

FIRST SEMESTER

Your first semester of college is what everyone tells you the most memorable will be. The transition into college is not easy. There is a lot of newly gained independence and it's a lot to take in. I went from living at home seeing my family, boyfriend, and friends every day. To moving into college where I didn't know anybody, and I didn't have my family and friends anymore. This transition was very scary, and I felt like I was completely alone and starting over. No one in my family has ever gone to college so I feel like I've just been figuring everything out for myself. However, Wesleyan has made the transition easier. From students, to professors, to the campus staff; it truly feels like everyone here wants you to succeed and will help you in anyway possible.

After being here for one semester I have learned many things about life at college. One lesson I have learned is that life in the dorms really isn't as bad as everyone says. I feel like living in the dorms puts you in the center of everything. I've become friends with a lot of the people that live in Dunn and it's a lot of fun because I'm living beside all my friends. Nights where it's freezing out and I don't want to walk to the library my friends and I go study in the floor study rooms or the lounge. I also can just go down the hall and ask a friend for homework help or to just visit. The dorm rooms aren't bad either, my roommate and I are very close, and this really feels like my home away from home. Another lesson I have learned is that all the professors I have this semester are awesome. I like every one of them and I feel like they really want me to succeed and that they will provide any type of help they can to assure that I'm learning the material. They all provide multiple resources for study material, and I have never gone into an exam feeling unprepared.

Over the last few months, I have learned about many new things. I feel like I can connect a lot of my classes together. In biology I have learned a lot about the cell cycle and cancer this

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connects to chemistry where we have learned a lot about the chemical compounds used to treat cancers. All that information ties into FYEX where we have talked about self-care and signs to catch cancer early. Over the summer I tore my ACL, MCL, and meniscus. I underwent surgery and am still in physical therapy recovery. In biology this semester we have learned a lot about our body and how certain things work after being repaired, I was able to apply what I learned in class to better understand my surgery and how part of my hamstring was used to make new ligaments.

Growing up I was taught the beliefs and values of my family and how my parents thought and believed. Being in middle school and high school opened me up to new beliefs and values and I was taught many different beliefs that others valued whether they were religious or political values everyone had different ones. I found this very intriguing and wanted to form my own opinions and not just agree and follow the values that my family believed in. This was how I related to Tara in *Educated*. She grew up with her father's strong values and was basically told she couldn't form her own until she went to school and realized she could. I feel like coming to college and being in FYEX has allowed me to form my own opinions and find people who believe in the same values as me. I also can have mature friendships where we may have different values and opinions, but we can still maintain a healthy friendship. This was a bit of a shock to me because previously in high school you were judged and treated differently if you value different beliefs and morals. Here at Wesleyan everyone respects each other's beliefs and doesn't judge them for being different.

After reading *Educated* and being in this FYEX 101 I think what it means to "be educated" is to be taught about many different beliefs and opinions as well as being taught how to apply

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knowledge into everyday things in the world. Being educated isn't just sitting in class and listening to a professor and then taking a test. Being educated is having the ability to apply that knowledge that you have been taught into real life situations. Without being able to apply what your taught all you have is some words on a page memorized.

Having a liberal arts education can allow you to grow in many ways spiritually and intellectually. On the spiritual side you get to learn about so many different things that may not be focused on in your major, this allows us to be able to understand one another and learn from each other by comparing similarities and differences. You also can be opened to new opportunities that can allow you to discover who you are on a more spiritual level. Now on the intellectual side, a liberal arts education can allow you to apply the knowledge you have learned about in your major-specific classes to the real world. Liberal arts give you more room and opportunities for personal growth which plays a major role in deciding what we want to pursue with our lives.

My first semester in college has been challenging, but it has also been a lot of fun to explore the new independence I have and to meet so many new people. I am looking forward to the spring semester and am excited to start my new classes.