



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
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your education is <i>mandatory</i> and usually free.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your education is <i>voluntary</i> and you pay for it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your time is structured for you by your teachers and parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You manage your time independently.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You go from one subject to the next, spending six consecutive hours in school Monday through Friday, for a total of 30 hours per week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You're usually in classes 12 to 16 hours per week (sometimes with several hours in between classes). Class times vary throughout the day / evening. Depending on your schedule, you might not have classes every day of the week.



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High School	College
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You need permission to engage in social and extracurricular activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You decide how to spend your free time.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your teachers and parents guide you in setting priorities, meeting deadlines, and behaving responsibly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	College Professors / Instructors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are trained in effective teaching methodologies to positively impact student learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are trained in their academic discipline.



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High School Teachers	College Professors / Instructors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impart knowledge and facts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expect you to synthesize information, draw conclusions, and apply what you've learned.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thoroughly explain homework assignments and give you reminders about due dates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expect you to read and follow the course syllabus (which lists assignments and due dates and delineates the grading system).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss your reading and homework assignments during class time to ensure you've grasped the material.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Usually write information on the white board for you to copy into your class notes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Often lecture non-stop, expecting you to take your own notes to summarize the main points.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rarely check assignments; might not accept papers or projects submitted after the deadline.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reach out to you if they think you need extra help; are usually available to talk with you before, during, and after class.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take attendance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Might not take attendance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain what you missed when you were absent from class.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quizzes / tests are given frequently and usually cover a relatively small amount of material.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Typically only two exams are given in each class — a mid-term and a final (which is usually cumulative).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generally, students are able to make up a quiz / test they missed due to absence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A make-up test is rarely an option.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sometimes teachers will re-arrange test dates that conflict with school events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professors schedule tests without regard to outside activities or events.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many teachers conduct a review session the day before a test.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You're expected study for exams on your own. If a professor conducts a review session, you're expected to prepare your questions in advance and actively engage in the discussion.



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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
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In most cases, you receive a grade for every assignment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Only major assignments are graded.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you get a low grade on a big assignment or test (especially early in the semester), good homework grades and extra credit assignments can boost your overall class grade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most of your final grade is based on mid-term / final exams and a project or term paper. A low grade on your mid-term can be a real wake-up call since it accounts for a substantial portion of your final grade. And there's no extra credit in college!
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As long as you pass all required classes with a "D" or higher, you'll graduate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In order to graduate, you must complete all required coursework (including general education and major / minor classes) <i>and</i> meet GPA requirements (typically <i>at least</i> a 2.0 or "C").

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!