



e-series: home-schooled students part five: tips for college transition



The transition from home-school to college can be a challenging combination of excitement and stress. Class sizes, interaction style and expectation of the faculty, schedules, and being on a dynamic college campus can overwhelm any student, but especially those coming from the more personalized and smaller learning environments of a home-school. There are several steps that students and their families can take to support a successful transition to a college campus.

tip one

Begin the transition before classes begin. Take full advantage of all the orientation activities that the university or college offers. Many offer events or receptions for admitted students in the spring. Most offer summer registration activities. Supportive colleges and universities will not charge students and their families to attend these events.



tip two

Attend the new student orientation activities that occur before classes begin. Most universities offer at least a day or two of activities designed to make students more familiar with their university or college. WOU's New Student Week is the longest in the state and lasts eight days.



tip three

Visit the campus during the summer or spring on your own. This will allow you to become more familiar with the campus grounds and local community at your own pace. While on campus stop by the admission office and the financial aid office to make sure that your files are complete.

tip four

If you have the option, choose to live on campus. While residence halls do not have the reputation of being spacious or four-star, they are practical, convenient and actually play a critical role in student success. Students who live on campus achieve higher GPAs, complete more courses and participate in more campus activities than do students who live off-campus.





tip five

Join a club or activity. A critical part of the college experience is learning to effectively interact with other students. Clubs and organizations provide students with interpersonal social networks and leadership opportunities. They are also tremendous enhancements to the academic aspects of college. Clubs range from sports to community service to political to religious to academic and almost any other topic that a group of students can imagine. At one time WOU even had a Harry Potter student club.

tip six

Go to class early and prepared. Faculty notice when students are engaged and trying to learn. The best way to do so is to arrive early and to read the assigned material before class. Also, sit near the front or the middle of class so that you can more easily hear the professor's lecture and read the presentation materials that are projected.

tip seven

Use faculty office hours. These are a critical component to learning. Make sure that you understand the course material. Remember if you knew it all already you would be teaching the class. It is expected that some of the material in your courses will be new and challenging to you.

tip eight

Be advised! Academic advising is one of the most critical parts of a successful academic plan. Make sure that you see your advisor regularly, the more the better. At WOU students are required to meet with their academic advising every term. Self-advising is one of the most certain ways to take the wrong courses, miss deadlines and needlessly extend your college experience, so take full advantage of academic advising.

tip nine

Have fun. College is a time to grow, learn and prepare. College is best when you have a strong balance of fun and work. Make sure you take time to exercise, go to campus concerts (most are free), talk late into the night with your residence hall roommate, and explore new ideas and perspectives.

tip ten

Call or email home regularly. One of the major advantages of a home-schooled education is the strengthened connection between parent and child. Make sure that the lines of communication stay open by having regular phone or text conversations.

