

UDecide

WELCOME BACK TO CAMPUS!

We hope that you had a great, busy, and fun filled summer however you chose to spend it. You've been missed here in Newark and we've been anticipating your return to campus!

Your year ahead can be filled with great sporting events, amazing activities, and fascinating classes.

Even with our hopes for you and your school year, only you can decide to make it an amazing one! So choose to get involved, choose to make friends, and choose to be open to the new opportunities that your educational experience here on campus provides you!

UDecide is a monthly newsletter produced by the student staff members of the Office of Student Conduct.

Welcome to Campus!

We are one of the most connected generations in history. We know how to use computers to an unprecedented capacity and we use them for everything. We need an answer to something, we Google. We want to talk to someone, we IM, Email, Post, Tweet, or Text. When you meet someone new, you friend them on Facebook, Myspace, or another social networking site. Due to the fact that the internet has shaped our lives, the majority of our interaction with friends (and even strangers) occurs through a screen (either a cell phone screen or a computer monitor).

Friending people online is easy. Talking on IM or on a message board brings a certain anonymity that allows for conversational freedom. If you're shy, having conversations this way might allow you to be courageous when speaking to people. If the conversation is occurring through a screen, then an individual can say whatever he or she wants to say without having to deal with the consequences as if it were face-to-face. Think of how hurtful words on a website can be.

Online interaction has made one thing increasingly more and more difficult for members of our generation ... going out



http://farm3.static.flickr.com/2332/1801722310_2c1721f108.jpg

and making friends! Many students have never had a roommate. They often worry about whether or not they will be liked, whether or not they will get along with their roommate, and whether or not coming to school was a good decision at all. Throw in the mix the start of the semester academic pressure (which can continue throughout the year) and being away from home and the resulting worries that a student could face are endless!

When you're stressed or pressured at home, who do you typically turn to for help or advice or simply a distraction? The answer given by members of our age group is typically "my friends." Who do you turn to when none of your friends are physically there for you in the moment? Sure, you can IM or email or post to your friends from home. But is staying at school without meeting new people a happy or healthy situation for anyone? How boring and lonely would living in a residence hall or apartment complex be if you didn't have friends to hang out with? Go to games with? Go to shows with? Or even simply go to dinner with?

There are simple things that anyone could do to make more friends in and around campus. Some are simpler than others, but most take almost no effort at all!

TRY THESE TIPS ON REVERSE SIDE!

Joining Organizations on Campus

One of the great things about campus is that there are a HUNDREDS of Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) and Chartered Greek Organizations. These on campus organizations allow each individual student to be involved in enjoyable things along with other students who enjoy the same things or who want to learn the same things. Think of how much fun it would be to hang out with other students who share the same interests that you do?

Sounds perfect right? But often times students don't join the organizations that they want to because they are scared to attend a meeting alone or they are unable to find a friend to go with them. Here are some simple steps to joining organizations here on campus:

1. Go to the Student Activities Nights. At the beginning of each semester the Student Centers host Activities Nights where campus organizations share information with potential new members. During these Activities Nights, you can sign up to receive emails from the groups about their meetings and upcoming events. The spring Activities Night is on Tuesday, February 9th from 7-9pm in the Trabant Center. If you missed the Fall Activities Nights, then you can call the Student Centers at 302.831.2428 to ask for group contact information.

2. Visit the organization's website. Some groups on campus have their own websites. All are listed on the Student Center Website. You can always email the representative listed for meeting and/or event times or general information about the group.

3. Ask around. Ask your friends or people on your floor if anyone is interested in attending a meeting with you. Often times, you maybe able to find someone on your floor who is interested in the same organization as you. Going to meetings seems less intimidating when you go with someone who has similar interests.

4. GO ANYWAY! If you don't have friends or people that are interested in joining a group (especially a group that you REALLY want to join), you shouldn't let that keep you from doing something you really want to do. It might be intimidating to go to a meeting alone, but remember everyone in that meeting is there because they want to be involved. You may get to that meeting and recognize someone from one or more of your classes! Those students may have the same interest in the group that you have! An easy way to get a conversation started is to sit down next to someone who is sitting alone and just say "Hi, my name is _____. This is the first time I have been to a meeting, is this your first time too?" It may or may not be that student's first meeting but in the end, you have a common interest to talk about! You're not going into the conversation completely unarmed.

5. You don't know until you try. This is true for almost any situation. Get the most out of your experience here at UD and try things that YOU really want to do. Campus organizations are ALWAYS looking for new members just the way people are always looking for new friends!

