What are You Going to do to make this a Good Semester?

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It starts with a day. How about today?

Do you feel in control of how your day goes? Why not?

Yes, you have responsibilities to attend to. You have to go to class and pay attention to your teacher; you may have to go to a job where you feel like the boss is on your case; you may have a sports practice where the coach will push you to your limits – or perhaps ignore you because you aren’t in the starting line-up. Does all that feel like everyone else is in charge and you just wander along through your day?

It doesn’t have to be that way, because guess what! All of those responsibilities are voluntary. You don’t HAVE TO do any of it! College is a choice, working a particular job is a choice, playing a sport is a choice. So who makes those choices? You! Which means YOU are in control.

So why do we sometimes feel out-of-control or trapped?

It’s because we’re going along with what we believe is expected of us and don’t take ownership of our choices. To be truly invested in school or work or an activity, we have to believe in what we are doing and be doing it for ourselves. You have to enjoy what you’re doing to some extent, or, be able to identify longer-term goals you want to achieve, for which today’s responsibilities are steps toward that goal.

If you can take some time to really assess what it is you’re doing and why, you can begin to feel more empowered by what you – and you alone – are planning to achieve. You can go into class seeking the knowledge that you want to have to be more informed, to become a better citizen, to ultimately get a more rewarding job. You do your current job with a sense of satisfaction from believing you are contributing in your work to the best of your ability and earning that paycheck. And on a sports time or other challenging activity, you test your own limits physically and mentally, seeking your personal best whether it contributes to a win for the team or not. It’s all about inner satisfaction.

As you go through your day, smile and greet people you pass on the sidewalk. Maybe they’re lonely or sad, and your smile lifts their spirits. As you’re driving to work, sing along with upbeat songs, laughing at yourself if your voice is not that good. When you’re in the bathroom and stop to wash your hands, look at that reflection in the mirror and say, “Wow, you’re hot!” and maybe you’ll start to believe it. At least, though, you’ll smile.

A positive attitude, with hope and confidence can create an upbeat feeling inside you that radiates from you, attracting positive response from other people, too. You’ll feel in control and powerful in making good choices and in your ability to bring sunlight to other people.
Be independent. Declare your freedom. Do it yourself. While college is the place where many students learn to be self-sufficient, it is important that they know who to seek out for help. Asking for help is nothing to be sneered at: after all, everybody does it!

Here at AU, we have some valuable campus resources for students to take advantage of—all at no cost to you! And according to a recently-published USA Today article, there are some specific services you should definitely seek out during your time at AU:

**Counseling Services:** Myth: Only crazy people go there! There are some really great counselors here at AU that just want to talk to you, they want to get to know you, they want to be a resource for you. Whether you are dealing with depression or just feeling homesick, university counselors are there to talk it out with you. And don’t worry about friends or professors finding out—it’s completely confidential. Seeking help when you need it is a sign of maturity and strength, not weakness. For more information, visit the Counseling Services website.

**Your Resident Assistant:** If you live on campus, you have one right down the hall. RAs sometimes get a bad rep for enforcing the rules and telling you to quiet down when it gets loud, but they are there 100% for students. And while they have some authority, they are your peers so they’re pretty easy to relate to. RAs are trained to handle some of the more complex situations, so if you and roommate aren’t connecting or you are struggling with class, they can help you out. Also, RAs are all students that have been at AU for at least a year, so new students can take advantage of their expertise and inside tips on how to succeed at AU.

**Professors/Instructors & Advisors:** If you’re having a rough time in a class, why not talk to the person who’s teaching it? Professors and instructors may seem scary, but don’t think that! They want to talk to you and help you succeed in their class. Your professors and instructors have office hours for a reason, so use them! Even if you are doing well in a class, it’s not a bad idea to pay a visit and find out if there are any ways you can improve upon what you’re already doing. Also, seek out your academic advisor in the Crouse Center. They know what you classes you need to get your degree and can help you set the perfect schedule. Advisors are also great for consulting on study habits, test-taking strategies, and tips for a successful college career.

