etc.)
- Calendar
(so you know the scheduled readings, assignment deadlines, and test dates)
- Prof's contact info and office hours
(and best way to get in touch)



JOEY, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

Q: How do I handle managing my time in college?

A: It's absolutely doable—you just need some sort of system that works for you.

- Use a planner
(either on your favorite device or get an old-school one you actually write in)
- Record your classes (plus important due dates from each class syllabus) and your work schedule
- Professors might not remind you when things are due, so you definitely need to write everything down
- Record longer-term dates (like registering for classes and reapplying for financial aid)
- Carve out time for stuff like working on your fitness and hanging out with friends (yep, you're scheduling fun now)
- Plan ahead for big projects by breaking them up into smaller pieces with earlier deadlines
- When figuring out how long you should study, the rule of thumb is **three hours of studying for each hour you're in class—so if you have three hours of class a week, you should schedule three hours to attend class and nine hours for studying**
- Build breaks into your study time (you'll totally need them)—think 45 minutes of studying, then a 15-minute break

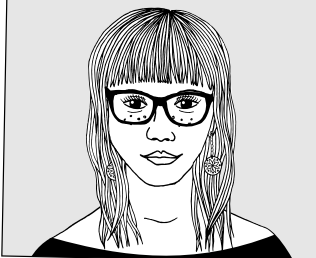


NIA, OHIO UNIVERSITY

Q: I heard some college classes use online portals—what does that mean?

A: They're a collaboration tool that the professor and student can both use.

Not scary at all—plus colleges offer tutorials to help you become a master. Profs may use them to post readings, presentations, class notes, videos, or extra documents. They can also put tasks, due dates, and even grades on there. Some super-techy profs might want you to submit your assignments and post questions right into the portal.



ERICA, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

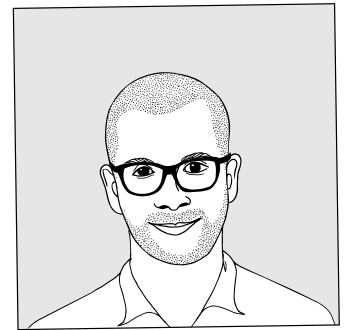
Q: What if the way I learn is different than the way professors teach?

A: Don't stress. Pretty much everybody learns differently—depending on your strengths, weaknesses, and overall preferences. So the way one prof teaches may not exactly match the way you learn. You just have to figure out your own learning style and make a plan for matching what the prof is putting out there.

Start by asking your advisor how to ID your learning style.

(An example: Visual learners do best by watching videos and making charts and maps.)

Then chat with your professor or teaching assistant to find an approach for the best way for you to tackle the class. Hit them up for advice on how best to study! And remember that how you learn in one class isn't always going to be perfect for every class.



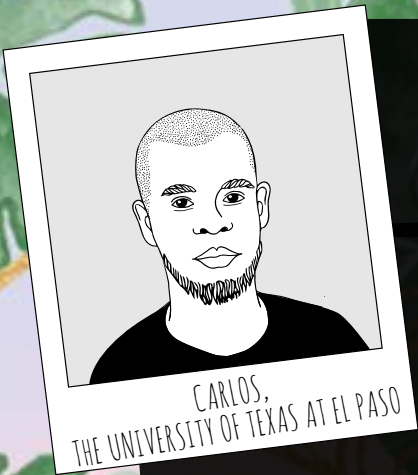
TODD, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

Q: How much do I really need to talk to my professors?

A: I swear that only good things will come of talking to your professors and building a real relationship.

- It'll show them you're making an effort to do well in class
- You can ask questions, get help on how to study for exams, and hit them up for tips on how to prepare for class
- It might even lead to mentoring by a prof—which means they could pass along amazing info about scholarships, special programs, and even real-world jobs
- You can also talk to the teaching assistants to ask your most burning questions—they're happy to help with any class-related issues

And remember that these people with all the grading power won't know if you're struggling unless you actually tell them. So speak up if there's anything messing up your classroom performance (like feeling ill, homesick, or mega-stressed). Don't wait until the end of the semester to reach out to them. This is the time to be proactive, people! But just keep in mind when you're emailing your prof—or whatever their preferred communication is—it's not like texting your friends. Use real words and real punctuation, you guys!



CARLOS,
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO



EMILY, DUKE UNIVERSITY

Q: I'm nervous about taking notes in college—is there a special technique?

A: You just go with whatever helps you soak up all the info. And it usually works best if you've already read the class material **BEFORE** showing up to class. Things to keep in mind:

- Not everything the professor says needs to be written down—concentrate on major concepts and ideas
- Organize your notes by using bullets, outlines, timelines, graphs or mind maps (which are a cool way to visualize the big picture stuff)
- You might have different methods for each class—like timelines for history, and mind maps for psychology
- Go over your notes right after class to see if you have any gaps (and if you do, compare with a classmate or ask your prof)
- Some professors provide class notes after the fact, so be sure to get in on that
- Ask your advisor about more campus (or online) note-taking resources if you really want to step up your game



MARCUS,
STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

Q: Got any study tips?

A: So glad you asked...

- Do whatever fits your learning style—like listening to music while studying or talking through concepts with classmates
- If you're studying for a test, break up the material over a couple days, and ask the prof if he/she can provide a review sheet or review session
- Creating your own study group can help you stay focused—and let you discuss the material, get clarification, or fill in any holes
- Figure out where/when you especially rock at studying (which may be different for each class)—is it early morning in the library or late night in the cafeteria or noon on a bench outside?
- Keep asking other people (advisor, profs, success coaches, friends) for study tips—it's really a “the more, the merrier” kind of thing.



VICTOR,
TEXAS A&M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Q: I haven't done much working in teams. Is there a trick to that?

A: Everybody's a little weirded out by group projects at the beginning, so it's not just you. Just follow some basic steps...

