

Students with Disabilities:

FINDING THE RIGHT COLLEGE MATCH

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Agenda

Legal Differences

Documentation Guidelines

Reasonable Accommodations

Student Responsibilities

How Students Can Prepare In High School

Campus Differences – Finding the Right Fit

Legal Differences

Understanding the law

- ▣ In the K-12 environment, 3 laws apply:
 - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
 - Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504
 - Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)

- ▣ In the postsecondary environment, 2 laws apply:
 - Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504
 - Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)

K-12:

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142) was signed into law in 1975.

It was updated and renamed the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** (IDEA, 1990 and 1997).

IDEA was Reauthorized in November 2004

- It significantly limits what evaluation data schools must provide
- High School personnel are no longer *required* to do transition assessment
- Secondary schools are moving to more functional data. (Response to Intervention, Curriculum-based assessments)

According to IDEA 2004:

- IDEA guarantees that all children, regardless of disability, are entitled to a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.
- IDEA applies only to individuals between the ages of 3 and 21 (or until high school graduation) who are receiving special education or related services.
- Under IDEA, the responsibility for initiating services is on the school system and parents.

Colleges and Universities:

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973)
- Americans with Disabilities (ADA, 1990)

state individuals must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life functions;
- have a history of such impairment; or
- be regarded as having such an impairment; and
- be deemed as “otherwise qualified.”

Post-secondary legal obligations:

- Colleges and Universities cannot exclude, deny, or discriminate against *otherwise qualified individuals* on the basis of their disability.
- Post-secondary institutions are required to make *reasonable modifications* in academic requirements to ensure that those requirements do not discriminate.
- Post-secondary institutions retain the right to *determine disability documentation requirements and criteria for eligibility for reasonable modifications*.

What is the Law?

IDEA and ADA - A Comparison

The Educational Perspective

IDEA	ADA
Free and Appropriate Mandatory Education	Optional Education
Entitlement Law	Civil Rights Law
Remedial Learning Tools	Aids and Accommodations
Outcome Oriented: Successful Learning	Equal Access, Not Equal Outcome

How do these changes affect our students?

Issue	Responsibility at Secondary Level	Responsibility at Postsecondary Level
Identification	School	Student
Assessment	School	Student
Programming	School/Parent	Student-Institution
Advocacy	School/Parent	Student
Decision Making	Placement Team	Student
Transition Planning	Placement Team	Student

Adapted from: Brinckerhoff, L.B. Shaw, S.F., & McGuire, J.M. (1992). Promoting access, accommodations, and independence for college students with learning disabilities. Journal of Learning Disabilities. 25, 417-429.

Documentation Guidelines for Students with Disabilities

Documentation

- Must be current and up-to-date (3 – 5 years)
- Must be prepared by a licensed or certified professional appropriate to the field of disability
- Must be comprehensive, specific in report diagnosis and effect upon learning and academic performance and provision of recommendations consistent with diagnosis
- Check guidelines for specific college or university – each has a list of specific components

Reasonable Accommodations

Areas Considered in Developing Individual Accommodations:

No “one size fits all” approach

- College Classroom
- Testing
- Academic Program Requirements

Reasonable Classroom Accommodations

- Recommend preferential seating
- Provide advanced copies of overheads, power-point presentations, board notes
- Student tape-records lecture
- Student uses lap-top computer for notes

Reasonable Testing Accommodations:

- Alternative low distraction testing room away from whole class
- Sound suppression earplugs or headphones
- Use of a sound screen to produce white noise
- Use of laptop computer for essay exams.

Reasonable Test Time Accommodations:

- Extended time on all written tests and exams
 - Time and one-half extended time (50% more time)
 - Double time (100% more time)
- Scheduled Breaks

Reasonable Test Format Accommodations:

- Present test orally
 - Have a Reader
 - Present the exam tape-recorded
 - Use computer software on exams with read-aloud capabilities
- Accept oral responses
 - Have a Scribe
 - Allow use of computer software for voice-to-text
- Allow the student to write directly on the test, rather than computer-scored answer sheet

Reasonable Program Accommodations:

- Early priority registration
- Reduced course load
- Flexibility with attendance policy
- Negotiate arrangements for due dates on projects and long-term assignments
- Course substitution

Student Responsibilities

Accessing Post-Secondary Disability Services

- Contact Disability Services Office and request policies and procedures for registering
- Find out what documentation the College requires
- Ask about types of resources available at the College
- Determine what are considered reasonable academic accommodations at that College

- Students have a responsibility to self-identify and provide documentation of a disability
- Documentation of a disability is reviewed and stored confidentially in one office on campus
- The documentation provided has to meet the college's policy guidelines
- Determination of eligibility and reasonable accommodations is based on the documentation and student interviews

- On most campuses, faculty letters are provided to the student which state that the student should receive a specified list of reasonable accommodations
- It is the student's responsibility to provide the letter to each faculty and discuss the accommodations
- On most campuses, it is the faculty's responsibility to provide the student with the accommodations once the letter has been received

HIGH SCHOOL:

- Everyone is informed about a student's placement. Teachers have an idea about the student's needs before the student enters the classroom.

COLLEGE:

- The student must initiate all actions regarding accommodation with each professor, for each course, every semester.
- Students have a right to choose whether or not to use accommodations.

HIGH SCHOOL:

- Parents are the legal guardians and advocates for their children's educational decisions and have a right to review all educational records.
- Students have little or no privacy.

COLLEGE:

- Under FERPA*, at 18 years of age students have the right to make educational decisions and must provide consent for disclosure of their educational records, even to their parents.
- The college is obligated to protect a student's confidentiality.

*(FERPA : Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.)

