



Alleman Catholic High School
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www.allemanhighschool.org

Pioneer alums tout preparation here as key in college

It all starts with a simple conversation.

Alleman counselor Lynn VanDeHeede speaks with recent alums anywhere she runs into them.

Some stop in her office when they come home from college. She runs into others at the mall, games, anywhere, really. But always, always she has the conversation.

“What I am pleased with hearing is that students time after time feel prepared,” VanDeHeede, a 1985 Alleman grad herself. “Despite the college they’ve gone to, despite their major, across the board they truly feel prepared, that we are giving them what they need to be successful.”

VanDeHeede does not stop there. Her next question is about what sets them apart from their college peers. There she hears more encouraging words from the recent alums.

Here’s a few areas from a report she shared with faculty, administrators and staff recently.

Service hours: Getting involved in the community is becoming more and more a part of the demands of not only clubs and organizations, but also of some classes. Students are also now receiving scholarships and other opportunities due to their community service hours from HS and what they have accumulated since arriving on campus.

Clubs, Sports and Activities: Involvement is so essential to success at the next level. Not only is it important for networking, but also a lot of fun. Our students are becoming the leaders of these activities because of the leadership that they learned here from their experiences, has helped them to become the leaders in



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their organizations. It also is helping immensely with time-management. A lot of their peers, are focused on their academics and don't have "time to do other things," and they are asking our students how they have the "time?" They respond, "it is all I know, I have always had a lot of involvement, and have structured and organized my time in high school and so I just continue to do it at the next level."

Writing: Papers are very common and the majority of the papers at the frosh/soph level are 1 1/2 to 2 pages. The skills that we work on with our students at Alleman: knowing how to structure a paper, develop a topic, provide support, and most importantly CITE sources, have been skills that are extremely valuable. Strong development of these skills have helped them be successful in relation to their peers that really struggle with their writing. They did state that MLA is most often used, but they are starting to have Chicago Style (humanities) and APA (social sciences) style be required as well, and thought it may be worthwhile to expose our students to other styles throughout our curriculum, especially in senior year.

Final Exams: Alums are actually "thanking" us for continuing with Final Exams. They want to stress more that at the freshmen level it is so important to continue to teach them "how to prepare, and study for a final exam," that they can build upon their next four years. Collegiate classes will often times only have a mid-term and final, and students that have never taken cumulative exams, really stress, and have no idea how to start to prepare. Our students prepare, go into the exam with confidence, and feel proud of their performance.

She also gets good feedback regarding

- Peer tutoring, how Alleman students are both comfortable getting it and giving it. Some are even able to turn their tutoring ability into scholarship money or simply a part-time job at their college.
- Dual-credit classes Alleman students take that put them in the front of the line at registration since registration priority is given to students higher credits earned.

She also hears plenty of thanks for teachers and staff at Alleman for all they have given them to be successful at the next level.



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And when VanDeHeede hears constructive criticism she makes note of that, too. “Then we go right to the department and start talking about curriculum changes,” she said. “The nice thing is we can reflect about what’s going on now. We don’t have all these hoops and things we have to jump through so that we can now make a change that may now be outdated.

“We can reflect on what’s going on currently with the post-secondary system and make changes now to benefit our students.”

VanDeHeede is quick to point praise in the direction of faculty and staff, including that the students have that good of a relationship with them that they want to stay in contact with their old school.

“Outside of their parents, we believed in them first,” VanDeHeede said. “It’s why they share their successes with us.”

■ **Alleman Alumni Relations Coordinator Jim Meenan**