

## The Guide to Surviving Your First Year in Loyola

By Marley Holt-Williams

"The University will inspire students to learn, lead, and serve in a diverse and changing world."

### The Mission

This is the most important part of Loyola's mission. A core value that you will learn here is the idea of serving. Not just serving yourself, but serving everyone around you and becoming a part of something bigger than yourself. That's what I really appreciate about this school. It feels like you are part of a community and not just a student among many others in a college. So for the class of 2026, make sure you are ready to work with your peers to make the whole experience better for each other, because without that ideal, you wouldn't be on the same path as the mission declares you to be.



Messina picture of first-years on Welcome Weekend

## MESSINA—AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

Also in reference to the mission, here at Loyola you are introduced to so many different beliefs, opinions, and values to where you learn to coexist with people different than you. There are so many opportunities to help the community all year around like with donations and charity events. Speaking of working together, another great thing about Loyola is the Messina program. This is great for incoming freshmen because it allows them to not only make friends and do fun things while getting to know each other and the campus, but also, within the Messina class, you will learn key tips about college and you will do things that otherwise would be hard to do alone, like registering for classes. You will serve others by just being in the program be-

cause you will help your peers. This is a great program that is very inclusive and helpful and every member of Loyola's class of 2026—you should be excited about it and looking forward to meeting your fellow Messina members.

At the core of Loyola, through the students, faculty, staff, and professors, whether you're a student-athlete or just strictly a student, everyone's goal is to help each other become the best version of themselves. Everyone here is very friendly and helpful and are ready to assist with teaching people things. With this in mind, I'm going to share some other tips with you.



The Quad with a statue of St. Ignatius

### SOME SPECIFIC PIECES OF ADVICE

#### A Great Place to Eat

Personally, I don't eat meat. So this might not be everyone's type of food, but one of my favorite restaurants in Baltimore is [Golden West Café](#): "Golden West Cafe is a beloved Baltimore culinary institution, serving Americana cuisine and Southwest comfort food, rooted in traditional New Mexican specialties." It's a vegan restaurant that has all sorts of things ranging from tacos, smoothies, donuts, chicken, waffles, and burgers. Whether you eat meat or not, this is a great place to try. There are lots of different options so there should be something for everybody. To get there, the best way to get around Baltimore, to be honest, is simply Uber. It's very fast and convenient. The Loyola shuttles will take you around campus but not through Baltimore.

#### My Advice on Saving Money

I learned this in high school, but still this is relevant. To save money in college, the best thing to do is budget yourself. This might seem obvious but what I mean by that is literally go into Excel and make a spreadsheet of all your expenses then figure out how much you should be spending a week and on what. On top of this, regardless of if your parents send you money or if you have money saved up, the best thing to do is get a job, so you will have a constant and consistent stream of income. There are plenty of on-campus job opportunities, so I would try to stay away from off-campus things because then all types of factors come up like transportation which could add more costs to your college life.



Budget sheets. Credit NORFOLK on Upsplash.

#### My Favorite Resource on Campus

My favorite resource on campus has to be [The Study](#). It's the best place to go when you just want a nice quiet space to go and get work done. Also, they offer tutoring that is free and you can get help on pretty much anything. I've personally gone a few times and found that it's a great environment to work in.

#### The Best Ways to Learn More about Yourself

A club is a great way to not only meet people as a freshman but also a great way to find what you like doing and maybe find out more about yourself. It's essential that as an incoming freshman you don't have too much time on your hands because then the school year flies by and you don't get the best college experience. So make yourself busy. I would not commute for the first year. Now I understand if it's a money thing, so if it's not affordable it makes sense. At first I was going to commute because of how cheap it would be relatively, but I'm so glad that I didn't. Living on campus is what makes college what it is and is the heart of it. There will be so many great memories made when you live on campus and so much fun to be had. I recommend that you don't stress about it and go random for the first year unless you know people at school, because most people incoming are going through the same thing and looking for friends, so it's not something to be pressured about or stressed out about. Welcome to Loyola!