

Perspectives from College Students

Want to know what college life is really like? Check out this site to see what students are saying about their experiences at college.

Advice from Sophomores attending colleges across the state of Florida:

What do you wish you would have known? Even though you may be a very independent person, you will still miss home and the luxuries of home... Also, if you have your own bathroom, Tilex should be the item you purchase most often.

8 AM classes are not always bad. My 8 AM classes were my best during my freshman year. They are not to be completely avoided! Also, that your priorities have to be straightened. You can hang out with your friends all the time and pass your classes, but you have to keep everything in check.

What is one thing every first-year student should do? 1. Find out about all of the clubs and events on campus for yourself, don't rule anything out based on other people's opinions. 2. Make an effort to find a good group of friends in your dorm, organization, etc. 3. Guard quarters with your life! They will be your most prized possession when you have to do your laundry! 4. Try to get in touch with your roommate before move-in day so you don't end up with two of everything.

Relax! College is a complete 180 from high school, but it's also a very laid back environment. Just get what you have to get done finished, and get to know your surroundings and your peers! The real relationships are built during these college years.

What are the mistakes first-year students usually make? Not going to class, eating too much junk food, and worrying too much about what other people think about them- just be yourself!

They seem to not take college seriously, at first. That all changes when the first semester gets heavy, ends, and the second one begins.

What advice would you give to someone who is far away from home for the first time? Stock up on calling cards, bring something special from home that will be a comfort, homesickness is ok and a lot of people experience it- but FSC will become your second home before you know it!

Your family and friends are only a phone call away. Moving to a new place can be very hard, especially if you're close to the people you love. But you must choose to have fun! Make awesome new friends from places just as far away as yours, as well as people who are Florida natives. Your family and friends still love you, even if you're in another state. They want you to have the best time of your life!

What do YOU feel is the most important thing to know as an incoming freshman? Stand strong on what you know and believe. People go crazy when they get a little bit of freedom,

and then sometimes end up regretting a lot of their decisions. FSC and your college experience will be what you make it- grasp the opportunity to make it a time you will never forget.

Get Organized -- My best advice for juniors about to plunge into not only the world of a high school senior but also the world of preparing for college is to **take initiative**.

1. Your high school counselor is a great way to get helpful information, but you have to do research, too. I come from a fairly small school; however, the workload of my high school counselor is still very demanding. So, I had to make the most of the time that I got with her. I noticed she was more willing to help students when they were more willing to do some work.

2. I always kept extra transcripts on hand to use for scholarship applications, I kept track of my school information, and I searched for scholarships myself. I know more about my qualifications than the counselors anyway, so why should I rely on her to find scholarships that match my credentials?

3. I treated my time spent applying for scholarships like it was a second part-time job.

4. Keeping things organized is very important. I kept a folder with copies of transcripts, award letters, recommendation letters, acceptance letters, etc., all the information that scholarships typically request. I kept all the applications on the other side, each page paper-clipped together with an addressed envelope, in order of their deadline date. I kept this folder with me everyday and worked on the applications in my spare time.

Because of my dedication to the scholarship applications, I now have all the money I need to pay for college. I will not have to worry about my finances at all. Students should apply for every scholarship that they are eligible for, don't even take time to think whether or not you have a chance to win. You won't have a chance if you don't apply.

High School Senior Year --- I've definitely have some tips for you future upper-classmen. First, work on scholarships well before your senior year. The longer you put it off, the harder it will be to finish. Second, DO NOT SLACK OFF YOUR SENIOR YEAR! It is a very good idea to try really hard and take the classes that you know will be challenging. This will give you a good head start for college. Last, but not least, visit colleges and get a good idea of what you want to major in. College visits can be very fun and knowledgeable. Be smart when deciding where to go and make sure to get the most out of the college of your choice.

Time Management --- If there's one thing I've learned in my first year of college, it is that you must plan your time wisely. Time isn't set for you like in high school; you must stay on top of things. And another thing: Do not take too many classes. I remember having to plan my time almost to the hour during my second quarter because I decided to take six classes and a lab class plus sports and clubs... Don't get unmotivated!! By third quarter, I was burned out and didn't want to work anymore. Make sleep a priority-a top one. You will be DELIRIOUS after too many all-nighters and a whole term of little sleep. Work hard, but have fun once in a while. Keep your eyes on your goal. No bitterness...no regrets...that's what I hope for the next three years. Best of luck to you all.

Comments University of Virginia students made to the question “What should I look for in a college?”

“ I would tell a high-school student to look for the characteristics that fit themselves and not just go for what everyone else is looking for. I knew many people who just applied wherever the “in crowd” was applying. They ended up transferring or not doing well. You really need to look for a place that suits you, a place where you can call home for the next four years of your life. Think about what you want to study, what interests you and what/where you are most comfortable with, and go from there. Areas of study, academic opportunities, up-to-date technology courses and tools, atmosphere and extracurricular activities were all factors in my college choice. The University of Virginia definitely fit the mold. :-)”

Laura Dornan Frick

“I am a fourth-year student graduating in May. With graduation getting closer every day, I would have to suggest that high-school students keep their eyes open for every opportunity that arises while they are in college. While you may be set on one course when you start as a freshman or first-year, there are so many people, groups and activities along the way that may steer you in a completely different, yet just as successful, direction by the time you graduate. Keep your eyes, ears and, most importantly, your mind open and you will do great!”

Nick Surace

“All I would recommend is “go with your gut instinct.” All the colleges I was applying to had good academics, so I truly believe that I would have done fine career-wise with a degree from any of the schools I was considering. But when it came down to making that final choice, I had to visit each one (some more than once, at different times in my decision process), and just live the life of a typical student at that university, and see whether it appealed to me. Everyday life at U.Va. seemed so vibrant, with a smart, busy and happy student population. There were dozens of choices of extracurricular activities and a real diversity of students. I couldn’t have known that from an admissions booklet, or any number of recommendations from other people. I had to go see it for myself and visualize myself spending the next four years of my life there.”

Beth Darrow Condon

My advice to high-school students would be fourfold: I would say that during the college process you should find a good group of schools and not look at the sports teams, or at where your friends are going, or at the party scene, but rather you should look at yourself, realize that college will be a blast no matter where you are, so long as you are willing to be open with yourself and with others, and choose a college by what you want, I would say that, while the stated purpose for going to college is learning, in the end, learning takes a backseat to personal growth and that it is important to not forget this. I would say that wherever you end up going to college it is important to immerse yourself not only in the culture and life of the college but also in the culture and life of the surrounding community, and perhaps most importantly I would say don’t get so caught up in your studies or your fraternity or your club or whatever that you forget to live.

Heyward Grimball

Video footage from students at University of Florida about college life

<http://virtualtour.ufl.edu/studentvideos/>

Meet the Rollins *R*-Journalists! These five students will fill you in on the day-to-day life at Rollins, from necessities you don't want to be without to study abroad.

<http://www.rollins.edu/journals/>

University of Miami - A Cane's view of life on campus

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZXJIMUYYvs>

New on Campus – Advice for incoming Freshmen

<http://www.buffalonews.com/lifearts/next/story/141270.html>

What college students say about a variety of topics --- from roommates, to social events, to academics and more

<http://www.virginia.edu/undergradadmission/video.html>

Princeton Review “Eye on Apply” --- checks in with 11 high school seniors as they navigate their way through the college admissions process.

<http://www.princetonreview.com/college/apply/eyeonapply/2007/default.asp>