- 1) Ask the professor how exactly the project components will be graded
- 2) Divide up the work and set a schedule establishing (very clearly!) what's due when, plus times for the group to meet outside of class
- 3) Every group member gets given specific tasks
- 4) Someone sends out notes of all the decisions so everyone's on the same page
- 5) Have regular group check-ins (via email or text) to keep track of progress
- 6) Don't be a snitch—but if one team member isn't finishing their tasks on time, ask your prof for tips on how to get everyone to contribute

And remember, if you were a Texas GEAR UP student it's totally OK to reach out to your former coordinators with any unanswered questions or concerns you might have. Chances are they're going to want to hear from you and all the amazing things you're doing in college, so don't hesitate to connect.

Q: I'm terrified of speaking in public! How can I survive giving presentations in college?

A: I completely am, too! But there are tricks to help you live through it.

- Build your presentation around however it's going to be graded (ask the prof)
- Practice your speech with roommates or friends —or even in front of the mirror
- Be sure to time yourself when practicing (and don't speed through the whole thing)
- Don't read the entire presentation word for word—try to summarize the main idea of each slide/page
- Try little calming things like keeping a paper clip in your hand (stops you from fidgeting), taking a couple sips of water (to keep your mind clear), or picturing the entire audience with panda heads (because why not?)
- Look stylin' (remember that you can never be TOO dressed up for a class presentation—and that absolutely counts for the whole gang if it's a group presentation)
- Add some humor
- Be yourself



CHLOE, TULANE UNIVERSITY

SYLLABUS SNEAK PEEK

EVERY CLASS SYLLABUS WILL BE DIFFERENT, AND THEY'RE USUALLY LIKE 10+ PAGES LONG (SERIOUSLY).
SO THIS IS JUST A TINY SLICE OF WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT ON YOUR FIRST DAY OF CLASSES...

Freshman English 101 Course Syllabus

Fall 2017

Professor John Chabon:

Office: Building A 3.104
Office Hours: MW 2:00-3:00pm
Email: jchabon@university.edu

Class Meeting Time: TTH 9:30-11:00am
Class Location: Building A 4.321

Teaching Assistant Lisa Lu:

Office: 2.104
Office Hours: By appointment
Email: llu@university.edu

GENERAL INFORMATION

Course Description

Most syllabi start with an overview of the course, offering up a general idea of the topics that'll be covered and the kind of work you'll be doing.

This is an intensive writing course for students who require additional experience in expository composition in preparation for their upper-division college courses. In this class, you will study the principles of effective composition, with emphasis on the improvement of papers through revision and the critical reading of substantive nonfiction texts. After completing the course, you should be able to draft, revise, and edit texts in which you demonstrate the ability to formulate a thesis in an orderly way; form clear and effective paragraphs and sentences; use an appropriate vocabulary; and apply the grammatical conventions of written English.

Goals and Objectives

- Students will be able to use rhetorical terminology to describe writing.
- Students will be able to identify instances of plagiarism and explain why it is a serious offense in academic writing.
- Students will be able to interpret texts written for academic audiences.
- Students will be able to use academic writing conventions in their own writing.

This is where you'll find all the details about any textbooks, novels, online subscriptions, programs, etc. that you'll need to purchase, rent or check out from the library for the course.

Required Materials

Writing About Writing: A College Reader. Elizabeth Wardle & Doug Downs. Bedford St. Martins, 2016. 978-0-312-53493-6

Required Technology

Along with any technology you'll need for the class, many syllabi will have a section covering a classroom technology policy. That's where you'll find whether or not the professor allows the use of personal technology—like your laptop or cell phone—during class time. (Bad news: All college lectures are selfie- and Snapchat-free zones.)

You will need:

- Flash drive or other means (dropbox.com account, for example) of storing digital versions of the essays and other written material you generate
- A valid, working email address that you check often
- Regular internet access (additional reading available online)
- Access to a computer with a word processing program and a printer (assignments must be typed and printed)

You may find a week-by-week schedule of topics for each class and due dates. Not all syllabi have this, but when they do, it's a killer tool to print out for easy reference. (And keep in mind that professors might not actually remind you when assignments are due—so you'll need to keep referring to the syllabus to know what your deadlines are.)

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Reading/Assignments
1	Begin Unit 1: What is Academic Writing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3: Plagiarism • "Plagiarism Lines Blur in Digital Age" article from <i>The New York Times</i> • Wikipedia founder on using Wikipedia in college
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4: Rhetoric • Greene, "The Role of Inquiry in Writing a Researched Argument" • Swales, "'Create a Research Space' (CARS) Model of Research Introductions" • GRAMMAR PROBLEM SET DUE
3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kantz, "Helping Students Use Textual Sources Persuasively" • Porter, "Intertextuality and the Discourse Community" • Swales, "The Concept of a Discourse Community" • REPORT #1 DUE
4	Begin Unit 2: What Makes Good Writing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Williams, "The Phenomenology of Error" • Dawkins, "Teaching Punctuation as a Rhetorical Tool" • Murray, "All Writing is Autobiography"

Read this section SUPER carefully, because it can be packed with important assignment information. Professors like you to first refer to the syllabus, so be sure to check here for details before asking them basic formatting questions.

Class Requirements

All work and projects are due at the beginning of the class. If you cannot attend class, you must find a way to get your materials turned in on time. All written materials must be typed with your name, course number, date, and title of assignment at the top of each page. Text will be single spaced 12 point Arial font. Failure to follow directions may result in a loss of graded points.

Attendance and Participation

Okay, this section is fairly obvious, but be sure to note any participation requirements because a good participation grade can be the difference between an A and a B. So, kind of a big deal...

Attendance at each class session is mandatory. You should therefore plan to attend, be on time to, and actively participate in every class meeting. More than 3 absences over the course of the semester will drop your mark by 10% (a full letter grade).

