



In planning a successful transition to college, it is important for students to understand that colleges have different responsibilities from high schools when it comes to providing accommodations for students with disabilities.

Comparing Disability Services Between High School and College

High School

Applicable Laws

- Under IDEA, children with disabilities are absolutely entitled to a “Free and Appropriate Public Education.”
- Section 504, subpart D, includes “Free and Appropriate Public Education” language for the public schools, and accommodations may include a shortening of assignments or the use of notes on tests when other students cannot use them.
- Either an IEP or a 504 Plan drives all services and accommodations, involves the teachers and counselors, and requires parental approval.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Student is identified and supported by teachers and parents.
- Primary responsibility for accommodations belongs to the school.
- The public school is responsible for assessment, physical therapy, occupational therapy, or personal care during school hours.

Applicable Laws

- Under ADA, access to education is the focus of the law; students must advocate for themselves in order to receive accommodations.
- Section 504, subpart E, is the first civil rights legislation that applied to colleges. It upholds the institution's right to maintain the academic standards, and no accommodations may be permitted that will fundamentally alter a class or program. Shortening assignments and using notes are not considered a responsible or applicable accommodation.
- 504 plans and IEPs do not exist on the college level.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Student must self-identify to Disability Support Services (DSS).
- Primary responsibility for accommodations belongs to the student.
- The student is responsible for personal care, medical and therapeutic requirements and prescriptive devices both during and after school hours.
- Attendance is taken and the student is responsible for attending class. He/she may be dropped from courses due to excessive absences based on the college attendance policy.
- It is the student's responsibility to request accommodations with DSS. In addition, it is the student's choice whether to utilize or not utilize his/her approved accommodations in each of their classes.

Parent Involvement

- Parents do not have access to disability related records or grades unless the student provides written consent.
- Students advocate for themselves.
- College instructors communicate directly with students, not with parents.

Teacher/Instructor Involvement

- Colleges are not required to modify curriculum or assignments.
- There is less flexibility with testing in college. Extended time (time and a half, double time) may be an appropriate accommodation; however tests are not typically broken into parts and taken at different times.