

The Difference between High School Teachers and University Professors

A crucial key to success in college is understanding your professors and what they require from you. You are no longer in high school where your teachers, parents, and counselors checked up on you. Turning in assignments late is no longer an option. In college, you are *expected* to take responsibility for your academic life. This includes not only class time but scheduling, appointments, studying, and free time. If you need help, you need to ask for it. There are many places to go for help, but your first contact is always the professor who teaches the class. For that reason, it might be helpful to know some differences between how high school teachers and college professors work.

Teachers (High School)	Professors (College)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your completed homework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not check homework, but will expect you to complete the same tasks on a test
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind you of your incomplete work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not remind you of your incomplete work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach you if they think you need assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professors are usually open and helpful, but expect you to make contact if you need help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are usually available for conversation before, during, and after class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect you to attend their scheduled office hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have been trained in teaching methods to assist in imparting knowledge to students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have been trained as experts in their particular areas of research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide you with information you missed when you were absent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect you to get notes from classmates if you are absent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present material to help you understand the material in the textbook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not follow the textbook; instead, to amplify the text, they may give illustrations, provide background information, or discuss research about the topic you are studying. They may expect you to relate the classes to the textbook readings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often write information on the board to be copied in your notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May lecture nonstop, expecting you to identify important points in your notes. Writing on the board may be to amplify the lecture, not summarize it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impart knowledge and facts, help you draw conclusions, and lead you through the learning process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect you to think about and synthesize seemingly unrelated topics.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take time to remind you of assignments and due dates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect you to read, save, and consult the course syllabus for due dates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carefully monitor class attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not formally take roll, but they are still likely to know whether or not you attended.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Guiding Principle:</i> high school is a teaching environment in which you acquire facts and skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Guiding Principle:</i> college is a learning environment in which you take responsibility for thinking through and applying what you have learned.

(Adapted from: Murray State University: www.murraystate.edu)