Grading Scale

This section will basically give you a sense of the work you'll be doing in the class. Looking at the weight of each assignment, you can know which ones may take some extra effort.

The final grade is based on the percentage of total points earned (A=94+, A- =90+, B+ =87+, B=84+, B- =80+, C+=77+, C=74+, C- =70+, D+=67+, D=64+, D- =60+). Scores are not rounded. No late work or makeup work is allowed. Here's a breakdown of how your grade will be calculated:

Report 1	10% of final grade
Report 2	10% of final grade
Report 3	10% of final grade
Exam 1	20% of final grade
Exam 2	30% of final grade
Final Project	15% of final grade
Class Participation	5% of final grade

University procedures may include policies on student conduct, disability accommodations, academic honesty, technology, religious holidays, etc. The good news is that you'll most likely only have to review this section at the beginning of each semester (just to make sure nothing changed).

UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES

Academic Honesty

Any cases of verifiable plagiarism, whether deliberate or accidental, will result in a failing grade on the assignment and will result in a failure of first year English. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion.

Classroom Professionalism Policy

The highest professional standards are expected of all members of the class. Faculty are expected to be professional and prepared to deliver value for each and every class session. Students are expected to be professional in all respects. The classroom experience is enhanced when:

- Students arrive on time
- Students minimize unscheduled personal breaks
- Students are fully prepared for each class
- Students respect the views and opinions of their colleagues
- Laptops and wireless devices are only used for course activities



THEY GOT YOUR BACK

You can't wave a foam finger on a college campus without hitting some outside-of-the-classroom resource that exists solely to help you make the grade and be successful.

ACADEMIC ADVISORS

- Help you create and follow a degree plan, register for classes, and choose a major
- Refer you to other on-campus resources that offer academic and personal support
- Answer questions about school policies and rules

STUDENT SUCCESS COACHES

- Match you to resources for academic support on campus
- Can offer expertise on note-taking, study skills, and time management
- Can usually be found in the academic advising office (sometimes they actually are the advisors) or in departmental student support offices

LEARNING LABS

- Help with homework, clarifying class materials, and doing test reviews
- Often focus specifically on math, reading, and writing
- May also go by other names, like "centers" (think "writing center")

CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICES

- Provide an area for you to connect and discuss spiritually-focused questions and concerns
- Are a great place to maintain a support network and make new friends
- Share information about the different spiritual systems on campus and how you can get involved

TUTORING

- Offers extra help on class materials in a wide variety of subjects
- Can be done in person or via online review sessions

CAREER CENTER

- The place to connect your major to a future career
- Holds workshops on choosing a major and what to do with it
- Provides career guidance and helps match your strengths to potential future dream jobs
- Offers opportunities for job shadowing, internships, and even connections to employers for real-world jobs after graduation

OFFICE OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES/AFFAIRS

- The club hub (you can even find resources to start your very own club)
- Hosts campus events and socials
- May have (event-related) free food at any given moment!

REC CENTER

- Loaded up with gym equipment (possibly even next-level stuff like climbing walls and giant pools)
- Offers a variety of exercise classes
- Can help with nutrition info and planning

SCHOLARSHIP/ FINANCIAL AID OFFICE

- Houses tons of up-to-date info on scholarships (both university-sponsored and from the outside world)
- Answers all your college-money questions
- Basically the closest thing to your GEAR UP advisor's office

SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION

- Covers specific classes that are known to be challenging
- Sessions offer up class-materials review, study strategies, and guided practice
- Proven to help students boost their grades, so go for it

TEACHING ASSISTANTS (A.K.A. TAs)

- Graduate students who help professors teach some classes, offer homework support, and lead test review sessions
- Sometimes hold office hours (like profs) to meet with students to go over any questions or concerns about the course



A man with a beard and sunglasses, wearing a yellow plaid suit jacket, white shirt, and patterned tie, is shouting into a black telephone receiver. The background is a textured, mottled grey.

**DEALS!
DEALS!
DEALS!**

Yep, college life can be pricey,

**but there are
bargains to be had...**

Textbooks

Buy used textbooks instead of shiny new ones. Check your campus bookstore for already-read options, or look online for used books.

Comparison-shop online to hunt down the best prices—try BooksPrice or TextSurf to get started.

If you don't want to keep them for future reference, renting textbooks can be a cheaper option (as long as you follow the exact return instructions and don't damage or overly mark them up). Ask at your campus bookstore or hit the web for options like CampusBookRentals.

Download eBook versions from virtual bookstores or even your college's bookstore. Just be sure your preferred reading device has the compatible software, which you can usually download for free with the eBook.

Protip: Make sure you actually buy the right textbook by searching with the ISBN number, which should be on your class syllabus. You can also typically check your class schedule on the student portal ahead of time to see a list of all the books and materials needed for each course. Some professors even email the must-know and must-purchase details directly to students.

Hardware & Software

Another killer perk of that higher-ed life? You can get legit discounts on hardware and software just by being in college.

Look for all the info and discount links on your school's website.

Entertainment

Your college ID is your magical key to discounts at places like movie theaters, bowling alleys, amusement parks, and other houses of fun. So bust it out all the time.

Travel

For getting around your college town, snag a lower-priced student bus card (and save even more by getting a monthly pass)

Cheap(er) student airfares can be found on different airlines—research flights through national organizations (for example, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities has a deal with Southwest Airlines).

Do some old-school train travel with Amtrak's Student Advantage card.

Look into discount bus lines (like megabus) for solid deals on the long-haul open road.

The cheapest way to travel to and from campus may be to carpool with fellow students. Sharing the gas costs and driving duty can make it a steal to get home. Plus epic car sing-alongs!

Food

Lots of restaurants near your college probably offer student discounts when you flash your school ID.

Never cut out any meals to save money, because that could put your health at risk. Many colleges now offer on-campus food pantries to help students—ask at the Office of Student Activities to see if your school has one.



