

1. Be generous with your friendship but stingy with your trust. The friends you have back home didn't get to be your friends overnight. Some of the people you meet in your first few weeks may turn out to be the best friends of your life but every class has its gems and its criminals (I'm not kidding, some of them are actually criminals). Which ones are which will come clear over the next few months. Wait until you get to know them before you loan them your car or share your deepest secrets.

2. For the first few weeks...live like a monk. Monks take vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience.

- **Chastity:** College may be the place where you meet the love of your life but you probably won't know that in the first week of school, especially on Friday night after a couple of drinks. Take some time to get used to your new surroundings before adding a boyfriend/girlfriend to the mix or hooking up with someone who may turn out to be a jerk. **RA & Hall Director, Fordham, Zahrah Ektefaei** – Watch out for the campus “player.” Every campus has a guy who is notorious for hitting on the incoming freshmen. This guy shows up to all the freshman events, will say all the right things, but be smart and be safe. I've known a number of freshmen who beat themselves up for things they did with that guy (or girl).
- **Poverty:** Don't blow all your money your first weekend. Companies love to give new college students credit cards. JUST SAY NO! It's way too easy to get in over your head.
- **Obedience: GO TO CLASS!** Seems obvious, it **IS** why you're at college but you wouldn't believe how many freshmen skip their way out of school. Do a little math and figure how much it costs for you to have your butt in that chair per hour. You'll be less willing to blow one off. Save your absences for the end of the semester when you've got mono and three papers due in the same week. **Dr. Amir Hussain, Loyola Marymount**—*Contact your professor when you first have a problem. If you wait until it is too late, then it is too late!*

3. Help! I'm Drowning! There are lots of helpful people on campus ready to throw you a life preserver—health services, counseling, academic advisors, campus ministry and your RA—to name just a few. The transition to college life can be a rocky one. If you find yourself behaving in ways that are contrary to your values or you feel like you're in the bottom of an emotional pit and can't get out—get help!

4. Stay Safe- Your Stuff and Your Self. Especially when you're new on campus, **choose caution over courage.** Is it brave to walk home alone at 3:00 am through an unfamiliar part of campus? Maybe, but most experienced students would tell you it's just stupid **ALWAYS LOCK:** your door, your car, your bike, your locker **DON'T LET OUT OF YOUR SIGHT:** your cell, your laptop, your iPod, your backpack/purse.

5. Be yourself! Don't forget who you are just because you're in a new place. You're still you and it's gotten you this far! Your values, your likes and dislikes, the things you're good at haven't changed, hang onto those things, especially while you're getting used to this new environment. **Charles L. Currie, S.J., of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities** suggests, “*Once a week, step back and say to yourself “What’s going on? What choices have I made? Have they been good ones or bad ones?”*”

6. Too much of a dangerous thing... beer + you = a very expensive waste of a semester. Underage drinking is a bad idea. **Don't** do it. It's also a really embarrassing way to flunk out or get yourself into stupid trouble of all sorts.

7. Too Plugged In. IM, computer games, TV, and your favorite game system can be nice diversions, just don't let them suck up **ALL** of your time. Give yourself an “allowance” each day for time spent chatting or surfing and don't go over it! **DON'T** stay up all night playing video games or surfing just because you can.

8. Your Mother was right. Wash your hands...Say your prayers...Eat real food and drink lots of water...Get some sleep! **Dr. Richard Kadison, Mental Health Services, Harvard**—*It's a myth that the best students stay up all night studying. It has been proven that it's the student who gets a good night's sleep, not the one who studies through the night, who does better academically.*

9. Get involved... but not too involved. Every club and association will be vying for your time. Campus activities are a great way to **connect** with other students who share your interests but be choosy. Be careful not to over commit yourself. **Rabbi Yonah Schiller, Hillel Director, Tulane**—*Experiment, flex your curiosity, college gives you access to great professors, people you never would've been friends with before, and new experiences. That all breeds a sense of search and exploration...and ultimately a sense of meaning.*

10. Opportunity of a Lifetime. There's a lot to think about and a lot to be cautious about, but this is also the opportunity of a lifetime. You will probably make some of the best friends of your life, you will probably fall in love, you will probably grow more and learn more and discover more about yourself than you ever thought possible. **Protestant campus minister Scott Young**—*We're such a career-crazed training program in college now, so a reminder that you're here to learn how to learn. You get to learn for your entire life and you've got a concentrated period of time around a bunch of learners that know how to learn, so learn how to learn.*

Because we are deep in the process of creating a **MUCH bigger and MUCH more comprehensive** version of the Freshman Survival Guide book, we trust you'll understand why this years online version is somewhat abbreviated from last year.

COMING SOON: ***Busted Halo's Freshman Survival Guide*** will be published in April 2010 by Center Street, Hachette Book Group USA.

BustedHalo.com is an online magazine for young adult spiritual seekers that publishes feature stories on the intersection of faith, culture, politics, and life. Based in the Catholic tradition and sponsored by the Paulist Fathers, the site is also a source of information about prayer as well as national listings of young adult spiritual resources. On Facebook: add your own suggestions and experiences to the Survival Guide and read others by logging on and searching for the “BustedHalo” fan page.