

High School Versus College

FOLLOWING THE RULES IN HIGH SCHOOL	CHOOSING RESPONSIBLY IN COLLEGE
High school is mandatory and usually free.	College is voluntary and expensive.
Your time is structured by others.	You manage your own time.
You can count on parents and teachers to remind you of your responsibilities and to guide you in setting priorities.	You must balance your responsibilities and set priorities. You will face moral and ethical decisions you have never faced before.
Each day you proceed from one class directly to another, spending 6 hours each day (30 hours a week) in class.	Class times vary throughout the day and evening and you spend only 12 to 16 hours each week in class.
Most of your classes are arranged for you.	You arrange your own schedule in consultation with your adviser. Schedules tend to look lighter than they really are.
You are not responsible for knowing what it takes to graduate.	Graduation requirements are complex, and differ from year to year. You are expected to know those that apply to you.
Guiding principle: You will usually be told what to do and corrected if your behavior is out of line.	Guiding principle: You are expected to take responsibility for what you do and don't do, as well as for the consequences of your decisions.

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS	COLLEGE PROFESSORS
Teachers check your completed homework.	Professors may not always check completed homework, but they will assume you can perform the same tasks on tests.
Teachers remind you of your incomplete work.	Professors may not remind you of incomplete work.
Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance.	Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance.
Teachers are available for discussion before, during, or after class.	Professors expect you to attend their scheduled office hours.
Teachers have been trained in teaching methods to assist in imparting knowledge to students.	Professors have been trained as experts in their particular areas of research.
Teachers provide you with information you missed when you were absent.	Professors expect you to get any notes from classes you missed from classmates.
Teachers present material to help you understand the material in the textbook.	Professors may not follow the textbook. Instead, to amplify the text, they may give illustrations, provide background information, or discuss research about the topic you are studying. Or they may expect you to relate the classes to the textbook readings.
Teachers often write information on the board to be copied in your notes.	Professors may lecture nonstop, expecting you to identify the important points in your notes. When professors write on the board, it may be to amplify the lecture, not to summarize it. Good notes are a must.
Teachers impart knowledge and facts, sometimes drawing direct connections and leading you through the thinking process.	Professors expect you to think about and synthesize seemingly unrelated topics.
Teachers often take time to remind you of assignments and due dates.	Professors expect you to read, save, and consult the course syllabus (outline); the syllabus spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due, and how you will be graded.
Teachers carefully monitor class attendance.	Professors may not formally take roll, but they are still likely to know whether or not you attended.
Guiding principle: Teachers bear much of the responsibility for your learning.	Guiding principle: You bear the responsibility for your learning.

GOING TO HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES	SUCCEEDING IN COLLEGE CLASSES
The school year is 36 weeks long; some classes extend over both semesters and some don't.	The academic year is divided into two separate 15-week semesters, plus a week after each semester for exams.
Classes generally have no more than 35 students.	Classes may number 100 students or more.
Most studying is in class, with homework as a back-up.	Most studying is outside of class (at least 2 to 3 hours for each hour in class) with lectures and other class work as a guide.
You seldom need to read anything more than once, and sometimes listening in class is enough.	You need to review class notes and text material regularly.
You are provided with textbooks at no expense.	You need to budget substantial funds for textbooks, which will usually cost more than \$300 each semester. Textbooks must be bought promptly.
You are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed, and often re-taught, in class.	You are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing which may not be directly addressed in class.
Guiding principle: You will usually be told in class what you need to learn from assigned readings.	Guiding principle: It's up to you to read and understand the assigned material; lectures and assignments proceed from the assumption that you've already done so.

TESTS IN HIGH SCHOOL	TESTS IN COLLEGE
Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material.	Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material. You, not the professor, need to organize the material to prepare for the test. A particular course may have only 2 or 3 tests in a semester.
Makeup tests are often available.	Makeup tests are seldom an option; and must be requested.
Teachers frequently rearrange test dates to avoid conflict with school events.	Professors in different courses usually schedule tests without regard to the demands of other courses or outside activities.
Teachers frequently conduct review sessions, pointing out the most important concepts.	Professors rarely offer review sessions, and when they do, they expect you to be an active participant, prepared with questions.
Guiding principle: Mastery is usually seen as the ability to reproduce what you were taught in the form it was presented, or to solve the kinds of problems you were shown how to solve.	Guiding principle: Mastery is often seen as the ability to apply what you've learned to new situations or to solve new kinds of problems.

GRADES IN HIGH SCHOOL	GRADES IN COLLEGE
Grades are given for most assigned work.	Grades may not be provided for all assigned work.
Consistently good homework grades may raise your overall grade when test grades are low.	Grades on tests and major papers usually provide most of the course grade.
Extra credit projects are often available to help you raise your grade.	Extra credit projects cannot, generally speaking, be used to raise a grade in a college course.
Initial test grades, especially when they are low, may not have an adverse effect on your final grade.	First tests are usually "wake-up calls" to let you know what is expected--but they also may account for a substantial part of your course grade.
You may graduate as long as you have passed all required courses with a grade of D or higher.	You may graduate only if your average in classes meets the departmental standard--typically a 2.0 or C.
Guiding principle: "Effort counts." Courses are usually structured to reward a "good-faith effort."	Guiding principle: "Results count." Though "good-faith effort" is important in regard to the professor's willingness to help you achieve good results, it will not substitute for results in the grading process.