

What are the Main Differences Between High School and College Level Academics

Class Time

- **High School:** You spend on average 6 hours each day/30 hours a week in class, proceeding from one class to the next.
- **College:** You spend 12 to 16 hours each week in class, usually with breaks in between. Times are not limited to daylight hours; many classes are offered in the evening.

Teaching Style

- **High School:** Teachers present material to help you understand the material in the textbook, often writing information on the chalkboard to be copied in your notes.
- **College:** Professors may lecture nonstop, give you illustrations, provide background information, or discuss research about the topic you are studying. You will be expected to be up to date on all assigned readings and be able to summarize it, so good notes are critical.

Time Management

- **High School:** Time is usually structured by others: administrators, teachers, coaches and of course, parents. Teachers carefully monitor class attendance.
- **College:** You manage your own time. It's up to you to get to class, do your lab work and study. Professors may not formally take attendance, but they are still likely to know whether you attended.

Homework

- **High School:** You will usually be told what you need to learn from assigned readings and teachers will remind you of assignments and due dates. They will check your completed homework.
- **College:** Professors expect you to utilize the course syllabus; which spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due and how you will be graded. It's up to you to read and understand the assigned material; lectures and assignments assume that you've already done so. Professors may not always check completed homework, but they will assume you can perform the same tasks on tests.

Supportive Questions to Ask

- What classes are you enrolled in?
- Did you read and understand your syllabus? Do you know the expectations of the class?
- How much time are you dedicating to homework each week? Did you make a schedule for this?
- Do you know all your professor's names? Do you know how to contact them via e-mail and office hours?
- Do you have weekly exams or papers?
- Have you connected with the Academic Success Center for help in your classes?
- Have you thought about seeing a tutor?
- Does your class have a Peer Academic Leader (PALS)? If so what is their name and when do they hold their review sessions?
- Have you thought about seeing an Academic Success Coach to help you get organized and manage your studies?
- If your child is working, ask them "how will you manage your work and school schedule?"
- When are mid-terms and finals? What is your plan to prepare for these big exams?