

# SECRETS TO SOAR

## Insider Tips for Auburn's Transfer Students First Semester Pitfalls

### **Pitfall # 1: Not making an organization or getting involved**

Coming into my first year of college I was still pretty unsure about my decision to come to Auburn. I didn't rush, I didn't live on campus, and I was under the impression that Auburn would be just like my high school. Since I wasn't living on campus or in a social sorority, I felt like I was missing out on everything and became very lost in the shuffle of getting adjusted to college. My family encouraged me to try and get involved and join some organizations so I could meet some new people. I eventually found several organizations that focused around my major and my interests and jumped in. It was hard at first and I didn't always get the positions I wanted, but I used these opportunities to connect with other students going through the same experiences and also used my involvement as a chance to develop my professional skills that I'll be able to carry with me into my future career. My involvement helped me find my place in Auburn and I'll forever be grateful for that.

-*Tiensaë Teshome,*  
SOS Orientation Leader Coordinator



### **Pitfall # 2: Not initiating conversation**

The first thing I usually do when I walk into class early and I'm waiting for the teacher to start the lecture is pull out my phone, and as a



new student it can seem very intimidating to initiate a conversation with your classmates. It's important to put your best foot forward and step out of your comfort zone.

Conversations can happen almost anywhere: class, on the transit, or even at a football game. You can start off simple by asking how someone is going to study for a test or if they're excited for the game. The conversation itself is easy, but putting yourself out there can be challenging. Even though it's easier to pull out your phone the best way to make such a big campus feel so small is to put the phone down and get to know those around you.

-*Madeline Northop,*  
SOS Orientation Leader Coordinator

### **Pitfall # 3: Not taking advantage of Auburn's resources**

Coming into my first year at Auburn I was excited for the challenge of being independent. I was determined to succeed on my own, so I rarely sought help with anything related to my classes. I did not take advantage of things like The Miller Writing Center, Study Partners, or RBD's many study locations/computers. I realized after a semester of failing to meet the goals I had set for myself, I had to seek help. I went to my academic adviser and she led me to the resources and programs, like the ones I mentioned earlier, that helped me get to a place where I am now proud and confident in my academic performance.

-*Patrick DePew,*  
SOS Orientation Leader Coordinator



### **Pitfall # 4: Assuming your college workload will be like your last college workload**

As a transfer student, it's hard to predict what your new institution is going to be like academically. It's important to keep in mind that every college and university has different strengths and focuses that they try to teach to their students. Auburn is a research institution, and the classes are probably going to be harder. A common misconception is that all universities are the same. I know I thought this when I transferred from a four year university and still the academic transition to Auburn was a bit difficult for this very reason. My research, writing and studying were held to a higher standard. It's also important to keep in mind your extracurricular activities as well. My previous institution was also not a part of the SEC so my Saturdays in the fall are very different. Here I quickly found I didn't have as much time to get everything I wanted done without being more proactive within the week. Remember to reach out for help when needed because there are countless resources available to help you succeed!! Good luck and War Eagle!!

-*Nicole Parente,*  
SOS Orientation Leader Coordinator

**Remember there are so many people here who want to help you succeed. If you run into a pitfall, be sure to talk with your advisor, your professors, or any of the numerous campus resources.**



**Haley Dellaccio,**  
is a Junior majoring  
in Early Childhood  
Education from  
Vestavia Hills, AL

### **Dates To Remember**

Don't forget to complete part 1 of Alcohol Edu & Haven online courses. You should have an email about it in your Tigermail account from Health Promotion & Wellness Services with your specific deadline.

**Aug 28 - Sept 11:** Drop Course Penalty Days. Dropping a class during this time will result in a \$100 fee per course dropped.

**Sept 2 @ 6:30pm:** First home football game of the season against Georgia Southern.

**Sept 4:** Labor Day (no classes)

**Sept 8:** Second eBill due. Statements were posted to your eBill on August 17.

**Sept 11:** 15th Class Day: Last day to drop from a course with no grade assignment. (See next page for more details about dropping classes)

**Sept 15-17:** Family Weekend

**Oct 6:** Deadline for Professors to submit Early Alert/Mid-Term Grades for all students in Core and First Year Seminar Classes. This is a great time to evaluate how you are doing in each of your classes and seek help if needed.

**Oct 19:** Deadline to request to move finals if you have more than two scheduled on the same day. You should request this through your Associate Dean.

### **Transfer Student Spotlight**

My transfer story begins when I decided to transfer to Auburn after my first year at my previous university. I already knew that I loved Auburn because my family is huge Auburn fans, but I was nervous. Everything had to come together at the last minute for the transfer to happen and this felt like a huge leap of faith. It didn't take long for me to feel comfortable at Auburn though. All of the people I met were very willing to help me with whatever questions I had and they helped me settle in to my home.

