

COLLEGE SURVIVAL GUIDE



Phone: (312) 413-2120

Website: www.wellctr.uic.edu

UIC University of Illinois
at Chicago

Dear UIC Student:

Welcome to college life. We are pleased that you have chosen to attend the **University of Illinois at Chicago**. Not only are you attending a great school in a great city, there are tons of resources available to you as a student.

First of all there is the Wellness Center, a place that is determined to help you thrive as a student. Wellness is living every aspect of your life to its healthiest. It's taking care of yourself and doing what's best for you. It's seeking and embracing a life fueled by healthy relationships, spirituality, safer sex, good nutrition, physical activity, and fun!

We're here to help you make that happen. If you are seeking help in any of these areas, please stop by, call us, or visit our website.

In this **Guide** you will find useful information that we have compiled to help make this year a success. As you flip through the sections you will notice practical (and often humorous) tips that have been compiled *by students for students*. Use the information provided as a guide that you can refer to throughout the semester and year.

Content Highlights:

- Getting It Right from Day One
 - Learn study tips and tricks. Also learn where to get help when you need it.
- Living Away From Home
 - Whether on campus or off, learn how to get along with a roommate.
- Basic Tips for a Healthy Diet
 - Want to avoid that freshman 15? Refer to this for tips on eating on campus and how to avoid over eating at the buffet.
- Bad News Games
 - Refer to this for information about the dangers of binge drinking and alcohol poisoning. Also learn how to drink responsibly.
- Stress!
 - This one seems apparent. Learn great stress management tricks that you may never have thought of.
- Sleep
 - Get information on factors that contribute to poor sleep habits among college students and tips on getting better sleep.

We hope you enjoy the information provided in this **College Survival Guide**. If you have any problems that are not addressed by this packet, don't be afraid to seek help or ask us.

Good luck!

The Wellness Center

Getting It Right From Day One



While each person has their own studying style, here are some tips that can help anyone.

1. **Study the hardest subject first.** Work on your hardest subjects at a time when you are fresh. Putting them off until you're tired compounds the problem.
2. **Make use of study resources on campus.** Find out about and use labs, tutors, videos, computer programs, and alternate texts. Get to know your professors and advisors. Don't be afraid to *ask questions*. "I didn't know," or "I didn't understand" is never an excuse.
3. **Do as much of your studying in the daytime as you can.** What takes you an hour to do during the day may take you an hour and a half at night.
4. **Study between classes.** Make use of your precious time. If you can, study before and after classes while the material is fresh in your mind.
5. **Begin the first day of class.** Know what's expected of you. Take notes from the first day even if it's routine stuff you think you already know.
6. **Establish a routine time to study for each class.** For every hour you spend in class, you will probably need to study two hours outside class. Studying for each subject should be at the same time, same place, if possible. Studying includes more than just doing your homework. You will need to go over your notes from class by labeling, editing, and making sure you understand them. Review your syllabus daily to see where you are going and where you have been. Be sure to do reading assignments. (Don't put them off just because there's not a written assignment.) Read ahead whenever possible. Prepare for each class as if there was going to be a pop quiz.
7. **Establish a place to study.** Your study place should have a desk, comfortable chair, good lighting, all the supplies you need, etc., and of course, should be as free of distractions as possible. It should not be a place where you routinely do other things. It should only be used as *your study place*. Don't study in bed. You will fall asleep.
8. **Schedule breaks.** Take a ten minute break after every hour of study. Instead of long blocks of time for studying, spread out several short study sessions during the day instead (if possible).
9. **Find at least one or two students in each class to study with.** Studies show that students who study with someone routinely make better grades. You will probably find yourself more motivated if you know someone else cares about what you are doing in the class. Teaching a concept or new idea to someone else is a sure way for you to understand it. Studying in a group or with a partner can sometimes become too social. It is important to stay focused.
10. **Be good to yourself.** Studying on four hours of sleep and an empty stomach or junk-food diet is a waste of time. Avoid food and drink containing caffeine just before or just after studying.

