THE TOP 10 tips on making the most of the liberal arts college (LAC) experience

With an exclusive focus on undergraduate education, dedicated teaching faculty, superb resources, and strong sense of community, LACs can be a wonderful choice for your undergraduate years. Below are some tips on how best to take advantage of the LAC experience.

10. **Talk with fellow students to get the inside scoop on the best professors, and take classes from some of them, regardless of the subject.** Great professors tend to make any subject fascinating—and you might just discover a new academic passion!

9. **Take advantage of the many support services available to students.** LACs excel in the broad level of support they offer students, through advising, writing assistance, academic tutoring, mentoring, counseling, etc. Don’t hesitate to reach out and ask for help.

8. **Don’t overdo the extracurricular activities, particularly your first year.** The transition from high school to college can be challenging. Pace yourself, and concentrate on your studies and a few well-chosen clubs and activities.

7. **Look for balance in your course selection.** Each semester, try to choose a variety of courses, both in terms of subject matter (to explore and learn about a broad variety of disciplines and ways of thinking), as well as the type of work required (papers, exams, problem sets, nightly homework vs. long-term research papers, etc.).

6. **Consider doing some kind of original research.** Contrary to common assumption, LACs are great places to get involved in research in virtually any discipline. Professors love to get students involved in research. You’ll gain confidence, knowledge, valuable skills, and experience for applying to graduate school and possibly gain an important mentor and friend for life.

5. **Decide what you want to do and then make it happen.** LACs are wonderfully supportive places and encourage students to create experiences for themselves. Many have resources and funds available throughout the institution to support research, internships, programs, or work experiences, whether during the academic year, in summer, or post graduation. Talk to people about what you want to do—it can lead to places and experiences you’d never expect.

4. **Meet and get to know as many international students as possible.** International students often are among the most interesting and engaging students on campus. Join any of the international students’ organizations that interest you. You’ll make great friends, be exposed to new perspectives, and always have places to visit throughout the world.

3. **Take advantage of your school’s alumni network and career services office.** Many students overlook these resources until facing graduation. Alumni of LACs tend to be extremely loyal to their alma mater and love to give back in many ways, including serving as career resources to current students interested in their professions. Get into the career service office early in your college career and learn about the many resources it offers—don’t wait until senior year!

2. **Consider doing some community service during college.** Most LACs have offices to help students find service opportunities in the community. You’ll get to know the community in a different way, meet new people while providing a needed service, and find the regular respite from college life welcoming and rejuvenating.

AND FINALLY:

1. **Relax, enjoy the experience, and take advantage of as much as you can.** Compared to many high-powered high schools, LACs tend not to be competitive places—students work hard, but not in competition with each other. So forgo the temptation to compare yourself with others, and instead immerse yourself in the wonderful four years ahead, taking advantage of the many opportunities available.