DECODING YOUR

COLLEGE BILL

Balance your
checkbook.

The main chunk of the bill you'll get from your college is made up of two things: **tuition** and fees. (Costs for your residence hall and meal plan are separate.) Your tuition cost depends on the credit hours you're enrolled in—not the number of classes. So one class could be worth three credit hours, while another one is four.

The **fees** you're paying may include student service fees, facilities fees, or fees related to a specific class (like architecture or chemistry). And those fees earn you mad benefits, including access to libraries, computer labs, tutoring services, advising, lab materials, and oh-so-much more. They even ensure that you can use the campus gym and get medical help at the health center.

So be sure to actually **use all these services that you're already paying for!** If you don't, then you're straight-up wasting your money, and that would just be plain sad.

CHEATING IS SERIOUS BUSINESS

COLLEGES DO **NOT** MESS AROUND WHEN IT COMES TO ANY TYPE OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY. You can be thrown out of school for:

**CHEATING
ON A TEST**

**USING THE EXACT SAME WORK
FOR MORE THAN ONE CLASS**

**LETTING A FRIEND
COPY YOUR WORK**

(if you and your classmate submit the exact same answers for an assignment, you could both wind up in big trouble)

**PLAGIARIZING
YOUR WORK—**

know when and how to credit sources you use in a paper, and understand that changing just a few words is still plagiarism

HOW TO AVOID ANY TROUBLE:

If you're having a rough time with an assignment, ask for help or more time from your professor instead of copying someone else's work

Ask the college's librarians for help with citing references, directly quoting a reference, and appropriate paraphrasing

If you have any questions, talk to your professor to fully understand what's considered grounds for academic dishonesty

BE SURE YOU KNOW YOUR COLLEGE'S RULES, YOUR RIGHTS, AND HOW THE APPEAL PROCESS WORKS (LOOK ONLINE IN THE STUDENT HANDBOOK). JUST REMEMBER IT'S ALWAYS, ALWAYS, ALWAYS BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY ON THIS FRONT.

You may have your first year of financial aid squared away, you superstar, but what's your plan for the three-ish years of college after that?



You'll need to reapply for financial aid **EVERY YEAR** that you're enrolled in college. (Let that sink in...)

Find out what your school's priority date is for financial aid. Make sure your FAFSA and other required paperwork is done by the priority date.

You can still submit your info after that date, but aid funds are usually limited.

You should never, ever stop searching for scholarships while you're in college. Be on the scholarship hunt every semester, every year.

Look right on campus for scholarship opportunities—your school's scholarship office, your academic department, faculty, mentors, and advisors.

Always keep your resume updated to help with scholarship applications and recommendation letters.

Internships can also help with the college bills, but many of them are unpaid—so make sure you get the full scoop before committing to the intern life.

You can fill out your FAFSA starting October 1 for the following school year

You and your parents will use the same FSA ID you created during senior year of high school

Be sure to allow plenty of time for your parents to complete their portion

Swing by your college's financial aid office if you need help

You may also be able to apply financial aid to summer classes—check with the financial aid office for info (plus deadlines and paperwork)

HOW TO KEEP PAYING FOR COLLEGE

HEADS UP!

**Your Grades Impact
Your Financial Aid**

**CONSIDER
YOURSELF
WARNED...**



You'll need at least a 2.0 cumulative G.P.A.

If you're starting at a community college, usually only classes where you earn a "C" or better will transfer.

You can't go over the max hours allowed (150% of what's required to graduate).

Always know your college's financial aid performance policy (which is posted on their website) so you know if you're meeting it. Got questions? Lots of schools have tutorials to help students understand the rules.

If your college is in Texas, know that you can only drop six total courses during your entire undergraduate career.

You'll need to complete at least 67% of your attempted class hours (with any grade—just no incompletes).

In college, you have to maintain better than a "C" average to keep your financial aid (and some specific majors may require an even higher average). It's all about "Satisfactory Academic Progress," which is evaluated every year.

If you repeat a college class three or more times in Texas, you'll automatically be charged additional fees when you register again for the class (and they won't be covered by financial aid).

Financial aid will only pay once for you to repeat a class that you got a passing grade in.

DROPPING CLASSES: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

WARNING!

DROPPING CLASSES CAN COST YOU MONEY, HURT YOUR GPA, AND EVEN IMPACT YOUR FINANCIAL AID. SO KEEP ALL THESE TIPS FIRMLY IN MIND...



BE PROACTIVE SO YOU CAN AVOID DROPPING A COURSE

PLAN YOUR CLASS SCHEDULE SUPER CAREFULLY.

Know the course requirements for your major's degree plan. (Hint: Look under "Academics" on your school's website.)

Talk with an academic advisor about your major, degree requirements, and the best mix of classes to take each semester. If you're an "undecided" major, they can recommend courses that explore your interests and help you zero in on a major.

Don't take classes that don't apply to your degree just to be full-time for financial aid purposes. (Most financial aid only requires half-time enrollment, but check with the Financial Aid Office to make sure.)

GET HELP WITH YOUR CLASSES ASAP

Hit up the tutoring center for help early on.

Take advantage of your professor's office hours to talk about your challenges.

Ask for help from a friend who totally understands the class material.

Join or form a study group with classmates so you can all support each other.



KNOW ALL THE BIG DEADLINES

Deadlines for dropping courses are online in the college's academic calendar. Two of the must-know ones are:

CENSUS DATE

- Classes dropped **before census day** won't appear on your transcript and won't impact your G.P.A.
- Your financial aid award may be adjusted for the semester, but your future aid eligibility isn't impacted.

- Classes dropped **after census day** will stay on your transcript (with a grade of "W"), but your G.P.A isn't impacted.
- Your financial aid award won't be adjusted, but your future financial aid eligibility **MAY** be impacted.

LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW

- This is always after the census day, and it's the final day you can drop a class without having it affect your G.P.A.
- If you drop a class **before this day** (and after the census day):
 - ▶ You'll have a grade of "W" for the class, which won't impact your G.P.A. but may affect your financial aid eligibility in the future.
- If you drop a class **after this day**:
 - ▶ Your grade for the class will be the grade you have on the drop date—which will impact your G.P.A. and may also affect your financial aid eligibility in the future.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU DROP A CLASS

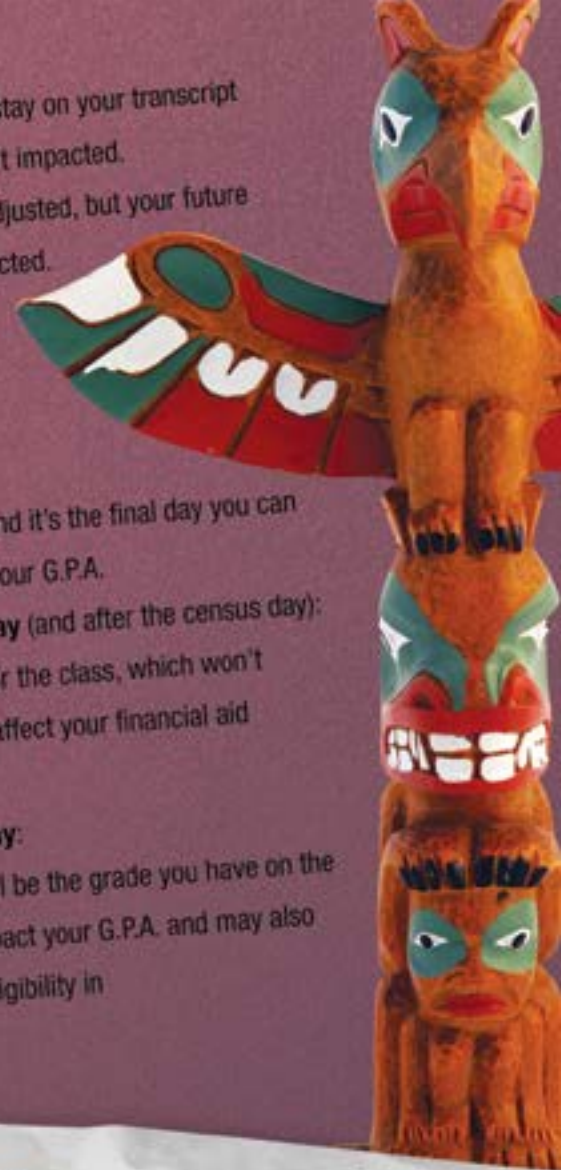
- Ask yourself if you've tried absolutely every possible option to get help with the class.
- It's best to drop a class as early in the semester as possible.
- Learn the real impact of dropping the class by checking with your advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and the Business Office.

SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK:

- How will it affect your G.P.A. or your academic standing?
- If the class is a pre-requisite for another class, how will dropping it now affect your future schedule?
- Will it change your financial aid award for the semester? (It's crazy-important to double check that you won't lose funds due to fewer hours.)
- Will it impact your financial aid eligibility in the future?
- Will the drop create a credit or increase what you owe?

KNOW HOW TO DO THE ACTUAL DROPPING

- If you're really ready to drop a class, you can usually do it online through the student portal by selecting the "add and drop classes" option. (An academic advisor can also help if a form must be submitted.)
- Keep in mind that adding a class already in progress to replace the dropped one isn't recommended because it means starting the class already behind.





COLLEGE LIFE IS PRETTY FREAKING AWESOME. BUT YOU CAN'T FULLY APPRECIATE IT IF YOU'RE NOT FEELING FINE. SO MAKE IT A REAL PRIORITY TO BE BOTH PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY.

GET FEELIN' GOOD

GOOD NUTRITION IS MEGA-IMPORTANT

Load up on fruits and veggies
+
Keep a stash of healthy snacks

LIMIT 
caffeine (we get that you're in college, but drinking lots of water is also a must)

Eat three meals a day—**NO** skipping breakfast

DON'T stress-eat 



AVOID processed foods and fast food as much as possible

Remember that recommended calorie totals and portion sizes vary for different activity levels and body types 

GET PLENTY OF SLEEP



Sleep deprivation can be a monster—it messes with your mental capacity, stress levels, energy levels, immune system, and even your safety



SET (and actually follow) a sleep-and-wake routine

Aim for **EIGHT** hours of shut-eye each night 



EXERCISE ON THE REGULAR

It **INCREASES** your energy while **DECREASING** your stress



Find an exercise partner or group



Get in on the exercise classes and equipment at your college's gym/rec center



Try out fun ways to exercise: riding bikes, Zumba, yoga, swimming, fencing, boxing, whatever sounds appealing



Sign up for intramural sports on campus



Establish a workout routine and **STICK TO IT**



Walk around campus **AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE**

RELAX TO FIGHT STRESS

Downtime is **CRUCIAL** to staying healthy



Not managing stress can impact your school work—and even **MAKE YOU SICK**



Plan study breaks each week to hang out with friends, focus on your hobbies, go on a date, or pretty much anything that makes **YOU HAPPY**

NEVER HESITATE TO ASK FOR HELP



ALL COLLEGES OFFER counseling and health services

Reach out to campus staff if you're feeling overwhelmed, excessively fatigued, or disinterested in your daily activities

Also consider speaking to your advisor, resident assistant, professors, or campus clergy

THERE'S LITERALLY ALWAYS A FRIENDLY EAR TO LISTEN





Have mini fridge, will (sorta) cook. You can totally pull together decent snacks in your dorm room with some creativity. And some spoons—a total must-have. We've got a couple healthy-ish ideas for inspo...