Adapted from Study Skills at mtsu.edu

Visit <http://www.vcsa.uic.edu/MainSite/departments/ace/home/strategies.htm> for more study tips.



Student Strategies

While no one is preventing you from cramming for that test, or writing that paper at the last minute, there are some things that every student should know when it comes to studying.

- Stay organized. Study the syllabi for each class. It may be helpful to compile a calendar with due dates and deadlines for all of your classes.
- Set goals. Plan to do research weeks (or even months) before a project is due. Set mini deadlines for yourself to achieve in the way of progress (for example set a goal to complete a rough draft for a paper well before it is due.)
- Be an active student. Do the reading assignments for class. Go to class prepared to ask questions and participate in class discussions. Don't just sit and take notes.
- Review the notes you take after class and compare them to the readings assigned in the text. Also clean up your notes after class so you won't be confused when it comes time for review.
- In math and science classes, make sure you work out problems. It is one of the best ways to understand difficult concepts.
- Seek help when you need it. Attend study sessions held by your professor or TA. Create a peer study group that meets regularly. Find a tutor. There are free tutors all over campus. Don't get suckered into paying someone 100 dollars an hour.
- Find a study technique that works for you. Don't have one? Try the Cornell Method.
 - Create a 2 ½ inch margin on your paper and place headings and questions in the margin leaving the rest of the paper for lecture notes and book notes.
 - Review all of your notes everyday. Start with the newest notes first and work to the older ones.

Whatever method you use, make sure it works for you. You can always adapt different techniques like using flashcards or creating outlines.

Take Advantage of Resources on Campus

The following resources provide academic support. You can visit these resources to get study tips, find a tutor, study in a quiet area and much more!

Academic Center for Excellence (ACE)
312-413-0031; Suite 2900 SSB 1200 W.
Harrison

312-996-6073; Suite 2640 SSB

African American Academic Network (AAAN)
312-996-5040; Suite 2800 SSB 1200 W.
Harrison

Writing Center
312-413-2206; 100 Douglas Hall

Honors College
Contact: jsheng2@uic.edu; 220 Burnam Hall
Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services (LARES)



Living Away From Home

On Campus Living.

Unless you were very fortunate to attend the same school as your best friend or sibling, chances are you were assigned a roommate.

Meeting a new roommate for the first time can be very scary/challenging. There are a few things to keep in mind to keep your sanity during the school year.

- Come to school with an open mind. Chances are your roommate may have a very different background than you. Rather than writing them off as having nothing in common, use this time as a chance to learn about something new.
- Set some rules. Establish guidelines about sharing, having friends over, studying, and sleeping. Don't forget to also discuss how clean or messy you are. Determine to be respectful of boundaries that you set, even if it means keeping your mess to one side of the room and your laundry odors to a minimum.
- Relax. So your roommate isn't exactly like you. (They are thinking the same thing.) Don't freak out about every little thing they do or you will become neurotic.
- Be respectful. Don't only respect the space but respect your roommate. They may have a different set of morals or study habits than you.
- Compromise. Meet in the middle about important issues. If they have a problem with your music or guests, meet up at a place other than your room.
- Talk things out. When problems arise (and they will) talk to your roommate before the issue gets out of control. If you can't come to an agreement talk to your resident assistant or someone else that can help you.

Living off campus (with friends).

Choosing to live off campus comes with a whole new set of challenges. You now have to shop on your own and establish with your roommates: bill payment, grocery shopping (will you share food or keep your own), cleaning routines, etc. These new responsibilities can strain and even ruin friendships.

A new important issue is personal safety. On campus there are many safeguards set in place to protect students. Once you move off campus, there are no longer security check points at the doors or those great emergency buttons.

Take time to establish safety precautions with your roommates:

- Discuss the importance of shutting and locking windows (especially on the first floor) and making sure doors are locked when no one is home.
- Practice stranger danger. Don't just answer the door for anyone (especially at night) and don't allow strangers into your home. This puts not only yourself but also your roommates in danger.
- Make an emergency plan for your home. Discuss escape routes and learn contact information for each roommate.

