

UNC Asheville: 10 Things, we wish we had known as freshman

As seniors, it's easy for us to say we knew everything about UNC Asheville from the beginning. We forget the things that once phased us as freshman, and consider them now to be common knowledge. Now that we are going to be heading out into the "real world," it is important for us to take a step back and share our 'common knowledge' with those who we will be leaving behind.

1. There is an art to registration. If you log on too early, you will inevitably be kicked off, and have to wait to log back in. If you try to log on too late, you run the risk of not being able to log on at all or all of your classes being filled. With this, you know that the day of registration, it is only necessary to wake up five minutes before registration begins, any earlier than that and you are just wasting precious time you could be sleeping.
2. Meet with your advisors, take their advice, but it never hurts to double check them. Advisors are awesome, most of them have a pretty good handle on evaluating student's progress and giving you a list of classes you need to graduate... But you should never rely on them completely, they have other advisees, and its possible to get lost in the shuffle.
3. Don't be afraid of summer classes. In fact, you should probably embrace them. As opposed to the 15 weeks of a class you have no interest in, consider taking it over the summer. Especially the core requirements. These have been shortened, to a barely recognizable outline of the original class. The teachers tend to be more laid back and your classmates seem to be in much better spirits.
4. Even if it is freezing cold in the morning, there is a chance that it will be in the 80's by mid-afternoon. Also, if the sun is shining, there is a chance that the sky will pour monsoon rains upon you at any second. Weather here, is unpredictable. Dress in layers, always have a rain jacket, or plan to stay inside until it clears up.
5. Parking. If you have class after 10 am and before 3 pm, you need to plan ahead. The chances of their being a continually open spot, in your 'ideal' parking lot are about zero. As seniors, we all take different approaches; some of us prefer morning classes that way we have our choice, why some of us try to push our classes into groupings as to only ensure our parking space hunt each day, does not go to waste. What ever your approach, you are probably a pro by now.
6. Know and use the resources available to you. We have a help center or tutors for anything you may be struggling with. The cost for the services is already included in your tuition so you might as well take advantage of it.
7. On the first day of each class, decide who you want to be in a group with. Working with others is a necessary job skill, and I can pretty much guarantee you, that in every class you will have at least one group project. Choose people you work well with and who will put in an equal amount of effort. In the real world, you won't have this choice, but while grades are at stake, take advantage of having a say.
8. Course syllabi are rarely set in stone. In any given semester a handful of reasons come up for due dates to be switched around. With this, be prepared at the beginning of the semester for the assignments original due dates, but I have yet to be in a class, where at least one date didn't change.

9. Get to know your teachers. At big schools, this isn't really an option, and as you continue at UNC Asheville, you will start to see how much you really 'lucked out.' Most the teachers here are not just from the world of academia. Many of them have extensive experience in their field. Even more than that, many of them are well connected in those fields. If you start building a relationship with them your freshman year, you are likely to have job leads or a shining recommendation by graduation.

10. Take advantage of the city of Asheville. Its rated in countless "Top Ten Best..." lists. Enjoy it, the history, the beauty, the culture; there is something for every type of person.