

Scholars for Excellence in Child Care

Providing Educational Opportunities for Child Care Professionals

MAKE A SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO COLLEGE

- Take control of your own education: think of yourself as a successful student.
- Get to know your scholar coordinator and instructors: they are your single greatest resource.
- Be assertive. Create your own support systems, and seek help when you realize you may need it.
- Take advantage of student services on campus and online; go to a learning strategies workshop; work with a tutor.
- Take control of your time. Plan ahead to satisfy course work requirements and make room for everything else.
- Make thoughtful decisions: don't drop any course too quickly.
- Think beyond the moment: set goals for the semester, the year, and your college career.

Although it may have been awhile since you were in school, being aware of the differences between high school and college will help you make a successful transition to college or back to college. Another helpful tool is the Grade Expectations (The Reality of Being a College Student) chart for academic expectations of a college student available at <http://www.osrhe.edu/scholars/forms.shtml>.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL and COLLEGE

RESPONSIBLY IN HIGH SCHOOL	CHOOSING RESPONSIBLY IN COLLEGE
Time is structured by school officials and parents.	Students manage their own time.
Students can count on parents and teachers to remind them of responsibilities and to guide them in setting priorities.	Students balance responsibilities and set priorities on their own.
Most class schedules are arranged for you.	Students arrange their own schedule in consultation with their scholar coordinator or academic advisor. Schedules tend to look lighter than they really are.
Bottom Line: School personnel watch out for students – guiding and correcting them if necessary.	Bottom Line: Students are expected to take responsibility for what they do and don't do, as well as for the consequences of their decisions.
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 three separate semesters. 16-weeks for the fall and spring semesters and 8-weeks for the summer semester.
Students can normally get by with studying outside of class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and perhaps cramming before tests.	Students need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class. A course load of 6 credits requires anywhere between 12 to 18 hours of independent study/homework time.
Reading is often re-taught in class; listening in class is sometimes enough.	Students need to review class notes and text material regularly.
Students are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed, and often re-taught in class.	Students are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing which may not be directly addressed in class, but still show up in tests.
Bottom Line: Students are usually told in class what they need to learn from assigned readings.	Bottom Line: It's up to the students to read and understand the assigned material; lectures and assignments proceed from the assumption that the students have already done so.
HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS	COLLEGE INSTRUCTORS
Teachers remind students of incomplete work.	Instructors may not remind students of incomplete work.
Teachers approached the students if they believed they need assistance.	Instructors are usually open and helpful, but most expect the students to initiate contact if they need assistance.
Teachers are often available for conversation before, during, or after class.	Instructors expect and want the student to attend their scheduled office hours.

Teachers provide students with information missed in the case of an absence.	Instructors expect students to get notes from classmates for any missed classes.
Teachers present material to help students understand the material in the textbook.	Instructors may not follow the textbook. Instead, they may use other materials to supplement the text; or they may expect the students to relate the classes and lectures to the textbook readings.
Teachers often write information on the board as a summary of notes.	Instructors may lecture nonstop, expecting students to identify the important points in their notes. Good notes are a must.
Teachers impart knowledge and facts, sometimes drawing direct connections to lead students through the thinking process.	Instructors expect students to think about and draw a conclusion about the similarities and differences of seemingly unrelated topics on their own.
Teachers often take time to remind students of assignments and due dates.	Instructors expect students to read, save, and consult the course syllabus (outline); the syllabus spells out exactly what is expected of the student, when it is due, and how it will be graded.
Teachers carefully monitor class attendance.	Instructors may not formally take roll, but they are still likely to know whether or not a student shows up.
Bottom Line: <i>In high school students mostly acquire facts and skills.</i>	Bottom Line: <i>In college students are responsible for thinking through and applying what they have learned.</i>

TESTS IN HIGH SCHOOL	TESTS IN COLLEGE
Testing tends to be frequent and covers small amounts of material.	Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material. The student, not the professor, needs 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, the student needs to request them.
Teachers are open to rearranging test dates to avoid conflict with school events.	Instructors in different courses usually schedule tests without regard to the demands of other courses or outside activities.
Teachers conduct review sessions pointing out the most important concepts.	Instructors rarely offer review sessions, and when they do, they expect the students to be an active participant, one who comes prepared with questions.
Bottom Line: <i>Mastery can be seen as the ability to reproduce what students are taught.</i>	Bottom Line: <i>Mastery is often seen as the ability to apply what the student has learned to new situations or to solve new kinds of problems.</i>

GRADES IN HIGH SCHOOL	GRADES IN COLLEGE
Consistently good homework grades may raise your overall grade when test grades are low.	Grades on tests and major assignments usually provide most of the course grade.
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 the student know what is expected – but they may also account for a substantial part of the course grade.
Students may graduate as long as they pass all required courses with a grade of D or higher.	Students graduate only if their average in classes meets the departmental standard specified in the college catalog.
Bottom Line: <i>“Effort counts.” Courses are usually structured to reward a “good-faith effort.”</i>	Bottom Line: <i>“Results count. Though “good-faith effort” is important in regard to the professor’s willingness to help students achieve good results, it will not substitute for results in the grading process.</i>