Commuter Student Resource Center

For additional resources for commuting students

Phone: 312-413-7440; Web: www.commuter.uic.edu; Email: commuter@uic.edu



Student Center East, 750 S. Halsted Street, Room 238

Phone: 312-413-2120; Website: www.wellctr.uic.edu; Email: wellness@uic.edu

Funny and Practical Dos and Don'ts of living with Roommates

Do take time to get to know your roommate.
Don't expect him/her to be your best friend.

Do arrange the room with your roommate.
Don't forget to make personal space.

Do share your TV, mirror, and maybe even clothes.
Don't expect to have free reign over all your roommate's stuff.

Do invite friends over from time to time. (During the day of course)
Don't let your boyfriend/girlfriend sleepover every night.

Do clean up after yourself. (This means doing your dishes)
Don't let the cockroaches kick you out of your own place.

Do visit home from time to time.
Don't go home every weekend because you might miss out on great opportunities on campus.

Do make yourself comfortable.
Don't lay around in your underwear all day.

Do talk to your roommate about a problem.
Don't "go postal" for no apparent reason.

Do make new friends and get involved on campus.
Don't hide in your room all day and creep out your roommate.

Do discuss drinking habits.
Don't let them know you drink by throwing up on their stuff.

Do plan a party with your roommate.
Don't force them to leave when your friends get there.

Do decorate your apartment or dorm.
Don't break the bank on art. Remember, Monets need to be insured.

Do get yourself a goldfish. (Fish are acceptable in the residence halls.)
Don't hide a puppy in your closet.

Do give your roomie some alone time if they need it.
Don't barge in if there is a sock on the door.



Basic Tips for a Healthy Diet



Start the day off right

Don't skip breakfast. Remember it is the most important meal of the day. Eating breakfast provides much needed energy to start your day. Eating foods like whole grain cereal and fruits provide more sustainable energy than coffee and donuts.

Lunch v. Dinner

Eat a larger meal at lunch than at dinner. Many Americans eat large hearty dinners and snack sized lunches. The food consumed at lunch provides energy for the rest of the day. Eating large meals before bedtime can lead to excess weight.

Get started.

- Make smart choices from every food group.
- Eat plenty of vegetables, fruits, whole grains and fat-free or low fat milk products. Also include lean proteins choices such as lean meats, fish, beans and nuts.
- Eat healthy snacks between meals.
- Find your balance between food and physical activity.

Eating on campus.

- Avoid over indulging in buffet style meals. Buffets are meant to provide a variety of foods. You don't need to eat some of everything.
- Try skipping dessert a few nights a week.
- At many places on campus a piece of fresh fruit is often cheaper than a candy bar.

When you choose your food.

- **Make half your grains whole.** Eat at least 3 ounces of whole-grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice, or pasta every day. One ounce is about 1 slice of bread, 1 cup of breakfast cereal, or ½ cup of cooked rice or pasta. Look to see that grains such as wheat, rice, oats, or corn are referred to as "whole" in the list of ingredients.
- **Go lean with protein.** Choose lean meats and poultry. Bake it, broil it, or grill it. And vary your protein choices—with more fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds.

Fast food

- If you must eat fast food, choose healthier items. Many restaurants offer healthy alternatives to French fries such as fruits or vegetable choices.
- Entrée salads (except taco salads) are a great alternative to burgers.
- Check out nutrition information online before heading to the fast food joint.
 - Wendy's - <http://www.wendys.com/food/NutritionLanding.jsp>
 - Sbarro - <http://www.thedailyplate.com/nutrition-calories/food/sbarro>
 - Subway - <http://www.subway.com/applications/NutritionInfo/index.aspx>

5-a-Day

When it comes to fruits and veggies, variety is the spice of life.

It doesn't matter if you choose fresh, frozen or canned the important thing is to get 2-3 servings of each per day.

Here are some serving suggestions.

