

## **Coping with College Series**

### **Getting Involved**

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There is always so much to do! Besides attending classes, doing homework, and hanging out with friends, there are events to attend and organizations to join. Getting involved is a great way to learn new skills, meet new people, network, build your resume, expand your horizons, and just have fun! Involvement is important for all of these reasons, but it is also important to make good “involvement” decisions.

Here are a few things to consider as you begin to get involved. First, being involved doesn't mean you have to become the president of a campus organization. Involvement can be active or passive. Active involvement requires you to take responsibility (e.g. you become a member of a registered student organization). Passive involvement just requires your presence and/or participation (e.g. you attend a movie at Capen Cinema or go to a Redbird football game). Both forms of involvement help you to become connected with the campus community.

Now that you know what involvement is, how do you learn about opportunities for involvement? There are several good ways! Making friends is one way to learn how to get involved. However, if you want to search more deliberately you could ask your Resident Assistant, stop by the Office of Student Life (Student Services Building Room 387), read the Daily Vidette, or check the University Calendar at [www.calendar.ilstu.edu](http://www.calendar.ilstu.edu). These resources are great ways to learn how to get involved at Illinois State University and in the Bloomington-Normal community.

If you do become interested in getting involved in a particular campus organization, it is probably a good idea to do a little homework beforehand. Set up a meeting with a key member of the organization or attend an informational meeting. You should consider asking about organizational goals, membership expectations, time commitment, meeting times, and opportunities for leadership positions. If you do not feel comfortable with the organization's goals or expectations, politely decline to join.

It is also important to remember that balance is the key to successful involvement! As a student, you have many responsibilities. Involvement outside of class is important, but it should compliment your academic work. Be sure to think about how much time extracurricular activities will require of you before you take on additional responsibilities!

Finally, don't be afraid to try new things! It's never too late to try a new activity or join a new organization. Involvement can provide a great way for you to grow personally. Attending cultural celebrations, unfamiliar sporting events, plays, or lectures about topics you're unfamiliar with are great ways to experience new ideas and perspectives. Take a risk, try something new and see what you learn. It may just become your passion!