Ingredients

1 package instant ramen (chicken or whatever flavor floats your boat)

½ cup fresh spinach (about a handful)

1 tablespoon peanut butter (crunchy or smooth)

A few pieces of beef jerky, torn (use as much or as little as you want)

2 cups water

1 egg

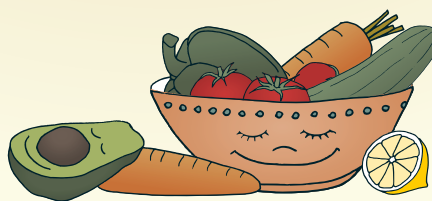
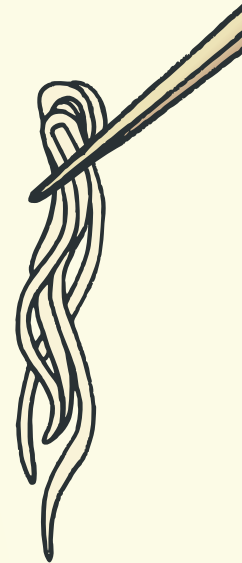
Hot sauce

Directions

- 1 Put the spinach, torn beef jerky, peanut butter, and ramen seasoning packet in a microwave-safe bowl.
- 2 Add the ramen noodles (you may need to break them up a bit to get them to fit in the bowl) and cover with the water.
- 3 Microwave for 1 minute. Remove the bowl and stir. Don't worry—the noodles won't be totally soft yet, but you'll want to stir it to make sure the peanut butter is getting melty and mixed in.
- 4 Crack the egg right into the bowl. Cover and cook for another 2 minutes.
- 5 Remove from the microwave and let stand covered for 2 minutes.
- 6 Top it with your favorite hot sauce (and anything else your heart desires).
- 7 Stir to break up the egg and enjoy!

Ramen Hacks:

- When it comes to ramen, anything goes! Why not try taco ramen (think canned corn and black beans with a dusting of chili powder, a squeeze of lime, and some crunched-up tortilla chips on top), chili cheese dog ramen, or veg out by loading up at the dining hall salad bar and stirring leafy greens, tomatoes, carrots, and more right in with the noodles?
- Substitute uncooked ramen for croutons. Just break up uncooked noodles into small chunks and top any salad.
- Spaghetti ready: Cook your ramen according to the package instructions and drain—don't add the seasoning packet. While the noodles are still warm, stir in packages of parmesan cheese and red pepper flakes left over from your last pizza delivery.
- For something sweet, make crispy marshmallow treats, using uncooked ramen instead of rice cereal. Microwave 1 cup of marshmallows with 1 tablespoon of butter until melted. Add in 1 package of uncooked ramen pieces, stir, and allow to soften a bit. Mold it into whatever shape you like and let cool.





Ingredients

¼ cup quick cooking or 1-minute oats

½ banana

1 tablespoon peanut butter (crunchy or smooth)

1 tablespoon milk

1 squeeze of honey or maple syrup (1-2 teaspoons)

1-2 tablespoons of raisins or dried blueberries or chopped apple (you get the idea...)

A couple dashes of cinnamon

Directions

- 1 Mash the banana in the bottom of a microwave-safe mug.
- 2 Add the peanut butter, honey or maple syrup, and milk and stir until combined.
- 3 Add in the oats, your other fruit, and mix well.
- 4 Microwave for 1 minute, then let stand for 1 minute.
- 5 Top with cinnamon.

Breakfast Hacks:

- No milk, no problem—substitute two small coffee creamers.
- Not a fan-a banana? Use ¼ cup of applesauce instead.
- Go nuts! Nuts are an easy way to get an extra boost of protein in the morning. Add some chopped almonds, walnuts, pecans, or pistachios to the mix.

Make use of your mug

Oatmeal isn't the only quick breakfast you can make in the microwave. Scrambling an egg is just as simple. Coat your mug with a little nonstick spray, add 2 eggs and 2 tablespoons of milk and scramble with a fork. Microwave for 45 seconds, stir, and then cook for 30-45 seconds longer (until they look right).





STUDY ABROAD

Want to study language in Beijing? Or economics in London? Basically all colleges have study-abroad programs that let you take classes in another country for a semester (or a summer).

The grades you earn in each class will show up on your transcript, but they don't count toward your G.P.A.

With approval from the powers-that-be at your school, you can apply course credits toward your degree program.

And yep, your international Instagrams and Snapchats will make everyone at home insanely jealous.



SEMINARS AND LECTURE SERIES

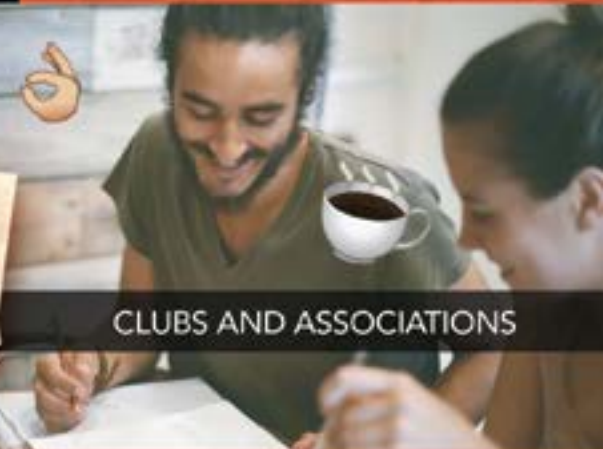


These are sessions where students, professors, and professionals have discussions about a specific topic.

They let you take a deeper dive into a subject, while also helping you learn more about careers in your major.

DITCH THE CLASSROOM

In college, learning is so not limited to just within the classroom walls. There are tons of non-homework-related opportunities to soak up more knowledge and put your newly-gained expertise to use.



CLUBS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Know exactly what career you're leaning toward? Or just have a real passion for a particular subject? Join a club to be around other people with the same interest. (EDM fans who love playing chess while eating soup? Sure, form a club!)

College campuses are packed with professionally-focused groups like the Society of Women Engineers, Sport Management Club, and Bilingual Education Student Organization, to name just an eclectic few.

