

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

RESPONSIBILITY

HIGH SCHOOL

- Learning support staff and/or parent(s) act as advocates for the student.
- Services are delivered to the student.
- The student's time is usually structured by others and teachers often remind you of deadlines and due dates.
- Guidance counselors pick students' classes each term.

COLLEGE

- Learning support staff and/or parent(s) act as advocates for the students. You act as your own advocate.
- You must seek out and initiate services.
- You must manage your own time and balance your responsibilities.
- Academic advisors make recommendations about class selection, but leave the final decision to you.

TIPS:

- You are expected to take responsibility for what you do and don't do, as well as for the consequences of your actions.
- Make sure you are familiar with your rights and responsibilities as a student by familiarizing yourself with CMU's policies and reading your course syllabus. Your course syllabus spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due, and how you will be graded.
- Use a weekly schedule to help manage your time —include your class schedule, study time, workout time, family time, etc.
- At the beginning of the semester, enter due dates and exams from your syllabus onto a monthly calendar or planner.

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GRADES

HIGH SCHOOL

- Grades are given for most assigned work.
- Extra credit is often an option.
- Teachers use many homework assignments, tests, projects, etc. to assign you a grade.
- Students may graduate if they pass all required courses with a grade of D or higher.

COLLEGE

- Assigned work is given for the benefit of the student but graded at the discretion of the professor.
- Extra credit is rarely an option.
- Professors often assign grades based on a few major tests or papers which may cover large amounts of material.
- You may be able to use D's or higher for some Essential Learning courses, but many programs require grades of C or higher for major courses. You are responsible for knowing your degree's requirements.

TIPS:

- Use assigned homework as a study tool. Practice answering questions without using your notes to quiz yourself.
- Use your syllabus to determine the dates and worth of assignments, exams, projects, etc. and start preparing for them in advance.

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TEACHERS

HIGH SCHOOL

- Teachers write out information for you to copy into your notes.
- Teachers often review materials you need to study for tests.
- Teachers let you know if they are concerned about your class performance and give you frequent feedback about your grade.
- Teachers take attendance.

TIPS:

- You are responsible for learning and applying course material. Preview assigned readings before class and review your notes shortly after class to see if you missed any material or need to add more information.
- Review notes from previous lectures once a week, so it remains fresh in your memory.
- Take advantage of your professor's office hours. Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance.
- If you know you are going to miss a class, contact the professor ahead of time to explain the situation. You will be responsible for any missed assignments and getting the notes you missed from a classmate.

COLLEGE

- Professors may lecture throughout class, expecting you to identify the important points in your notes.
- Professors don't review as much and expect you to come prepared to ask questions before exams.
- Professors expect you to keep track of your own grades and ask them if you need help.
- Professors may not take attendance.

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STUDYING

HIGH SCHOOL

- Spend a great deal of time in class, less time on homework.
- May not have needed to study much outside of class.
- Students are expected to reproduce what they have been taught.
- Careful note-taking during lectures is often unnecessary.
- Reading assignments are usually reviewed in class.

COLLEGE

- You may spend 12-15 hours in class, but much more time on homework. For every hour you are in class, plan to spend at least 2 hours studying.
- You will need to review class notes and read textbooks.
- You will be expected to be able to apply what they have learned to new situations, solve new types of problems, and synthesize information.
- Note-taking strategies should be learned and used for every lecture.
- Reading assignments are done on your own and class lectures assume you have read the materials.

TIPS:

- Break up studying into 30 minute to 1 hour sessions, then take a short break. Review course material early and often—try to do a little every day!
- Try out some reading strategies, like SQ3R, to make reading assigned materials faster and more efficient.
- Use active study methods and don't be afraid to try out new study strategies.
- Work with a tutor at the Tutorial Learning Center to further develop your study skills.