

411 Connection 5: The Transition of a Lifetime

October 2010

Remembering back to my days as a freshman, I was from another state and didn't know much about college or how different it would be. There are an array of differences between high school and college, both socially and academically. Yet, being prepared to face these differences is the best way to start off your collegiate experience and successfully transition from high school to college.

Academically and socially, the transition from high school to college can be a very difficult one.

Classes – In high school the hours you are in class are long and the attendance is mandatory. At DePaul, no one is going to force you to attend classes, which ultimately means all of the responsibility of your education will be on your shoulders. This not only encompasses going to class, but also means making it there on time, and asking questions when you are confused.

Teachers – High school teachers are very active in ensuring the student is learning and turning in their work. College professors, on the other hand, expect students to take charge of their academics. They expect them to follow the syllabus, have all of the required textbooks and to visit during office hours if they should need additional help.

Tests – If you were to fail one test in high school it typically was not the end of the world when pertaining to your grade. However, at DePaul, or any college for that matter, this is not the case. Most tests and essays are worth a large percentage of your overall grade. Failing one could jeopardize your grade in such a way you may not be able to recover. Making sure you are prepared for your exam, your class attendance and developing good college study habits will be essential for your success here at DePaul.

Campus Resources- There are many places on campus that are designed to ensure you academic success while at DePaul. The Writing Center, for example, located in the McGaw building right next to the School of Music, has students on duty 6 days a week to help you with your various assignments.

Organization – You need to keep everything organized; this cannot be stressed enough! Find a method of organization that works for you, a strong suggestion would be a planner or a notebook that you can write everything down in. In college you can never be too organized.

Personal Freedom – The crazy amount of personal freedom college students have can be very overwhelming at first. When you have only four classes and they are spread throughout the week, you will find yourself with a lot of free time. Some freshmen get so caught up in the parties and the bar-scene that they neglect their

academics and flunk out of their first year. As a new college student you will have to learn that you need to take care of yourself and effectively manage your priorities in order to survive.

On-Campus Employment – DePaul offers tons of jobs for students. To find out about more employment opportunities just visit <https://studentemployment.depaul.edu/> and check out the postings. You will need to upload your resume and cover letter in order to apply. However, you are not expected to do this on your own. The Career Center offers assistance for students who need help writing their resume or cover letter as well as mock interviews.

Making New Friends – First-year students often find themselves in a completely new environment. It's important to make friends and be open to new people. While being a social butterfly is awesome, it's also important to schedule some personal time for yourself.

These simple tips are a few things I have found most helpful in my journey thus far at DePaul, and hope they will prove as beneficial to you as they have been for me.