## CAREER VISION

## On the Move: The Transition from High School to College

Are you one of millions of students who will start college as a freshman in the fall? If so, you're probably really excited - and maybe even a little scared too! After all, you've never traveled this road before. So your transition from high school to college may be a bit bumpy at first. But, with a clear map of the road ahead, you'll be prepared to handle the curves.

## The Road Ahead

The road to high school success is different than the route you'll take in college. Many things will change. So, before you begin your journey, make sure you know:

## - Who's driving?

When you're in high school, your teachers and parents are in the driver's seat, guiding your way. They tell you what to do and how to do it. And they help you get back on track when you veer slightly off course. But in college you're behind the wheel. It's up to you to decide what to do and to accept responsibility for the consequences of your choices.

| High School | College |
| :--- | :--- |
| - Your education is mandatory |  |
| and usually free. |  |$\quad$ • Your education is voluntary and | you pay for it. |
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| High School | College |
| :---: | :---: |
| - You need permission to engage in social and extracurricular activities. | - You decide how to spend your free time. |
| - Your teachers and parents guide you in setting priorities, meeting deadlines, and behaving responsibly. | - You set priorities, juggle responsibilities, and accept the consequences of your choices on your own. (And, as a result of your new independence, you might have to make some tough decisions not only in terms of time management, but in challenges to your values, morals, and ethics.) |
| - You're not responsible for knowing what it takes to graduate. Your guidance counselor helps you map your coursework, ensuring that you're on track to graduate. | - Graduation and major requirements are complex. It's up to you to schedule annual meetings with your academic advisor to ensure you're taking the right mix of general education, pre-requisite, major, and minor classes to meet graduation requirements. |

- Your "driver's ed" teacher

When you're in high school, your teacher explains and summarizes what you are expected to learn from lectures and homework assignments. But college professors assume that you're keeping up with and understand the assigned reading materials on your own.

High School Teachers

- Are trained in effective teaching methodologies to positively impact student learning.

College Professors / Instructors

- Are trained in their academic discipline.


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High School Teachers

- Impart knowledge and facts.
- Thoroughly explain homework assignments and give you reminders about due dates.
- Discuss your reading and homework assignments during class time to ensure you've grasped the material.
- Usually write information on the white board for you to copy into your class notes.
- Check your homework; remind you of missing assignments; usually allow you to turn in homework and assignments past the due date (deducting points from your final grade).
- Reach out to you if they think you need extra help; are usually available to talk with you before, during, and after class.

College Professors / Instructors

- Expect you to synthesize information, draw conclusions, and apply what you've learned.
- Expect you to read and follow the course syllabus (which lists assignments and due dates and delineates the grading system).
- Might not follow the textbook or discuss reading assignments in class at all (instead delivering lectures to provide illustrations, research, and background information to supplement reading materials).
- Often lecture non-stop, expecting you to take your own notes to summarize the main points.
- Rarely check assignments; might not accept papers or projects submitted after the deadline.
- Are usually approachable, open, and helpful, but expect you to proactively initiate contact during their scheduled office hours if you need assistance.


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## High School Teachers

College Professors / Instructors

- Take attendance.
- Explain what you missed when you were absent from class.
- Might not take attendance.
- Expect you to get notes from a classmate when you miss a class.


## - The mile markers

In high school, teachers gauge your mastery of the subject by assessing how well you're able to reproduce what you were taught - in the same format in which it was presented to you. At the college level, mastery requires that you're able to solve new kinds of problems by applying what you've learned.

| High School Tests | College Exams |
| :--- | :--- |
| - Quizzes / tests are given |  |
| frequently and usually cover a |  |
| relatively small amount of |  |
| material. |  |$\quad$| -Typically only two exams are <br> given in each class - a mid-term <br> and a final (which is usually <br> cumulative). |
| :--- |
| - Generally, students are able to |
| make up a quiz / test they <br> missed due to absence. |
| Sometimes teachers will re- <br> arrange test dates that conflict <br> with school events. |
| - A make-up test is rarely an |
| option. |

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## - How wide is the lane?

In high school, teachers usually structure courses to reward good-faith effort. If you try, you'll earn some points! But, at the college level, only the results count. In other words, when you demonstrate effort, your professor may be more willing to help when asked. But, your final grade is determined by the results you achieve (not the effort you put forth).

| Grading in High School | Grading in College |
| :--- | :--- |
| - In most cases, you receive a |  |
| grade for every assignment. | - Only major assignments are |
| graded. |  |

## Roadside Assistance

Don't be surprised if you hit a few bumps in the road while you're in college. It's a big adjustment, especially in the beginning. In fact, few students get through college without needing assistance at some point during their college career. Meet with your professor, get a tutor, and contact your college's student support services office if you need some assistance. Full speed ahead on the road to college and career success!

