

Differences between High School and College Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

An important issue for potential and current students with disabilities is to understand the difference between disability rights laws in high school and college. In college, more responsibility is placed on the student.

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.
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
Teachers remind you of your incomplete work of assignments.	Professors may not remind you of incomplete work design or alter assignment deadlines.
Teachers provide you with information you missed when you were absent.	Professors expect you to get from classmates any notes from classes you missed.
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.

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
You may graduate as long as you have passed all required courses with a grade of D or higher.	You may graduate only if your average in classes meets the departmental standard.
Teachers frequently conduct review sessions, pointing out the most important concepts.	Professors rarely offer review sessions, and when they do, they expect you to be an active participant, one who comes prepared with questions.
Consistently good homework grades may raise your overall grade when test grades are low.	Grades on tests and major papers usually provide most of the course grade.

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.
Personal services for medical/physical disabilities are required.	No personal services are required.
Students are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed, and often re-taught, in class.	Students are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing which may not be directly addressed in class.
Students are not responsible for knowing what is required to graduate or tracking their own progress.	Students are expected to select their own majors and/or minors and are expected to learn the graduation requirements for their programs of study.

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 20 U.S.C. 1232 g(d) states that generally speaking, parents of children who attend or have attended a school or facility that receives funding have rights under FERPA. When a student turns 18 years old or enters a post-secondary institution at any age, all rights afforded to parents under FERPA transfer to the student ("eligible student"). However, FERPA provides ways in which a school may - but is not required to - share information from an eligible students education records with parents, without the student's consent.

For example: Schools may disclose education records to parents if the student is claimed as a dependent for tax purposes. Schools may disclose education records to parents if a health or safety emergency involves their son or daughter. Schools may inform parents if the student, if he or she is under age 21, has violated any law or policy concerning the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance.

Helpful General Information

National Council on Disability
<http://www.ncd.gov/resources.htm>

Helpful General Financial Aid Information

Financial Aid for Students through the US
 Department of Education's Office
<http://www.ed.gov>

Texas Workforce Commission
<https://twc.texas.gov/>

The Financial Aid Information Page
<http://www.finaid.org>

For more information contact Collin College ACCESS Office at 972.881.5898 or visit
<http://www.collin.edu/studentresources/disabilityservices/index.html>

Equal opportunity shall be afforded within Collin College to all employees and applicants for admission or employment regardless of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, or disability.