

Folks, the "Freshman Myth" refers to the myth freshman have about their abilities/confidence to meet the challenges of college/university, especially in a place like this one where a student is expected to be self-motivated more than anywhere else because teachers have other mandatory responsibilities besides teaching—e.g. research and publication. No, I did not write what appears below, but it is good advice.

The Freshman Myth

1. What are your short and long-term goals both academically and personally when you get to college (this means more than getting good grades)?
2. How do you think your relationships with your family will change when you go to college (because it definitely will)?
3. Do you expect your college grades to be similar to those you got in high school? If so, how will you feel if they are not? How will you deal with these feelings and improve?
4. Do you think you will need any outside help to do well in your courses? If not, why (most students do)? If yes, how will you find it?
5. Will it be difficult to discipline yourself to keep academic commitments, such as attending classes and being prepared for classes? If not, why do you think so (I've never seen a student who could do this effortlessly)? If so, what skills will you need to manage it?
6. Do you think you will feel stressed out at college? If so, list five ways to deal with it. If not, why not (because I'll guarantee you will feel stressed)?

Academic Expectations

1. Do you consider yourself an independent learner? If not, what's your plan for becoming one?
2. Do you have a system for taking class notes? What if the lecture was three hours long and the instructor talked faster, could you keep up (there is a good chance of this, better read up on how to take good college notes)?
3. Do you know how to read for college (it's different than reading for high school)?
4. How would you feel if instructors don't take a personal interest in you (some definitely won't)?
5. What is your study strategy for an exam on 8 weeks of lectures and 22 chapters of textbook reading? What if you multiply that by 5 classes and include several papers?
6. How will you deal with stress?

Social Challenges

1. Have you identified two academic, social, or volunteer organizations that you want to check out when you arrive on campus? Have you emailed the leaders of the group? Most clubs and organizations have events over the summer.
2. What are your personal and academic goals for college? What social or co-curricular activities will help you reach these goals? Are these activities available at your college?
3. What are your core values and beliefs? These often change as we are exposed to new things, but list them out and then look for people and activities that exemplify them.
4. What things did you do in high school that you really liked? Are these things available at college? Have you researched them and found out how to get involved?
5. Have you used Facebook to try to make friends with other incoming students? If not, get online.
6. Have you checked out the surrounding community of your college? Remember, you don't need to stay on campus 24/7. Find off campus places that make you feel comfortable.