**Friends:** Okay, so we don’t offer “friends” as a campus resource, but chances are you’ve made some since you’ve been here. Whether they are your roommate, classmate, or co-worker, remember the importance of friendship and spend quality time together outside of the context in which you met. Don’t just rely on seeing each other at study group or at a club meeting, but seek each other out at other times. Support each other and help each other grow. Friends can be a great sounding board for personal issues and can help you re-focus your priorities or relieve stress in crazy, hectic times.

If you’d like to hear what they say in the USA Today article, click here to read more.
Unless your hands look like this...

WASH THEM!

For your best protection against colds, flu and other illnesses be sure to wash your hands...

- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After using the toilet
- Before, during and after preparing food
- Before eating
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- Whenever your hands become visibly soiled.

...and anytime in between!

Contact Wellness Center for additional information
630-844-5434 or wellness@aurora.edu
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11th

Look for the RED BOX at these locations:

- Counseling Center
- Wackerlin Center
- Library
- Residence Life
- Wellness Center
- Student Activities (The Spot)
- Crouse Center (Kris Johnson’s office)
- Social Work (1st Floor Alumni Hall)
- David Fink-Chaplin (Eckhart 302A)

* Come show your support for the LGBTQ community! Handouts and information will be available for those who identify as LGBTQ or those who identify as their Allies.

* You can also sign up if you are interested in receiving information about a future Gay/Straight Alliance organization on campus.

* Information about a Coming Out Support Group starting this fall will also be available.

Sponsored by:
Counseling Services
427 S. Gladstone
630-844-5118

Aurora University is celebrating:

International Coming Out Day
You come home from class and your roommate has her clothes everywhere, she drank your last Mountain Dew, and her music is so loud you can’t think. Tensions are running high, and you snap telling her everything that is on your mind, from how disgusting it was to have banana peels in the garbage for two weeks, which she left in there and wouldn’t take out the garbage, to putting her books on your desk... your personal space.

Being away from home for the first time presents many challenges. Navigating the campus, budgeting time for studies and extracurricular activities, and getting to know one’s roommate(s) are all typical challenges for students. Many students come from homes where they did not need to share a room, let alone a closet, small refrigerator, etc.

Needless to say, tempers can run high once the initial “get to know you” stage has passed. It can be particularly uncomfortable living in a small room with a roommate once a blow out occurs, whether it was you or your roommate who initiated it. How do you reestablish a relationship after a conflict?

It is not always easy reconnecting after an altercation and asking to move is not always the answer. Here are some tips on how to reconnect and move on even after an incident has occurred:

**Be Aware of the Role Technology Plays:** It is tempting to text, email or facebook your roommate(s) as a way to reconnect. However, this is not a substitute for face-to-face interactions. Often times, people misunderstand the “tone” of a text or facebook comment. How is the true “tone” understood if no one is speaking to you? Take the time to calmly talk things out.

**Keep Talking:** Sometimes we all want to just ignore the other person that we are in a disagreement with. However, communication is the key. Not talking only leads to feelings of resentment toward the other person and the elephant in the room has not left. If anything, it will continue to drive you apart. After some “cooling off” time has occurred, maturely sit down and discuss what it was that bothered you so much. Chances are a good conversation will be had so that the same issues don’t keep arising.

**Be Realistic About Outcomes:** Will everything change the way you want them to? No, probably not. Part of the college experience is learning how to maturely handle situations that may not always go entirely your way. You and your roommate are not the same and will not always think and do things in the same manner. You will need to learn how to live together, and part of that is the sometimes hard lesson that we need to give and take. Pick your battles. If something is not that big of a deal, let it go. Save your energy for things that really matter to you.

**Resist Telling Others About Your Roommate Problems:** I know it can sometimes be difficult not to share your feelings with others on your floor. However, if this information is relayed back to your roommate(s), it will drive you further away from one another. Remember that this is one incident that can be worked out so long as it is handled carefully and maturely.

As the semester goes on, and demands and pressures become unavoidable, it is easy to find fault with those closest to you. Just remember, others are in the same boat as you are and we all handle stress differently. Recognizing that we are all unique and that different people have different “hot buttons” is very important. Talking things out in a mature fashion and not holding grudges will be key to a harmonious relationship with your roommate(s).