

“Journey to College” Video Transcript



00:00 Introductions

Sasha Davy: Okay so - hello, my name is Sasha. I am from Houston and right now I'm going to UT Austin, where I'm double majoring in History and English Literature. And, yeah.

André Williams: So hi, I'm André Williams.

Luis Alatorre: Okay, so my name is Luis Alatorre.

Sonia Singh: Hi, my name is Sonia Singh.

Luis Garcia: My name is Luis Garcia.

Jessica Tifase: Hello, my name is Jessica Tifase. I'm a senior studying Digital Storytelling with minors in Film Studies and Art at the University of Missouri - Columbia.

Luis Alatorre: I go to U of H, so University of Houston - Main [Campus].

Sonia Singh: I attended the University of Texas at Austin.

Luis Garcia: I study at the University of Texas at Austin.

André Williams: I got to UT - Austin or University of Texas at Austin and I study International Business. I'm also working toward a certificate in Spanish.

Luis Alatorre: I'm an English major, Education minor.

Luis Garcia: I'm majoring in both Government and International Relations and Global Studies.

Sonia Singh: I studied a Bachelors of Science in Biology and a Bachelors of Science in Biochemistry.

01:04 What was the college application process like for you?

Sasha Davy: So, the college application process for me was like a mixture of like scary but also excited feelings.

André Williams: I didn't get - really get the opportunity to see anybody else go through that application process, so it was kind of something that was new to me.

Sonia Singh: Me having immigrant parents from different countries and me being a first generation American here in the US, it was a lot of uncharted territory so I really didn't know what to expect.

Luis Alatorre: Definitely fear of like not knowing what I wanted to do. So, when I applied to UT Austin, I applied as a Chemistry major actually, so that's like way different than what I'm doing now. So there was a lot of like that doubt, I was like what do I even apply as?

Sasha Davy: Like, I was excited because I was gonna go to college and stuff right, but I was also scared because I wasn't sure if my writing was good enough when it came to writing the essay portion.

André Williams: I had to work out like how to write the essays, how to kind of look at the different sites like Texas - Apply Texas and those different things.

Jessica Tifase: Um, I applied to a lot of out of reach schools - that my teacher would call out of reach, so schools that definitely I had no business getting into and that I probably wouldn't get into. So, her kind of just catego[rizing] most of the schools I applied to as being out of reach for me, I think that had like built a fear that I wasn't going to get into these schools, that I really wanted to get into, and that I was just being judged on my grades and my GPA, my SAT scores, and I wasn't really being judged on like me as a person. So, definitely it was scary.

Luis Alatorre: And then another fear I guess was the financial side. So like applying to UT Austin, I was like how much - how big of a scholarship will they give me.

Luis Garcia: For a good while I really thought I wasn't going to be able to go like my dream school, in this case UT Austin, because I thought I wasn't going to be able to afford it. So, I think it really took like doing a good amount of like internet research and like calling financial aid offices like all day to ask all these questions and kind of pressure them to make sure I understood everything.

Sasha Davy: I applied to Rice in Houston and I didn't get into that one. I remember I was crying the whole day because I really wanted to go to Rice as well, but I didn't get accepted. So it's like, when you don't get in it's obviously really sad, and for me it was almost heartbreaking, but there's a lot of really good things that come out of it as well, like now I'm at UT and I love this place so much.

03:46 What do you wish you had known or done during this process?

Jessica Tifase: I wish someone would have told me like just take it easy, this is really important, so be serious about it, but also like dream big and like do a better search.

André Williams: What I kind of learned was that it's kind of an experience that you make on your own and so you have to take advantage of the resources available to you, and like ask for help and really ask for help. Once I started asking for help and kind of looking for different resources, it made the experience a lot better.

Luis Garcia: I didn't know honor programs existed at UT. I didn't know how financial aid worked. I didn't know all of the scholarships I could have applied for early on rather than like later on while I was in college. So, kind of just taking the initiative to like ask my college counselor, ask people who I knew had been through the college experience before.

Sonia Singh: Maybe I shouldn't say this, but Reddit is really good - definitely look [there]. There are a lot of social media too that you can go ahead and reach out to people.

Jessica Tifase: If you lack in something, like show out in something else. So thankfully my SAT scores were really bad, but I had a really solid resume that could back up the type of person I was. I had a pretty good GPA that also helped. So if you see that you're like lacking in one area, try to really show that other area that you might be popping in.

Sasha Davy: I thought in my essays that I had to be like this super like smart, super cool person, like oh look at all this stuff I'm doing, I'm in all these organizations all these clubs. But really the most effective way for me to write my essay that really helped me get things done and feel satisfied and also get accepted was just like to be honest about my life, my background, my struggles growing up, and just like put it all down on paper and then talk about how I overcame the struggles. And now like I'm applying to college, and now I'm actually in college!

