

How Is College Different from High School

| FOLLOWING THE RULES IN HIGH SCHOOL | CHOOSING RESPONSIBLY IN COLLEGE |
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| * High school is <i>mandatory</i> and usually <i>free</i> . | * College is <i>voluntary</i> and <i>expensive</i> . |
| * 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. | * <i>You</i> must balance your responsibilities and set priorities. You will face moral and ethical decisions you have never faced before. |
| * 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. |
| * 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. |
| GOING TO HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES | SUCCEEDING IN COLLEGE CLASSES |
| * You may study outside class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and this may be mostly last-minute test preparation. | * You need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class. |
| * 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 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. |
| 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 provide you with information you missed when you were absent. | * Professors expect you to get from classmates any notes from classes you missed. |
| * 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. |

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| * 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. |
| * Guiding principle: High school is a teaching environment in which you acquire facts and skills. | * Guiding principle: College is a learning environment in which you take responsibility for thinking through and applying what you have learned. |
| 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; if they are, you need to request them. |
| * 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, one who comes prepared with questions. |
| * Guiding principle: Mastery is usually seen as the ability to reproduce what you were taught in the form in which it was presented to you, 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. | * Watch out for your <i>first</i> tests. These 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 be shocked when you get your grades. |
| * Guiding principle: <i>Effort counts</i>. Courses are usually structured to reward a "good-faith effort." | * Guiding principle: <i>Results count</i>. Though "good-faith effort" is important in regard to the professor's willingness to help you <i>achieve</i> good results, it will not <i>substitute</i> for results in the grading process. |

Adapted from:

<https://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/NeatStuffforNewStudents/HowIsCollegeDifferentfromHighSchool>