- One small banana, a handful of strawberries or a medium apple. A cup of fruit is also a good idea.
- Choose dark green vegetables i.e. broccoli and dark leafy greens.
- Eat colorful fruits and veggies. The richer the color the greater the amount of nutrients. Some things to try veggies: carrots, sweet potatoes, and squashes; fruits: peaches, nectarines, and berries.
- Also add peas, beans and lentils for a great source of protein.

Keep up on calcium

- It is important to eat calcium rich foods for bone health. Try to get about 3 servings of dairy each day. Choose foods like lowfat milk, cheese and yogurt.
- There are also alternatives to milk such as soy or rice milk and even fortified juices that provide adequate amounts of calcium to your diet.



Power Hour, Beer Bongs, Quarters and Now What?

Dangers and Repercussions of Binge Drinking

What is Binge Drinking?

A drinking binge is commonly defined as having five or more "standard" drinks in a row for men, and four or more in a row for women. *Why the difference?* Women generally have more fat than men and are therefore affected by alcohol more. Other factors such as body size, fat content, amount of food eaten, mood and tolerance can affect the rate at which a person gets drunk. This however does not mean the person will not feel the effects of alcohol.

Binge drinkers and high risk drinkers are often people ages 18-23; college students.

What is a drink?

A standard drink contains .6 oz of pure *ethanol* (the proper name of alcohol) which equals:

- 12 ounces of beer or wine cooler.
- 8 ounces of malt liquor.
- 5 ounces of wine.
- 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits (whiskey, vodka, etc.)

Alcohol and your body.

- Everyone's liver can only metabolize one drink (1/3 of one ounce of ethanol) per hour.
- Nothing but time will sober you up. (Not coffee & not a cold shower.)
- Women get drunk faster than men, due to a naturally higher fat content.

Some things you NEED to know.

- A red keg/party cup is generally 16-24 oz, which is more than a standard drink.
- The average mixed drink has 3-5 shots per drink (thus making it a binge drink in a glass.)
- "Jungle Juice" and punches blend a variety of hard alcohol that has no standard amount of alcohol. You don't know what you're getting.
- The average beer bong can hold anywhere from 24 to 60 ounces. (That is 2-5 standard drinks.)
- A power hour session can have you consuming up to 3 beers in one hour. This gets your Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) soaring to dangerous levels.
- People often consume 3-5 drinks per hour at an open bar.
- Ordering pitchers or going to keggers gives people a "bottomless" cup that is hard to regulate.

The Dangers of Binge Drinking and High-Risk Drinking

- Immediate effects include: loss of inhibitions, slurred speech, impaired judgment, feeling of well-being, euphoria.
- Adverse effects: dehydration, memory-loss, vomiting, anger, depression, unsafe and risky sexual encounters, passing out, and black-outs.
- Alcohol poisoning: nausea and/or vomiting; hypothermia, can progress to unconsciousness, coma, or death.



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Real Questions.....Real Answers



I vomited while I was drinking, what does it mean?

You need to remember that Alcohol is a poison to your body, which is why there are adverse effects. Your body will try everything to get rid of it. Frequent urination and sweating is an immediate response to alcohol. Vomiting however is a sign of a bigger problem. (See below.)

Alcohol poisoning will never happen to me.

Vomiting while drinking is your first sign of poisoning. “Puking and Rallying” i.e. vomiting and drinking more is extremely dangerous behavior. Vomiting is a signal from your body to STOP drinking. The final signal is passing out. Passing out (not sleeping) from alcohol poisoning can lead to death in 2 ways: choking on vomit and slowed, shallow breathing. Alcohol is a depressant which slows the body (and respiration) down. Your breathing rate can drop so low that it just stops.

If you see this happen to your friend, do not hesitate to call 911. Alcohol poisoning is a very serious matter. A friend's life is worth more than spending the night in the drunk tank. Is that sobering enough for you?

It's the next day and I can't stop throwing up. Why?

You throw-up after a night of binge drinking for many different reasons. The main reason people get sick is from dehydration. (This is different than alcohol poisoning but often feels worse.) Your hang-over can also be felt as headaches and grogginess.

