

## **ADVICE FROM EDINA GRADUATES ('12) TO CURRENT EDINA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Take AP courses you expect to succeed in, and take them in as wide a variety of subject areas as possible. Have an idea of what you want to do with your life, and pick the college that makes sense for you to continue exploring that path. Don't pick a college based on what you think your friends or teachers will think: you will be the one living there for the next four years, not them. Don't wait until the last minute to start thinking about your college application and decision process, but also realize there's no need to fret too much about getting into a certain one or two colleges. Many colleges will offer similar experiences. Often, the decision on whether you're admitted to a college isn't based on the fact that you didn't have that one volunteer experience or an A in math one semester. Instead, it's about who the college needs and wants to fill out its class. So don't beat yourself up if you don't get in.

Although sometimes it might seem easier to figure things out on your own, one-on-one with the textbook, asking for help or discussing the material with your teachers is a much richer way of learning. Learning from the people in my educational environment has proven invaluable to me at college and it is a skill I did not cultivate enough in high school. I always thought that I would get the job done quicker if I did it myself. This approach completely underestimates the amount of experience and insight that lies untapped in every educator. The curriculum is often times only the tip of the iceberg of a lifetime of experience, and in every teacher there lies a potential mentor. By recognizing all the resources in the people around you, you will find answers to questions you would never have thought to ask, and their experiences will give you a much more comprehensive perspective on the subject.

Make sure to take classes senior year in subjects that you enjoy. Don't take courses that are easy for the sake of breezing through. I ended up taking 4 elective courses that weren't easy, but I knew I would be interested in. Doing that really helped me figure out what classes I wanted to take in college and once there, I did so again to pick my major and minor.

Have an idea of what areas interest you and take some internships or volunteer in those areas. Also make sure you have a part time job of sorts for general life experience and understanding and respecting people in lower payed positions.

People will not be holding your hand throughout college, so learn to think and work by yourself.

Start early and know that Edina High is ridiculously easy compared to college. Take as many AP classes as possible, and go to a college that accepts fair scores on the tests as college credit. It will give you a big head start. GPA is important, but it's probably better in the end to get a B+ in an AP and pass the AP test, than an A in a normal class and not get any college credit.

College is a lot of working in groups and teams- something that I didn't do that much of in high school. Also, I have had to do much more in depth research in college. I did not feel prepared on how to use search engines, find reliable sources, citing texts, etc.

pay attention

Take high school seriously! It may seem like a joke now, but it does pay off if you try your best.

Work hard in high school, it really pays off in college. You will be much better prepared, and if you're big on AP credits, you will have fewer gen ed requirements in college and get perks related to advanced standing (earlier course registration and better housing options sooner). Develop a good work ethic. Use your time wisely. Have good working relationships with some of your teachers. They will be a great resource for you while you are in high school, when you are applying to schools, and even while you are in college. (Stay in contact with high school teachers). Know yourself as a student. What works for you? What doesn't? What are you good at? Where do you need to improve? Having good study habits and being aware of your strengths and weaknesses will get you through college. Also, know yourself as a person. What are your principles, morals, and goals? Stand by them, but spend time to deeply examine them, too. We are still young and we are always changing our minds about ourselves, and especially about our futures. There is a lot of uncertainty. But don't fret. Have faith that everything will work out. You don't need to know what your career will be when you enter college. You don't need to know what your career will be when you are graduating from college (though hopefully you will have a better idea). Realize that the world is full of possibilities. Stay openminded, stay focused, be your best self. Recognize the opportunities that are presented to you. Be adventurous. Be fearless. Go with the flow. Try new things and don't be afraid to make mistakes - treat everything as a learning experience. Stay curious. Find balance - work and play, diet and exercise, sleep. Push yourself but be mindful of your limitations. High school can be grueling and very competitive. Allow yourself to relax and have fun every once in a while. Be responsible. Be always mindful of the future, but don't forget to live in the present. This time in your life only comes once. Enjoy it - the pleasures, the stress, the relationships, the anxieties... life is good.

If I had put half the effort I put into my college coursework into my high school work I would be at Harvard right now.

Grades are very important, but they're not everything. Remember to do other things too, and to be happy. The hard work you put in will pay off, but don't overly stress out about it. You have your whole life to worry about things-- why start so strong, so early?

Always put school first

Realize that not everybody is from Edina. You are extremely fortunate to be from such a great place, but not everyone was that fortunate so be patient and empathetic towards others.

Don't procrastinate

Do not be afraid to branch out and leave home. If you stay afraid, you will forever be afraid.

Be open to new experience and points of view. Try new things but also don't forget what it is that is important to you.

Learn to study in high school - EHS provided me with study skills that many of my peers in college did not come prepared with.

Don't stress out and take everything as it comes. Also just do the homework it makes life a lot easier.

