

Helpful Advice for Freshmen Year

By Melissa Einhorn, Binghamton University Intern working at Newark Valley High School

The transition between leaving high school as a senior and entering college as a freshman can be a very anxious, scary, and exciting period of time for anybody. Most agree that being a senior in high school is a privilege; there is just something special about being the oldest ones that “rule” the school. However, starting college puts all high school seniors in the same boat they were once in years beforehand as an unaware and overwhelmed freshman. The most important thing to keep in mind, as an incoming freshman, is that everyone feels the same nerves, anxiety, and excitement-you are not alone! Do not stress yourself out too much in the beginning and do not hesitate to ask questions or for help because chances are someone right next to you needs answers too.

It is extremely important to make become aware of all the opportunities your new school offers and to take full advantage of that. Make sure to attend any freshmen orientation meetings or functions in order to get more familiar with your fellow classmates. Most importantly be friendly and open-minded. College is an extremely diverse and cultural environment; therefore it is inevitable to build a great understanding of differences and learn not to judge others. Since college offers such a great range of extra-curricular activities, there is no better place to pursue any talents or interests you may have. Do not be shy, try out for those athletic or dance teams, join a religious group, explore the various clubs or organizations that might appeal to you, or become a member of Greek life. This is the time to be out-going!

Another important tip is to become better acquainted with the actual college campus. Nothing is scarier than the first day of classes when you are in a new place and do not know where you are going, feel rushed, and show up late. Before classes start, walk around your campus, figure out a route to take to and from class everyday, and practice those directions. It is so important that you do not wait for the last minute for anything, especially when it comes to your classes. This involves registering for classes and doing what is expected for a specific class. The schedules of classes in college are very different from the usual 8 am –3 pm day at high school. One of the most important tips to a successful college career is time management. Make sure to develop a consistent and organized schedule to stick to everyday in order to fit in all the work and the daily activities of college life. Take full advantage of the 24-hour day!

It is a common saying that “college is the best four years of your life”. Embarking on this whole new way of life may seem impossible to adjust to at first, however, by the end of first semester you will be more adapted and comfortable than imagined. Do not get discouraged in the beginning if college does not live up to certain expectations. As time goes on, it becomes clear that college is whatever you make of it. Learn to take the good experiences with the bad in all aspects, such as academically and socially, and in the end you have learned lessons that will better serve you for the future.