

SECRETS TO SOAR

Insider Tips for Auburn's Transfer Students

A Letter from First Year Experience

It is hard to believe we are already three weeks into the spring semester! The First Year Experience Office is so glad you are here and we hope your semester is starting off well. We know transferring to another school can be challenging and we hope that this newsletter and your Orientation Leader will serve as a resource throughout your time here. We enjoyed having you join us at SOS this past November or January, and please know that the First Year

Experience Office is here for so much more than just your orientation session. We are here for questions, advice, or when you don't know where to go throughout your time here at Auburn.

At the end of each month, you will a Secrets to Soar newsletter which will include helpful reminders, tips and information by Auburn's transfer students in the Transfer Student Organization (TSO), Tau Sigma the Transfer Student Honor Society, SOS Orientation Leaders, and staff in the First Year Experience Office. Please do not hesitate to contact the First Year Experience Office at (334) 844-4501 or fyedesk@auburn.edu or reach out to your Orientation Leader. **War Eagle!**



Mark your Calendar for these Dates To Remember

Jan 30 from 10-1pm: Internship & Part-Time Job Fair in the Student Center Ballroom

Jan 31: 15th Class Day: Last day to drop from a course with no grade assignment. (See last page for more details about dropping classes)

Feb 1 by 4:45pm: AUSOM scholarship deadline. Complete the AUSOM application to be considered for General and Departmental Scholarships. Can be found in AU Access on the My Finances tab.

Feb 2: eBill is due. The eBill was posted on Jan 11. AU Access for more information.

Feb 8: Next eBill is posted. It will be due March 2.

Feb 13 from 3-7pm: STEM Career Expo in the Beard-Eaves Memorial Coliseum.

Feb 23: 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.

Mar 8: 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.

March 12-16: Spring Break

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 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.

-Tiensae 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 upcoming 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. Here I quickly found I didn't have as much time to get everything I wanted done without being more proactive within the week.

-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.



SECRETS TO SOAR

Transfer Student Spotlight



Haley Dellaccio,
is a Junior majoring
in Early Childhood
Education

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!

Academic Spotlight- How to be Successful at AU

- **Read your syllabus.** This is your guiding document for your class and will contain a lot of important information like your professor's office hours, textbook information, course objectives, test and assignment dates and details. If you have a question about a class, it is always a good practice to see if the professor mentioned it in the syllabus first. Make sure to put all of your assignments, readings and test dates on your calendar ASAP so you can plan in advance for busier weeks.
- **Visit professor's office hours.** You might not have needed to visit your professor in office hours before, but you want to make sure you do it here. Visiting your professor's office hours will not only allow you to get clarification on any information you are confused about, but begin to establish a relationship with your professor. The professors here really want to help you and are glad to provide you that extra one-on-one attention if you are willing to make the effort to come to their office hours.
- **Seek academic resources early.** Identify if there are any services offered to help you succeed in your courses, such as Supplemental Instruction, Study Partners, or free tutoring. If you do not have these tutoring groups for your class, talk with your professor or start a study group with people in your class. Since course materials often builds on itself each class session, you do not want to wait if you are even the tiniest bit confused. It can be hard to ask for help, but by asking early you can make sure you have a solid foundation and stay on top of everything.
- **Stay Organized.** Auburn academics are known for being challenging, so be sure to keep on top of all deadlines or assignments you have. Use a planner or smart phone, and watch yourself so you do not procrastinate or overburden yourself with too many activities. Staying on top of these things will help you be successful with the increased workload.
- **Make a good impression.** Attend class, do the readings, participate in the discussions, allow yourself enough time to



study before your tests, and prepare for each class. Professors expect students to be independent and self-motivated so do your best to put your best foot forward in class.

- **Breathe!** Take things slow. As a transfer student, you may feel rushed because your time is limited, but make sure to take a breath and take things day-by-day. Focus on doing your best and acclimating to your new environment. Your first semester may be more difficult than your previous institution academically or socially, but like anything new, it takes time to adjust. You may not have to learn things like you did your freshman year, but you may still have to learn how to adapt to new study techniques and a new academic environment.

Transfer Student Spotlight

Transferring to Auburn is one of the best decisions I have ever made; however, there was a time when this decision was met with anxiety, fear and loneliness.

Although I was prepared and excited to embark on this new adventure, the transition to a larger university was not easy at first.

Luckily, I received some really great advice from a professor during my first week at Auburn. He explained that too often transfer students come to Auburn expecting to fill an instant connection. The truth is, transfer students have to make an extra effort to find ways to connect.

I believe involvement is the key to becoming a successful transfer student. It wasn't until I joined various on-campus organizations that I truly felt connected and a part of the Auburn Family. My involvement gave me the opportunity to find others who have similar interests and gave me an outlet to leave a positive impact on the university.

Be sure to check out the many opportunity Auburn provides to become involved. All transfer students should take advantage of the involvement resources such as AU Involve (auburn.edu/quinvolve), the Involvement Ambassadors, and Organization Days (O-Days).



Kaleigh Garner,
is a Senior majoring
in Public Relations.

SECRETS TO SOAR

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 **January 31st**. 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 **January 18th-31st**, you will be required to pay a \$100 fee per course dropped. The last day to withdraw from a course is **March 30th** and a "W" will be assigned for the course. You want to get as few Ws as possible. After March 30th you can only withdraw from a course due to extreme

circumstances and with special permission from your Associate Dean.

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/>

Campus 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 for more information about Academic Support's services. Study Partners appointments are available now 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.



AUBURN
UNIVERSITY

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE

