

STUDENT TO STUDENT:

Nine Tips (plus one) for Making The Most of Your Time at UM

Advice from a Senior Focus Group Project

The following tips were drawn from comments made by University of Maryland Seniors reflecting on their time at UM in a series of focus groups held in the Spring, 2000. The Senior Council provided advice on how to take advantage of these tips, and a selection of websites are provided as a starting point for gaining more in-depth information for each tip.

Take Charge

Be proactive about your education by getting to know your professors, TAs, and administrators. Don't be afraid to ask professors and TAs for clarification if you are confused by or unsure of something they have said in class. We learn through inquiry!

Advice from Seniors

- Utilize your professors' office hours - and not just when papers are due or during exam times.
- Be active in the various course and college e-mail lists.
- Make a point to introduce yourself to your professors and TAs.
- Speak out in class, ask questions and share your thoughts.
- Sit in the front of the classroom.

Resources

The Higgins Plan for Academic Success

www.life.umd.edu/classroom/bsci230/higgins/content.html#hplan

Learn the Facts

Although academic advisors and faculty are there to guide you, make yourself aware of your major's policies, procedures, and requirements so that you can make informed decisions.

Advice from the Senior Council

- Don't assume that your advisor has all of the answers.
- Come prepared to your advising meetings to ask questions.
- Start a personal academic folder at the beginning of your first year and keep your own records.
- Keep your course requirement checklist up to date.

- Get acquainted with the various websites related to academic matters.
- Make sure to fully read the Schedule of Classes.
- Read messages from your college listserv.
- Take advantage of peer advising.
- Get to know your academic advisor.

Resources

Academic Departments

<https://www.umd.edu/academic-departments-and-programs>

Undergraduate Catalog

<https://catalogundergraduate.umd.edu/>

Get Involved

Become involved in as many aspects of the campus community as you can, so you can experience all of the richness that it offers. Taking advantage of the multiple organizations, clubs, and activities will help you find your niche. Get actively involved in some type of organization/group because the interpersonal, leadership, and group skills that can be gained will be very beneficial.

Advice from the Senior Council

- Find something that you like to do and get involved.
- Attend the First Look Fairs.
- Visit the Office of Campus Programs.
- Visit the Commuter Affairs and Community Service Office.
- Talk to faculty who are in fields of your interest.

Resources

Stamp Student Union: Student Involvement

http://thestamp.umd.edu/student_org_resource_center_sorc

Appreciate Diversity

Appreciate the diversity around you because not every environment will provide this kind of opportunity to learn about so many cultures in one place at one time. Expand your horizons and take the time to interact with people who are different from you.

Advice from the Senior Council

- Say "hello" and smile to people when they pass by you on campus.
- Be friendly.
- Attend the cultural events on campus.
- Be open to explore and experience something new and different.
- Get involved in different types of organizations.

Resources

A Student Guide to the CORE Program

Available from your college advising office, Undergraduate Studies (2130 Mitchell Building), or on reserve at the Reserve Desk, Ground Floor, Hornbake Library.

Information on the CORE program is available at <http://www.ugst.umd.edu/core/>

Engage in Research

Take time to investigate and engage in undergraduate research opportunities; they will enhance your resume. Be sure to ask academic advisors, faculty, staff, the Career Center, and individual departments for assistance!

Resources

Undergrad Research

www.ugresearch.umd.edu

Study Abroad

Take the challenge to study the world! Study abroad increases awareness of other cultures and languages while providing a comparative international perspective. Many students find study abroad essential for their majors or career plans. Others view it as part of their liberal arts education. There are many exciting study abroad opportunities. The UM Study Abroad Office is ready to assist you and has excellent material.

Advice from the Senior Council

- Attend the various information sessions about study abroad opportunities.
- Look into the winter sessions that provide opportunities to study abroad.
- Begin thinking about study abroad opportunities at the beginning so you can make sure to incorporate it into your plans.
- Visit the Study Abroad Office.
- Learn more about scholarship money and how it can be used for study abroad opportunities.

Resources

Study Abroad Office

www.umd.edu/studyabroad

Learn in the "Real" World

Take advantage of internship and co-op opportunities because they will not only be appreciated by prospective employers, but they will also provide you an opportunity to get practical, hands-on experience. Ask for assistance in finding these as well!

Advice from the Senior Council

- Talk to department professors about internship and co-op opportunities.
- Network whenever you have the opportunity.
- Visit Career Services.
- Attend Job Fairs.
- Utilize Terp-online.
- Attend resume and interview workshops.
- Investigate on-campus internships.
- Talk to upper class students about their internships and co-op experiences.
- Start planning for internships and co-op experiences in your first year.

Resources

Career Center

www.CareerCenter.umd.edu

Academic Departments

www.umd.edu/academic

Live on Your Own

If you have the opportunity to live off campus for at least one semester before you graduate, the transition from being a student to being a full-time professional may be smoother.

Resources

Off-Campus Housing Search On-Line

www.umd.och101.com

Prepare for the Next Step

When workshops are being provided for Seniors on such topics as interviewing, networking, money management, and other related topics, make an effort to attend.

Advice from the Senior Council

- Seniors need to read the messages from the Senior Council listserv.
- Read flyers and calendars that are posted around campus and placed in the Diamondback and other publications (Keep Your Eyes Open).

Resources

Career Center

www.CareerCenter.umd.edu

Get Help Fast

Alright -- technically this suggestion came from campus professionals, not Seniors. There are many offices on campus eager to help students understand and act on the nine tips above (as well as others issues), so contact them sooner rather than later.

Resources

Learning Assistance Service

www.counseling.umd.edu/LAS

Counseling Center

www.testudo.umd.edu/soc/counsel.html

University Health Center

www.health.umd.edu

Note: URLs have been changed to reflect the current locations of files where possible. If the files are no longer readily available the resource links point to the closest that could be found.