

Don't stress about college expectations



Holly Fisher

Entering college as a new student is like entering a new world. Life becomes vastly different from what it was during high school and because of this, it is natural to develop a series of expectations for what this new reality might look like. Having something to expect gives us something we can prepare ourselves for, which can be extremely comforting. However, these expectations are not all they're cracked up to be.

A quick Google search will tell you partying, for instance, always makes the list of most common college expectations, and to be fair, the college party scene is legendary. Hollywood has dressed up the magnificent haze of pounding music, flashing strobe lights and an endless river of red Solo cups in more ways than can be counted to represent the average college experience.

Then comes a very large shock to all of us — Hollywood has lied.

Real college parties are not nearly as extravagant or endless, and Truman State in particular is not known for its party scene. However, during Truman Week, the parties can seem like the only part of college that matters. Greek Life uses the week to do a good chunk of its recruiting, with a pretty solid lineup of parties every night. The Hollywood dream of non-stop partying starts to seem like reality, but fair warning — unless the 24/7 party train lets off in a quaint little spot known as the classroom, you will not make it to sophomore year.

College, of course, is more than just partying, and many of our high school teachers took it upon themselves to set those expectations for us. Every time they assigned us something ridiculously over-the-top, it was only because they were “preparing us for college.” They tried to convince us they were the nice ones, and we would dream of having it so good during the times to come.

In a way, they were right. You might have 20-30 page papers and group projects that take the better part of a

semester to complete, but many of these assignments are not as distressing as they sound. With a few exceptions, Truman professors often are much more lenient than high school teachers throughout the country would have us believe. They actually care about their students, and sometimes if an assignment is too stressful in addition to the rest of your course load, they will work with you on an assignment that still meets their standards and is more manageable. If there is one suggestion I wish I had paid more attention to during my early college years, it would have been to go visit my professors. They are not ruthless monsters, but helpful and compassionate people.

These points aside, one major change spawns butterflies in the stomach of every college freshman — you have become a legitimate, bona fide adult. You're living without your parents, you have to worry about buying items such as food and toilet paper, and the words “taxes” and “bills” are no longer supposed to be abstract concepts. You are leaving the immature world of high school behind and entering the tough, responsibility-driven world of college life.

I have a small secret for you, though. The two months of summer between high school and college do not make one an adult.

We all had expectations of entering the real world when we entered college. Instead, we found blanket forts and nap times. Becoming a certifiable adult in this day and age can take some time, and luckily, you still have a few years to get it down. Sadly though, this expectation goes both ways, meaning the petty, immature drama you excitedly expected to leave behind in high school still will plague your college campus.

When facing a change as big as shipping off to college, expectations can be good to have. They give us higher standards to live up to or they prepare us for rotten situations, but they will not always line up with reality. By recognizing this and allowing your expectations to be different from the world, you can avoid the soul-crushing disappointment or simmering panic when your wall of expectations starts tumbling down. Try to live in the moment, to take life one step at a time, and I promise you will get the most out of your freshman year of college or any other situation.

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PACKING FOR COLLEGE

WHAT YOU <i>THINK</i> YOU NEED	WHAT YOU <i>ACTUALLY</i> NEED
 Solo cups that won't be reused	 Water bottle
 Stack of \$300 textbooks	 Gift cards & discount site memberships
 Unlimited meal plan	 Late night take-out

Making Kirksville feel like home is easy



Sarah Muir

There's nothing like the bittersweet return to school. Whether it's your first year here or your last, being in Kirksville can elicit a lot of conflicting emotions.

Living in Kirksville can be either one of the best times of your life, or it can be miserable. It's cliché, but true — the years you spend here are what you make them. That's vague advice, so I'm going to give some tips on how to make Kirksville great, regardless of how many years you have left.

If this is your first year in Kirksville, welcome. It's a pretty friendly place even if it's not what comes to mind when you think of a college town.

If it's your last year here, now is the time to enjoy it because, believe it or not, most people who leave tell me they miss it.

The first key to enjoying Kirksville is to stop thinking about everything it's not. There's no Chipotle, Target or fancy shopping malls. It's best just to accept this and move on.

One of the benefits of the relative lack of chain stores and businesses is the cool local places that thrive here. La Pachanga has the best Mexican food. It will ruin your love for places back home. Pro tip — they deliver. El Vaquero and La Fuente also are great options. You can't go wrong with Mexican food in Kirksville, Chipotle or not.

Other great restaurants to check out are a Mongolian place called Nurhachi — be sure to drive around back and check out the great mural — Rosie's Northtown Cafe, Greek Corner Gyros, Pagliai's Pizza, Sweet Espressions Coffee House, DuKum Inn Grille — get the cheeseburger, seriously — and the To Die For bakery.

Of course, a great college town is more than just good food options. There's also cool places to explore or hang out at. There's a bowling alley and skating rink, a movie theater with cheap student

tickets, a great state park to enjoy nature in and the train bridge. Don't overlook the things Kirksville does have just because it's small.

You could never leave campus and still have a great college experience at Truman State. Try everything, and I mean everything, that you have even a small interest in. It is the easiest, least awkward way to meet people and enjoy your time here. Most people won't look back on college and regret stepping outside of their comfort zone. Some of the best times I've had here have been doing absolutely nothing with great people.

Last tip — don't dread going to the classes you take to fulfill requirements outside of your major. Those classes are such a great opportunity to discover something new you really like doing. Taking a class just for fun helped me realize what I wanted to do after graduation.

With the right attitude and a sense of adventure, you can make your time here the best it possibly can be.

Sarah Muir is a senior political science major from Lee's Summit, Mo.

AROUND THE QUAD

What are you most looking forward to this year? Why?

I am looking forward to meeting new students and teaching my JINS class. I love the energy students bring to campus each year, so I can't wait until they are all back.

Troy Paino
University President



I'm looking forward to class discussion, especially in my Urban Violence class. This is also my first year as a full-time professor and I will be advising students again.

Arlen Egley
Justice systems professor



I'm excited to move into the dorms. I'm from Kirksville so I know a lot about Truman and I'm excited to be in a new environment.

Camden Woods
Freshman



I'm excited to actually get to take the classes I worked so hard on getting into and seeing my friends again.

Scott Davis
Graduate student

