

Post-Secondary Education Expectations



Are you prepared for when your son/daughter with disabilities graduates from high school and moves on to post-secondary education?

Do you have the information you need to advise your son/daughter on what to expect of a post-secondary educational experience?



Who is responsible for managing my son/daughter's post-secondary education?

Your son/daughter is ultimately responsible for managing the post-secondary education. This means your son/daughter needs to:

Understanding his/her disability and how it impacts learning

Contact the college disability services office to disclose disability, provide required documentation, and request accommodations

Request accommodations from individual instructors

Seek academic help when needed

It is important to remember that privacy laws prevent college staff from sharing any information about a student with parents unless the student provides written permission to do so.

What are the differences between high school and college?

High School	College
Services are delivered to the student	Student must seek out services
Services are based on an agreed upon time allotment and menu of choices	Services are based on situational/individual needs
Case manager acts as advocate	Student acts as advocate
Annual review of IEP	No annual review or IEP
Regular parent contact	No parent contact
Entitlement Law (IDEA)	Anti-discrimination law (ADA)
Educational and psychological testing is provided	Student must arrange and pay for assessments

How has my role as a parent changed?

At the post-secondary level the roles of both the parent and student changes.

- Student becomes responsible for accommodations as well as managing records.
- The parent's role becomes one of guidance and support for the student.
- The parent can assist the student by encouraging him/her to take responsibility for academic limitations.
- The parent can urge the student to register with Disability Services, where he/she will be assisted in obtaining reasonable accommodations.
- The parent is encouraged to stay actively involved and engaged with the student.

What is meant by reasonable accommodations?

Reasonable accommodations are made in order to level the playing field for qualified students with disabilities. As much as possible, accommodations are designed to lower the functional limitations of an individual in a given task. These adjustments allow students with disabilities the opportunity to learn by removing barriers that do not make the academic standards easier.

Examples of Accommodations:

- Students who are deaf cannot hear class lectures. Sign language interpreters, as an accommodation, gives students who are deaf access to the information discussed in the classroom at nearly the same time it is presented. Students who are deaf are also provided with note-takers, even though the lectures are interpreted. This is because it is very difficult to follow a signed lecture and take notes at the same time.
- Students with learning disabilities may be accommodated in a variety of ways depending on their particular type of learning disability.
- Students who are blind may be accommodated by receiving printed materials in another format such as audio CDs or in Braille.
- Students with mobility limitations, such as wheelchair users, may request that classroom locations be moved if the classroom is not accessible on a ground floor or by an elevator.

In providing an accommodation, the college is not required to lower or substantially modify essential requirements. The college does not have to make modifications that would fundamentally alter the nature of a service, program, or activity or would result in undue financial or administrative burdens. Also, the college does not have to provide personal attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature, such as tutoring and typing.

What will college classes be like?



The academic year is typically divided into two separate 15-week semesters, plus a week of finals for each. (12-15 hours a week; may include evening and/or Saturday classes). Classes may vary from 50 minutes to 3 hours. Classes may number 100 students or more at the university levels. Community college classes have enrollments similar to most high school. For each class, students should expect at least 2 to 3 hours of study time outside of class. Students need to review class notes and test materials regularly. Students should review notes after each class, rewrite notes, and reread notes before going to the next class. Students are assigned substantial amounts of reading and

writing, which may not be directly addressed in class. Effective reading comprehension skills are important in college. (Students in college should be reading at a minimum of a 10th – 12th grade equivalency). There are more major writing assignments in college classes and essay questions are more common on tests. Students pay for textbooks (typically \$500 per semester). Retests are highly unlikely.

What about college professors?

Professors distribute a course syllabus and expect students to complete assignments on time and prepare for assignments as noted in the syllabus. Professors frequently require research. Professors do not always check homework, but they will assume you can perform the same tasks on tests. Professors may not remind you of incomplete work. Professors are usually open and helpful; but, they expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance. Professors expect and want you to come for help during their scheduled office hours. Professors have been trained as experts in their particular areas of research. However, they may not be trained as teachers. Professors expect you to get notes from classmates of classes you missed.

Why is time management important?



College classes usually meet for just a few hours each week. The syllabus outlines assignments, tests, and deadlines for the whole semester.

Your son/daughter will need to independently plan and use time each day for reading, studying, researching, and completing written assignments in addition to making time for social activities, eating, sleeping, and basic self-care.

What will college testing be like?



Testing may be less frequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material.

There may only be one to four tests per class per term. A comprehensive final may be given.

Test preparation is the student's responsibility.

The professor may review for the test or not. Makeup tests are seldom an option. If a makeup test is an option, it is the student's responsibility to request one.

What about my son/daughter's living situation?

Many post-secondary facilities have on or off campus housing. Your child will most likely be responsible for all aspects of daily independent living including, but not limited to the following.

