• Realize that earning a GED/AHSD is the first step toward college readiness.
• Find a mentor like a counselor, instructor, or experienced college student.
• Take the college placement test at least six months before you plan to start college.
• Get help in weak areas and re-take the test.
• Arrange for financial aid and plan your budget.
• Ask if there is a bridge to college program available on your campus. These programs help students experience what college is like.
• Learn Moodle and other college computer programs.
• Refresh math skills especially in Algebra.
• Develop strong communication skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

GED/AHSD
"Instructor Supported"  College
"Student Directed"

There are usually no attendance requirements.  Class attendance is expected.

Students are frequently reminded of assignments and tests.  All assignments are given on a syllabus which students must follow.

Instructors tell students what to learn.  Successful students discover what to learn and learn how to study.

Instructors - Summarize main ideas.
- Outline notes.
- Provide study guides.
- Ask questions.

Successful students - Use effective reading skills to discover main ideas in required readings.
- Take good notes and study them regularly.
- Create study guides.
- Develop questions and consider answers from different perspectives.

Instructors guide research and help students find information.  Successful students know library and Internet research skills.

When students are absent, instructors give them the information they missed.  Successful students get missed information from their study buddies.

GED classes have few if any grades.  AHSD instructors provide grade sheets to track progress.

Inappropriate student behavior is disciplined by teachers.  Inappropriate student behavior is not tolerated.

There is usually no homework.  Successful students study 2 hours for every class hour.

Students choose AHSD elective courses based on their interests.  Successful students meet with their advisors and plan course schedules based on program, degree, or transfer requirements.  These requirements can change!

Realize a 15 credit semester load is a full time job!
| GED/AHSD  
| “Student Focused” | College  
| “Content Focused” |
|---|---|
| Students study independently or in small class groups. | Instructors deliver long lectures that expand on assigned readings. |
| Classes are usually smaller than 20 students. | Classes are larger with 25 – 100 students. |
| Classes meet daily. | Classes meet 1 to 3 times a week. |
| Students study until GED tests are passed/required and AHSD credits are earned. | The academic year is divided into 16 week fall and spring semesters and a shorter summer semester. |
| Instructors provide necessary background knowledge. | Instructors assume students have necessary background knowledge and skills. |
| Instructors use questions to focus learning. | Instructors expect students to ask questions. |
| Instructors present all content in class. | Students are expected to read and know information from the textbook and supplemental readings. |
| Instructors organize learning. | Students must organize their notes, handouts, and assignments. |
| Instructors give structured assignments with clear directions. | Successful students interpret assignments, get help as necessary, and conduct their own research. |
| GED classes have few tests. AHSD classes often use true/false, multiple choice, and short answer questions. | Instructors give complex test questions requiring students to analyze, apply, and synthesize ideas and theories. Tests are multiple choice and extended essay answers. |

Students have daily contact with instructors and receive regular feedback. Students have limited contact with instructors and must seek them out.

Instructors give extra help. Successful students have study buddies and form study groups, get help from their instructors, visit academic support labs, and arrange for tutoring.

Instructors lead students through how to think through and solve problems. Successful students develop the ability to discover solutions to complex problems.

In high school and AHSD courses, extra credit is available. There are usually no opportunities for extra credit.

AHS courses test after each chapter and allow make up tests and re-tests. Instructors give 2 to 3 tests per semester and usually do not offer make up and re-tests.

Grades are based on quality, completion, and effort given to assignments. Grades are based on assignment quality and how well students match expectations of college-level thinking, research, and writing.

Adapted from College Readiness: Understanding the Difference between High School and College from MNADE Executive Committee, 2004

For additional information please see:  
[www.collegeforadults.org](http://www.collegeforadults.org)  
[frank.mtsu.edu/~studskl/10tips.html](http://frank.mtsu.edu/~studskl/10tips.html)  
[www.cpcc.edu/ican/help/notetaking_handout.pdf](http://www.cpcc.edu/ican/help/notetaking_handout.pdf)

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