

Dear Prospective Student,

Hello! I'm so glad that you decided to click on my letter and want to start off saying how lucky the University of Iowa is to have you for the next four years! You're probably reading this letter because you are either considering joining the Honors Program or already have and let me make that decision for you a whole lot easier by saying that it was without a doubt the best decision I have made in my college career. I graduated from a small-town high school where I knew everyone on a relatively personal level and moved to a campus larger than I knew possible where I essentially knew not one person. I was terrified, lost, but inspired to pursue my career path at my dream university. I came across the Honor's Program on my orientation visit where I learned about Honor's Primetime and the opportunity to move onto campus a week before the rest of the students. I signed up with little thought, but when the time actually came my mom had to quite literally push me out of the car because I was not only regretting my decision, but also felt fear on a level I had never experienced. Turns out, that week was not only one of the best memories I have being at college, but it also gave me my best friends, introduced me to Iowa City campus life, and gave me the confidence needed to be a successful student. If you are on the fence or hesitating to make the leap, I urge you to join! The Honor's Program truly will become your home away from home.

In terms of the first year of college there is a lot that I wish someone would have told me before I stepped onto campus my freshman year, and I feel them to be essential for student success. To begin, don't expect college to be anything like high school, like not at all they aren't even distantly related cousins, the experiences are completely different and cannot be compared. In most cases you will only know a select few of your fellow classmates within your classes, your professor will have no idea you exist (especially in the big introductory courses), and the largest

tragedy of all being that study guides are not a thing. You are going to fail. I'm going to say it again, you are going to fail. This is coming from a high school student that religiously studied, graduated with nearly a 4.0, and never got a late assignment in her life. No matter how prepared you may feel or how well you preformed in high school, it takes time to adjust to the rigorous curriculum of college courses. You will fall on you face, feel overwhelmed, and become frustrated, but it's going to be ok. Failing an exam does not mean failing a class. You will learn from your mistakes, correct your studying methods, and end up being successful because of it. This is something that took me a whole year to accept because while not getting an A on my first Principles of Chemistry exam seemed like the biggest failure I could every endure, it ended up being the biggest lesson I needed to learn. College is hard, you will fail, but in the end you will learn from your mistakes and be stronger for it because of the work you were willing to put in.

No matter where you came from, you will be overwhelmed as this is one of the first glances you will probably have at the world of opportunity. Hundreds of clubs, organizations, internships, and leadership positions, are at your fingertips seemingly all at once which can seem even a bit suffocating. My tip is to let yourself adjust to the fast-paced schedule of being a college student first, and then start looking into different things you want to get involved with. There is no rush; make sure that you ease your way into everything before overloading yourself with commitments. In my own experience, I joined the Honor's Program, which I knew was on the top list of priorities for me in terms of involvements, and then from there I saw all of the unique engagements that others members were involved in as well as the passions they were pursuing and used that inspiration to get involved myself. The program not only served as an inclusive community when I felt lost as an incoming student, but also enabled me to form connections and provided opportunities to pursue my passions. I joined the Honorable Messenger publication

team because I love to write and joined the Outreach team because assisting students in a meaningful way aligns directly with my career goals. As a person that is easily overwhelmed, I'm not sure I would have become so involved if it wasn't for the Honors Program pushing me to become not only the best student, but also women of society and I truly couldn't be more thankful to be a part of the organization. I wish you the best of luck on your journey here at Iowa and am so beyond excited for the growth you are about to endure.

Sincerely,

Mackenzie Anderson