

Transition Tips

There's no argument that moving from high school to college is a pivotal point in life. You will find that there are going to be many differences between high school and college, and one of the major differences that you will encounter is the way that student with disabilities establish academic accommodations.

If you received special education services in high school and had academic accommodations, chances are that those accommodations and related special education services were coordinated by your teachers, parents, and school administrators, however when you reach the college level, establishing appropriate academic accommodations becomes your responsibility.

First, it is important for you to know that if you wish to receive academic accommodations and/or disability support services, you must initiate the process by disclosing your disability to the Office of Learning Support Services, located in A-100. Second, before accommodations and services are established, you will be asked to provide appropriate documentation of your disability. After providing the required documentation, you will progress through an intake process that will result in a reasonable and appropriate accommodation and service plan that is created based on your individual needs and the impacts and demands of the courses that you are enrolled in for any given academic term.

Preparing for the Intake Process adapted from Lissner, S. (2005, Spring). *College Accommodation Planning, TACCLD*.

There are several steps that you can take in preparation for creating your Verified Individual Service and Accommodation (VISA) plan:

1. Be able to answer the following questions:

- How would you describe your disability?
- How does your disability impact you in the academic setting? Take into consideration the following contexts:
 - In the classroom (lectures, labs, physical activity, distance learning, group work)
 - Assignments (reading, writing, calculating, keyboarding)
 - Assessment (tests, papers, oral presentations)
 - Time constraints (timed exams/quizzes, college deadlines, assignment due dates)
 - Attendance (class, required outside of class activities)
 - Campus (mobility, navigation, transportation)
- What have you tried in the past?
 - What accommodations, services, and/or adaptive equipment have you used in the past?
 - Which ones worked well? Which ones did not work well?
 - What do you anticipate needing in college?

What you Need to Know About the Review Process

Once you have participated in an intake interview with the Coordinator of Learning Support Services, your requests for accommodations, services, and adaptive equipment will be evaluated. The impact of your disability, rather than the actual diagnosis will be taken into consideration. For an accommodation to be reasonable and appropriate, the impact of the disability must substantially interfere with your ability to receive information, participate in an academic setting, communicate, or display your knowledge. Having the diagnosis of a disability does not necessarily guarantee a specific accommodation. Also, accommodations must never alter the fundamental goals of a course. Each accommodation is approved on a case-by-case basis after taking into consideration the goals of each course and context in which the accommodation will be applied.