What does this all mean?

- ▣ Simply put, all of this means.....

- ▣ **The student** is in charge!
 - **The student** is the CHANGE AGENT!!
 - » **The student** is the PRIME MOVER!

How High School Students with Disabilities Can Prepare for College

Attributes to Develop

_ *From Transition of Students with Disabilities to Postsecondary Education: A guide for High School Educators*, www.ed.gov , 2008.

1. Positive attitude towards successful outcome
2. Realistic expectations about level of difficulty and effort required
3. Strong self-advocate

- Students need to understand their disabilities and what strategies work for them in high school
- Accept responsibility for their own success
- Take a high school curriculum that will prepare them to meet college standards
 - Take the toughest courses they can
 - Develop good study skills
 - Develop good reading and writing abilities

- Develop critical thinking skills
- Learn time management skills
- Acquire good computer skills
- Discover and practice using Assistive Technology
- Research postsecondary education
- Visit campuses and include the Disability Service Offices in the visit. Find the campus that feels right.

The most important concept to grasp is that the student with a disability needs ALL the same competencies as any other college student PLUS whatever special skills or strategies are needed to cope with his/her disability. It is better to start acquiring skills in an environment he knows well, (i.e. high school) rather than to wait until he arrives on the college campus. Going to college comfortable with oneself and one's needs can make the difference between success and failure.

Effective College Planning: 8th Ed. (2002) WNY Collegiate Consortium of Disability Awareness

In the College Transition:

- Encourage students to participate in advanced summer college preparatory programs or freshman orientation classes
- Students need to get involved on campus during their first year
- Stress to students to learn the resources available on campus and use them

Campus Differences...

Finding the Right Fit

Finding the Right Fit

- All students have choices to make:
 - Size (small, medium, large)
 - Location (rural, suburban, urban, distance from, distance learning)
 - Commuter/ Residence Hall
 - Cost
 - What do they wish to accomplish

Is College the Right Choice?

- What is the desired goal? Is it the student's goal or the parent's?
- Is the goal realistic based on the student's ability and skill level?
- Has this been discussed with the IEP team/medical professional?
- Certificates vs. degree options
- Level of support

Finding the Right Fit

- Goals of Post-Secondary
 - Certificate or Diploma
 - Associate Degree
 - Bachelors Degree
 - Graduate and Professional Degrees
- Options in Post-Secondary
 - Community or Technical College
 - On-line Distance Learning
 - Colleges and Universities

Open Access Campuses

- Don't require SAT or ACT scores
- Students need a H.S. diploma or GED to apply for admission
- Placement test given to assess math and English skills
- Developmental classes typically available to assist students
- Variety of campus resources to assist students

Which Campus is Right for Me?

- 2-year typically offers more support than a 4-year institution.
- Open Enrollment vs. Selective
- Culture of the institution and its effect on the Disability Services Office.

Finding the Right Fit

- All colleges are required to offer services to students with documented disabilities
- HOW they do that is the question
 - Level of student independence, level of institutional support & resources must be identified for each student & matched
 - If health services are necessary, student needs to identify those

Choices:

- By federal law, all colleges and universities must provide equal access to all of their programs and activities.

98% of the colleges and universities provide access accommodations using a service delivery model.

2% of the colleges and universities offer a structured program or coordinated services model for students with learning disabilities.

Choices

- Structured program: most comprehensive; highly structured; director and/or staff certified in Special Ed or related areas; usually additional fee

Choices

- Coordinated services: less comprehensive; not as structured; sometimes a fee is charged
- Services: least comprehensive; offer services that comply with federal mandate
- There is a huge variety and diversity among colleges and universities.

▣ [The K & W Guide to Colleges for Students With Learning Disabilities or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder](#) by Marybeth Kravets and Imy F. Wax (Library Binding - Jun 15, 2008)

Choices

At the College of Mount St Joseph, we offer a service model *and* a program model. The Learning Center is the service model. Project EXCEL is the program model. Of the 294 postsecondary institutions in Ohio, there are only 3 program models. Project EXCEL is the only program model in the region.

It is important to understand the differences and similarities between the two.

Two College Models

Service Model - The Learning Center

- Peer tutoring available to all students
- Math Center available to all students
- Writing Center available to all students
- Accommodations for students with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit a major life activity
- Free

Program Model – Project EXCEL

- Professional tutors provided
- Intensive program specifically designed for students with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) or ADD/ADHD
- Individualized scheduling
- Time management and organizational coaching
- Project labs & guided study sessions
- Study tables
- Once admitted to college, make application to Project EXCEL
- Fee based program

Similarities

- Both Project EXCEL and the Learning Center provide reasonable academic adjustments and auxiliary aids to eligible students at no charge, according to students' individual needs.

A word about tutoring....

Not an accommodation. Section 504 regulations say that tutoring is a personal service or responsibility.

- If College does not offer tutoring for all students, it does not *have* to provide tutoring for students with disabilities.
- Check availability of tutoring for all students / group or individual
- Check availability of individual tutoring for specific subjects of difficulty

Other Types of Resources

- Career Services
- Disability Services Office
- Tutoring Services
- Counseling Services
- Academic Advising
- Veteran's Services
- Specialized Services

Resources to help you Search

- ▣ www.collegeboard.com
- ▣ www.Collegeview.com
- ▣ www.petersons.com
- ▣ [The K & W Guide to Colleges for Students With Learning Disabilities or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder](#) by Marybeth Kravets and Imy F. Wax (Library Binding - Jun 15, 2008)
- ▣ [K & W Guide to Colleges for Students with Learning Disabilities, 9th Edition \(College Admissions Guides\)](#)





Questions
and
Discussion