



Love big practices

“IT REALLY HELPED ME GET OUT OF MY SHELL AND MAKE STRONG FRIENDSHIPS.”



Throwing is super fun

## Frisbee, Friendships, and Family

### By Frebruk Mikre

Before you read the rest of this article, I'd like to get a serious misconception out of the way: college isn't anything like how you expect it to be. I had so many notions about it, and the truth is, the experience varies for each person. Everyone drones on about how you have so much time and the truth is you do until you don't. In high school the repercussions for missing an assignment were minimal, a little scare with a slap on the wrist at worst but no real life-changing consequences. In college, missing an assignment is like a blow to the stomach; you're effectively tossing money down the drain with each bad decision you make and the pressure to perform will weigh you down. To any prospective college student, I'd say capitalize on the first few weeks to really create good friendships and connections. You will need the emotional support to get you through the year and after those first two weeks, joining a friend group will seem as difficult as joining a Mean Girl's clique. In those first two weeks, I decided to join a couple club sports and the first one that stuck out to me was Ultimate Frisbee. As I guide you through the intricacies of university life, I hope to light the pathway to a successful social and academic college career.

### REALITY

The first week of college is always the rosier. It's filled with no worries, friendly faces, and the excitement of leaving the house with no governing authority. You're going to go buck wild, and I can't blame you for it. As the first week of classes sets in, though, you might begin to feel more and more lonely, secluded, and lacking a sense of belonging. Trust me, it's completely normal. I consider myself an extrovert and will talk to just about anyone, but the fact of the matter is—unlike high school—no structure exists that forces people to interact with each other anymore. If you are simply going to your classes and going back to your dorm, the likelihood of you making friends will decrease dramatically. You might be skeptical, but the scene is likely ridiculously different from any previous form of education you've attended. Everyone is running on their own schedule so you're going to want something to anchor yours with other people who share similar interests. Your options are endless, from clubs, organizations, and in my case, Ultimate Frisbee. The first reason I chose to play frisbee was just because I wanted to learn how to play the game. As the semester is progressing, however, I'm beginning to realize more and more the value of being a part of this amazing family. I'll separate the reasons into three broader elements: social life, physical/mental health, and academic health. Now you might be confused as to how playing frisbee could possibly influence your academics but, for now, let's focus on the obvious elements.

## THE THREE ELEMENTS

As I mentioned before, everyone is running on their own schedule, and it becomes increasingly difficult to see your friends or make friends during the week because you're swamped with classes and work. What joining a club does is sets an allotted time specifically for you to socialize and have fun with like-minded individuals. It's literally **an alley-oop for you to make friends**. If you don't score a point after that assist, I'm not quite sure I can help you. That's an essay for another time so let's get back on track.

The second element, **physical and mental health**, is a no brainer but I'd like to offer a possibly unexpected perspective. MIT, widely regarded as one of the best universities in the world, requires their students to pass a swim test by the time of their graduation. The principle is that intelligence is strength of both the mind and body. Obviously, simply learning how to swim probably isn't consistent enough to keep your body healthy, but the thought is present. I encourage everyone planning to attend college to be as physically active as possible. Going straight to your dorm right after classes can seem so enticing and comfortable but as you get into the habit of lying on your bed, you're almost guaranteed to lose motivation. Committing yourself to a team will allow you to get some positive pressure in your system that will motivate you to get up and not only go to the club of your choosing but also redirect that motivation into your studies, hobbies, etc.

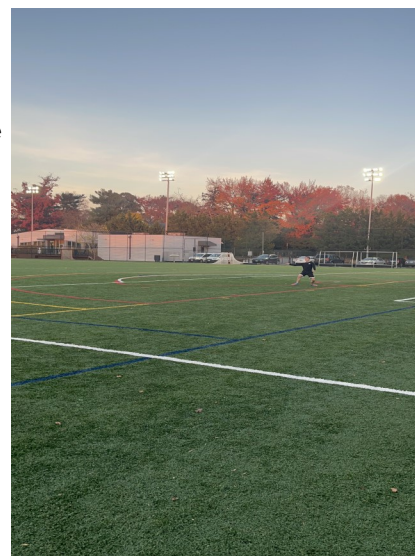
Mentally, school is very draining. I don't need to tell you this; high school was something, but college is a different beast. I have fewer classes and almost twice the workload; it honestly feels like I'm just watching myself complete assignments sometimes. You're going to need a stress reliever. Somewhere to shout at the top of your lungs and talk trash and try to outrun people who might be faster than you. Obviously, everyone deals with mental stress differently but for people who want to destress with physical activity, frisbee is guaranteed to have you heaving and bent over after running as fast as you can trying to defend an upperclassman.

That's also another thing that isn't spoken about enough. You are now the person who plans and facilitates your days so not having something to occupy your time is a trap a lot of freshmen can fall into. Clubs and sports, especially those that meet multiple times a week like Frisbee (3 times a week, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday) give you something to look forward to when the rest of your week is bleak with assignments and class.

The last element, **academic health**, is probably one you weren't expecting. Truth be told, it isn't exactly a standalone pillar; it intertwines the first two elements but since academic progress and achievement are the main reasons we all attend higher education,



Practicing catches



Practicing throws

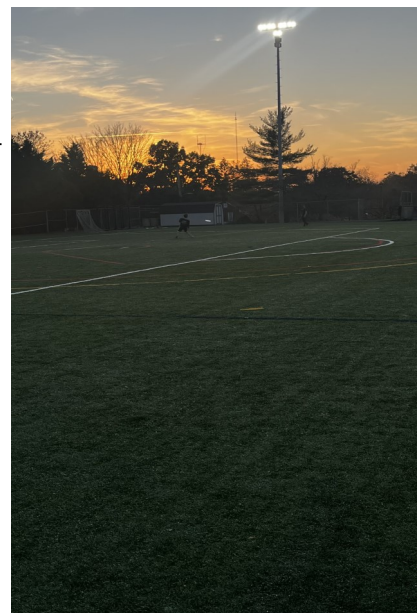


### THE THREE ELEMENTS CTD.

we might as well make sure we are as fully prepared as possible to absorb as much knowledge as possible. College isn't much like high school in terms of classroom dynamics. Most classes are independent and the ones that incorporate group work don't have the same vibe, so to speak. A good lifeline I've found is talking about your assignments or classes to people who are both classmates and not. On the frisbee team, I have a friend who has the same Spanish class as me and she'll remind me of assignments that have completely evaporated from my mind. I'd be remiss if I didn't acknowledge that my grade in Spanish is still half afloat because of her.

### FLY WITH THE PAGODAS

If any of the previous points haven't at least made you consider joining the team, I'll leave you with some words of wisdom given by our current captain, Jacob. While Jacob did play Ultimate in high school and is more familiar with the sport than most of the people on the team, he makes sure that there is "lots of patience and accommodation" to go around. Many of the first-years who join have no knowledge of Ultimate and if you have any inhibitions, I'd urge you to squash them. Jacob advises that the club does require some level of effort in terms of showing up and coming in with a positive attitude but the rewards you reap are abundant. He says that from the moment he joined the team as a freshman to now, he's seen how the "community has fostered a positive environment" for both him and other people. He says the club was "exactly what [he] was looking for, and really helped ease the transition into college." If you've managed to get this far, I thank you and invite you to join the Flying Pagodas of Loyola (our club name, in case I didn't mention it).



Sunsets on DGA don't disappoint



The Flying Pagodas

