WELCOME TO CUA

Congratulations and welcome to CUA! As August approaches, you may be wondering what college life will have in store for you. Here at CUA, we don’t want to hold back any surprises. We want to make this transition from high school to college or from another university to CUA as smooth as possible. For that reason, we have asked administrators and current students to write small articles reflecting upon their own experiences at CUA. Be sure to check out this newsletter CUA Newsflash on a monthly basis to see what new stories administrators and students have for you!

This month’s edition focuses on the academic side of CUA. From First Year Experience, to study skills, to interning, CUA Newsflash has a number of interesting articles that gives you an idea of what CUA academics has to offer. Stay tuned for our next issues which include topics on the social life at CUA, orientation, transferring, and commuting!

From The Orientation Program

HELP, I NEED A JOB!

If you have been awarded financial aid which includes Federal Work-Study, you are eligible for an on-campus job. First, accept your award online through Cardinal Station. To find a work-study job, attend the Campus Employment Fair on Wednesday, September 1 from 10am to 2pm in the Pryzbyla Center Great Room. Work-study jobs will be posted on Cardinal Connection (visit: http://careers.cua.edu<http://careers.cua.edu>, click on Cardinal Connection (left navigation) and enter your username (complete CUA email address) and your password (CUA ID Number)). Check back frequently as jobs will be added throughout the summer.

What if I’m not qualified for Federal Work-Study, you ask? We encourage you to attend the Campus Employment Fair. There will be offices in attendance who will be hiring for non work-study positions. Off-campus part-time jobs are posted on Cardinal Connection - see above. Check back frequently as jobs will be added throughout the summer and school year. For more information see the Career Services contact information above.

Virginia Marbella is the Assistant Director of the Career Services Office located in Room 202 of the Pryzbyla Center
Develop Skills for Studying

Having a solid set of study skills will be one of the most important parts of your academic career here at CUA. These skills will allow you to be successful and accomplish all of your academic goals. The Fall semester of Freshman year is the best time to establish a new set of study habits because you can start from scratch to figure out what works for you. If you think you have good study habits from high school, great! Do not automatically assume that these will work at CUA though. College level work is, obviously, more difficult and may require you to tweak or completely reconfigure your study skills.

The most important thing to remember as you begin classes at CUA is that, in time, you will figure out what skills work for you. That concept is very important to understand. Since we are all different, the skills that you find to be successful may not be successful for your friends. Conversely, the skills that your friends find to be successful may not be successful for you. It is important that you find what brings you the most success and stick with it! Here are a few tips to get you thinking about how to construct effective study habits:

- Use a planner—Scheduling when you study and do homework will assure that you spend enough time each day doing work and allow you to visualize deadlines.
- Find a place to study—Some people like to study in a quiet environment, others in an environment with some commotion. Either way, find what works for you and stick to it.
- Don’t procrastinate—Waiting until the last minute to complete a paper may seem like a good idea two weeks before a deadline, but procrastinating is not a good idea. Studying requires time and effort, and procrastination does not usually provide enough time for you to study for a test or construct a well-written paper.
- Familiarize yourself with each syllabus—Your professors will give you a syllabus on the first day of class, which outlines the course. Everything from how you can contact your professor to course goals and assignment deadlines to grading policies are easily found in the course’s syllabus. Some classes will have more assignments than others so it is important to be aware of how much each assignment is worth.
- Ask questions! If you are having trouble creating successful study habits, or if you are having trouble in class, talk to your professor! They are there to help you and are more than willing to do so. In addition, you could go to the Center For Academic Success in the Pryzbyla Center to seek other guidance. Most importantly, don’t be afraid to ask questions! These skills will assure your success here at CUA, so it is important to establish a good foundation so you can be as successful as possible.

Matthew Longo is a Sophomore Psychology Major from Howell, NJ.
Greetings!

My name is Dr. Todd Lidh, and I’m writing to let you know about CUA’s summer reading for the First-Year Experience: Homer’s THE ODYSSEY. I’m excited about this project, and I trust you will be, too.

THE ODYSSEY bears directly to what you’re about to do. You’ll want to give particular attention to the first four books: they’re about Telemachus, Odysseus’ son, and his quest to find out who he is and who he comes from, what to believe and what to discard, who to trust and who to avoid. And he does this by leaving home—just as you are about to do. So even if you’ve read this poem before, we’re asking you to read it again because you’re not who you were when you read it in the past. As you read this epic tale, the stories of Telemachus and Odysseus should lead you to reflect on who you have been, who you are now and who you will become.

