



THE PHOTO ABOVE IS OF MY FAVORITE STUDY SPOT IN THE HUMANITIES BUILDING. BELOW IS THE BEAUTIFUL QUAD IN THE SPRING!



## How To: College Edition

By Lauren Ficon

Hello, and a warm welcome to the Class of 2028! Whew. You did it. You're almost here! \*\*\*I say this as a wave of anxiety probably overwhelms you just at the thought of actually starting college...\*\*\* But, trust me, you will be fine. I was in the same place as you just a few months ago, and believe it or not...I am still alive! So, instead of rubbing in the fact that I got the most challenging part of college over with, I'll give you some real advice and a newsflash: you might want to listen to me!

### 1. Be Open to Everything, Even if it's Out of Your Comfort Zone.

When I asked Olivia LaGreca, prepare yourself...this is a long introduction, a fourth-year student here at Loyola University Maryland with a Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness major and a minor in Marketing and LALS, who participates as an active member of Sigma Society and LCG, what her best piece of advice would be for you guys, the incoming class of 2028, she replied with, "I would say to come with an open mind and don't be afraid to put yourself out there and get involved on campus." This is HUGE. Trust me...I get it. Doing things out of your comfort zone, especially when undergoing such a significant change and adjusting to settling into your new home, can be intimidating. But please just trust me, it's a MUST! I made new friends and met many amazing people I am still friends with today during my first new days here just by being open to everything during orientation and putting myself out there.

On the other hand, if you come to college with a closed mind, you won't be able to grow to your fullest potential. If you keep yourself inside your box, not straying outside, even if it's uncomfortable (which it probably will be), you're not doing yourself the justice you deserve. For example, before college I probably would've laughed in your face if you told me that I would be best friends with a girl I met during one of those classic ice-breaker games (TOTALLY not my thing). I think about if we both didn't participate or go there with an open mind looking to

meet new people, we wouldn't be such good friends today. Go into every experience with an open mind. Just by trying a few new things or talking to people you wouldn't usually talk to, you are opening new doors to fun, exciting experiences that wouldn't be open to you if you were still in your box.

## 2. Be Patient with Yourself.

Give Yourself a Break! Okay, Do NOT misinterpret this...I do not mean to slack off and be lazy by not attending class because you "need a break." I mean to give everything you do your best while remembering you are doing all you can. When I asked my best friend, a fellow first-year student at Loyola, Riley Grillo, what her best advice would be for first-year students, she exclaimed, "PATIENCE! Please learn to be patient with yourself and others around you because this is new for you and most of the people you will be surrounded by during your first few weeks here." See...this is why she's my best friend...I couldn't have said it better myself. While here, you will be put in different or new situations that you aren't fully prepared for, which requires you to be patient with yourself and others around you. And also know that you're not alone. Loyola offers many different resources if you need help or guidance. Some services provided to you by [The Counseling Center](#) include Brief Individual Counseling, "Let's Talk" Single Sessions, Group counseling, Comprehensive Referral Support, Psychiatric Services, Consultation Services, and more! These are just a few of the services I find to be great if you need guidance or help with a specific thing or even just want to talk to someone. By doing this, you are adapting to your surroundings and helping yourself better adapt to your new home at Loyola!

## 3. Communicate with Professors

Ugh, I know. I'm boring talking about academics; take this advice anyway. I will quote myself for this one: "YOU NEED TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR PROFESSORS!"

Maybe your current high school is drilling this to you guys now, but it's the truth. You don't get chased down for missing assignments anymore; you need to be responsible for your work. And also, please just go to class. And I know you're probably thinking...OMG college professors are horrifying, but from personal experience they are often



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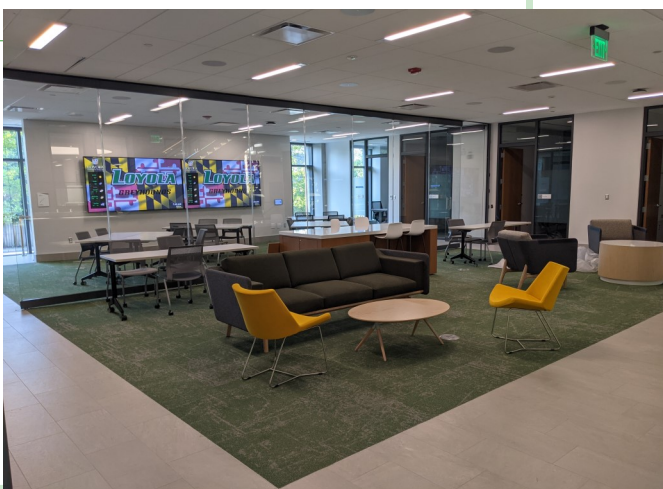
nicer than your average high school teacher. Do not be scared! The professors are here at Loyola because they want to help you and see you thrive. Also, do your part by attending class. I promise that going to class benefits you significantly; not only do you get the participation grade, but you get the chance to build a relationship with your professors by being an active and consistent part of the discussions, and you get to take part in a class atmosphere that can benefit you down the line.

#### 4. Lastly, STRIVE To Do Your Best.

I saved the best and most important for last. Please strive and push yourself to do your best no matter what you're doing! Striving for your best work goes with getting out of your comfort zone, which I think is an essential step in transitioning to your new home, Loyola. Striving to do your best can apply to many instances, for example, in relationships (new and old), taking care of yourself (physically and mentally), and, significantly, academically. When I asked Heidi Fuentes, Academic Success Coach here at Loyola University Maryland, how to succeed as a first-year student, she responded, "As a first-year student in college, there will be many challenges along the way. The most important aspect to academic success is being honest with yourself about what you may or may not struggle with. Do not be afraid to ask for help because professors genuinely want you to succeed." Moreover, I wish I had known this before college, as the professors are here for you! Everyone here at Loyola wants you to do your best and succeed in whatever you decide to do.

Well, I hope my yelling at you to read this worked since you're still reading it. I genuinely wish you the best college experience at Loyola University Maryland. Keep my advice in your mind, and everything will work out how it needs to. Go, Hounds!

A Smart (now) Sophomore



The Rizzo Career Center is a great place to start preparing for post-Loyola as you set yourself up to STRIVE.