



Newburyport High School Advisory

NHS College & Career Center College Knowledge 101

Transitioning from high school to college is a significant step, and being prepared can make the experience smoother and more enjoyable. Here are some key areas that high school seniors should be aware of before starting college. This glossary of college terminology provides an overview of common terms and concepts that new college students will encounter as they transition into higher education. By preparing in these areas, high school seniors can transition into college life more smoothly and set themselves up for success.

Glossary of College Terminology

Academic Integrity

- **Plagiarism and Cheating:** Understand what constitutes academic dishonesty and the severe consequences associated with it.
- **Ethical Behavior:** Practice integrity in all academic work and interactions.

Academic Preparedness

- **Time Management:** College courses require more self-directed study. Develop good time management skills and use planners or digital calendars.
- **Study Skills:** Enhance study habits. Utilize active learning techniques, such as summarizing notes, teaching concepts to others, and regular review sessions.
- **Writing and Research:** Improve writing skills and become familiar with research methods. Knowing how to cite sources properly is crucial.
- **Advising Sessions:** Encourage students to meet regularly with their academic advisor to ensure they are on track to graduate and meet all requirements.

Academic Programs

- **Major:** The primary focus of study, requiring a specified number of credit hours in a particular field.
- **Minor:** A secondary concentration of courses that supplements the major.
- **Electives:** Courses that students choose to take outside their major requirements.
- **Prerequisite:** A course that must be completed before taking another course.
- **Syllabus:** An outline of the subjects in a course of study or teaching.

Academic Terms

- **Academic Advisor:** A faculty member who helps students with course selection, career advice, and academic planning.
- **Accreditation:** A recognition that a college or program meets certain standards set by an accrediting agency.
- **Audit:** To attend a course without receiving credit or a grade.

- **Credit Hour:** A unit that represents an hour of instruction over a specified period. Most courses are 3 credit hours.
- **Dean's List:** A recognition for students with high academic achievement, usually determined by GPA.
- **GPA (Grade Point Average):** A measure of a student's academic performance, calculated by averaging the final grades and assigning point values to each grade.

Administrative Terms

- **Bursar:** The office responsible for billing and collecting tuition and fees.
- **Registrar:** The office that handles course registration, academic records, and graduation requirements.
- **Transcript:** An official record of a student's academic performance and history.
- **FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act):** A federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Students control who has access to their records once they reach college.
- **Tuition:** The cost of attending classes at a college or university. This usually does not include room, board, or other fees.

Admission and Enrollment

- **Acceptance Rate:** The percentage of applicants who are admitted to a college.
- **Early Decision (ED):** A binding admission process where students apply early and commit to attending if accepted.
- **Early Action (EA):** A non-binding admission process where students apply early and receive an early response.
- **FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid):** A form used to apply for financial aid from the federal government.
- **Matriculation:** The process of enrolling in a college or university as a candidate for a degree.

Campus Life

- **Housing Options:** Decide between on-campus housing or off-campus apartments. Each has its pros and cons regarding cost, convenience, and social life.
- **Campus Resources:** Familiarize yourself with available resources such as the library, academic advising, mental health services, and career counseling.
- **Extracurricular Activities:** Get involved in clubs, sports, or other organizations to meet people and enrich your college experience.
- **Dormitory (Dorm):** A building providing living accommodations for students.
- **Resident Assistant (RA):** A student leader who supervises and assists residents in a dormitory.
- **Meal Plan:** A prepaid account for dining services on campus.
- **Greek Life:** Fraternities and sororities that offer social, academic, and leadership opportunities.
- **Intramural Sports:** Recreational sports organized within the college community.

Career Planning

- **Career Goals:** Begin thinking about career interests and goals. Utilize career services for resume building, internships, and job searches.
- **Internships and Experience:** Seek internships, volunteer opportunities, or part-time jobs related to your field of interest.

Classroom and Study

- **Lecture:** A class format where the professor gives a presentation on a subject to a large group of students.
- **Seminar:** A small class format focused on discussion and active participation.
- **Lab:** A practical, hands-on class component often accompanying science courses.
- **Office Hours:** Designated times when professors are available to meet with students.
- **Study Abroad:** A program that allows students to study in a foreign country for academic credit.

