

## Eight Key Expectations In Higher Education

Often, students set their goals at earning good enough grades to get their degree, but many educators want more for their students. Some important skills that educators would like to see students develop are critical thinking, analytical reasoning, communication skills, personal responsibility, self-motivation, self-management, self-awareness, lifelong learning, emotional intelligence, and self-confidence. These personal skills shape your choices and empower you to create a rich, personally fulfilling life.

1. Educators expect students to be responsible for their education. Students should be mature and accountable for the decisions that they make. Pet peeves include:

- Blaming poor performance on the instructor, the book, class time, and other external factors that are common to the college experience
- Not turning in assignments or participating in class then expecting second (third, fourth, etc) chances
- Being unprepared for class because they were absent from the previous class
- Not referring to the syllabus or Moodle page for course guidance
- Believing that whatever is wrong is not their fault and that they have nothing to do with it
- Whining instead of addressing concerns

2. Educators expect students to be highly motivated to succeed. They expect college to be students' top priority. They also expect students to sacrifice other pursuits in order to complete their education. Pet peeves include:

- Expecting instructors to motivate them
- Apathetic attitudes
- Seeming to think that they will be able to make up work, rewrite things, or re-submit things to improve a failing grade
- Expressing lack of interest
- Lacking interest in improvement, even when provided extensive feedback and support
- Not completing reading assignments through lack of interest
- Expecting instructors to entertain them

3. Educators expect students to attend class regularly and complete all assignments to the best of their ability. Students should apply organizational skills in order to complete their work without supervision. Pet peeves include:

- Expecting good grades with minimal effort though they have fallen behind in assignments and come to class unprepared
- Thinking that they can do whatever they want because they have paid for the class

- Believing that the instructor should automatically catch them up on what they missed due to absences
- Constantly being late, absent, or not doing assignments
- Acting as if they are entitled to pass a course
- Thinking that just showing up without participating will get them a good grade

4. Educators expect students to collaborate with peers and make use of available help to achieve academic success. Students should actively work with their peers and seek assistance from the instructor and campus support services when needed. Pet Peeves include:

- Refusing to acknowledge when they need help
- Refusing to use resources that are readily available
- Not asking for help as soon as they realize that they are struggling with something
- Not connecting with other students to study
- Not saying anything until it is too late
- Feeling that group work is not beneficial; feeling like they can only learn from the instructor
- Waiting until the end of the semester to ask for help, then expecting tutors to do their work for them or magically catch them up

5. Educators expect students to change if what students are doing is not working. Students should realize when doing something a certain way is unproductive. They should figure out what has gone wrong and try something new in order to get back on course. There are many resources out there to help students in this endeavor but no one can tell you what will definitely work for you. If you are lost, ask for help. Pet Peeves include:

- Thinking that what worked in high school will work in college
- Developing new bad habits (drinking, skipping class, sloppy work, etc) due to new freedoms and remaining unaware of how these habits hurt them.
- Inability to look for different choices that might bring positive results; unwillingness to change when something is not working
- Allowing negative thoughts to hold them back
- Focusing on weakness instead of developing new strengths
- Ignoring low test scores or feedback
- Continuing to repeat negative, counterproductive behaviors

6. Educators expect students to demonstrate a passion for learning. Students should be intellectually curious and pursue *knowledge* instead of grades. Students should strive to become lifelong learners. Pet peeves include:

- Being unaware of what “learning” is and how to go about it purposefully – instructors cannot pour knowledge into the heads of students, students must actively participate
- Believing that there is no reason to form an opinion because everyone is entitled to their own

- Taking financial aid for granted, wasting money, abusing the system
- Cheating
- Emphasizing grades over learning (Example: Asking “Will this be on the test?” or “What do I need to do to pass this class?”)
- Thinking they have no role in their own learning (expecting professors to do all the work)
- Not buying or reading the text

7. Educators expect students to manage their emotions, as well as the emotions of others, in the service of their goals. Students should resist disrespectful choices that will sabotage their success and the success of others. This does not mean that students should not feel emotions, but should be able to control them and recognize when an action may be detrimental to their career. Pet peeves include:

- Not attempting the work because they are afraid of failure (letting fear guide decisions)
- Being purposefully judgmental and hurtful
- Inappropriate or disrespectful communication
- Lacking perseverance
- Choosing short-term gratification, waiting until the last minute to write papers or study
- Refusing to speak during class for fear of being judged
- Being openly rude or indifferent to others

8. Educators expect students to have realistic self-confidence about themselves and their ability to succeed in college. Students should be self-assured without being arrogant. Pet Peeves include:

- Pretending to know things they don't
- Using setbacks as a reason to give up
- Being unwilling to struggle to learn
- Not believing in themselves
- Thinking that they need no criticism because they did well in high school
- Continually talking about how they will never succeed
- Talking big but giving up easily

### **Freewriting Activity**

Think about the eight expectations of college educators that we have discussed. Which is the most different from your most recent educational experience? Explain those differences. Use personal examples when possible. Which of the eight expectations do you believe is the most important for you to fulfill? Why? How difficult do you think it will be for you to fulfill that expectation? Have you encountered any of these expectations already? If so, list examples.