

# Adjusting to College



[Making the Transition](#)

## What are some of the most common changes you can expect in the first year on campus?

- **New environment and relationships.** First year students must adjust to different living arrangements and develop new relationships. Living with roommates may be the first 'test' freshmen experience. Students face the challenge of adjusting to roommates who may have very different boundaries and individual needs than family and friends from home. Roommates may or may not develop close friendships, but communication and compromise can build a smoother transition. College brings a unique opportunity to interact and live with students from various backgrounds and cultures. Expanding your worldview by learning about each other's differences and similarities will likely enhance your college experience.

Pritchard, M. E., Wilson, G. S., & Yamnitz, B. (2007). What predicts adjustment among college students? A longitudinal panel study. *Journal of American College Health*, 56(1), 15-22.

## Making the Transition

## What are some of the most common changes you can expect in the first year on campus?

- **Greater personal freedom.** Living on your own for the first time means that you will gain independence and take charge of the many choices and

**decisions that your parents and teachers made for you in the past. While this new found freedom can be exciting, it may also feel overwhelming and less predictable than what you are accustomed to. The freedom to manage your daily life is a learning process, but one that can be very satisfying.**

Pritchard, M. E., Wilson, G. S., & Yamnitz, B. (2007). What predicts adjustment among college students? A longitudinal panel study. *Journal of American College Health*, 56(1), 15-22.

## **Making the Transition**

### **What are some of the most common changes you can expect in the first year on campus?**

- **Added responsibility. First-year students must manage the daily responsibilities that accompany their increased personal freedom. Students must manage basic tasks such as eating, sleeping, exercising, and going to class. New students must also address more complex responsibilities such as balancing studying and socializing, participating in clubs and activities, and handling finances. Managing time is a demand that all first-year students experience. A typical day in college is less structured than high school, and there is more reading and studying that is required outside of class. Some students may feel as if they have no free time to do anything but schoolwork, while others feel like they have too much free time outside of the classroom.**

## Making the Transition

### What are some of the most common changes you can expect in the first year on campus?

- **Changing relationships.** While there are many changes occurring in your new campus life, there will also be changes in your relationships. New students often face challenges such as best friends going to other universities, beginning new romantic relationships or maintaining existing ones, and juggling newly formed relationships with already established ones. Students must balance a sense of connectedness and separation while at college. Some freshmen feel the need to call or e-mail home several times a week in the first few months away, while others require less frequent communication with their family and friends.