College challenges you to learn and relearn. It’s not strictly about rote learning or regurgitating what’s said in class; instead, it’s about taking any and all bits of information and learning how to make sense of the whole. Sometimes college is going to be easy, so you have to learn how to challenge yourself. Sometimes college can seem easy, so you have to learn how to recognize where the challenge lies. Sometimes college can be hard, so you have to learn how to improve your abilities or seek out others who can help.

You should know that you are not alone as you venture out on a journey in which you will discover both the world and yourself. You are embarking on the kind of adventure that great souls have been undertaking for thousands of years. And just as Telemachus has Mentor to encourage him, you will find that there are people looking out for you and who can assist you in your journey—and that is where CUA and the First-Year Experience comes in. Our first step in helping you get off to a good start is to recommend this story that has helped guide countless generations from before the time of Christ all the way to the present day.

Here’s the information on the specific translation; there’s also a terrific audio version—read by Ian McKellen himself!—that you are encouraged to listen to as well if you wish.

THE ODYSSEY, translated by Robert Fagles.
ISBN: 0140268863

Take time to read (or reread) this fantastic poem. We’ll be incorporating it throughout your first year here at CUA, and we want you to get the most out of your efforts. And keep an eye out for more information regarding THE ODYSSEY throughout the summer. I look forward to seeing you in the fall. Until then, be well.

Sincerely,

Todd M. Lidh, Ph.D.
Director of the First-Year Experience
Learn, Have Fun, and Meet New Friends: Your First Year Experience

Within your first few weeks at Catholic University, many different terms are thrown at you, one being the “First Year Experience.” Now what does that even mean? FYE is a recently instituted program that helps first year students find a familiar place in the academic world at CUA. It’s a bit different from other first year programs like Orientation or Orientation Extended. With FYE, new students are divided into “learning communities” of about twenty students who together take the core classes such as philosophy, theology, and english each semester for the first year. The communities are lead by your First Year Advisor who will be your FYE professor. Together with the students and professors, the First Year Experience creates a community that helps calm many of the first year fears.

Worried you won’t make any friends in your classes? Those nerves are suddenly calmed as you walk around campus with twenty new friends all in the same boat! With having the same twenty students in your classes for the entire first year, you create a special bond with your “learning community.” You won’t be alone while studying bible passages or philosophers such as Aristotle, Kant, and Plato late at night. It is a great to have a community to bond with especially within your first few weeks taking classes at college!

Another great aspect of FYE is that you take trips into DC as part of the course curriculum. The school, advisors and peers feel that coming to CUA is not just about learning inside the classroom but about the great city you live in. The opportunities to go into the city to learn more about different places through different historical perspectives is great! The papers and projects are interactive and become fun experiences and memories. Living in DC is a large reason why many of you chose to come to CUA. Having the city as an accessible resource, teachers try to use real life examples rather than staying within the boundaries of a classroom.

Your teachers are another large asset on campus, FYE teachers believe in the Importance of being there for you. They are trained to understand that you are still making a transition into college and can help make improvements where needed. Your FYE advisor along with your other professors help students understand their current level and where they need to be. With regular meetings, emails, study groups in Starbucks, or time after class, these professors are there to help you and to teach you the fundamentals that will help you achieve success in other classes at CUA and in your future.

Armaine DeCastro is a sophomore Politics Major from Ridgewood, New Jersey
What’s Your Major?

The first question people typically ask after you have told them which university you are planning to attend is, “What’s your major?” It will also most likely be one of the first questions that you will ask of your fellow classmates when you arrive at CUA in August. When chosen well, your major gives others insight into your interests, passions, and aspirations. If you have not chosen the right major, it can be frustrating to sit in classes that don’t excite or even interest you.

When thinking about this important question, it is important to spend some time in reflection. Think about what classes you really enjoyed taking in high school and what you enjoy learning about – either in or outside the classroom. Think about what subject you would like to focus on for roughly the next four years of your life. As we all know, this is a tough decision to make so rest assured that if you do not choose the right major, you have the flexibility to change your mind here at Catholic. A few of the wonderful things about pursuing a liberal arts education are that you are going to be exposed to many different fields of study, your eyes will be opened to new and exciting ideas, and your thinking will be challenged in many different ways. Keep in mind, your co-curricular experiences may also influence your major choice or inspire you to move in a different direction.

As you transition into this next step of your life, continue to rely on those people who have assisted you in the past: your family, mentors, teachers, friends, and anyone else who is important to you. These people will be crucial to your success here at CUA. There are also excellent resources on campus who are ready and willing to help you explore your unique strengths, interests, and abilities to guide you in making an appropriate major choice. Here at The Center for Academic Success, we are available to talk with you both over the summer and throughout the year. Also, your academic advisor, First-Year advisors, and the Career Services office will be great resources for you.

