

# 5 Common Mistakes

## TO AVOID IN COLLEGE

Have you ever wished that you could go back in time and give your younger self some advice to save the current you from a lot of heartache? Consider this article a guide to help you avoid exactly that. From your future college graduate self to your current “just starting college” self, here are 5 common mistakes to avoid in college.

### 1. Ignoring your health

For many of you, this is your first time living somewhat on your own. You eat at a cafeteria serving a delicious array of foods ranging from healthy salads to not-so-healthy donuts. You might find yourself busier than ever, tempting you to skip the gym and maybe even cut back on your sleep. One mistake that many college students make is putting their health on the back burner. This is a major mistake that you will surely regret later. Your health should always be a priority. When you are eating healthy, getting the sleep you need and staying active, other areas of your life will also improve.

### 2. Taking on Too Many Responsibilities (or Too Few)

Your first Andrews club fair may be exciting and fill you with inspiration when you think of all the fun and engaging clubs you can join, but keep in mind that every club you sign up for, each music group you join, or job you take on will come with responsibilities. On the flip side, college is the time to build friendships, grow your skillsets and knowledge, and set yourself up for professional success. Don't limit yourself to playing video games and watching Netflix in your dorm room. Balance here is key – it's important to stay involved, but at the same time don't take on so much that you will be overly stressed later on.

### 3. Poor Planning

It's completely normal to change your major as you learn more about yourself and various career paths. It's ok if you decide that you don't want to stick with the major you initially decided on when starting college. In fact, one of the benefits of attending Andrews University is the wide variety of majors and combinations that are open to you! However, you should put some effort up front into planning out your college career. Explore different industries and the types of jobs you might be interested in pursuing early on. Remember, if you *do* change your major, it will save you both time and money if you decide this early enough to change the trajectory of your classes.

Are you interested in studying abroad or being a student missionary? These are helpful plans to take into consideration when scheduling your classes starting the first semester. Some classes that you will need in order to graduate are offered every semester or can be taken online, while others might only be available on campus every other year. Bring up any goals with your advisor so that you can start planning ahead as early as possible!

### 4. Not Taking Advantage of Career-Building Opportunities

Andrews University offers many opportunities that can help you grow professionally such as career fairs and presentations by successful individuals. Once you leave college, you'll discover that this opportunity to listen to keynote speakers or to network in-person, which is currently free and widely available to you as a college student, is one that someday you would likely need to pay for at a conference or networking event. Take advantage of these opportunities that are so easily accessible to you right now. You will even find on-campus job interviews taking place for students. Use these opportunities to cultivate your networking skills and industry knowledge. You never know what you might learn, or who you might meet.

### 5. Not Looking Beyond College

A college education both deepens your knowledge base and prepares you for the working world. However, many students don't put in time or effort to prepare for fitting into the #adulting world after college. While classes, work, and other obligations might be consuming, the importance of planning for your future cannot be ignored. Don't assume that simply having a college degree will land you a job. Proactively broaden

your future opportunities by applying for summer internships, researching companies, and talking with professors. It's also a great idea to find a mentor who can help guide you through the transition from student to professional.

Use your electives and time wisely. For example, now's a great time to start learning about investing, budgeting and retirement savings. Why not take that class in personal finance or attend that free seminar about avoiding credit card debt? Or go hear that speaker who is presenting about project management or work/life balance? Or audit Elementary Spanish during your easy semester and then go abroad to Argentina because you've always wanted to learn a language but haven't yet had the opportunity?

Consider, "Who do I want to be in five years? Where do I want to see myself in ten years?" Then use your time now in college to set yourself up for future success and to grow into who you want to eventually be, through the relationships you form, the spiritual depths you explore, the knowledge you acquire, and the choices you make.