

## College dating laws: *Love, lampshades and roommates*

So you have been at college for a month and a half. You are into the swing of things. You have made friends, you have exhausted all of the food options in McEwen and Harden combined. You write papers in the wee hours of the morning. You go out and chances are you have taken the time to notice members of the opposite sex.

At a school where the number of girls more than doubles the number of guys, it is easy to see why there might not be too much of a dating scene. But for those who have succeeded in winning the heart of one of your fellow students, you know that sometimes college dating isn't all it's cracked up to be.

Read "Dear Abby" sometime and take a look at how many of the little sappy "how we met" stories occurred in college. College is hard enough without having to deal with impressing members of the opposite sex.

Relationships here differ between people, generally though, there are basically four dating situations you can be involved in: long-distance love, random hook-ups, dating the guy/girl down the hall and the avoidant perspective, where you would like

nothing better than to completely avoid the opposite sex all together in favor of lab time or whatever. Which ones work and which ones fail miserably? Let's see...

First, the long-distance idea. It's 11:00 p.m., August 24 and you go out on your driveway gazing into the eyes of the "love of your life" whom you have chosen to stay faithful to through college.

You try to repress mental images of scenes from the movie "Roadtrip" as you tell them you will never, ever under any circumstance even remotely consider breaking up with them because you have, indeed, found true love.

You wave a tearful goodbye and promise to call as soon as you hook up your phone. And then you actually get to school, and it dawns on you, "there are other guys/girls here and, wow, some of them are hot." What do you do?

It's important to weigh the options before rushing in and switching significant others. Just because that guy in your Spanish class LOOKS like an Abercrombie model doesn't mean

he is worth giving up your boy back home for (in defense of the boy back home, he must have done something noteworthy to merit sticking with him through

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school).

Long distance romance is tough to maintain. Trust me, but it also gives you something to look forward to on breaks, which is definitely a perk.

Next we'll look at random hook-ups. Sure, this is fun and a favorite pastime of many. It's completely commitment free, totally spontaneous and allows you to make a whole bunch of new friends. The downsides involve who exactly you end up with and the bizarre after effects. The after effects seem to be worse for girls than for guys.

Girls get harassed and constantly reminded of who they have made out with, guys see this as strangely status forming. Worse

still is the slight problem of who you get together with.

Say you are at a party one night and the next day your roommate informs you that not only did you manage to dance on a table with a lampshade on your head, clad in a bed sheet toga, but you also disappeared for awhile with that weird guy/girl from your Econ.

class. You know the one who wears the same shirt everyday and looks as though he/she has a chronic fear of soap?

Somehow I doubt anyone would be happy about those rumors spreading around, especially since they could possibly kill your chances of having a member of the opposite sex glance in your direction ever again, not to mention the money you will waste on toothpaste and mouth wash trying to rid your mouth of unwanted germs.

Next we have the people who do miraculously meet someone at school and manage to begin a fairly

happy and exclusive relationship with them. These people depress the long-distancers and confuse the hook-uppers. Unfortunately this situation is no piece of cake either.

You get to see that person every single day...24/7 most likely, which can get older than the variety of food at Octagon, only faster. Not only that, but while you are off making googly eyes at your new found love (yeah that's what they call it these days), your roommate may be then driven into a state of "sexile". Such states force them to wander the halls in search of something to do and lead them to avoid the couch like the plague.

This is an extreme case but dating at school is a complexity all in its own, which is great for those who can work it out. And if by some strange means this wonderful relationship comes to a screeching halt, you still have to see that person...everyday...24/7, which might not be the treat it once was.

So there are a whole bunch of enticing options out there, whether "Mr./Miss Right" is found here, seven hours away or at the next party, it all makes up more of that "academic" college experience...right.

## Clues as to what your "rip-off" meal plan is really paying for

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Elon College wants to be recognized as giving students the best deal for their money. However, this is only in terms of tuition. The meal plan is a different story. The way the meal plan works is ridiculous in my mind, and is certainly not the best deal for the students.

For the majority of my life my parents encouraged me to eat three meals a day in order to stay healthy. This totals 21 meals a week, however when signing up for Elon's meal plan, there was no 21 meals a week option. The highest was 19 meals and it cost a fortune. I reluctantly signed up for the 15 meals a week plan and tried to think of how I would live without my needed meals.

When I got to campus I was amazed at how my appetite had grown. All of the walking across campus to

Harden and Moffitt really wipes a girl out. However instead of being able to eat when I wanted to, I had to calculate when and how many meals I could eat in a day. Just two meals a day and one extra one tagged on somewhere during the week.

I found myself happy that my roommate and I had extra food in the room. Shouldn't dining services take care of our hunger needs? Where else is our \$2,000 going to if not for food?

Perhaps the biggest rip off of all is the exchange rate for our wonderful meal plan. My best friend Mindel came to visit me the second weekend of college. That Saturday we spent the whole day and night at a concert, jumping, screaming and signing at the top of our lungs. When we woke up on Sunday Mindel wanted to go to Harden and grab some breakfast. I regretfully informed her that

breakfast was not included in my meal plan because I only had 15 meals per week and I usually eat lunch and dinner and grab a shake once in awhile.

So we held our stomachs for a few hours and made the long trek down to Harden to feast on lunch. Our meals at McEwen and Harden are valued at are valued at 5.50, so Mindel had to fork over that money in order to eat.

However when we went to Octagon later, I found out that my meal plan there is only worth 2.50. What causes the huge difference in the exchange rates? It isn't that the government subsidizes our dining halls because we are a private institution.

So I don't know why our meal plan is basically worthless at the College Coffee shop or Octagon Café, but the discrepancy annoys me.

Also with our meal plan we

have to plan accordingly to when and where we can eat. On Tuesdays and Thursdays I am in class from 10:30 until 2:00 and McEwen, the dining hall closest to me closes at the magical hour of 2, so there goes my lunch on that part of campus.

I usually walk across campus to Octagon and have my little chicken sandwich and small drink...because I don't want to go over my meal plan worth of 2.50.

I also wonder why McEwen is closed all weekend. Students are still here on campus during the weekend, and don't those on the "academic building side" of campus have stomachs?

Nope I guess not, and yet again we have to walk all the way down to Harden to eat. Harden boasts that it is open 24 hours, but it doesn't serve food for all of those hours, just certain times.

This causes students to look

to other places to find nourishment for their growing college bodies.

Also, why do the dining halls not open until 11? For those who attend church on Sunday it might be nice to be able to grab some real breakfast before attending the service, not just cereal in their rooms.

So to sum it all up the meal plan we signed up for is a rip-off. We are paying around \$2,000 to eat in dining halls that only operate on certain hours that are not convenient to students.

On the weekend McEwen closes down forcing the students on that side of campus to find somewhere else to eat. The exchange rate for the meal plan in the different campus eating areas doesn't match up.

So where exactly is our money going? I don't know but I am hungry...oh wait it's three in the afternoon, no McEwen for me, I guess I will have to wait until dinner.