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Tips for Thriving at College (from current college scholars and alumni)

Selina Fernandez (Southwestern University)

Your college campus is not perfect. While I love Southwestern, I have to admit that it isn't always my favorite place... there are moments when you can feel alienated, but this can be good, because it can help you form the activist/resistor in you. As woman, as a Latina, as a Mexican girl, it is not easy always... but like I said before this will shape your identity! My ultimate advice to the graduating seniors is to question everything about the institution you choose to attend! Good Luck!

Evelyn Vargas (University of Denver)

- Understand that a transition to a PWI (Predominantly White Institution) can be a big culture shock
- Make sure you are in close contact with the bursar's office. Their job is to help you, so reach out. And they'll likely help you faster if they already have that relationship with you
- Reach out to new people!!! It's scary and awkward at first but it's definitely better than being alone and feeling isolated
- Join a ton of things on campus. You'll make new friends and if you don't like it you can just drop it. But you never know, you could find a new passion or some new friends!
- Attendance isn't mandatory a lot of the time but skipping a lot of classes will bite you in the butt

Imelda Nevarez (University of Denver)

It's ok to feel like you don't belong sometimes, because there were times that I felt that I wasn't welcomed because of my Latina identity. But I was able to overcome that by promoting diversity and acceptance through supporting my African friends' new organization, African Students United. I actually became the secretary for the group and I feel like I am contributing to the whole cause, which is ultimately promoting diversity at a PWI. Overall, don't be afraid to challenge these institutions, and question the way things are. Because you do have the ability to create a difference!

Selma Gutierrez (St. Edward's University)

- Being away from home is hard at first but it gets so much better after a week!
- Be yourself and do not forget where you came from
- READ THE SYLLABUS
- Please take care of yourself and eat because I know I had days I would be so busy I would forget to even make time to eat
- USE YOUR RESOURCES
- Don't doubt yourself and don't compare yourself to others
- GET INVOLVED! You'll make wonderful friends!



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- Call your parents often! They will seriously always be cheering you on!
- DO YOUR HOMEWORK EARLY
- PLAN OUT YOUR WEEK!

Esteban Cabrera Durán (Swarthmore College)

- Make a solid group of friends, but be open to meeting people from everywhere
- Transferring is an option if things don't play out as you imagined. *But it's okay to stay if you don't want to leave!*
- Set boundaries. I found it helpful to go to sleep at a certain hour so that I don't stay up all night doing work. Prioritize your health!
- Talk with your professors!
- Slay

Alondra Granados (Cornell College)

- I think it's important to not forget basic necessities, like cleaning supplies!!!
- The first couple of months are honestly the hardest, but honestly it gets better as times go by!
- You're going to miss home, your friends and your family sososo much, but it's important to keep in mind that they are always cheering you on
- Sometimes you're going to feel like you won't survive a class but when you do it feels amazing!
- Finally, you're going to meet a variety of people and it's awesome to get to know them

Ivan Comparan (UNM)

It's okay to not know what you want to do. That's the point of college!

Lesley Estrada (SFCC)

Reach out for help! Always try to get an advisor's help. Remember, you're not alone!

Rocio Archuleta (Alumna, St. Edwards University)

If you made friends at orientation and got contact info, it may be a good place to start regarding hanging out in a group if you don't know anyone. I met my first friends at orientation. We kind of hung out the first days of school but then I made closer friends at my dorm.

Dorm/apartment suggestions

- Always make agreements with roommates and try to avoid conflict at all cost
- COMMUNICATE!
- Make plans with roommates to hang out! And attend events! Who cares if you go alone!
- Introduce yourself to neighbors



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- Pick up after yourself
- Don't isolate yourself in your room so much – it can get pretty lonely in there!

Suggestions for school

- Get the contact info of at least 1 person in every class- whoever you sit next to or what not. This saved my butt so many times
- Deadlines seem to knock your door 10x faster in college. Don't wait so long to start an assignment!
- Take advantage of all the tutoring/test reviews/ study sessions you can until you know what to expect from a teacher
- Do your best to get to know teachers and participate in class because they can recommend you to programs, additional scholarships, etc.
- Look for books at places like bigwords.com and other price comparison websites before making your final choice of where you get a book from

Penuel Abbas (Alumni, Colorado College)

Concerning packing: don't go crazy! College freshman are notorious for bringing too much. If you're near home you can always grab more stuff and your fam can usually send stuff. Your favorite clothes, personal items, are all you usually need. Also freshman dorms are usually small so pack light!