Alcohol is a diuretic, which means it makes you lose water *fast*, through sweating and urination. Whether or not you “break the seal” your body will lose incredible amounts of water. This however can be prevented by drinking responsibly. Drinking a large glass of water between drinks can help you stay hydrated and more importantly prevent you from getting wasted.

This sounds scary. What can I do to prevent this?

Become a responsible drinker.

- Only drink when you want to.
- Do not drink to intoxication.
- Drink water between drinks.
- Don't pressure others to drink.
- Have a designated driver before you go out.
- Know what you are drinking. If it's a mystery drink, avoid it.
- Look out for your friends drinking behavior.
- Know the signs of alcohol poisoning.

Host a better party. Not everyone wants to drink alcohol. Offer water and other beverages that do not contain alcohol. Make a “mocktail”: a non-alcoholic version of your favorite cocktail.

Stress!



What happens when I am stressed?

We all have experienced stress in our lives in one way or another. Certain times, factors in your life may seem out of control and you may feel “*stressed out*” or you may *break down*. The first thing you need to consider in these times is that a certain level of stress is normal. You may just need to take some time to *chill out* or overcome a stressful situation.

When you are stressed, your body responds as though you are in danger. It makes hormones that speed up your heart, make you breathe faster, and give you a burst of energy. This is called the “fight-or-flight” stress response.

Some stress is normal and even useful. It can help if you need to work hard or react quickly. For example, it can help you win a race or finish an important job on time.

But if stress happens too often or lasts too long, it can have bad effects. It can give you headaches, an upset stomach, back pain, or trouble sleeping. It can weaken your immune system, making it harder to fight off disease. If you already have a health problem, stress may make it worse. It can make you moody, tense, or depressed. Your relationships may suffer, and you may not do well at work or school.

The good news and the bad news

The bad news is, for the rest of your life, situations will arise that will cause stress. The good news is, you can learn to cope, manage and control your reactions to stressful situations.

- The first thing you need to do is figure out what is causing your stress. This answer may be simple, such as the number of classes you are taking or the loss of a loved one. If you are overwhelmed, however, it may not be clear what is causing your stress.
- Prioritize your stressors. Make a list (even if it is only in your head) of what is bothering you. Can you change the situation? If you can’t, acknowledge that some things are out of your control. While some things are really troubling, such as death and illness, remind yourself that these things happen and people react in different ways. Remember it is ok to cry and seek professional help if you need it.
- Try to get some things you can control out of the way. Write that paper or do homework ahead of time so you aren’t waiting until the last minute.

How can I reduce my stress?

Stress is a fact of life for most people. While you may not be able to get rid of stress, you can look for ways to lower it.

Try some of these ideas:

- Learn better ways to manage your time. You may get more done with less stress if you make a schedule. Think about which things are most important, and do those first. Even if you only keep a loose schedule, it is better than no schedule at all, make sure to keep track of your commitments without trying to do too much.
- Find better ways to cope. Look at how you have been dealing with stress. Be honest about what works and what does not. Think about other things that might work better.
- Take good care of yourself. Get plenty of rest. Eat a balanced diet and exercise moderately. Limit nicotine and alcohol consumption.
- Try out new ways of thinking. When you find yourself starting to worry, try to stop the thoughts. Work on letting go of things you cannot change. Learn to say “no.”
- Ask for help. People who have a strong network of family and friends manage stress better. Sometimes stress is just too much to handle alone. It can help to talk to a friend or family member, but you may also want to see a counselor.



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How can I relieve stress?

You will feel better if you can find ways to get stress out of your system. The best ways to relieve stress are different for each person. Try some of these ideas to see which ones work for you:

- Exercise. Regular exercise is one of the best ways to manage stress. Walking is a great way to get started.
- Write. It can really help to write about the things that are bothering you.
- Let your feelings out. Talk, laugh, cry, and express anger when you need to.
- Take time for yourself. You don't need to be around other people all the time. Set aside some time to relax.
- Do something you enjoy. A hobby can help you relax. Volunteer work or work that helps others can be a great stress reliever.
- Learn ways to relax your body. This can include breathing exercises, muscle relaxation exercises, massage, aromatherapy, yoga, or relaxing exercises like tai chi and qi gong.
- Try to look for the humor in life. Laughter really can be the best medicine.

