

MYTHS ABOUT COLLEGE

COLLEGE EDITION

- **Myth:** Once you attend a college, you must complete your education there.
Fact: If you realize that the college you have chosen is not the one for you, you can always transfer to another campus. One out of every five students who graduate from a four-year college actually began their education at a different college
- **Myth:** The more famous the college, the better it is.
Fact: It is your character such as persistence, humor and warmth, not the name of the college you attended, that will help you stand out in your community and in the job market.
- **Myth:** After I apply for scholarships for my freshman year of college, I don't need to worry about them.
Fact: You should apply for scholarships throughout your college career. Don't stop looking for scholarships because financial aid is available for college freshmen, sophomores, juniors, seniors and even graduate students.
- **Myth:** You need an exact match between your course of study/major and a future career.
Fact: Though there are some careers that require specific training, such as nursing, engineering, accounting, etc., there are more careers that do not follow from a specific course of study/major. In fact, a recent study by the College Placement Council indicated that the majority of college graduates are successfully in fields not directly related to their academic majors!
- **Myth:** Once you have a course of study/major, you must stick with it your entire college career.
Fact: More than 70% of college students change their course of study/major at some point during college.
- **Myth:** Job market demand should be the primary determinant of an academic choice.
Fact: Selecting a course of study/major because it is currently "hot" on the market can be dangerous. Though it is important to look at the potential for employment, the job market is difficult to predict. What is in demand when you are a freshman may not be in demand by the time you graduate. You are on much firmer ground when you select a course of study/major that truly interests you, and find a way to apply it to a career.

- **Myth:** You must pursue a certain specific course of study/major in order to prepare adequately for professional schools such as dentistry, law, business, medicine, etc.

Fact: Most professional schools do not require a specific course of study/major, as long as you meet certain academic courses. For example, in recent years, liberal arts majors have had a greater success with acceptance to medical schools than biology majors.



Myth: Your academic course of study/major is the primary determinant of your future career success.

Fact: A college major alone is not enough to help you prepare adequately for a career. Internships, jobs, extracurricular activities, and volunteer work all contribute to your growth as a well-rounded person, and in developing your skills and abilities. In fact, employers place a very high value on these types of "extra" activities when looking for employees.

- **Myth:** Your career path will remain fairly stable throughout your adult life.
Fact: Nearly half of all graduates change their career plans after they finish college, and the average person changes careers nearly 8 times in his/her lifetime.

- **Myth:** Best friends should never room together.
Fact: This is a borderline one. Rooming together has strengthened friendships and it has broken others. The only one(s) who will honestly know the answer to this one is you and the friend you are considering rooming with. Know that any roommate will get on your nerves at times and you will have to work out issues. If you still can't decide, you and your friend should request the same dorm/floor, but separate rooms. This way you will have your space (somewhat) and easily get to know and make new friends.



- **Myth:** You won't get homesick.
Fact: There are many mixed feelings and emotions when you go off to college for the first time. The thought of being off on your own can get overwhelming at times, as you learn to handle this new feeling of independence. Many get homesick for a number of reasons. This is why you will see some students going back home every so often to get some home-cooked meals, visit with parents, and see friends and siblings back home.
- **Myth:** Long distance relationships can work.
Fact: It is possible to make it work, just know that it's going to cost you a lot of time, effort, money, and missed opportunities. You will meet a whole new group of friends in college, so no one knows what to expect. Just don't spend your college life talking on the phone every night for multiple hours. There is too much to do in college.

Myth: The Freshman 15 happens to everyone.

Fact: While the Freshman 15 comes true for many freshman, not all students will gain 15 pounds their first year in college. Students aren't living at home anymore getting those full course meals, and are instead eating lightly and cheaply. Granted fast food intake and cafeteria food consumption goes up (the main causes of the freshman 15), but students tend to spend their last dollar(s) on textbooks, not proper calorie intake. Besides, many students can actually appear that they are in better shape after their first year of college, rather than looking like they gained 15 pounds. This is because students (mostly males) tend to grow into their bodies.

Myth: Ivy League schools are full of rich kids.

Fact: Not at all. Although Ivy League schools are traditionally considered expensive and only for the elite, it's the smart ones who know that any student can get in and be able to afford it regardless of their parents income class.

Myth: These will be the best years of your life.

Fact: How many times have you heard that from your parents? Many adults look back on college as a time when they were free from most real world responsibility, and now they are stuck in the daily grind of the working class. College isn't always the best time of your life per se, just enjoy the freedom you have while you have it. This is your time to figure out who you are as a person (being away from home for the first time) and what type of career you want to go into. Make every minute count. Learn how to properly balance school work, activities, and a social life.

Myth: College is like high school.

Fact: College is not like high school at all. The work and requirements are more intense. Many students who come into college don't take it seriously (mostly those that come from high schools with grade inflation) and get less than stellar grades, or worse yet, end up on academic probation their first year in college. Take studying, homework, and class attendance seriously and don't get distracted by all the social life (partying) in college.

Myth: College lasts four years.

Fact: Only about 1 out of 3 students complete college in four years, and about half complete it in six. If you plan to be out of college in four years, learn what your college's four-year graduation percentage is. There is nothing wrong with taking five years to get your degree.

Myth: It's better to get good grades than to take challenging courses.

Fact: What you really want to take in college is classes that will benefit you, help you grow, and be useful in your career after college. Of course, you'll have the courses required for your major, but almost all majors leave time for electives. This way you can pick and choose classes that may be interesting to you.

Myth: The more extracurricular activities you do, the better.

Fact: You only have time for so much. When it comes to extracurriculars, less is more; you already have enough to keep you busy. Picking a few select activities and clubs and engaging in them deeply is better than being a part-time member in lots. Remember its quality, not quantity. Pick a club or activity or two and show great interest and involvement. The leadership skills in these organizations are really what's going to help you in the long run.

Myth: Your major determines your career.

Fact: Sure an Engineering degree sounds a lot better than a History degree. There are still many excellent career opportunities for graduates from any major, as long as you can show potential employers that you know how to learn and can adapt to the field. There are many college grads out there who end up in a career totally different from their major.

Myth: There will be no need to study.

Fact: Think you can cram the night before a college physics exam? Think again. Unlike high school, you won't be getting tested over a few simple equations with multiple choice answers. Chances are that college mid-term exam will cover ten chapters consisting of two-hundred textbook pages covering everything from memorized equations to the theory behind those equations.

Myth: You will be Miss/Mr. Popularity, just like you were in high school



Fact: When you walk into your first college class with over 300 students and nobody even bothers to turn in your direction, you will know that being popular in high school does not equate to popularity in college.

Myth: You'll still be the smartest one.

Fact: Take a look around your college classroom. Sitting to your right, to your left, right in front of you and right behind you are people who also graduated in the top ten of their high school class. You'll have to work at least twice as hard in college as you did in high school to stand out academically.

Myth: You won't be home-sick.

Fact: When your parents drop you off at your new college dorm, the feeling of independence is so overwhelming you can hardly contain yourself. Many students tell their parents they won't be coming home until Thanksgiving break when, in fact, they will get so homesick, their parents will see their car coming up the driveway every single weekend.

Myth: You will keep in touch with all your old friends.

Fact: On your high school yearbook, I guarantee your friends wrote little notes like BFF (Best Friends Forever) and LYLAS (Love You Like A Sis) or DEC (Don't Ever Change). You will meet so many new people in college that it will be difficult if not nearly impossible to keep in touch with all of your old high school friends. You will go to your ten-year high school reunion having kept in touch with only one or two people even though you swore you'd e-mail your high school friends every single day.

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