

# Differences between high school and college

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Differences between High School and College

**HIGH SCHOOL** High school is mandatory and usually free. Time is structured by school officials and parents. Students can count on teachers to remind them of responsibilities and to guide them in setting priorities. Daily classes follow one after the other, with a few minutes in between. Most class schedules are arranged by school personnel. Students are told about graduation requirements.

**IN COLLEGE** College is voluntary and expensive. Students manage their own time. Students balance responsibilities and set priorities on their own. Students often have large time gaps between classes; class time varies from day to day. Students arrange their own schedule in consultation with their academic counselor or advisor. Graduation requirements are complex, differ from program to program, and sometimes from year to year. Each student is expected to know those that apply to him/her.

**Bottom Line:** School personnel watch out for students

**Bottom Line:** Students are expected to take responsibility for — guiding and correcting them if necessary. what they do and don't do, as well as for the consequences of their decisions.

**HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES**

**COLLEGE CLASSES** Students can normally get by with studying outside of class. Students need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and perhaps for each hour in class. A course load of 12 credits requires cramming before tests. anywhere between 24 to 36 hours of independent study/homework time. Reading is often re-taught in class; listening in class is

Students are assigned substantial amounts of reading and sometimes enough. writing which may not be directly addressed in class, but still show up in tests.

**Bottom Line:** Students are usually told in class what

**Bottom Line:** It's up to the students to

read and understand they need to learn from assigned readings. the assigned material; lectures and assignments proceed from the assumption that the students have already done so. HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS Teachers check completed homework. COLLEGE PROFESSORS Professors may not always check completed homework, but they will assume the students can perform the same tasks on tests. Teachers remind students of incomplete work. Professors may not remind students of incomplete work. Teachers approach the students if they believed they Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect the need assistance. students to initiate contact if they need assistance. Teachers are often available for conversation before, Professors expect and want the student to attend their during, or after class. scheduled office hours. Teachers are taught teaching methods to assist in Professors have been trained as experts in their particular imparting knowledge to students. areas of research, not necessarily on how to teach. Teachers provided students with information if case of Professors expect students to get from classmates any notes an absence. from missed classes. Teachers present material to help students understand Professors may not follow the textbook. Instead, they may the material in the textbook. use other materials to supplement the text; or they may expect the students to relate the classes to the textbook readings. Teachers often write information on the board as a summary of notes. Teachers impart knowledge and facts, sometimes drawing direct connections to lead students through the thinking process. Teachers often take time to remind students of assignments and due dates. Teachers carefully monitor class attendance. Bottom Line: In high school students mostly acquire facts and skills. TESTS IN HIGH SCHOOL

Testing tends to be frequent and covers small amounts of material.

Professors may lecture nonstop, expecting students to identify the important points in their notes. Good notes are a must. Professors expect students to think about and synthesize seemingly unrelated topics on their own.

Professors 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. Professors may not formally take roll, but they are still likely to know whether or not a student shows up.

Bottom Line: In college students are responsible for thinking through and applying what they have learned. TESTS IN COLLEGE Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material. The student, 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 seldom an option; if they are, the student needs to request them. Professors in different courses usually schedule tests without regard to the demands of other courses or outside activities. Professors rarely offer review sessions, and when they do, they expect the students to come prepared with questions. Bottom Line: Mastery is often seen as the ability to apply what the student has learned to new situations or to solve new kinds of problems.

GRADES IN COLLEGE Grades may not be provided for all assigned work.

Extra credit projects cannot, generally speaking, be used to raise a grade in a college course. Students graduate only if their average in classes meets the departmental standard specified in the Catalog. Bottom Line: "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. Makeup tests are often available. Teachers are open to rearranging test dates to avoid conflict with school events. Review sessions pointing out the most important concepts are common. Bottom Line: Mastery can be seen as the ability to reproduce what students are taught. GRADES IN HIGH SCHOOL Grades were given for most assigned work. Extra credit projects are often available to help raise your grade. Students may graduate as long as they pass all required courses with a grade of D or higher. Bottom Line: " Effort counts." Courses are usually structured to reward a " good-faith effort." Extracted from the Altshuler Learning Enhancement Center at Southern Methodist University