Exams and Grading

- **Midterms:** Exams given in the middle of a semester to assess students' progress.
- **Finals:** Comprehensive exams at the end of a semester.
- **Pass/Fail:** A grading system where students receive a pass or fail instead of a traditional letter grade.
- **Plagiarism:** Using someone else's work or ideas without proper citation, considered a serious academic offense.

Financial Literacy

- **Budgeting:** Create a budget to manage expenses. Track spending on food, books, and entertainment.
- **Understanding Loans and Scholarships:** Learn about different types of financial aid, including loans, grants, and scholarships. Understand the terms and conditions of student loans.
- **Part-time Work:** Consider part-time jobs or work-study programs to earn extra money and gain work experience.
- **Interest Rates:** Understanding the terms of interest on student loans is crucial, including the difference between subsidized and unsubsidized loans.
- **Refund Policy:** Learn the institution's refund policy in case of course withdrawal or unexpected changes in financial circumstances.

Financial Terms

- **Grant:** A type of financial aid that does not need to be repaid, often based on need.
- **Scholarship:** Financial aid awarded based on various criteria (academic, athletic, etc.) that does not need to be repaid.
- **Loan:** Borrowed money that must be repaid, typically with interest.
- **Work-Study:** A federally funded program that provides part-time jobs for students with financial need.

Logistics and Practicalities

- **Orientation Programs:** Attend orientation sessions to learn about campus layout, academic requirements, and available services.

- **Emergency Preparedness:** Know the procedures for campus safety, including emergency contacts and evacuation routes.
- **Transportation:** Understand transportation options, whether it's public transit, biking, or driving.
- **Health Insurance:** Know whether the college offers health insurance plans and whether students are required to have health coverage.
- **Laundry and Daily Living:** Managing daily tasks like laundry and groceries, especially if living off-campus, is part of becoming self-sufficient.

Miscellaneous

- **Alumni:** Graduates or former students of a particular school.
- **Commencement:** A ceremony where degrees are conferred to graduating students.
- **Orientation:** A program for new students to familiarize them with campus life and resources.
- **Quad:** An open area surrounded by buildings, often used for social gatherings and events.
- **Academic Calendar:** Keep track of important dates such as add/drop deadlines, midterms, and breaks.
- **Study Groups:** Form study groups to enhance learning through collaboration and peer support.

Personal Well-being

- **Health and Wellness:** Maintain physical and mental health. Establish a routine that includes exercise, healthy eating, and adequate sleep.
- **Time for Self-care:** Make time for hobbies and relaxation to avoid burnout.
- **Support System:** Stay connected with family and friends. Build a new support network at college.

Social Skills

- **Networking:** Start building professional relationships with professors, advisors, and peers. Networking can provide academic and career opportunities.
- **Roommate Etiquette:** Learn to live with others by communicating openly and respecting shared spaces.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Develop skills to handle conflicts respectfully and effectively.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** Engage with diverse groups and learn from people with different backgrounds. This fosters inclusion and personal growth.
- **Public Speaking:** College often requires presentations and group discussions. Developing public speaking skills is key.

Technology and Tools

- **Digital Literacy:** Become proficient with essential software and tools, such as word processors, spreadsheets, and presentation software.
- **Online Learning Platforms:** Familiarize yourself with the online systems your college uses for assignments, grades, and communication (e.g., Blackboard, Canvas).
- **Cybersecurity:** Learn about safeguarding personal information and accounts on college networks.

- **Tech Support:** Colleges typically offer tech support services for issues like Wi-Fi access, software installation, and device troubleshooting.

Tips*

- **Stay Curious and Open-Minded:** College is a time for exploration. Be open to new ideas, experiences, and people. Have a growth mindset in all you do!
- **Seek Help When Needed:** Don't hesitate to ask for help, whether it's academic support, mental health counseling, or career advice. There are people on campus to help you with anything you need, you are paying to be there so get what you need to be successful.
- **Balance:** Strive for a balance between academics, social life, and personal well-being. Make sure to HAVE FUN!!