

## Setting Demands

Keep in mind that the college demands will be different and often greater than the demands in high school.

These demands include the need for greater organizational skills, assertiveness, and use of self-advocacy skills.

Students must be prepared to handle a complicated course schedule and make more time for studying and completing assignments.

Mastering learning strategies and study techniques will make college coursework more manageable. Because faculty will not be seeking the students out to offer assistance, students cannot be shy about asking for help.

How good are my son/daughter's study and test taking skills?

## How to Lend Support

You can support your son/daughter entering the college setting in a number of ways.

First, be knowledgeable about the rights and responsibilities your son/daughter has under the Americans with

Disabilities Act (ADA). Your son/daughter is responsible for using the information. Prior to enrollment, make sure that you son/daughter has all the paperwork needed to obtain services. Once you have gathered the necessary paperwork, make copies and turn it over to your son/daughter as the first step toward assuming responsibility (make sure that you keep a copy in a safe place).

## Further Support

Beyond taking care of paperwork, consider these steps.

1. Encourage the development and use of self-advocacy skills
2. Help your son/daughter understand his/her disability
3. Once your son/daughter has a class schedule, discuss how each class will affect his/her strengths and weaknesses and what kinds of services he/she might need in order to be successful
4. Once the semester is under way, ask questions about progress, but remember that your

son/daughter is ultimately responsible for his/her success

5. Listen and ask questions when you sense a problem is occurring
6. Realize that the course work will be more difficult and time consuming than during high school
7. If your son/daughter is living at home, make sure he/she has a quiet place to study and ample time to finish assignments

## Parents' Rights

Your son/daughter is considered an adult at the age of 18. His/her records will no longer be accessible to you, unless he/she chooses to share information with you. You cannot call the university and get updates on your son/daughter.

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# A Parent's Guide to College

A short guide to help you understand the transition process from high school to college for your child with a disability

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## About College

College life poses different challenges for students with disabilities. When students enroll in college, they are considered responsible adults by faculty and staff. The expectations are that they will assume responsibilities for meeting their class requirements. This added responsibility is coupled with a change in environment. Whereas the high school was a very structured environment with a set schedule, college schedules can vary dramatically. For the first time, students may have considerable time between classes and frequently do not use this time wisely. Students must enforce their own attendance policies and prepare to realize personal consequences if they choose not to attend class.

Is my son/daughter ready to assume responsibilities? If not, how will he/she learn these responsibilities?

## Self-Advocacy

Another student responsibility is that of self-advocate. Students must become adept at realistically assessing and understanding their strengths, weaknesses, needs, and preferences. Also, they must become experts at communicating these to other adults including instructors and service providers. Although services will be available to them through the Disability Resource Center (DRC), students will be responsible for seeking these services and supports. Good communication skills and knowledge about oneself become crucial to success in college.

How well does my son/daughter describe disability information? How well does my son/daughter self-advocate?

The table in the next column contrasts services offered at the high school level and college.

## Comparison of Services

High school and college are very different. Consider these differences and their importance to your son/daughter.

### High School

- Services are delivered to the student
- Services are based on an agreed upon time allotment and a menu of choices
- Case manager acts as advocate
- Annual review & IEP
- Regular parent contact
- Entitlement law (IDEA)
- Educational and psychological testing is provided

### College

- Students must seek our services
- Services are based on situational/individual needs
- Student acts as advocate
- No annual review or IEP
- No parent contact
- Anti-discrimination law (ADA)
- Student is responsible for providing documentation of his/her disability

## Acceptable Documentation

It is the student's responsibility to provide recent professional documentation of his/her disability. The documentation must include the following.

- a) Statement of disability on the letterhead of a qualified professional
- b) Statement of how the disability functionally limits him/her in the academic environment
- c) Recommendations for specific accommodations and rationale for those recommendations

*An IEP is acceptable ONLY if it includes full psycho-educational testing and results, completed within the previous 3 years.*