

## HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE TRANSITION -- TIPS FOR STUDENTS

- **Pick the right college.** Probably the major factor in determining your happiness and success in college. Define what you want and visit campuses before you commit. Seek help from your family and/or your counselor or advisor.
- **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 is expected to assume responsibility and control over his/her success (or failure) in college.
- **Time management.** The amount of free time you have in college is much more than in high school. Always have a weekly class, study and free time schedule. Otherwise, time slips by, you will not be able to account for it and, worse, you could get behind.
- **You're not alone.** College can seem overwhelming to a freshman. Seek help if you are struggling with academic, social, financial or other personal issues. Know what resources are available and remember that your family is your biggest supporter.
- **Scheduling freshman classes.** Because of all the adjustments you will make during the freshman year, try to carry a minimum full-time load. You can make up any shortfall later, once you understand the system. Your freshman GPA goal should be to match or exceed your high school GPA.
- **Importance of performance.** Don't take your courses or studies lightly. The decisions you make in college will affect your future. Remember, first and foremost, you are here for an education, and your study habits are learned during the freshman year. It is very difficult to bounce back from a sub-par freshman year.
- **Class attendance.** As a college student, you will decide whether you want to go to class or not. Frequent absences will hurt you.
- **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.
- **Types of assignments.** In high school you are given a homework assignment every day. In college you have a large task assigned to be done by a certain time. No one tells you when to start or what to do each day. Once you get an assignment, start working on it right away. It takes daily effort to keep up.
- **Amount of study.** In high school you can be a "B" student without studying. But in college, without studying, you should expect "C or D" at best. To succeed, you have to study!
- **Size of institution and classes.** If anything, the larger the school and classes, the more responsibility falls on the student as you will probably not be noticed.
- **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 people. Good time management skills will help you achieve a healthy academic-social balance.

Frank Bernier, Ph.D.  
College Advisor  
Lansing Catholic HS