

Transitioning from High School to Post-Secondary Frequently Asked Questions

WHO?

WHO knows that I need accommodations? No one, unless you speak up and let them know. In order to receive accommodations, you must register with the campus accommodation center. No information from high school goes to the college unless you share it with them.

WHO does the accommodation center communicate with? The campus accommodation center will only communicate with the adult student – not the parent. Although the center will allow the parent to initiate the disability registration process, once a student is enrolled in the institution, communication shifts solely to the adult student.

WHAT?

WHAT services are available for me? Services are determined on an individual basis and vary from student to student. Services generally fall into two categories: academic adjustments or auxiliary aids and services. Examples include: a note taker, audio recorded lectures, captioned films, extended time on exams, alternative testing arrangements/locations, instructions provided in multiple formats, computer with voice output, spellchecker and grammar checker, concise oral instructions, clear written instructions, and well organized visual aids. Some colleges will also allow a modified course load, course substitution, and changes in the length of time permitted for degree completion.

WHERE?

WHERE should I start the process? First, you should register with the accommodation center on the college campus. Then, once you have received your semester schedule, you should talk with each professor to explain your learning strengths and struggles.

WHEN?

WHEN should I start the process to receive accommodations? You need to meet with the staff in the accommodation center on your campus at the end of your senior year of high school or the summer before your first college semester. You can wait until the semester has started, but the process for approval may be lengthy and you cannot expect immediate accommodations.

HOW?

HOW are services decided? You must provide the accommodation center documentation that you have a disability and any accommodation plan that you used in high school. The accommodation center may require updated assessment and information to determine your needs. Trained staff at the center will meet with you to determine which accommodations are best for you.

HOW will my professors know that I need accommodations? In most cases, the accommodation center will notify professors of students needing accommodations, but it is your responsibility to speak up if you need accommodations. This is why a “beginning-of-the-semester” conference with each professor is important.

For more information:

Transition of Students with Disabilities to Post-Secondary Education: A Guide for High School Educators published by the US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights

Examples of Accommodations by Disability Type published by the American Psychological Association

Transitioning from High School to College published by the International Dyslexia Association