

Differences between High School and College Culture*

HIGH SCHOOL CULTURE	COLLEGE CULTURE
High school culture usually assumes immaturity.	College culture expects maturity!
Students have few choices and less freedom.	Students have many choices and much more freedom.
Students are required to attend high school.	Students are not required to attend college, it is a personal choice.
Teachers often remind students to complete assignments.	Professors give assignments and expect students to hand them in on time without reminders.
Teachers spend time disciplining students who create disruptions.	Professors do not tolerate disruptive students and may ask them to leave the class.
Students typically spend 30 or more hours in class each week, and teachers cover the majority of the course material during class.	Students typically spend 15 or fewer hours in class each week, and professors expect students to come prepared to discuss new material in class and review the lecture notes outside of class.
Teachers and parents manage much of the students' time.	Students must manage their own time.
Teachers are often pressured to "teach to the test" so that students can pass standardized assessments.	Professors have more "academic freedom" to choose what to teach and how to teach it, and they challenge students to be critical thinkers.
Academic standards are not always high, and students often get good grades without working too hard.	Academic standards are usually high, and all students are expected to do the work necessary to meet these challenging standards.
Family and friends provide advice or solutions to help students with academic, social, and other problems.	Students must solve their own problems or seek help from one of many support services available at the college.
Students' choice of classes is relatively limited by graduation requirements.	Students have many courses to choose from, and they are responsible for meeting with a counselor to create an educational plan.
Teachers and parents often dictate priorities for students.	Students are responsible for setting their own priorities and having a balance between academics, work and personal life, including parties, television, video games, browsing the Internet, etc.
Educational costs, including textbooks, are paid for by taxpayers.	Educational costs, including text books, are paid for by students and/or their families, which may also include applying for financial aid and loans.

In the college culture, students **must** always be in control of their learning!



*Adapted from Downing, Skip (2013). On Course: Strategies for Creating Success in College and in Life (7th Ed.)