Getting involved was the best way that I made friends, so I would definitely recommend finding something that you are interested in and go for it! There are so many different opportunities to get involved, so don't be afraid to put yourself out there! I know that it can be very stressful going into such a big place like Auburn when you don't know many people, but if you're willing to reach out and make the extra effort it goes a long way in your college experience!

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## Dropping a Class

As the semester gets into full swing, the amount of course work and the difficulty of the content sometimes may exceed your expectations. There are many options if you feel that a class may be too much. The Academic Support Office, located 0176B in the RBD Library, has several resources available. There is Academic Coaching that will work with you on skills such as workload management, notetaking, test prep, and more. This is a great option if you are seeing issues across many classes. Study Partners (free tutoring service) and Supplemental Instruction (peer-assisted study sessions) are also available if you are having trouble with a specific subject or class. Check out more information about Academic Support below. Meeting with your professors during their

office hours can also provide you with extra help. If you still feel overwhelmed, then dropping the class is another option.

To drop a course, log-in to AU Access and go to Add/Drop courses page. The last day to drop a course with no grade assignment is **September 11th**. This means that any course dropped before then will not show up on your transcript. Please be aware that if you drop a class from **August 28th-September 11th**, you will be required to pay a \$100 fee per course dropped. The last day to withdraw from a course is **November 3rd** and a "W" will be assigned for the course. You want to get as few Ws as possible. After November 3rd you can only withdraw from a course due to extreme circumstances and with special permission from your Associate Dean. Withdrawing from

a class during this period may result in either a "W" or "WF" on your transcript. A "WF" is given if you were failing the course at the time of withdrawing and this will factor into your GPA as an F.

Before dropping a course, we suggest that you talk with your Academic Advisor. Your Advisor is the best person to discuss this decision with. They can have helpful tips to help you get back on track towards passing the course or help you see if there are any unforeseen consequences for withdrawing from the class, for example if that course is an important prerequisite for your next semester or if it would affect your financial aid.



## How to Email and Impress your Professors

It can be hard to find the balance between being too professional and too casual. Check out some of *The Young Hopeful's* tips on writing great emails to your professors.

**Start with the Syllabus:** Often your answer will be in there. Plus, you don't want to ask something that has already been answered.

**Use your Auburn Email Address:** This is the more professional way to communicate and the university's official form of communication.

**The Greeting:** If your professor has stated what he or she prefers to be called, then you can address them

accordingly in your email. But, if they haven't made it so clear, it's always better to go with the more formal option. If you don't know their title (Dr., etc.) a neutral "Professor \_\_\_\_\_" can do the trick. However, if you know for sure your professor does not have a doctorate, it is probably best not to address them as such.

**The Good Stuff:** Professors don't want to read through paragraphs and paragraphs of explanation, so do them a favor and keep your emails short and sweet. Get to the point of your email and include any necessary details so they can answer your questions. Be sure to

use full sentences. This is an email after all and not a text message or a tweet. It can also be helpful to include which class you are in since many teach multiple classes or sections.

**Tone:** It's important to let your professor know that you appreciate everything that they do for you and your class. Your professor is going to be more likely to help you out if he or she feels empowered and respected instead of them feeling like you are demanding something from them.

Check out the full blog post here: <https://theyounghopeful.wordpress.com/2015/07/06/how-to-email-your-professors/>

## Academic Spotlight- Academic Support



The Academic Support office has several resources available to students including Academic Coaching, Study Partners, and Supplemental Instruction (SI). These services are not only for students who are struggling, but we encourage you to use these free services as extra review even if you are doing well in the class.

Allison Stewart, Coordinator for Academic Coaching, said this about the services offered through Academic Support: "Our tutors provide engaging reviews of class material so that you can be sure you have grasped the major concepts before moving too far ahead into your coursework. If you find that you are still having difficulty preparing for a test, one of our coaches can sit down with you one-on-one to discuss ways to develop study habits that lead to success in your college career."

Take advantage of these resources

early and often, especially before your first test to make sure you have a solid understanding of the material. When utilizing these resources, you can stay on top of your work, clear up any topics you may be confused about and be successful in your coursework.

Check out [auburn.edu/academicsupport](http://auburn.edu/academicsupport) for more information about Academic Support's services. Study Partners will start September 5th and SI details are normally announced on the first day of class if your section has one assigned.

## Transfer Tip:

Make sure to be using the time between classes to your benefit. You often have some breaks between classes, so go to the library or find a quiet area of the building you are in and put that time to work for you. With so much technology at your fingertips it can be easy to lose that time to social media, but if you get into the routine of reviewing your notes, reading chapters, or working on homework during this time, you can really free up other parts of your schedule.



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