



Humanities

## Commuting Life at Loyola By Lee Le

When I got the acceptance letter for Loyola Maryland back in March, I was ecstatic but a question popped into my mind, "Am I gonna get a dorm or commute there every day?" Then I promptly forgot about it until mid June when emails about summer orientation came in. I realized then that the application for housing already passed on the 16th of June, so commuting here I come. I took my mom's car, drove through morning traffic at 8 am, tried to use the GPS, and spent 20 minutes finding where to park. After parking at the York lot (never park here), I got out and looked around to see dozens of cars that had a pass allowing them to park. I was without one. I just took a risk and said, "Surely I don't get towed right?" That was my introduction of driving to Loyola. But with a few months of experience under my belt, I came to the conclusion that commuting is hard but manageable.

### PARKING AT LOYOLA

You may be wondering, "Why never park at the York parking lot?" Because it is just far away from everything and the walk is around 10-15 minutes to everything else. It is especially spooky when walking to York after sun down: lights flickering, walking uphill, uncut grass, through a residential area. Getting to and from the parking lot is easier with shuttle buses when knowing where you're headed (pro-tip: learn the names of everything on campus and how to get there). I could have just opened the [campus map](#) but being a goof I didn't until a few weeks later.

One good place to park for a limited time is North Charles Street. You can street park there from 9 am until 4 pm without getting a ticket, so use that to your advantage. You might not need to pay for a parking pass if your classes fall in between those times. Having a [parking pass](#) is nice, I would recommend the cheapest one—daytime satellite parking for \$125. It allows you to park at the gym, or FAC as others call it, York parking lot and the Cathedral lot from 7 am 'til midnight. The FAC is on North Charles Street so parking there is great, a nice clean area, you can spot some deer if lucky, and there are hella shuttle buses that go to the FAC so missing one is hard.

### GETTING INVOLVED AT LOYOLA

"How do I get involved with Loyola while commuting?" a question that was constantly on my mind because I didn't want to miss out on the college experience. I joined the Esport club and tried out for some games. It is fun getting to know people at the school without actually living on campus. I got on two teams. Every week we competed against other universities and practiced for the game. The bond created helps me with adapting to university life and commuting. The club allowed me to make friends: we played late-night games, talked about school and life. It made me feel like I belonged. (An added benefit is that I can crash at the "refuge" dorm of my teammates.) So I definitely recommend joining a club because connecting with people on campus is important. With over [200 clubs](#) available and hundreds more events, join any that peaks your interest and it will make commuting life easier.



Boulder dining hall and my favorite cashier

## DRIVING EXPERIENCE

Dying in traffic waiting for a bus to pick up kids, a long line of cars on the highway, Baltimore drivers, and weather all were my enemies during the first week of driving. This all sounds bad from an outsider perspective but if you live in Maryland you know this is not uncommon.

Also, there is always construction no matter what in the city. Bumps? Check. Cones? Check. Concrete trucks at every corner? Check. The road that I drive to school had construction for weeks, they took away the entire road and put in a new one. You have to plan for this.

And finally, a commuter day is shorter than on-campus day because time is spent driving. Having good time management is needed to make life easier. I found this out the hard way, falling behind a bit in class work because of my lack of discipline. So better pick up that skill if you decide to be a commuter. (If you need help with this, check out [The Study.](#))



Esport Club President,  
Kobe Middleton, '24

## THE UPSIDE OF COMMUTING

The nice thing about commuters is saving on money for dorming—between [\\$11,500-12,950](#)—so if you are stingy like me, we are good. Commuters are not obligated to get a meal plan, saving a few thousands on food. But if you are ever hungry, paying with a credit card is accepted at Boulder, the main food court. There are also plenty of fast food places and restaurants in the city: Popeyes is five minutes away from the school, and [Korean BBQ/Hotpot](#) is close by in Towson, so you are never lacking in variety.

## TRY OUT COMMUTING

Commuting life at Loyola is hard but manageable, once you find your most efficient routine. Getting closer to the end of first semester, I see lots of benefits of being a commuter. You are not bound to stay at the school, eating the same food every day with limited movement. Commuters have freedom after finishing classes—we can go back home to our family while we save money on dorming and meal plans.

There will be obstacles when commuting, running over a nail because construction, Gotham-like weather out of nowhere, forgetting to start the car when it's freezing outside. But when it is managed well, you'll save lots of money, and you won't be stuck at Loyola every day. Give commuting a try for a year, see how you like it. Just remember to [apply to housing](#) before the due date, unlike me, if commuting is not for you.



The Writing Department hallway, lined with lots of seating, is a great place to study and meet friends.