05:48 What was the transition to college like for you?

Sonia Singh: It was really exciting at first, and knowing that I had gotten accepted into my major as well, it was really - I felt very validated, you know at the beginning.

Jessica Tifase: I was like oh yeah college is going to be so easy for me - it's going to be hard but it's going to be worth it, and then definitely I got smacked to the face when I got to Missouri.

Sonia Singh: It was not what I had expected at all. It was very very rigorous. The academic setting was insanely rigorous.

Luis Alatorre: That first semester, I think that was probably the semester that my grades were the worst. So, I think that transition of going into college and taking on that responsibility of you know you have to go to class on your own, on your own time, and it's all up to you what you do.

André Williams: I think I allowed myself to miss out on a lot of opportunities because of fear, and because of just - yeah, just fear and feeling like I didn't necessarily deserve to be in those spaces or wasn't good enough to be in those spaces.

07:06 What helped you find your place in college?

Jessica Tifase: It was just weird, because on Twitter I would read all the threads about like freshmans in college and I would be like okay I got this, I'm going to do this, this, and that. And then when it came down to it, I was just like no I'm not doing any of this. But I think as like the years went by, and I realized that like getting involved literally was like my saving grace and helped me be where I am now. I don't have any regrets, but I definitely wish if I could tell other people, like hey seriously you can meet the coolest people if you just join an org[anization], or if you just like see someone you think is cool just say hey I think you're cool or I like your shoes or stuff - just don't be like on the backburner because life will literally pass you by.

André Williams: I think college is sometimes scary, and I remember thinking that everybody had figured out exactly what they wanted to do and I was like wait I don't know exactly what I want to do so I was like uhhh okay. But I realized you don't necessarily have to know what you want to do, you just have to know who you want to be. And so when you come to college, really take that time to really figure yourself out. Sit down with yourself and ask yourself what you want out of an organization, what you want out of life, what are some accomplishments - what are the things that make you feel accomplished, because it doesn't have to be making a super large amount of money, it can be like making a community and uplifting the people around you.

Sonia Singh: Having that strong support system you know, having not only peers that are in the same position as you are, but having professors that have felt that way as well. Not only professors but other mentors and them just validating your presence in that institution was very helpful. And just knowing that you know that wherever you're going to go after undergrad, your masters, med[ical] school, etc., you know a lot of people just like you have achieved great things. And that you will too.

09:23 What would you say to students going through the college application process right now?

Jessica Tifase: I just think that comparison is just like the thief of joy. And like you just can't do that. And obviously there's moments where you're going to be like you know what I'm having a bad day - I feel like trash, but as long as you like - you think about it and you're like you know what I'm a bad b - I'm a bad b. You wake up the next morning and you're like you know what I'm not going to let that tiny voice in the back of my head make me forget who I am as a person.

Sonia Singh: I would say just trust yourself, you know what you're doing. Be consistent. Be super consistent in who you are and what you're trying to do and just keep mental notes

of what you're trying to achieve. And just research, research, research. Do a bunch of research. Talk to people, make connections. In your high school, outside your high school, in your local community.

Sasha Davy: I would tell them that there's always somebody there to help. You can ask your teachers, or they could even ask if they have anybody in their family who is in college, you could ask them, if they feel more comfortable asking someone that they're close to. Just like encourage them to really seek out people to help them because there's always, always going to be somebody there to help them out. And like the sky is the limit. They can do anything they put their mind to. Because I did it, and I'm like not even anything special.

Luis Alatorre: Make your decision based off of you, not what your parents are doing or what your friends are doing.

Luis Garcia: Don't be afraid to get out of your comfort zone. Like maybe college seems like something that necessarily isn't what you're supposed to follow or even if you do follow it right it feels like maybe an option that like you don't feel fully comfortable with. But that's what's so great about college like you kind of get four years to take a good look at yourself, constantly challenge yourself in one way or another - whether that challenge is learning something that you want as a career, whether that challenge is making new friends, taking on a new hobby. I think that's what's beautiful about college and once you get there you have so many opportunities to grow that sometimes not being in college doesn't offer.

André Williams: I would say be more bold, and really tap into who you are. I feel like every day, I become a little bit more of myself as I allow myself to tap into my potential and I think that's kind of like - yeah, allow yourself to be great. Like you have so much to offer the world and yeah don't be afraid to shine, don't be afraid to be bold, don't be afraid to say what you want and ask for help when you need it. But also just sometimes you have to be fearless. I think that college is a scary time, there's a lot of unknowns, but within the unknown, you find so many beautiful things, you meet so many beautiful people. You get to meet yourself in different ways that you haven't before. And so really allow yourself to experience that.

12:33 Credits