



STRATEGIES FOR GETTING INVOLVED

by the student editors of ***FIND YOUR PASSION IN COLLEGE***,
a Students Helping Students™ book

- **Scope out the scene**

"When you first show up at college as a wide-eyed freshman, the sheer amount of opportunities available to you can be overwhelming. Don't worry though—after a while you'll find where you fit in."

**Junior,
Harvard University**

Take some time to check out the many activities and organizations that are available at your school. This can sometimes be a relatively straightforward task, but at some larger schools you'll have to work to get your finger on the pulse of the sorts of things you could do.

Many colleges have activity fairs at the start of each school year or semester where representatives from various student groups have booths from which they dispense fliers, copies of their latest printed project (if they have one), and, of course, valuable pieces of information.

Another excellent resource for finding out about the opportunities available at your school is the Internet. Many universities have student group contact information directories in their "student life" sections, and a large number of groups have their own websites as well.

Perhaps the best way to find out what's going on at your school is to go about things the old-fashioned way and simply talk to people in the know. Upperclassmen in particular are a great resource and might be able to tell you what sort of reputation a certain group has and whether people involved in it are happy with the way things are going.

- **Don't intimidate yourself**

"I tried this once in high school and I sucked at it."

"I don't think I'm the kind of person that does this stuff."

Excuses, excuses. We all have them and we all use them. But if you use too many excuses to talk yourself out of getting involved in certain activities you risk missing out on doing things that can make you really psyched.

Don't intimidate yourself and don't make too many excuses. How do you know that you're not good at something if you don't try? And if you tried once and it didn't work out, who says that it can't work out the next time around?

Take the relative safety of your college experience for a spin and try things that interest you, regardless of how good you think you'll be. If you like something, you can definitely get better.

- **Get advice but call your own shots**

It's always a good idea to get advice from trusted and knowledgeable sources, whether it's about your major, an internship you're considering, or a college organization you're thinking of joining. Professors, advisors, and your parents and friends all have good ideas to contribute. But this is your college experience, your life, and your decisions—get advice, but make sure that you're doing what you want to be doing.

- **Look for great people**

One of the best aspects of getting involved in extracurriculars at college is meeting other students who share your interests. By joining your school's Anime Society, you'll finally have the chance to talk with people about your intense love of the work of Hayao Miyazaki, and by joining the university's Young Democrats club, you'll be surrounded by people who share your views on environmental policy. If you attend a large school and have trouble finding other students with interests similar to yours, this is definitely the way to go.

For more helpful tips and proven strategies from students and recent grads on exploring as many extracurricular activities as possible, thinking about activities in relation to career possibilities, gaining leadership roles, and much more, visit www.StudentsHelpingStudents.com and buy the Students Helping Students™ guide titled ***FIND YOUR PASSION IN COLLEGE***, available at bookstores and online stores, such as Amazon.com.

Feeling comfortable with the people in your club or organization is as important as liking the actual activity, if not more so. As you explore different options make an effort to get to know the people involved. If they seem like a great group, then you've found your home, but if you're uncomfortable being around them, think again.