Go all in and work hard in the things you love! Getting good grades isn't as important as learning, gaining new skills, and getting better at the things you're passionate about doing.

Learn how to study for a test when there is no ongoing homework involved.

Choose your friends wisely! College is an opportunity to decide what you want out of your life, and those decisions are long-lasting. The people that you surround yourself with, the work that you put into your schoolwork, and the choices you make in your own personal faith will all impact your life past college. "Show me your friends and I'll show you your future".

It can be scary, but start thinking about your long term future as soon as you can.

Don't be pressured by others. Go with your gut and don't be nervous of how others persevere you. If you put your mind to it and have confidence in yourself, you will do great.

Don't string yourself out too much in high school. College is really difficult and although you do have lots of time to meet people and have free time on top of your learning, it is quite challenging. Enjoy the courses that you are taking in high school and don't worry about if they are all AP classes because most colleges won't even take the credits for those courses. Also don't be afraid to join clubs and groups around school if you are indeed interested in the issue that they deal with. It is a great way of meeting people and preparing you for more in depth conversations that you will find at college.

Learn how to write, and not dread it. Try and get your priorities in order, academically and socially. Expect lower grades and way more thinking.

Work hard in high school, it will pay off in college. Also take AP classes, it is very nice to have those extra credits in college and potentially get out of some classes.

Get involved in anything you're interested right away

Take senior year seriously because it's hard to transition from the classic "senior slide" in the spring to hard college courses in the fall. Also appreciate the help of your high school teachers because some college professors are not as easily available or helpful.

The academics isn't the hardest part of college. Balancing academics with student clubs, work, friends, and taking care of yourself is the hardest part of living at college. Set good work and time management habits now so the transition into college won't be as difficult.

Nothing you learn in high school is going to prepare you for the real world. If you want to have some real world expectations, get a part time job where you're on the payroll. It teaches you how the world works and to be responsible in the working world. Always have a job too. If you don't like the one you have, make sure you get a new one before you quit. Regardless, stay employed. It might seem like a lot going to school and working but the homework load compared to college is miniscule. You can do it. Having money is nice too. You might think that being popular and having the most friends, looking the best, having 500 twitter followers and

so on is the most important thing but I'm telling you right now, it's all crap. The only thing that really matters is you. High school is a very temporary thing and it goes by quicker than you realize. Once it's over, that's it. You're on your own. What you do next is up to you. Study hard and get good grades so college's want you. If college isn't your thing though, that's fine too. It isn't for everyone. Regardless, focus on you. A lion is not concerned with the opinions of sheep. Your path is the most important. Take your time finding it, get lost even. No one ever really figures it out completely. Most importantly though, don't give up. Keep fighting.

Work very hard, it will pay off! Remember to keep your priorities in check. School comes first always.

Take AP classes if you can. Even if they seem irrelevant to your interests, they'll take care of liberal education requirements in college and hopefully lighten your load.

Do debate. I learned nothing in terms of writing, argumentation, critical thinking, and research in class; I learned all of that entirely in debate.

College isn't the only option after high school, gap years are ok, and probably a good idea! But if you go to college do what makes you happy, don't try to change yourself to fit it.

Learn to do more work outside of class that may not be required. Most college classes don't assign any homework or not very much so you have to do things on your own to help you learn the material.

Take science your senior year because you will have to take at least one in college.

Don't be stupid. Work hard and put everything you have into. You're paying for your classes and all the resources and organizations your school offers. Take advantage of them.

Don't expect everything to be a cake walk.

Learn how to talk to strangers, or people you are unfamiliar with. This skill will take you far, especially in networking. First impressions are quite powerful. Also, try to have friends of differing races and backgrounds -- I know it's hard at Edina, but you have to escape the bubble. Go outside of Minnesota, too. College allows for a dramatic change of lifestyle which is excellent, because we should strive to actually live life rather than just remain stagnant. Take advantage of this smooth transition (that has been accounted for since you were born). College isn't all that scary if you're an introvert, too. You will find your niche -- eventually!

Create solid study habits now because you will NEED them in college.

Learn how to study and take good notes. The homework isn't as extensive or helpful in college and if you don't make yourself do extra studying, you will not do well.

Do the best you can in your high school classes. Develop effective study habits. Learning how to learn and study is more important than getting an A in every class. In college you will have less time and more work to do so having solid study skills is important. Also, have fun and explore your interests in high school. If you don't take time to study things you are passionate about, you will burn out very quickly.

Work on time management and learn to be independent. Take courses that are challenging.

Start doing all the readings in high school. You won't get by without doing them in college

Learn how to study on your own. College is completely different environment and you are on your own a lot more than you would think. Also, learn how to manage money in high school so you don't run out halfway through the year.

