

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE DISABILITY SERVICES

There is no Special Education at the college level. Educational rights covered by IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Act) do not apply to postsecondary education. Colleges must comply with ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the civil Rights Restoration Act. College students have civil rights, but no “education” rights.

Postsecondary institutions are **required** to:

- *Make all programs and services physically accessible to all students*
- *Provide auxiliary aids, notetakers, and appropriate equipment to ensure the participation of students with disabilities in college classes and activities*
- *Accommodate the academic participation of qualified students with disabilities in college classes and activities*

Postsecondary institutions are **not required** to:

- *Provide specific auxiliary aids as long as the college provides a method of assistance that allows equal opportunity*
- *Provide academic modifications if these modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the course or program or place undue burden on the institution*
- *Lower admission criteria for applicants with disabilities*
- *Diagnose a disability or conduct testing and assessment of learning difficulties, physical, or mental impairments*
- *Provide personal attendants*
- *Provide personal or private tutors*
- *Prepare “Individualized Education Programs” (IEP’s)*

Differences in Policies and Procedures	
High School	College
The school is responsible for identifying students with disabilities	The student must self identify or disclose his/her disability
The school must provide the assessment of disability, classify disability, and involve parents	The student must provide documentation of his/her disability to the designated office
School staff will discuss academic progress with parents or legal guardians	The student is considered an adult with privacy and confidentiality protections. Staff cannot talk with parents or legal guardians about the student’s academic progress
The school must develop an Individualized Educational Program	The student must request specific accommodations and provide supporting evidence through documentation
The school must provide a free and appropriate education including modified program and appropriate related services	The student must act as independent adults to activate and obtain accommodations and structure weekly schedules
The school must coordinate the provision of all services, monitor progress, and evaluate results	The college must provide reasonable accommodations for students who qualify

Differences in Courses	
High School	College
Class attendance is mandatory and monitored carefully	Students are expected to follow the instructors attendance policy as stated in the syllabus
Teachers will usually approach students who are having academic difficulties	Students are responsible to ask the instructor for help
Teachers remind students of assignment due dates	Students are responsible for keeping track of their projects, assignments, and tests dates
Teachers will provide students with missed information when they are absent	Students must approach their instructors for information they missed when absent
Teachers many times will provide extra credit assignments to help students raise their grades	Extra credit assignments are not usually given
Make up tests are usually available	Make up tests may not be an option
Teachers present information to help the student understand the textbook	Instructors may not follow the textbook, but lectures enhance the topic

Differences in Accommodations	
High School	College
Services include individually designed instruction, modifications, and accommodations based on the IEP	Reasonable accommodations may be made to provide equal access and participation
Modifications that change course outcomes may be offered based on the IEP	The college is not required to lower or effect substantial modifications to essential requirements.
Appropriate accommodations are determined by the student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)	Appropriate accommodations must be determined based on the student's disability documentation, and individual need

Differences in Parent's or Legal Guardian's Role	
High School	College
Legal guidance is provided by IDEA	Legal guidance is provided by Section 504 and ADA
Parents must ensure that their child attends school until the age of 16	Parents are not required to send child to college
Periodic progress reports are given to parents	No progress reports will be given to parents
Teachers are free to approach parents without consent from student to discuss student's progress	Without a release of information signed by the student the teacher legally cannot include the parents in any part of the educational process
The parent is the student's legal guardian	In college the student is considered to be his/her own legal guardian unless there is a court order to the contrary
The parent is expected to advocate for the student	The student is expected to advocate on his/her own behalf