



Differences Between High School and College Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

From

The Accessibility Office

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General Differences Between High School & College

High School	College
Class schedules are arranged by school personnel	Students arrange their own schedules
General education classes dictated by the state and/or district requirements	Classes are based on a field or program of study; requirements may vary
Class attendance is usually mandatory and monitored carefully	Attendance policies are set by individual instructor and vary
Textbooks are typically provided at little or no expense	Textbooks can be expensive (an anticipated range for a full-time student is \$200.00-\$400.00 per semester)
Instructors and school personnel closely watch out for the students; guiding and correcting them if necessary	Students are expected to take responsibility for what they do and don't do, as well as for the consequences of their decisions

Applicable Laws

High School	College
I.D.E.A. (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)	A.D.A. (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990)
Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973	Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973
I.D.E.A. is about SUCCESS	A.D.A. is about ACCESS

Required Documentation

High School	College
I.E.P. (Individualized Education Plan and/or 504 Plan)	High School I.E.P. and 504 are not sufficient. Documentation guidelines specify information needed for each category of disability. <i>There are no IEPs or 504 Plans at the college level.</i>
School provides evaluation at no cost to student	Student must get evaluation at own expense
Documentation focuses on determining whether student is eligible for services based on specific disability categories in I.D.E.A.	Documentation must provide information on specific functional limitations, and demonstrate the need for specific accommodations

Self-Advocacy

High School	College
Student is identified by the school and is supported by parents and teachers	Student must self-identify to the Office of Disability Services
Primary responsibility for arranging accommodations belongs to the school	Primary responsibility for self-advocacy and arranging accommodations belongs to the student
Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance	Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance

Parental Role

High School	College
Parent has access to student records and can participate in the accommodation process	Parent does not have access to student records without student's written consent
Parent advocates for student	Student advocates for self

Instruction

High School	College
Teachers may modify curriculum and/or alter pace of assignments	Professors are not required to modify curriculum design or alter assignment deadlines

You are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed, and often re-taught, in class	You are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing which may not be directly addressed in class
You seldom need to read anything more than once, and sometimes listening in class is enough	You need to review class notes and text material regularly

High School Teacher vs. College Instructors

High School	College
Grade and check completed homework	Assume homework is completed and students are able to perform on a test
May remind students of incomplete assignments	May not remind student of incomplete assignments as it the responsibility of the student to check with instructor to see if requirements are being met
May know students' needs and approach students when they need assistance	Are usually open and helpful, but expect students to initiate contact when assistance is needed
May be available before, during or after class	May require students to attend scheduled office hours
Often provide student with information missed during absence	Expect students to get information from classmates when they miss a class
Present material to help students understand what is in the textbook	Instructors may not follow the textbook and lectures enhance the topic area
Often write information on the board or overhead to be copied for notes	The Instructor may lecture nonstop; when the instructor writes on the board that is to enhance the lecture, not summarize it
Teach knowledge and facts, leading student through the thinking process	Expect students to think independently and connect seemingly unrelated information
Often take time to remind students of assignment and test dates	

Grades and Tests

High School	College
I.E.P. or 504 plan may include modifications to test format and/or grading	Grading and test format changes (i.e. multiple choice vs. essay) are generally not available. Accommodations to HOW tests are given (extended time, test proctors) are available when supported by disability documentation.
Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material	Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material
Makeup tests are often available	Makeup tests are seldom an option; if they are, you need to request them
Teachers often take time to remind you of assignments and due dates	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

Study Responsibilities

High School	College
Tutoring and study support may be a service provided as part of an I.E.P. or 504 plan	Tutoring DOES NOT fall under Disability Services. Students with disabilities must seek out tutoring resources as they are available to all students.
Your time and assignments are structured by others	You manage your own time and complete assignments independently
You may study outside of class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and this may be mostly last-minute test preparation	You need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class

Reference:

West Chester University. (2016). Differences Between High School and College Accommodations for Students with Disabilities. In *Vice Provost Home*. Retrieved October 3, 2016, from <https://www.wcupa.edu/universityCollege/ossd/documents/College-And-HS-Differences-Students-with-Disabilities.pdf>

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