



## New to UBC – Learn From Peers

**Sakura:** [00:00:00] Hi my name is Sakura. I recently graduated from the GRS program in LFS, and I focused on city planning and Asia.

**Angela:** Hi, my name's Angela. I'm going into my third year as a psychology major and I'm also a Chapman Learning Commons Assistant.

**Collin:** So, I'm Collin. I'm going to my fifth year of kinesiology at UBC, and I also work as a Chapman Learning Commons project assistant.

**Sara:** So, my name is Sarah and I'm a fourth-year biology student.

**Maxwell:** Hi, my name is Maxwell and I'm in a combined major in economics and statistics.

### How did you choose your major?

**Sakura:** First year, I like failed a bio course and I was in the applied biology program, but I didn't want to lose all those credits and I still wanted to kind of stay in science. So, I found the GRS program because it took most of those first-year credits. And then also I talked to Roxanna, the program coordinator. And yeah, it really helped my decision to go into GRS.

**Angela:** So, it definitely wasn't immediate or intuitive decision. It was definitely a huge process of me trying to sort of figure out my options. It was along the path I sort of questioned a lot of like decisions that I already made. Like, for example, when I chose English (I initially went into English as a Bachelor of Arts).

And during that process, I found that it wasn't really, it didn't really feel very fulfilling towards me and my needs. And so, I sort of talked about my options with really anyone I could find, such as my friends and family as well as some professors and TAs. And eventually, throughout my first and second year as I was taking my courses, I found that I had a pretty big interest in psychology, ever since like high school as well.

And you know, mental health is something that's also very important to me. So eventually I decided to do what I was most interested in and switched gears from English to psychology.

### **How did you set yourself up for academic learning at UBC?**

**Maxwell:** Going to my first year, I knew I always wanted to do economics. But after a second year, I really decided that I should probably talk to someone. And that's when I went to Arts advising, which is very helpful in understanding what courses you need for your program and what you'll be needing for your next few years. I also found talking to professors in the field that you would like to pursue as well as other professors whose classes you've taken can also help you guide your academic future.

And in the end, I decided to do both economics and statistics. After discussing further with my professors,

**Collin:** Go to prof and TA hours if you feel like you need help. There's been times when I've been totally confused and then I sent them an email or went to office hours and they cleared everything up. So, most of them are really nice. Give it a shot.

**Sara:** So, when I first started at U B C it was really challenging because I had to relearn how to learn.

So basically, my first couple of midterms, I ended up having grades that I had never seen in high school. And in retrospect they weren't that bad, but it just, it was a wakeup call that the study techniques and the study strategies that I had in high school just wouldn't translate to university.

Instead of cramming the night before, I had to actually take the time to learn the concept. Go to the Math Learning Center, go to the Chemistry Learning Center, talk to my profs and TAs. So that was really what helped me derive a good academic learning strategy.

### **How did you make friends at UBC?**

**Maxwell:** Going into my first year, I found Jumpstart was very helpful in making friends. It's a great way to meet new people, get introduced to U B C and see also what type of activities and clubs they have. Other ways include the activities and clubs which you can join after the first week of school. And just being able to be in an environment where you're connected to people that are

also maybe in your department or also in an activity that you also enjoy is a great way to make friends.

**Sakura:** Think I met my best friend at Jumpstart and then after that, just during the pandemic, I mostly joined a club. And then my fourth year I joined more clubs, like through exec positions. And then I met some more people through that.

### **How piece of advice would you give to upcoming first-years?**

**Sakura:** I think really take advantage of the resources that are at U B C, like, I think only towards the end of the degree I realized how much like L F S as a faculty had to offer me in terms of like, they're just willing to help you, like at any step of the way.

**Sara:** So, the one piece of advice that I would give to first year students, is to get on the U B C housing wait list as soon as possible if you want to live on campus. It's the one thing I was really glad that people told me in my first year, because the wait list can be up to a year. So, you really want to get on that wait list as early as you can if you want live on campus. So yeah, get on the U B C housing wait list as soon as possible.

**Angela:** In terms of mental health, I would say that it can be a difficult process, especially transitioning from high school to post-secondary. It's looks different for everyone. And you know, what works for me may not really work for everyone.

So, I definitely advise people to do your work research and look to your friends and other people around you that you can trust to talk about this and discuss. The things that may have worked for them as well. And it's also really important to recognize, acknowledge the tougher days. The days that you'll have like lower energy, poor mental state, lower productivity, those days are ultimately bound to happen, and it's important to recognize that it's okay to have those days and to just be, try and be a bit nicer to yourself when it does happen.

**Maxwell:** So, in terms of budgeting, I would recommend that students have a calendar, which has at least a few weeks in advance their budget. I would recommend making monthly schedules of how much you're able to spend, what you're going to spend that on and also making sure that if you're a student resident, especially for the first years that you understand what you're given with your student plan and what other amenities you might need, including

textbooks or other food supplies. And just making sure that you are ready for the end of the winter term, which is going to be the busiest.

**Sara:** Thanks for watching everyone. We hope that the tips and tricks from our CLCAs really helped you and we'll see you in our next video. Bye.