Advice from someone who’s been there. This is my final semester at Tulane, so I’m going to offer you some advice because I think I’ve finally got it down. Spring semester is always a bit more challenging than fall, especially as a freshman at Tulane. First of all, you’re excited to get back after a looong month at home; you’re ready to get back in the swing of things and hang out with the friends you’ve been missing all December. So the last thing on your mind? Classes. But beware!

* Professors are not going to be so lenient with you this semester: you’ve been here a semester, and they figure that’s long enough to adjust to life at college. So keep yourself on track – spring semester literally flies by; if you’re three weeks in, and you haven’t done any work, you’re going to be in some serious trouble.

* We only have a couple of breaks: one day off in January, Mardi Gras Break, and Spring Break, and you’re certainly not likely to be catching up on schoolwork during that time.

* If you’re going through Greek recruitment, don’t wait for the weekend to get work done – you won’t have time to do much other than recruitment activities.

* It’s likely your first Mardi Gras: enjoy the festivities, but realize you need to be caught up, even ahead, if you don’t want to do any work during it!

So what can you do?

* Get studying right away. Make yourself do the readings and work required the night after the class or the night before the next class. If you like to use flash cards, make them as you go through each chapter instead of waiting until right before the test. Utilize The Tutoring Center if you need help in a class or two.

* Go through the syllabus for each of your classes. Mark them on a calendar or in a planner, somewhere you’ll see upcoming ones on a near-daily basis.

* If you like studying in a group, find people in your classes who do too early on in the semester. It’s also a great way to meet new people.

* Find your favorite place to study – there are TONS of locations that could fit your individual preferences: the library, LBC, business school, Boggs, Cudd Hall, your dorm or room, etc. etc. Once you’re comfortable with a location, stay there! Tune out distractions and focus on studying.

* Time management is the biggest key – as long as you can balance work and play, you’ll be a successful Tulane student.

Good luck!

Hilary Adams, Class of 2013
Feeling lost about your future?
The Academic Advising Center is offering a zero-credit course called “EXPLORE: Major Decisions & Career Planning” designed to help you take steps toward a successful professional life. The class will meet one hour per week beginning the week of January 25th and will allow 15-20 students per class to explore their strengths, interests, and values. Academic opportunities at Tulane will also be discussed.

Students taking the course will be using a workbook available at the Bookstore, Selecting a College Major: Exploration and Decision Making, as well as articles related to major selection and college success.

If you’re interested, email Patrick Godbey at pgodbey@tulane.edu to indicate your preferred day/time among these choices: Tuesdays, 5-6 PM, Wednesdays, 5-6 PM, or Thursdays, 5-6 PM.

GPA lower than you’d like?
If you’re on academic probation or are having other academic problems, there’s a new, zero-credit course for you. The Academic Advising Center has created a program called MAP: Maximizing your Academic Potential. It meets for one hour only once a week for 12 weeks, but in that short time, you’ll learn all kinds of strategies to improve your GPA. You’ll identify the source of your difficulties, then learn success strategies including better time management, study skills, and improving reading, note taking, test taking, and writing. Finally, it’ll allow you to set goals and do some long-term career planning. Join your peers in a confidential setting and see what a difference this course can make.

The course has already begun but there are still some spaces left if you act fast!
E-mail Sarah Montes (the Academic Advising Center’s Student Success Manager) at smontes@tulane.edu by Friday, January 29 to sign up. The available times are:

Need a little extra help?
If you’ve never been to The Tutoring Center, make a visit this semester. Its resources are intended for both successful and struggling students, and there are currently tutors available in 57 subjects!

Visit www.tutoring.tulane.edu to see session schedules and information about the Writing Studio.

Congratulations to the following students whose names were drawn from those who entered the First Year Student Satisfaction Survey:

Elijah Anders, Lynell Franklin, Kyle Gross, Lauren Gruenebaum, Kathryn Kaintz, John Ortman, Kyle Gross, Jordan Vance, Ali Walendz each won $50 to spend at Maple St. Café, Okinawa Hibachi & Sushi Bar, Vincent’s Italian Cuisine, Basil Leaf, Lebanon’s, Felipe’s, Sara’s, or Ciro’s Cote Sud.

Thanks to all of you who answered the survey sponsored by The Office of Orientation & Student Transitions. Your feedback is important to us.
Looking for something different to do this weekend?
Attend a Tulane After Dark event on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday night. Join the Facebook fan page to get weekly updates. Here’s the tentative schedule for this semester, but more events will likely be added.

1/28/2010 Thursday: Mardi Gras Bingo
1/29/2010 Friday: The Female Orgasm
2/5/2010 Friday: Comedian TBA
2/6/2010 Saturday: Soul Rebels

Do you want to be an O.C.?
If you’re interested in applying to be an Orientation Team Leader or Orientation Coordinator (the people who guided you to Orientation activities during Welcome Week), please join our Facebook group!

Here’s the link: http://www.facebook.com/groups.php?ref=sb#/group.php?gid=189708518499 or just look up “2010 Orientation Coordinator Information Group.” We’ll message you with more information as soon as the application is live (which should be in the next two weeks).

A message freshman honor society Phi Eta Sigma president, Lyndsey Adams:
If you not only survived your first semester in college, but excelled with at least a 3.5 gpa, watch for an email invitation to Tulane’s Phi Eta Sigma Honor chapter. I highly encourage those who receive the invitation to join because being a member of Phi Eta Sigma provides you scholarship and leadership opportunities and recognition during graduation! This year, Phi Eta Sigma participated in the Activities Expo, Freshman Move-In, co-hosted a Registration Pizza Party and will hold a Mardi Gras Kingcake Party next month. Being an active member is not only fun, but it allows you to co-plan events with officers and socialize with other members!

Stay healthy this semester! Don’t start off the new year sick. The Student Health Center is offering H1N1 vaccines during normal immunization hours: