

ARMAND VELARDO'S TIPS FOR SUCCESS DURING COLLEGE

1. Taking a year off before starting college usually does not work; “find yourself” during the Summer after you graduate from high school. The best time to start and complete college is between the ages of 18 and 22. It is more difficult to start and complete college after these ages, because your responsibilities increase as you become older.
2. Understand the number of classes and credits that you will need to graduate, and spread them over the number of semesters it will take for you to graduate; typically, 8 semesters over 4 years. Note, some colleges refer to “units” and “semester hours”, instead of “classes” and “credits”. If you take classes during the Summer, you can lighten your load during the school year or graduate early. Note also, an increasing number of students are completing college over 5 years, instead of the customary 4 years.
3. Do not wait until the last minute to schedule your classes. If you are registering online, prepare a schedule of your classes and alternative classes with the proper designations, dates, and times so you can enroll in the correct courses while online.
4. When choosing classes, take one difficult class, two moderate classes, and one easy class; do not bury yourself by taking all difficult classes in a semester.
5. Spread your classes over at least 4 days per week. This will typically spread out your final exams. You want to avoid having to take multiple final exams on a given day.
6. Ask other students about their experiences with professors and keep a list of the good and bad professors. Professors are also rated on the internet. Avoid the bad professors.
7. When scheduling classes, be cognizant of the location of such classes. You do not want to have to hurry between classes to avoid being late.
8. Get your books and e-books ahead of time whenever possible.
9. At the beginning of each semester, schedule all projects and exams; stay organized throughout each semester; utilize a written or electronic planner.

10. Turn your phone off while attending class, and while studying. Refrain from using your laptop, tablet, etc., unless you are taking notes.
11. Spread your homework over seven days. Do not fall behind with your homework.
12. Review your class notes every evening and add to them when necessary.
13. Before submitting papers, use the spell check on your computer and fully justify your papers.
14. Professors typically make themselves available during office hours, do not be scared to ask for help.
15. Do not skip classes; the professors usually emphasize the material that will be on the exams.
16. Some professors make available old exams at the library, or online; look at them when available.
17. When studying for an exam, study the material that you do not know, instead of the material that you do know. Do not always review the material from the oldest chapter to the newest chapter. Once in a while, start with the newest chapter and work backwards.
18. Two weeks prior to your final exams, your entire focus should be on completing your final papers and studying for such exams.
19. Prior to starting your first answer on any exam, quickly scan the entire exam so you can allocate your time between questions.
20. If you finish an exam early, take the time to check your answers before turning the exam in.
21. When it comes to choosing a major, pick something that you enjoy, something that interests you, and something that will allow you to make a living after college.
22. After you choose a major, be aware that higher level courses are not offered every semester. As a result, plan your schedule of classes accordingly, so that you do not have to attend an extra semester or two to complete your coursework.

23. Look for Summer internships to gain experience in your chosen field, and to prepare you for a career after graduation. Do not wait until the last minute to look for a Summer internship; start looking in September of each year for the following Summer. If you are not planning to attend graduate school, start looking for your future employment after your junior year.
24. Treat college like a full-time job; you will need to commit a substantial portion of each day to attending classes and studying.
25. Keep a list of those professors who show an interest in your performance, and who you believe will be willing to provide you with a recommendation for graduate school or when applying for a job.
26. If you need to borrow money to go away to school, only borrow what you need. Alternatively, consider attending a community college for the first two years to reduce your outstanding student loans when you are finished.
27. Do not use your student loans to pay for Spring Break or other vacations; you will regret it later.
28. Alternatively, attending a four-year college that you can commute to is also a viable option, which will also help you save for graduate school or life after college.
29. If you need to work part-time while attending college, accumulate your work hours over a couple of days if possible. This will reduce the downtime that is involved in preparing for, and traveling to and from, work.
30. If your parents are paying for your tuition, room and board, and meals, thank them repeatedly; they are making sacrifices for your benefit.
31. If you are leasing an apartment or house, read the lease closely before signing it. Immediately upon moving in, inspect the apartment or house thoroughly and submit a dated list of damages and repairs needed for the apartment or house. If possible, it would also be beneficial to take date-stamped photos or videos upon moving in, and after moving out, of the apartment or house. College town landlords are notorious for excessive repair costs and refusing to refund security deposits.

32. When moving out of your apartment or house, make sure to transfer the utility bills out of your name. Do not rely on roommates who may be staying in the apartment or house for an additional period of time. If these utility bills remain unpaid and end up in collection, they will damage your credit score for years.
33. If you live off campus, consider purchasing a meal plan so that you can eat at a nearby dorm between classes, so as to avoid the hassle of returning home for lunch.
34. Stay in touch with your parents and siblings. This will keep you grounded, and you will feel more secure.
35. Ask your parents to keep your bedroom intact, so you have something to come home to, and feel comfortable in, when times get tough, when you become homesick, when you are home for the Summer and holidays, or when you just want to visit.
36. Get your rest. Treat college like a marathon, and not like a 100-yard dash.
37. Take a shower every day and wash your clothes regularly; it will cause you to be more desirable and efficient.
38. Learn to manage your time.
39. Limit the tattoos, body piercing, and gauging. If you do not limit the same, you will regret it when you get older.
40. Do not party like it is the last day of your life; everything in moderation, which includes Spring Break.
41. When you do party, do not get wasted; nothing good comes out of it.
42. Inevitably, the police will show up at a party that you are attending; show them respect and behave yourself in their presence.
43. Do not drink and drive. Note, being ticketed as a minor in possession can also be detrimental to your career. If you do drink, call an Uber, a taxi, and/or a friend to do the driving.
44. Walk away from conflict. There is no need to get into a brawl over anything.

45. Analyze the potential benefits and pitfalls when pledging for a fraternity or sorority.
46. Avoid being involved in hazing. If you do get involved in hazing, use your common sense; make sure the person being hazed is not emotionally and/or physically at risk; know when to stop!
47. If you become sexually active, practice safe sex and birth control. Remember, some sexually transmitted diseases last forever; and “no!” means “no!”.
48. Be tolerant of other student’s beliefs.
49. Be a leader, not a follower.
50. There is no substitute for dedication and hard work; your effort should be 100% at all times.
51. Seriously consider attending graduate school immediately after college. In today’s competitive world, you will be at an advantage with additional education.
52. To be successful, you need to grab the bull by the horns, stick your foot halfway up its rear, and try to control it.
53. Success during college, and obtaining a college degree, is your ticket to a better life. Do not waste the opportunity.

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