

REACH FOR YOUR DREAM

A Guide to Transition from High School to College

This publication is designed to help students with disabilities transition from secondary school to college. It will guide students, parents, teachers, and administrators as they begin planning for college. Checklists may be duplicated for student use or for program planning. We hope that students will reach for their dream as they move on to college.

**PRODUCED BY COLLEGE OF THE DESERT,
DISABLED STUDENTS PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
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Transition Goals Checklist High School:

FRESHMAN

FIND OUT ABOUT YOUR DISABILITY (Review these each year of high school)

- Describe your rights under “Section 504” and the “ADA”.
- Define “disability” and “functional limitations” according to Section 504 and ADA.
- Identify your disability, functional limitations and the accommodations you want to request.
- Identify the written verification you will need to request services and accommodations in college. (If you have a learning disability, you will need new testing as an adult, 17-18 years old using the WAIS-III or WJ-R Cognitive. You need to request this testing in writing from your high school.)

LEARN HOW TO ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF

(By Junior year, you should be able to advocate for yourself)

- Define what it means to “advocate for yourself” or to “self-advocate.”
- Identify your academic goals in high school and your plan to meet them.
- Identify people who can help you solve typical problems you may encounter in school.
- Define “Due Process” in school/workplace according to Section 504 and the ADA.
- Attend your educational planning meetings, e.g. IEP, 504 Plan, every year.

SOPHOMORE

PREPARE FOR COLLEGE

- Identify 5 colleges you are interested in attending and the majors you may want to study.
- List the entrance requirements for each college.
- Identify how your current classes now will help you in college.
- Contact the disability support office and find out what it offers.

PREPARE FOR COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION (4 year colleges only)

- Identify what test(s) need to be taken.
- Study for the entrance exam. Enroll in SAT or ACT prep program if possible. Use the study guides.

JUNIOR

TAKE THE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION(S)

- Pick up test packet(s) from your high school counselor. Apply early and request academic accommodations on application(s) for tests.
- Begin taking exams as early as possible. This gives you time to retake exams.

SELECT THE COLLEGE(S) YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING

- Plan to visit college(s) if possible. Include disability support office in your visitation.
- Based on your investigation, pick the college(s) you feel have academic programs that match your interests and will provide you the services you need to be successful.

SENIOR Transition Goals Checklist:

SELECT THE COLLEGE(S) TO WHICH YOU WILL APPLY (fall semester)

- Request an application from the college(s). Fill out the forms and send them in on time.

APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID

- Pick up a financial aid packet from your high school counselor's office. Complete the application
- Contact the colleges you're applying to and request any other financial aid applications.
- Request information about other scholarships from your high school counselor.
- Contact local service clubs, state and national disability organizations, and search the local library and Internet for information on scholarships.

YOU'VE BEEN ACCEPTED TO COLLEGE

- Apply with the college disability support office to receive services
- Provide current written verification of your disability. This must include the name of your disability, functional limitations and academic accommodations you want.
- Make an appointment to meet with a staff member from the disability office.
 1. Identify accommodations you will request and campus procedures to obtain them.
 2. Find out how "Due Process" works on the campus.

- Arrange for other supports not provided by college
 1. Arrange housing, attendant care, and transportation as appropriate.
 2. Develop a contact list for equipment repairs, interpreters for no-school activities, and medical services, as appropriate.
- Plan classes with a college counselor. Review your selections with the disability support office. Buy a college catalog.
 1. Register as early as possible if you need books on tape or sign language interpreters.
 2. Plan sufficient time between classes to arrive on time and to allow extended time on tests if this is an accommodation you plan to use.
 3. Before classes begin make sure your classrooms are accessible. Problems should be reported to the disability support office.
 4. If you know you need your materials in an alternate format (enlarged print, tape, Braille) request this as soon as possible from the disability support office.
 5. Use breaks between classes to review information from your last class and to preview your notes, syllabus, and homework for your next class.
- Advocate for yourself:
 1. Report problems with accommodations to the disability support office immediately. Don't be talked out of an accommodation authorized for you.
 2. Learn about all the support services offered on your campus, e.g. tutoring, writing lab, computer lab, and/or counseling center.

INVESTIGATE COMMUNITY AGENCIES SERVING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

- Identify community agencies that provide support to persons with disabilities.
- Contact the Department of Rehabilitation to identify what services it offers.
- Identify your local disability advocacy office. Note the services it offers.