For more information about the many student organizations on campus go to:

www.udel.edu/RSO/
www.udel.edu/student-centers/A&P/index.html

To find information about events sponsored by student organizations, please visit:

www.udel.edu/studentevents

University of Delaware ∴ Office of Student Conduct

• **Smile!**

Smiling is the easiest thing that you could do to initiate a conversation with someone. Whether you are living in a residence hall or an apartment complex, you have neighbors.

An easy, harmless way to initiate conversations with people is to smile at them.

- **Say 'Hi'!** If you're living in a residence hall or apartment complex, the students who are living on either side of you really do wish to know who you are. Seeing them in the hall or when they have their doors open is a great time to just say 'hi'. While it might feel awkward the first time that you stop in to say hello to someone, you simply need to be armed with "My name is ____ and I live next door. I just wanted to introduce myself and say hi." You can knock on your neighbors' doors and introduce yourself too, you don't have to wait for an open door to say 'hi'.
- If you're living in a residence hall, **opening your door (when you're in your room)** can allow for people the opportunity to pop in and say hi. Simply be mindful to shut and lock your door if you choose to leave.
- **Attending floor meetings and programs** in your building or complex are two other ways that you can meet people that you might not otherwise meet.
- If someone is sitting alone in the dining hall, the Scrounge, or the Roundhouse, you can always **ask the person if you could sit down**. That student might be busy studying but he or she might simply welcome the company. Nothing wrong with asking right? What's the worst that could happen? You're told No?

New Place, New People, Possible New Pressures

Some people seem like the life of the party. They may seem like the point person on the floor to know where or when cool activities are going to happen. Or they may be the person who listens to the best new music.

These new people might seem cool when you're hanging out on your floor or in class, but when put in a situation where they have to make a tough decision they might not always make the best of choices. Or on a night out, they might put you in a situation where you have to make a tough choice about what to do or what not to do.

Peer pressure is something that you have heard about since you started school. The pressure is very real for many students especially when they have moved far from home to attend UD.

In a difficult moment, you're the only one who can make the right decision for you. Only you can decide what is in line with your morals and values or the choice that will keep you healthy. Peer pressure is real and it's you who decides whether or not it's going to play a role in your college experience.

In the end, only you can decide what you're personally going to do about making friends. You come to college to go to class and learn. But you also come to college to experience new things, be exposed to new ideas, and meet new people. One thing to clearly remember is that everyone else on campus wants to make friends too. Even if they have been here for a year or a couple of years, they are still open to meeting new people. You should never allow yourself to be intimidated and think that no one will want to make new friends or be your friend. The person next door, down the hall, or two rows in front of you in class might be worried about the the same thing as you or be just as shy in terms of making friends. All it takes sometimes is a simple smile or a simple hello!!

Ultimately only YOU can decide to make the most of the friendships that you (can and will) make at college and keep for a lifetime!

New Friends & Alcohol

College is a time to experience life in a different way than you have in high school. You no longer live under the constant watch of your parents. You have the responsibility to watch out for yourself, to make your own decisions, to set personal expectations, and to ensure your health, safety, and well-being.

New friends aren't always going to know how you were brought up, your personal goals, or how you aspire to conduct yourself in social situations. It's very easy to be swept up in the moment, especially when your new friends wish for you to drink. Many students feel the pressure to drink either directly (their friends drink so they feel like they need to drink too to fit in) or indirectly (the myth that there's nothing to do on campus expect drink).

Only you know how you feel about new friends or alcohol. Only you know the goals that you want to achieve and how alcohol might deter you. Only you can decide not to get swept up in the peer pressure when making your choices about alcohol. Only you can make the choice to get involved, keep yourself safe, and have fun during your time here on campus!

Roommates

Some come to college knowing who they are going to live with while others are randomly assigned. Roommates don't always turn out to be immediate best friends. Sometimes roommates can make living in a small space a very difficult experience.

The best piece of roommate advice that one can receive is: "get to know your roommate before you make a judgement." Whether or not you know someone, living with them changes everything. And everyone deserves a shot regardless of how immediately fundamentally different (or alike) you and your roommate appear to be.

By getting to know your roommate, you learn to understand how they act, why they act that way, and what's important to them. Learning about them can help you learn things about yourself that you might otherwise not recognize. Your differences can bring about similarities and your similarities can bring about disagreements. Open lines of communication foster discussion instead of disagreements.

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