

The Differences BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE A POINT-BY-POINT COMPARISON

To succeed, all students coming from high school to college must negotiate a brand new environment of expectations, requirements and discovery.

Personal Freedom In High School	Personal Freedom In College
High school is mandatory and free (unless you choose other options).	College is voluntary and expensive.
Your time is usually structured by others.	You manage your own time.
You need permission to participate in extracurricular activities.	You must decide whether to participate in extracurricular activities. (Hint: Choose wisely in the first semester and then adjust later.)
You can count on parents and teachers to remind you of your responsibilities and to guide you in setting priorities.	Guiding principle: You're old enough to take responsibility for what you do and don't do, as well as the consequences of your decisions.
You need money for special purchases and events.	You need money to meet the basic necessities.

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 task on tests.
Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance.	Professors are usually open & helpful, but most expect you to contact them if you need assistance.
Teachers are often available for conversation before, during, or after class.	Professors expect and want you to attend their scheduled office hours.
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.
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 summarize it. Good notes are a must.

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.
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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 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 in prepared with questions.
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.	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 work homework grades may help raise your overall grade when test grades are low.	Grades on tests and major papers 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.	Watch out for your first 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: "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.

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