Some fun activities that you may not have thought of...

- Play. Kids seem to never have stress. Get outside and play a game of kickball or Frisbee. Or break out your favorite board game or even pick up some crayons and color.
- Pamper yourself. Have a couple of friends over for facials or pedicures.
- Play a pick-up game of basketball or get a group together and play football.
- Have *SEX*. Safe sex can be a great stress reliever. If you don't have anyone to help you out... remember you can do it yourself!
- Be goofy. Put on some music and dance around. Have people over and play dress up.
- Indulge every once in a while without feeling guilty. Eat your favorite food or buy something new for yourself.

Stress Resources on Campus

Counseling Center

Find someone who will listen to you. But remember to call first to set up an appointment.

312-996-3490; 2010 SSB 1200 W. Harrison

Campus Recreation

Here you can work-out, get a massage (for really cheap) or just chill out in the huge hot tub.

312-413-5150; 737 S. Halsted

Academic Center for Excellence

You can find academic support here. Also remember you can go to your college advisor to help schedule the best classes for you.

312-413-0031; 2981 SSB 1200 W. Harrison

And of Course...The Wellness Center.

Grab a brochure or ask some questions. Get some condoms.

312-413-2120; 237 SCE 750 S. Halsted



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When counting sheep doesn't work... Factors that contribute to a college student's poor sleep.

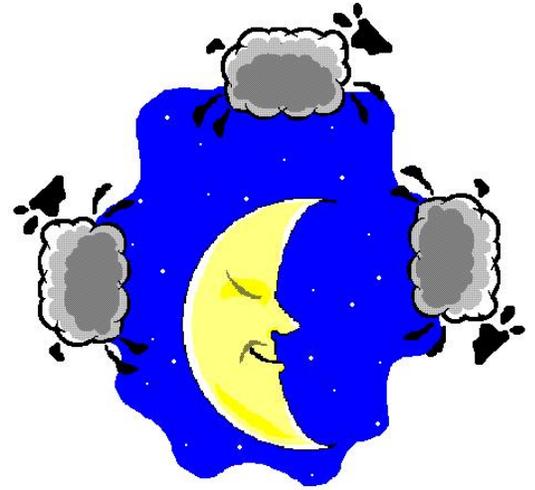
- Late night social activities.
- Homework done in the evenings.
- Going to bed late and waking up early.
- Parents are no longer enforcing a bedtime.
- Work, sports, and other extracurricular activities.
- Staying up late surfing the Internet & on social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc).

This may lead to...

- Difficulty waking up for classes.
- Skipping classes.
- Falling asleep in class or while doing homework.
- Traffic accidents.
- Poor performance in school. Poor grades.
- Depressed mood.
- Problems in both peer and adult relationships.

What you can do...

- Manage your time.
- Take a mid-day nap.
- Go to bed before 11pm.
- Study between classes and not too late at night.



Ten Tips for Better Sleep

- Maintain a regular bedtime and wake-time schedule, including on weekends.
- Establish a regular, relaxing bedtime routine, such as soaking in a hot bath or hot tub and then reading a book or listening to soothing music.
- Create a sleep-conducive environment that is dark, quiet, comfortable and cool.
- Sleep on a comfortable mattress and pillows.
- Use your bedroom only for *sleep* and *sex*. It is best to take work materials, computers and televisions out of the sleeping environment.
- Finish eating at least two to three hours before your regular bedtime.
- Exercise regularly. It is best to complete your workout at least a few hours before bedtime.
- Avoid nicotine (e.g., cigarettes, tobacco products). Used close to bedtime, it can lead to poor sleep.
- Avoid caffeine (e.g., coffee, tea, soft drinks, chocolate) close to bedtime. It can keep you awake.
- Avoid alcohol close to bedtime. It can lead to disrupted sleep later in the night.