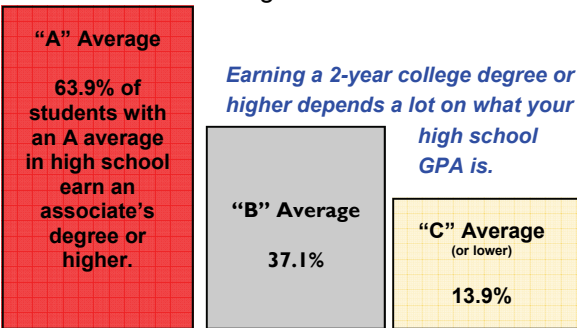


Grades Matter!

What you need to do in high school, if you want to graduate from college.

Let's start by getting the cold, hard truth out in the open: Less than 40% of students who plan to go to college actually earn a 2- or 4-year degree within 10 years of graduating from high school (Rosenbaum, 2001). Do you know what it takes to succeed in college? The simple answer is that if you take hard classes, do all your homework, and get good grades in high school, you will be ready.

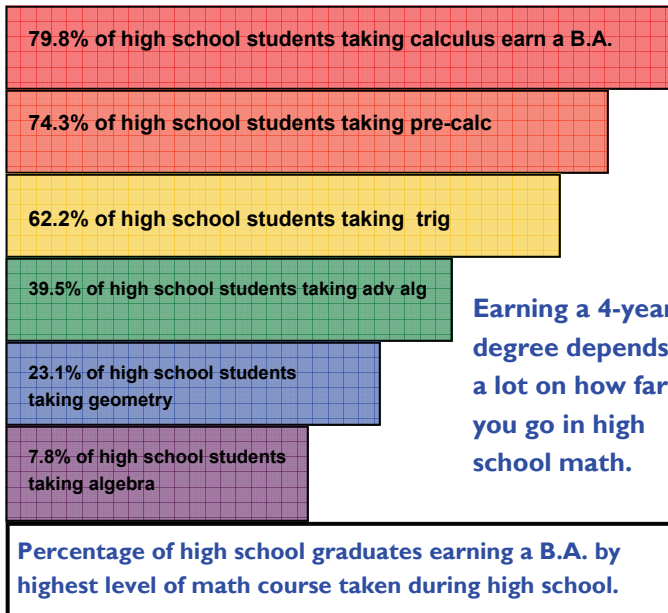
Grades Matter. Your high school GPA is a great predictor of whether or not you will earn a college degree. Check out the chart below. Less than 14% of students with C averages or lower in high school earned a 2- or 4- year degree. Even worse, 52% of college students who had a C average or lower in high school didn't even earn 1 college credit! What are they doing while they are "in" college? They are spending time and money on remedial classes that repeat high school work and earn no college credit.



Percentage of seniors who say they are going to college who have actually earned a 2- or 4-year degree 10 years after high school.

Homework Matters. Homework might seem like a waste of time, but it teaches you content, time-management, and discipline — all of which you'll need in college as 44% of high school seniors do less than 3 hours of homework in a week; only 14% of seniors do more than 10 hours. But homework time strongly predicts college success: Over half the students who do more than 10 hours of homework a week will earn a 4-year college degree; only about 16% of those doing less than 3 hours of homework a week will earn a bachelor's degree.

Math Courses Matter. The further you go in math during high school, the better your chances are of earning a college degree. Look closely at the chart below. Completing Advanced Algebra, or a higher course, is a huge help in you earning a college degree. And if you really want to earn a bachelor's degree, you better go as high as you can in math while you're still in high school.



Even if you don't go to college, your high school GPA is still important because it predicts future income. While high school grades do not predict income immediately after graduating from high school, they are strong indicators for predicting long-term income. If you don't go to college, an increase of one letter grade, such as going from a C to a B, in your high school GPA typically increases income by 13% by the time you are 28. Compared to students who do not go to college, a 4-year degree typically increases income for students by about 14%.

Even if you don't go to college, improving your high school grades from Cs to Bs improves the chances that you will be able to support a family. So remember, grades do matter!

Adapted from: Trish Hatch (2006); James Rosenbaum (2001) *Beyond College for All*; & Clifford Aldelman (1999) *Answers in the Toolbox*.