

## Differences between High School and College for Students with Disabilities

There are a number of differences between high school and college that you should be aware of before starting college. One of the most important is that you are expected to speak for yourself in college. That means meeting with staff from disability services to discuss your disability and accommodations, talking to your professors when you have a question or a problem, and making and keeping appointments. There are other important differences, too. For instance, in high school some of your work may have been modified. In college, your course assignments cannot be modified. You will be expected to learn all the information just like everyone else in the course. In college, you will be able to make use of accommodations if you need them. Accommodations might include things like using digital recorders to tape class discussions, listening to an audio version of a textbook, or having more time to finish a test or quiz.

### High School

#### Applicable Laws

- I.D.E.A. (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)
- Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- I.D.E.A. is about Success in School.

#### Required Documentation

- I.E.P. (Individual Education Plan) and/or 504 Plan
- School provides evaluation at no cost to student
- Documentation focuses on determining whether student is eligible for services based on specific disability categories in I.D.E.A.

#### Self-Advocacy

- Student is identified by the school and is supported by parents and teachers.
- Primary responsibility for arranging accommodations belongs to the school.
- Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance.

#### Parental Role

- Parent has access to student records and can participate in the accommodation process
- Parent advocates for student

### College

#### Applicable Laws

- A.D.A. (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title 11)
- Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- NC Senate Bill 866
- A.D.A. is about Access to what is available at college.

#### Required Documentation

- High School I.E.P. and 504 are not sufficient. Documentation guidelines specify information needed for each category of disability.
- Student must get evaluation at own expense.
- Documentation must provide information on specific functional limitations, and demonstrate the need for specific accommodations.

#### Self-Advocacy

- Student must self-identify to the Office of Disabilities Services.
- Primary responsibility for self-advocacy and arranging accommodations belongs to the student.
- Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you want assistance.

#### Parental Role

- Parent does not have access to student records without student's written consent.
- Student advocates for self.

## High School

### Instruction

- Teachers may modify curriculum and/or alter curriculum pace of assignments.
- You are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed and often re-taught in class.
- You seldom need to read anything more than once, sometimes listening in class is enough.
- Attendance taken and reported

### Grades and Tests

- I.E.P. or 504 Plan may include modifications to test format and/or grading.
- Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material.
- Makeup tests are often available.
- Teachers often take time to remind you of assignments and due dates.

### Student Responsibilities

- Tutoring and study support may be a service provided as part of an I.E.P. or 504 plan.
- Tutoring is provided by specially trained teachers or staff.
- Your time and assignments are structured by others.
- You may study outside class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and this may be mostly last-minute test preparation.
- Personal care services (assistance with getting to class, etc.) are required.

## College

### Instruction

- Professors are not required to modify design or alter assignment deadlines.
- You are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing which may not be directly addressed in class.
- You need to review class notes, text, and material regularly.
- Attendance is taken and students can be dropped for missing too many classes.

### Grades and Tests

- Grading and test format changes (i.e. multiple choice vs. essay) are generally not available.
- Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material.
- Make up test are seldom an option; if they are, you need to request them.
- Professors expect you to read, save, and consult the course syllabus (outline); the syllabus spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due, and how you will be graded.

### Student Responsibilities

- Tutoring DOES NOT fall under Disability Services. Students with disabilities must seek out tutoring resources as they are available to all students.
- Tutoring is provided by peers rather than teachers who are trained in special methods.
- You manage your time and complete assignments independently.
- You need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class.
- If personal care services are necessary, the student needs to arrange them.