Take APs and get as many college credits as you can! This will save tens of thousands of dollars.

Figure out study habits in high school

Take as many AP courses as possible.

Develop good study habits NOW. I was a student in high school who didn't need to study very much or very well to get good grades in my classes, but that just will not cut it in college. For my science classes I study between 15 and 30 hours for every test, and for english papers it is imperative to start writing them as soon as you receive the assignment or you will find yourself awake at 3am on the day the paper is due telling yourself you will never procrastinate again. Your professors and teaching assistants are there to help you! Utilize them. It may not appear to be the 'cool' thing to do, but trust me when all your friends come to you for help because you took the initiative and went to your professor, you will feel pretty smart and definitely less stressed for exams. This practice can begin in high school too. Go to your teachers so that you are comfortable approaching your professors in college. It will make classes and exams so much less stressful if you take initiative for your learning. I know that Edina has a reputation for turning out students that are very well prepared for college. Don't take that for granted. You may feel that you will breeze through freshman year; most of you won't find that is the case. It is easy until you get to your first round of exams (and I mean round. They will almost certainly all arrive within the same 10-day span). Once you see your first exam grade you may freak out. That's okay, just take that and learn from it. If you did well, then great! What did you do to prepare? How did you study? If you didn't do as well as you had hoped, then what did you do to prepare? How did you study? The questions are the same but your take-away from them must be different. Find a group of people to study with, even if it is just one other person. It always helps to talk it out and teach each other. (Hint: if you can teach material to a friend and help them understand exactly what is happening, then you know what is going on in that class) All that being said, don't spend the summer before college studying and fretting about the years to come; enjoy it! You won't see your friends from home every day and maybe not for months at a time. Some people will go to your same school, some people will go to school across the country or across the globe. Enjoy the summer and make memories.

Try your hardest to go to an out of state

Learn to manage homework with extra curricular activities

Take AP courses when you can, because it'll save you a lot of time and money in the long run

Take AP classes, they prepare you well for college. Also, learn to keep up with textbook readings.

Do what you love, not what you think you're supposed to do, and work really hard at it. You only get to do college once, so seize every opportunity!

Start learning about how to be successful in classes where you do not have any close friends to partner with and work together and study together. It cannot be depended on in college, even in large classes. Also think about balancing school, activities, and social life. Even though you may be busy in high school, college is a different kind of busy, where you have to decide your own schedule and utilize your time according to your own priorities and commitments.

Don't be afraid to mess up, because you will. Edina wants to make you think that you can be perfect, and you can't. It is impossible. Also, the real world is nothing like Edina. The bubble is not just a funny name, it is the truth. Recognize in the real world that people struggle, and people fail, and sometimes life just kicks you in the ass. Get mentally prepared for a real awakening when you leave and please please please know that you have been sheltered since birth. Do not take it for granted, but appreciate it. Also, you have a rare chance to get educated to a level in which maybe 1 percent of the world population will also achieve. It is morally irresponsible and wrong to waste that opportunity.

Don't just live to satisfy others. Find what makes you happy, and do that. Live at your own tempo.

Work on your writing - the teachers may not give you the structure you will need to learn in order to be highly successful in college. That is a product of the American High School system, not necessarily a fault of EHS. However, if you want to maintain the GPA in college that you had in high school, you need to self-advocate while still in high school and learn how to write critical, thesisdriven work.

Take foreign language until you graduate. A lot of colleges allow you to use that credit to fulfill gen eds.

As cheesy as it sounds, I would say to believe in yourself. Edina prepares you well for college and better than most high schools do. It is very important to balance academics and social life. An imbalance might not seem harmful or too detrimental, but a lack of quality sleep, continuous procrastination, poor sleeping patterns, and eating junk food frequently. With that, I would also say to try and practice these living this way your senior year of high school and into the summer before your freshman year.

If you plan to go into Engineering, take AP Sciences that apply to your discipline of Engineering.

Take advantage of all the AP classes offered at EHS. They prepare you well for college and the credit transfers from high AP scores puts you a step ahead of other students. Utilize the classroom environment in high school. Learn how to speak in front of the class and have group discussions. Participation and being able to articulate an argument is a big factor in college classes. Make connections with the EHS teachers. They are a great resource when it comes to the college search and during and after college as well. Learning how to be comfortable

speaking with teachers and asking them for help or a letter of reference is a skill that is much needed in college.

Don't get comfortable senior year, always look ahead.

Take advantage of all the resources at Edina and actively use them. Reach out to anyone if you feel that you are struggling because all faculty at Edina are willing to help. Attend college information sessions to learn more about them, and make decisions based on your personal preferences, not those of classmates or friends.

Learn to write well. Edina high school gives you the opportunity to learn to excel in all areas, take advantage of that.