Although it can be overwhelming, choosing a major is an exciting opportunity. Spending time thinking about what your interests should be fun. Use the resources available to you and know that you are not locked into your choice for the duration of your college career. Although you have to have your major officially declared by the end of your sophomore year, you have time to change your mind. This is the time to explore new and exciting opportunities – enjoy it!

Elise Forte is the Coordinator for the Center For Academic Success that is located in Room 204 of the Pryzbyla Center

How Career Services Can Help You in Choosing a Major!

If you are unsure what to major in, Career Services is ready to help. There are several ways where we offer assistance:

From your computer:
1) Get a list of careers that are associated with a specific major: http://careers.cua.edu/explore/
2) Take FOCUS, an on-line career assessment: http://careers.cua.edu/explore/exploringhelp.cfm

Come to Career Services:
1) To take a career interest test to help you narrow down your options
2) To schedule a 1-on-1 appointment to discuss what and where you need help in your decision-making process.

To schedule a 1-on-1 appointment or for more information, call (202-319-5623) or stop by the office in 202 Pryzbyla Center. Office hours are 9-5, Monday thru Friday.

Virginia Marbella is the Assistant Director of the Career Services Office located in Room 202 of the Pryzbyla Center
Interning in college is a great way to build your resume and pave the way for professional success. Here at CUA, interning is as common as going out with your friends, and since we are in Washington DC the opportunities are limitless. Regardless of your major, there is a business or organization in Washington just waiting for you to apply. In many cases, you can get academic credit for your internship which makes things all the more fantastic. In comparison with most other college students, you will be able to have several internships throughout your time at CUA. In my case for instance, I’ve had six internships in just three short years. Whether it was working on Capitol Hill in the House and Senate, working at NBC News, or interning in British Parliament across the pond in London, the Office of Career Services always makes sure my resume is competitive and my professors have helped me organize my schedule to make sure everything is balanced. Sometimes people ask me “Joe how do you have time to go to school, be involved in activities and intern?” I have always responded by comparing life in college with life in high school. For instance, at my high school, I was in school Monday through Friday 8AM to 3PM. That’s 35 hours per week and that does not even include the after school activities most people participate in during high school. Suddenly in college, actual “school” is only 15-18 hours per week, and you now have a lot more time on your hands. I choose to spend those new found 20 hours a week doing something productive for my life and career, and interning is a great way to fill up some of those hours.

On behalf of all of us interns at CUA, welcome to Catholic University. We are glad you are coming. Take the first semester to get acquainted with our University and then when you are ready to start interning just talk to us. Who knows — there might just be an internship that we have waiting for you!

Joe St. George is a Senior Politics Major from Youngstown, Ohio.

Discover CUA Libraries

One of your greatest resources at Catholic University will be the expansive collections in our libraries. Our collections are so extensive that the over 1.4 million volumes have been organized into subject-specific branch libraries, throughout campus. Texts relevant to the study of the Humanities, Theology and Religious Studies, Philosophy, CUA’s impressive collection of rare books and a majority of reference materials are located in the John K. Mullen of Denver Memorial Library. The Architecture/Engineering, Music, Nursing/Biology, and Physics texts are conveniently located close to their disciplinary buildings, which makes it easier for students.

If one of the largest library systems in Washington, DC does not have a book that you need, don’t fear! Catholic belongs to the Washington Reference Library Consortium, which means that through your student account, you may request books from the libraries of Georgetown, Gallaudet, George Washington, George Mason, American, and Marymount Universities, as well as the University of the District of Columbia, as if they were your own. The books will be delivered to Mullen library within a week so that you can easily complete your research.

The library system at CUA does more than provide access to books, periodicals, and laptop computers; students and faculty are given access to over 130 scholarly and professional databases that enhance scholarship and research, especially at the undergraduate level. There are multiple rooms for group study, as well as many quiet carrels and rooms for silent study. The library is staffed by knowledgeable professionals and work-study students, who are more than willing to teach you how to make use of the libraries’ many resources. You can access the catalog online, and even ask for help with research through “IM with a librarian” (there is usually someone online until 9 p.m.).

The libraries really are here for you, the students, so much so that (in collaboration with the Student Association General Assembly) Mullen has been open 24hours/day for the entirety of exam week. Find out more at libraries.cua.edu.

Maggie Bykowski is a junior English major from Brookeville, MD.