

## From High School to College – What to Expect.

*Academic Resource Center, tel: 684-5917*

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As you will soon learn, college is very different from high school!

- You will see changes in the amount of personal freedom you have;
- notice differences in how classes are structured and offered;
- realize that expectations of college professors are very different than those of high school teachers.

You will also notice that:

- studying in college requires much more work than studying in high school;
- tests in college are less frequent than in high school—for example, you may have only one or two tests in a semester-long class;
- tests are frequently cumulative—that is, you may be tested on everything you've learned by that point of the semester, rather than being tested on just one chapter;
- grades are awarded based on performance and that extra credit is generally not given.

Whether you are beginning college directly after high school, are leaving a full-time job to pursue an education, or are working and attending college at the same time, you will face some adjustments during your first semester here.

Students in two freshman level courses at Wichita State University were asked to describe the transitional issues they faced in their first semester and to give advice to incoming students. What they had to say are pretty much the types of issues that incoming students to Duke will face:

### **Top Ten Issues Identified by Students (in order of importance)**

1. **Personal responsibility** "In college you have freedom to do as you please...to go where you wish...to do as you wish. Unfortunately, this freedom is easily abused. The student carries 98% of the responsibility and control."
2. **Class attendance** "As a college student, you will decide whether you want to go to class or not. Being absent will hurt you in the long run."
3. **Teacher attitudes** "Your instructors will not hound you to do your work. It's entirely up to you."  
"Get to know your teachers. If your teachers know you, it will be easier for them to look out for you and help you if you're having trouble."
4. **Types of assignments** "In high school we were given a homework assignment every day. Now we have a large task assigned to be done at a certain time. No one tells when to start or what to do each day. Once you get an assignment, start working on it right away. It takes a daily effort to keep up."

5. **Importance of performance** "Don't take your courses or studies lightly. The decisions you make in college will decide your future, in some respects. Remember that you are here for an education."
6. **Time management** "The amount of free time you have in college is much more than in high school. Always have a weekly study schedule to go by. Otherwise, time slips away and you will not be able to account for it." Unlike high school where teachers frequently structured your assignments and classes filled your day, in college, you will have less in-class time, more outside of class work, and a great deal of freedom and flexibility. An ASIP instructor can help you manage your time well so that you can get the most out of your Duke experience.
7. **Amount of study** "In high school I was a B student with out studying. In college I was a C/D student without studying. To succeed, you have to study!"
8. **Size of institution/classes** "Lecture classes are much larger than high school classes. This can be scary for a new student."
9. **Difficulty of college work** "College is probably going to be tougher than high school. Don't let that stop you!"
10. **Social life** "Sometimes it seems harder to make friends because of the size of the school. But there are a variety of organizations and activities. Get involved and meet the people!"

**Our goal at the Academic Resource Center is to help make your transition to Duke as smooth as possible!** We can help you develop and improve academic skills for ALL your classes, as well as provide instruction on mastery skills like effective problem-solving and class preparation in math and science courses. Make an appointment to come in and chat with one of our learning specialists, we provide a free, confidential one-on-one service for all Duke undergrads!

**References:**

Pauk, W. 2001. How to study in college. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston MA.