Florida State, First Impression Essay, Research Paper

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When I decided to come to Florida State, surprisingly enough it wasn’t for the parties. I was actually excited about coming here and studying (don’t ask me why). Every other school I looked at I judged them according to how much of a party school they were and what the girls looked like. Then I end up at the #1 party school with a 5:1 ratio of girls to guys. In fact when I came here I wasn’t even planning on rushing a Fraternity. When I got here though it was a whole different story.

I can remember the week before school started, walking down the hall of my dorm and seeing newspaper clippings on all the doors. After a few days I got curious and decided to read one of them. It was an article about how our University was named the #1 party school for 1999-2000. The last time we had this title was in 1996. Our school has ranked in the top five biggest party schools four times in the last six years, and in 1996 it was ranked #1. For those first one or two weeks of school, everyone was making a big deal about it. I even saw it brought up on MTV News, and Comedy Central. Both shows were ripping on Sandy D’Alemberte about the comments he had tried to make to save the face of his school. His comments about the title were that it was unfair because it was not done in any type of scientifically correct manner. Another one of his arguments was that an interviewer from the Princeton Review had not been to the campus since 1997 so there was no definite way that they could have information from students about the present social life at the school. The only information the media had to judge this on was feedback they got from student surveys, which are not the most dependable way to get information.

So how exactly is this title decided? Does someone go around to different parties and decide it based on how good the parties are? Is it decided by the number of kegs bought in a set amount of time in Tallahassee? Maybe it’s judged by polls that ask how often each student here has sex. It’s hard to tell. From what I see I don’t think we party any more than other colleges that I’ve been to. Granted some people party more than others and some fraternities party harder than others do. But as a whole I do not think that that FSU should be considered the #1 party school in the country. If its based on the ranking of our football team then that would be a different story. If that were the case then it wouldn’t give our university such a bad reputation. Right now though we have a reputation that the students like because it makes them look like a bunch of hard ass partiers. But the graduates don’t really like it because they know that their possible employers know about that reputation and probably look down on hiring someone who is a party animal. The thing that sucks the most about it is for those people who don’t really party that much like my roommate. He hates having that name because he has never had a sip of alcohol in his life. But when he tells people that he goes to FSU they immediately smile and ask him some question like, “how many beers can you drink in one hour?” Personally I don’t really care about being known as a party animal. I will admit that I probably party a lot more than I really should. Especially being in a fraternity, there are always parties that I can go to. Unfortunately though, it is beginning to have an impact on my studies even though I have to go to mandatory study hours with Kappa Alpha.

I am going to have to disagree with the magazines and newspapers when they say that the students of Florida State are nothing but a bunch of drunken slobs. There are a lot of extremely smart people here. “FSU, for instance, came in 45th in the nation in U.S News and World Report’s recent rankings of public universities.” So no matter what our national party ranking is I will never be worried about an employer looking down on me because this is where I went to school. I mean I didn’t pick this school for that. Besides, it got that title after I got here this year. Most employers know that no matter what title Florida State might have, it is still a good school to get a degree from.

One thing that makes me mad about this campus and the media is that a lot of people here are extremely anti-Greek. Right now the campus is trying to get fraternities to be away from campus. So now a lot of the fraternities are moving into houses that are on the East side of campus. The fraternity that I’m in; Kappa Alpha, has a house right now that we are renting from the University but are building a new house across the street from Pot Belly’s. One reason for this could probably be traced back to the fact that we are known to be a huge party school. True there has been some problems with fraternities on this campus, but then again, every campus has some type of problem with fraternities. But typically these are dealt with fairly easily without much commotion. When people think of the Greek system they usually envision these outrageous parties with several kegs and a bunch of wild people running around like in the movie, Animal House. The truth is that fraternities and sororities actually help out a lot on campus and in the community. Each one is required to do a certain amount of philanthropy work and functions. Just this past weekend my fraternity had a haunted house for charity and we raised over $6,000 for muscular dystrophy. Then this weekend we have a golf tournament that already 150 people are signed up for at $50 per person. That is not to mention the individual holes sponsored by local businesses. Even though I am biased on this topic, I really don’t understand this because I think that the Greek system is the greatest thing to have at college. It allows you to meet people that you would otherwise never meet; people who have a lot of the same interests as you do. Already I have made 21 of the greatest friends in my life. Fraternities cause you to become closer to people than you would most likely get otherwise.

Basically, I believe from my point of view that the media misrepresents colleges very often times in reporting about them. The Media needs to do a better job of finding out what college life is really like. They never right about what kind of academic things are happening around the university. Even in the campus newspaper, which does a pretty good job of getting the facts, usually fails to write very much about any thing other than what bar specials there are that week, what band is playing where, what fraternities or sororities are having date functions, and then classifieds for jobs and other things. I have not seen a section dedicated to schoolwork. Even if they wrote an article every now and then about improving your study skills, or the best way to go about finding a tutor if you need one, at least it would be something somewhat beneficial. This sucks because it gives the general public a false impression about what colleges are about these days. Too many times I’ve heard older people talking about how college is nothing but a big party compared to the way it was back in their day. It upsets me because I would love for them to try coming to school now. I would go as far to say that college is harder now than it was 25 years ago. Not just the classes in general though. A lot of school being harder now is due to the increased distractions outside of school that keep students from studying.