

Tips for Transfer Students

1. Recognize you are leaving your former institution, but you may still have friends there. It's normal to feel ambivalent, and even a bit lonely at first, especially since others in your class at Wartburg already have some social connections established.
2. It's normal to feel a bit awkward since you're not a "freshman", but you're not "in the know" like returning students, either. It may take a bit of extra effort on your part. Try the following:
 - a. Push aside your inhibitions—don't worry about being an upper-class student in a group of 1Ys.
 - b. Join a club. It may help to know that some students who have been on campus join campus clubs AFTER their first year, so you may not be the only upper-class student new to the organization.
 - c. Seize social opportunities. PARTICIPATE in the transfer group in fall orientation. There you'll meet other transfer students and returning Wartburg students as well as new 1Y students.
 - d. Reach out—one student put Smarties and Hershey's Kisses on her residence hall door and invited others to help themselves and leave a message (including their room number so she could visit them back).
 - e. Check out the web page for transfers. It includes a Wartburg "dictionary" to help you learn local places and abbreviations www.wartburg.edu/transfer/
3. Recognize that getting credits to transfer may be a combination of art and policy.
 - a. If you don't think you got credit for courses that should have transferred, talk with your adviser and/or the Registrar. Be sure to tell your adviser about what you've done and what your goals are.
 - b. Be prompt in having transcripts sent from other institutions where you earned credit.
 - c. Bring syllabi, major tests, papers or projects to help explain the depth and breadth of previous course work. Faculty can help the Registrar evaluate what should transfer.
 - d. Recognize that some credits will not transfer or will transfer only as electives. For example, Wartburg doesn't have a landscape design program or agricultural science, so no matter how rigorous those courses were at your previous institution, there are no equivalents at Wartburg and likely little or no credit will be awarded.
 - e. Be sure you **do your homework** and understand admissions requirements (both to the College and to a particular program) of the school to which you are transferring. Know the grade requirements and prerequisites for programs you wish to enter. Recognize that more selective colleges will be pickier about credits they will accept.
 - f. Don't let up on your studies just because you're leaving, even if you've been accepted at a new school. Courses in which you earn less than a "C" often do not transfer.
 - g. Use the time between deciding to transfer and arriving here as planning time. Contact advisers in the department you'll be joining; establish relationships right away. Arrange to be involved. For example, are there research projects you can join? This will help you secure letters of recommendation for jobs or graduate school.

Recognize that you are taking a less traditional path. Colleges are used to students arriving and staying for four years. If you arrive in the "academic midstream," be prepared to advocate for yourself and take charge of your own education. *"There are [sometimes] good reasons to switch colleges, but it's disruptive to personal life and education and can add to the duration and cost of a degree. So do your homework. . ."*

Ideas gleaned from four articles in the April 23, 2006 Sunday *New York Times*.