

Freshman survival guide

The summer is over. It's time to say good-bye to your friends and kiss your folks because it's finally your turn to go into the big bad world. You've graduated high school and you are now a college student. Yeah for you... now the fun stuff starts.

Can't you just feel it? There is an electric spark in the air. All of your senses are heightened. A tingling starts in the back of your head and races across your brain like a forest fire. The only way you, a freshman; inexperienced with this sensation, can express this new feeling is with the word "FREEDOM!"

Finally, the time has come when there are no parents breathing down

Chuck Buckley
The Pendulum
bucka5c0@elon.edu



your neck. No one telling you when to come home or keeping track of what you do. You have got a chance to start over with a clean slate. You have a chance to remake yourself. You just found the reset button on this game we call life.

This college scene is just waiting to recognize you as it's lord and god. This entire campus is waiting for you to claim it. All you have to do is thrust your way into everything you can.

Now before you go sticking things in places that they don't belong, there are certain things that you need to know. These are little suppositories of knowledge to get you off on the right foot and make sure that your college career is as fulfilling as it is supposed to be. We can't have you guys running around in a drunken, naked stupor just because the leash has been taken off.

First thing you've got to do is ask yourself this question, "What do I want to get out of college?" The answer is going to be different for everybody. It could be learning a skill, getting a good resume, drinking more beer than anyone you know, doing everything you can to futher your career goals or to have mind-bending sex.

The point is, whatever your goals, college is supposed to be a time of change. You are going to grow into a totally different person from who you are now.

Right now is the last time you will be able to call yourself a kid. In four short years you are going to be an adult. College is the time when you are supposed to learn about

yourself, find out what you like and what you want to do with the life you've been given.

The only way to grow properly is if you keep everything in balance: social, academic and personal. Only if you have a proper balance in these things can you grow.

That being said, let me offer you some advice to get through this first year of the greatest time of your life.

Tip #1 Go out as many times as you can in the next two weeks. I don't care if your academics take a hit or two (small hits) but you have

got to get out there and be seen by people and talk to everyone. You need to make friends now!

The people at this school have an amazing tendency to start building walls and closing themselves off after about two weeks. In all probability, the people that you are friends with by the end of the first month of school will be the friends that you have the rest of your college career.

Unless you are doing a major homework assignment, you need to be out there. If you are naturally a shy person, just grab your suite mates, find a party and do the best you can. For the next two weeks there is no excuse for watching television or sitting around and doing nothing. Get out of the dorm!

Tip #2 The grades that you get during your freshman year will more than likely be the theme for the rest of your time here. If you start to get failing grades this first semester, the odds are against you improving them. Don't lose all hope if you get bad grades, if you exert yourself you can pull them up. I had a GPA of 1.67 at the end of my freshman year, now, at the beginning of my fifth year, I have a GPA of 3.1 and 131 credit hours.

Just one final reminder, your parents still receive your grades during your freshman year. That won't change, so party in moderation, that is, after this next two week period.

Tip #3 Get yourself involved in an organization. There are many reasons for this. You meet people, it looks good on your resume and sometimes you can even get work experience.

Now when I say organization I do not mean a Greek organization.

At the end of this semester, you freshman are going to be approached by many Greeks asking that you rush their group. Don't do it. Wait. Deciding to be Greek is a lifelong commitment. It's not a decision that you make in haste. Take your time and decide which group has the most to offer you, then after the entire freshman year, if you think it's right, rush. Don't worry the Greek system will still be there when you make your decision.

Tip #4 Economize you time, money and space. I'm not going to say anything about this because the only way you're going to figure it out is if you do it right the first time or learn from your mistakes. TIME, MONEY, and SPACE.

Tip #5 "Beware the Fuzz." For the next couple of weeks the police are going to be coming down extra hard. They are working off the philosophy that if you hit a dog hard enough the first time it does something wrong you don't have to worry about it doing it again. So if you are planning on doing something illegal, be careful of the cops.

Nothing says to your parents that you're a responsible adult than getting a citation your first week of school.

I'm not going to say avoid the bar and party scene, but I can almost promise there will be a raid within the next week.

After that the cops will ease back a bit, but still remember that except for maybe two or three people, all freshman are underage.

Tip #6 Your friends at home are far away. Keep them that way.

Most of your friends are going through the same thing that you are, meeting new people, getting used to new routines and generally taking their first steps into the next chapter of their lives. Don't interfere with that process.

It is self-destructive for you to go to other colleges or home every weekend to visit your friends, girl/boyfriend or your parents. You need to be here at Elon, both physically and mentally. People that go someplace else during their free time tend to drop out after the first year.

On a similar note, long distance relationships aren't the easiest things to keep going. I'm not saying they don't work, but I wouldn't bet on it.

All in all freshman year is a good time, but it's a lot of hard work. It will test you in every way, but you'll make it if you keep a positive attitude and keep everything balanced.

Welcome to Elon.

Fightin' Christian?

Did you feel a twinge of shame the first time you told your family that you were a Fightin' Christian?

Do you secretly envy your friends because their universities boast ferocious cartoon mascots?

Do you long to call yourself a Wolverine, Gator or Blue Devil?

If so, you have a lot to learn about what it means to be Fightin' Christian.

On the surface, the term "Fightin' Christian" seems to be an oxymo-

Rich Blomquist
The Pendulum
blomr7d0@elon.edu



ron. According to the Bible, a good Christian is supposed to love thy neighbor, not fight him. Right?

Wrong. In medieval times, Christians set an important precedent when they decided that the word "neighbor" should be interpreted only as "one living in a house directly adjacent to your own."

Medieval Christians took full advantage of this biblical loophole and kicked ass every chance they got.

When belligerent Muslims seized control of Jerusalem in the year 1095, Pope Urban II called for a great Christian Crusade to free the Holy Land.

More than 25,000 European Christians went to Jerusalem and kicked ass. When the fighting was over, all of the city's Muslims and Jews had either been killed or driven out.

The Christians loved fight-

ing so much that they started seven more Crusades and kicked ass for nearly 200 years.

It is in this spirit that we call ourselves "The Fightin' Christians" here at Elon.

Our school's moniker is nothing to be ashamed of.

Instead, take pride in being the best Fightin' Christian that you can be.

If you ever meet someone who has a different religion than your own, punch him!

If he has something that you want, knock him down and take it from him!

That's what a good Fightin' Christian would do.

As long as your victim doesn't live next-door to you, you're still going to heaven.

And if the police give you any trouble, just tell them that you're operating under the authority of Pope Urban II.

They'll understand.

All right, I'll admit that Elon's mascot seems a little lame when compared to those other schools.

Don't get me wrong. I love Mr. E.

He's just not very original. Mr. E looks like the Notre Dame Leprechaun with a different hat and about 90 extra pounds.

What Elon College needs is a mascot that captures the true Fightin' Christian spirit.

How about Jesus wearing boxing gloves? Or perhaps brandishing an Uzi?



Look for the new
Pendulum Interactive at
<http://www.elon.edu/pendulum>
Chat rooms, search engine,
personalized news and
archives
Debuting 9/16/99