EVERYBODY'S DOING IT

Each college campus is home to a massive amount of organizations all about different interests in service, politics, sports, environmental issues, religion, social life, and pretty much anything else you can think of.

JOINING AN ORGANIZATION IS FANTASTIC FOR A WHOLE LOT OF REASONS:



Perfect way to meet new people who share your interests



THERE ARE ALSO...



Intramural sports for students (way less pressure than official college teams)



Looks good on your resume



Lets you increase your network

Service learning and volunteer opportunities on campus and in the community

Fraternities and sororities for anyone who wants to get involved in Greek life

- Builds relationships with college staff (a.k.a. club sponsors and mentors)
- Helps you connect with your college services and resources
- Grows your understanding of college traditions

Super-important reminder:

Just don't overcommit your time by joining too many organizations or one single thing that sucks up too many hours. Academics always need to be priority #1.



THE MENTOR HUNT

Finding a good mentor in college can be incredibly helpful on all fronts—academically, professionally, and socially.

They can...

- Give you career info and advice
- Connect you to other professionals and opportunities in your major
- Offer support on challenges outside the classroom

Once you're set up with your mentor, establish a regular meet-up date and time (like lunch on the last Friday of every month, for example). You should decide how you're going to communicate—email, text, phone calls? Just make sure you're both on the same page, then you're ready to rock...

Your college is crawling with potential mentors. Consider professors, work supervisors, leaders of campus organizations, student affairs staff, alumni you meet through campus events—some schools even offer official programs where you can apply to be placed with a mentor. (Ask your advisor about that angle.)

To officially get a mentor:

- Ask someone directly to be your mentor
- If you're unsure, start by asking them for advice, which will help you figure out if they're a good fit for your needs
- Don't take it personally if someone tells you they don't have time to be a mentor—it has nothing to do with you, and you want someone who has the time to commit to you anyway

Study First, Party... Fourth?

Schoolwork. Job.
Extracurriculars.
Living it up. It can be
tough to find a balance
between it all in college.

Obviously, academics come first—after all, that's the whole reason you're there. Then if you've got a part-time job, that's a serious responsibility you have to dedicate specific time to. And you absolutely want to get involved with some extracurricular activities on campus to boost your life experiences and expand your social circle. Just focus on two or three key activities you're super passionate about so your schedule doesn't blow up.

And speaking of schedules, actually create one. For real. Plan out all your must-dos for each week. Organization is your friend! **Once you're finished all that priority stuff, then you can let loose.** Relax, hang with your friends, live life like a genuine college student. You've so earned it.

Scheduled fun can seriously be the best fun. We swear on our shower caddies.





How to Live with STRANGERS

Many college freshmen live on campus in a residence hall/dorm, and single rooms are often hard to come by, so there's a strong chance you'll have a roommate (or two or three). The good news is that it's completely possible to live peacefully with a stranger who sleeps a few feet from you—and you very well may become total BFFs.

HAPPY-ROOMMATE TIPS

1. Establish some rules together about things like lights-out, quiet time, visitors and/or overnight stays, sharing personal items, cleaning, and general safety
2. Set boundaries for acceptable behavior and mutual respect
3. Go explore your new campus/life together

If a roommate dispute does pop up:

Have a conversation about the issue when everyone's calm—be honest and respectful of everyone's feelings

Your school's counseling department may even offer assistance if needed

Be ready to compromise, but stand firm on any issue that involves your well-being

Don't get into any physical altercations, because that could have disciplinary or legal repercussions

Ask your Resident Assistant (a.k.a. the RA—an older student living in the dorm who's trained to help kids adjust to college life) for advice or to mediate the disagreement

Don't gossip about the problem to others

P

USPS PRIORITY MAIL[®]

*Love,
Mom*

XOX



0102 0555 7490 5271 202

Electronic Rate Approved #83929329



RECYCLABLE PACKAGING

**BEING
HOMESICK
IS TOTALLY**

OK

ACCEPTED

URGENT

Seriously.
Homesickness is completely natural and expected when you start college. (You might even miss your most annoying sibling.) It always takes a little time to feel like you're truly comfortable in your new environment. Luckily, there are some ways to cope...

Keep in touch with family and friends from home.



Stay updated through social media, and set up a specific amount of time each week (just not ALL your time) to call, Skype, or FaceTime.

Get involved in culture-based groups to make new friends on campus.

Volunteer or participate in service-learning projects offered by your school.

Get moving—take a walk or check out a fitness class at the campus gym.

Practice spiritual wellness, like yoga or meditation.



Birthdays!



Some colleges offer support groups, and talking with other students who feel the same can be hugely helpful.

MOST IMPORTANT:

IF YOUR HOMESICKNESS STARTS TO TURN INTO ANXIETY OR DEPRESSION, BE SURE TO REACH OUT TO CAMPUS COUNSELORS, MENTORS, ADVISORS, PROFESSORS, CAMPUS CLERGY, CLOSE FRIENDS, OR YOUR RESIDENT ASSISTANT.

Some signs of depression are excessive sleeping or insomnia, changes in appetite, lack of interest in your daily activities, and/or unusual amounts of sadness.

DON'T BE SHY ABOUT ASKING FOR HELP!



TIPS COMMUTER FOR STUDENTS

GIVE YOUR PROFESSOR A HEADS-UP IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE LATE DUE TO TRAFFIC OR CAR TROUBLE *PRO TIP: DEFINITELY DON'T MAKE IT A HABIT –LEARN TO LEAVE EARLIER!

CHECK YOUR EMAIL OFTEN IN CASE YOUR PROF CANCELS CLASS—NOBODY LIKES WASTING TIME

WEAR COMFY CLOTHES AND PLAN FOR THE WEATHER (UMBRELLAS ARE YOUR FRIENDS)

MAKE SMART USE OF YOUR ON-CAMPUS TIME BY STUDYING, VISITING WITH YOUR PROFESSORS, MEETING WITH YOUR ADVISOR, OR COLLABORATING WITH CLASS WORKGROUPS

JOIN CLUBS, ORGANIZATIONS, OR ACTIVITIES TO MAKE NEW FRIENDS, USE THE SCHOOL RESOURCES YOU'RE ALREADY PAYING FOR, AND EMBRACE ALL THE UNDENIABLE AWESOMENESS OF CAMPUS TRADITIONS



You DO You





So now is definitely not the time to stop being you!



College is all about different personalities coming together, sharing ideas, and then collectively getting smarter. So don't hold back on unleashing the real you when you get to campus.



- * Stay true to yourself. You absolutely don't need to change your personality just because you're in a new environment or around new people. Your uniqueness is what everybody on that campus wants to experience.
- * Don't be too intimidated or shy about speaking up or answering questions in class. Remember that other kids are probably feeling exactly what you're feeling. So you can also be their inspiration to contribute. #hero
- * Keep in mind that not everyone in your classes will share your opinions. And that's perfectly okay! The more opinions shared, the more everyone learns. So share away...
- * Hunt down groups, clubs, activities or networks of other students who are into the same things that you're into (interests/causes/hobbies/cosplay/whatever). If you're such a special unicorn that a group doesn't already exist, start it yourself!
- * When you're feeling rushed, stressed or just generally overwhelmed, don't forget to do whatever it is that makes you happy and reminds you of who you are.
- * Remember why you're there. You're in freaking college! You totally belong right where you are. You're smart enough, and you have the power to change the world. Seriously!

Feel like you totally don't belong there? So does basically every other freshman at some point—especially if they're the first in their family to go to college. We promise. You may have bombed a test (it happens), you may be comparing yourself to other kids on campus (never a good idea), or you may just be super homesick (get to FaceTime or Skype ASAP). Don't hesitate to reach out to your advisor, mentor or the school's counseling services to talk through any issues.

And never forget how **YOU** got yourself to college. No one did it for you.

- * **You** were a straight-up ninja in your high school classes.
- * **You** kept your dreams alive even when it was hard.
- * **You** navigated your way through unknown territory.
- * **You** kept believing in yourself even if others didn't.
- * **You** are reading this right now instead of taking a selfie.



**Disclaimer: It is expected that your taste in music may change drastically when you get to college. Don't fight that—it can only make you cooler.*



STAY SAFE OUT THERE

MOST COLLEGE CAMPUSES ARE PRETTY SAFE PLACES, but anything can happen—which is why you want to **always stay smart.**

KNOW YOUR CAMPUS

- Make sure you're aware of any potentially dangerous areas on and near your campus
- Know your way around well enough to be able to evacuate in case of an emergency
- Take time to familiarize yourself with your school's campus safety services like safe rides, walking companions, and emergency phones

LOCK YOUR DOORS

- Just avoid unnecessary risk by locking your room and car doors
- It boosts your personal security and prevents theft

AVOID WALKING ALONE AT NIGHT

- Use the buddy system with your friend to get around campus after dark
- When you're out late, never stay at a party, restaurant, or bar without at least one person you know and trust
- Many campuses have a phone-accessible volunteer escort system to get students back to their dorm or car (although it may not be available 24/7)

MAKE USE OF THE CAMPUS POLICE

- Their main goal is to keep you safe, and they're available day and night
- Keep their number on speed dial in case of an emergency
- You can always contact them to escort you to where you need to go on campus—no matter how near or far—especially late at night

FIND YOUR SCHOOL'S EMERGENCY ACCESS SPOTS

- Most schools have emergency access points throughout the campus
- It's important to know where these emergency call buttons or phones are to make sure you can get help as fast as possible if needed

AVOID EXCESSIVE DRINKING

- Drinking alcohol affects your ability to think and make good decisions
- It impacts your ability to control yourself and your surroundings, which can be dangerous in any situation
- Binge drinking can also put your health at serious (and immediate) risk

RECORD YOUR EMERGENCY CONTACTS & PHONE NUMBER

- Make an ICE ("In case of emergency") entry in your cell phone
- Carry a list of emergency contact info in your wallet/purse— as well as storing it in your desk and your car's glove compartment, plus sharing it with your roommate(s) and a few close friends

UNDERSTAND THE EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM

- Colleges use emergency alert systems that text and email students if there's any safety risk
- Be sure to update your cell phone number and email address regularly on your school's online student portal

IF YOU WANT TO BE EXTRA PREPARED

- Consider carrying a whistle to call for help
- Look into taking a self-defense course
- Many colleges offer safety workshops and online videos for students



YOU'RE THE ONE WHO NEEDS TO TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE

by staying focused, following through on your plans, and keeping on top of your must-dos:

- Reapplying for financial aid and scholarships
- Allowing enough time to actually do your school work (and do it well)
- Registering for the next semester on time after meeting with your advisor
- Meeting with your professors two or three times per semester—whether you need help or not (you can chat about internships and other outside-the-classroom opportunities)

HUZZAH

BE YOUR OWN

HERO

YOUR #1 GOAL OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS IS TO EARN THAT COLLEGE DEGREE

and prepare to win at life. The tricky part is that unlike high school, no one's going to be there to remind you to meet deadlines, stay on track, or ask for help (unless your mom's loitering outside your dorm window, which would be weird). It's all you now!

YOU'LL NEED TO LEARN TO REALLY ADVOCATE

for the things you need to make your degree (and your dreams) happen:

- Be super proactive – Ask for help the minute you realize a class might be harder than you thought
- Call on your advisor or success coach – They're there to help you, but you need to take the first step
- Find all the campus resources – They're just waiting there to help you rock



MOST IMPORTANT?

DON'T PANIC.

YOU SO GOT THIS.



—TEXAS—
GEAR UP

www.texasgearup.com