

College Myths

There are many misunderstandings when it comes to college, and therefore there are many common myths about college as well. Whether it is due to wrong assumptions in popular culture, or just rumors spread by fellow college students, in the following article we will reveal the truths to the many myths that surround college.

Myth: If your roommate dies, you get all A's.

Truth: Although many schools will sympathize with you and understand this would be a traumatic situation, no school has a policy that awards a 4.0 GPA to a student whose roommate dies. There are a number of variations of this myth, one being students thinking they receive a 4.0 only if their roommate commits suicide. There is no truth to this myth. If something this horrible did happen, students would probably be offered counseling, but not a 4.0. This myth is portrayed in the movie *Dead Man on Campus*.

Myth: Best friends should never room together.

Truth: 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.

Truth: 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.

Truth: 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. It is tough and there will be some rocky times, but if it was meant to be, then it will all work out. 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.

Truth: While the Freshman 15 comes true for many freshmen, 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.

Truth: 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. Even Harvard recently made changes to their financial aid packages to help lower and middle-class families be able to afford a

Harvard education easier.

Myth: Ivy League Schools are expensive.

Truth: Contrary to popular belief, the Ivy League schools are affordable. Granted they are more expensive than your typical state college, know that most of the Ivy League schools offer excellent financial aid packages. Did you know Harvard is only the 118th most expensive college in the nation tuition wise?

Myth: Sororities are outlawed at certain colleges because of brothel laws.

Truth: This myth is false. There are many students across the country who are convinced their university lacks a sorority because of this non-existent law. Some municipalities have old laws that prohibit a number of women living together in order to prevent the establishment of brothels. However, sororities and other college housing are exempt, as are other reasonable situations where lots of women might live together, like a dorm at a women's college. Some municipalities do have zoning laws prohibiting more than a certain number of non-family members from living together, but not even in those cases would a household in violation of these codes be labeled a brothel.

Myth: College is like the movie Animal House.

Truth: Believe it or not, most students go to college to study. While many make partying a weekly thing, it's those that do it every night who end up struggling with their grades and/or fail out of class and end up on academic probation. While a good college theme party is fun every now and then, one of the biggest tests of college is being able to balance academic work with your social life. Live a little, but know why you went to college in the first place.

Myth: Beer before liquor, never been sicker.

Truth: As soon as you reach more than a handful of drinks, it really doesn't really matter in what order you drank them...odds are, you're going to be sick the next day. Granted mixing doesn't help, just know what your tolerance level is and try and maintain.

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

Truth: 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.

Truth: 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.

Truth: 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.

Truth: 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. See our list of recommended courses students should take.

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

Truth: 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 it's 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 college degree will be your ticket to your dream Job.

Truth: By the time you graduate, there will be many college grads just like you competing for the same job at that top Fortune 500 company. A problem that many grads find coming out of college is that they lack the experience that employer's desire. Yes, you got a college degree...Congratulations! Just remember everyone has to start somewhere. This is why you should start looking for a job well before your graduation and/or do internships at companies in fields you are interested in working in.

Myth: Your major determines your career.

Truth: 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.

This is part one of a three part series that includes college myths, college admission myths, and college urban legends.