Self Quiz

EVALUATING YOUR READINESS FOR COLLEGE

College involves many new responsibilities, so you should begin now to develop skills for success. How prepared are you? Check your readiness with this list :

1. Yes No I am self-motivated to study.
2. Yes No I need someone to push me to study.
3. Yes No I do not hesitate to ask questions in class.
4. Yes No I hesitate to ask questions in class.
5. Yes No I complete assignments on time.
6. Yes No I put off assignments and do not complete them on time.
7. Yes No My class notes are organized and complete.
8. Yes No My class notes do not make sense when I review them.
9. Yes No I pay attention even if a class is not interesting.
10. Yes No I frequently tune-out when a class is not interesting.
11. Yes No I avoid studying subjects I do not like.
12. Yes No I study all my subjects, whether I like them or not.
13. Yes No I practice good time management.
14. Yes No I frequently don't plan my time and end up not finishing tasks.
15. Yes No I recognize that success or failure is up to me.
16. Yes No I believe success is a matter of luck.
17. Yes No I have good computer/word processing skills.
18. Yes No My computer/word processing skills are weak.
19. Yes No I accept that my disability poses challenges, but I seek opportunities to overcome them.
20. Yes No I focus on my disability limitations and avoid challenges.

Check your responses. "Yes" answers to odd number responses reflect important steps you have already taken toward success. "Yes" answers to even number responses indicate areas you need to improve. Highlight those that need improvement and start making changes today toward a successful college career.

Checklist for College Disability Services

The disability support office is the campus office responsible for determining and providing appropriate academic accommodations for students with disabilities.

In order for the disability support office to determine a student's eligibility for services and to provide services, the following steps are recommended:

APPLY TO THE COLLEGE

Fill out a college application for admission. Return it to the college Admissions office.

APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID

Pick up a financial aid packet from your high school counselor's office or contact your financial aid office early to apply for financial aid. If you plan to attend a community college, investigate the Board of Governors Fee Waiver (BOGFW)

APPLY FOR DISABILITY OFFICE SERVICES

You will need to provide:

1. Current IEP or 504 Plan
2. Current Psychoeducational report and/or medical verification of disability.

TAKE THE COLLEGE ASSESSMENT TESTS AS APPROPRIATE

Sign up to take the college placement tests. You may need to contact the disability support office for disability-related accommodations on the college assessment tests.

SIGN UP FOR AN ORIENTATION THROUGH YOUR COLLEGE.

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH COUNSELOR/SPECIALIST

Make an appointment to meet with your disability support office counselor/specialist to complete intake procedures, discuss accommodations, and plan classes.

REGISTER FOR CLASSES

Instructions are in the class schedule. Be prepared to pay all fees when you register. When the Department of Rehabilitation pays tuition, documentation from the Department of Rehabilitation is required when you register.

BUY TEXTBOOKS

Books are expensive. Visit the campus bookstore for specific prices. If the Department of Rehabilitation pays for books, contact your DR counselor for the correct form and procedure.

Verification of Disability

Verification is written proof that a current disability exists. **Verification of the disability is the responsibility of each student seeking accommodations and services.** The verification must be provided by a licensed professional in the disability related field. Services and accommodations are offered after the formal verification of a current disability.

Application Process to Receive Disability Services

High school students frequently think they are automatically eligible for disability support services at the college level. It is important to understand that this is not true. Under Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, you must take the following steps:

- Complete an application for services.
- Formally disclose and name your disability.
- Provide current written verification that:
 - names the disability
 - identifies educational limitations that the disability causes
 - identifies reasonable accommodations.
- Documentation verifying the disability must be recent and from a professional.
 - Physical, health and psychological disabilities will require documentation from a physician or psychologist.
 - Learning disabilities and speech and language disabilities require a recent assessment with adult measures.

According to federal laws, you must be able to identify the reasonable accommodations you want to request from the college.

It is recommended that you contact the disability support office at your college for assistance with this process.

Differences Between K-12' , Education and College

K-12 IDEA `97	K 12 504 Plan	College 504 and ADA
Success more of a right	No guarantee	No guarantee. Student responsible for own success
District identifies disability	Parent provides documentation of disability	Student provides documentation of disability and need for accommodation
Free evaluation of disability	Parent responsibility	Student's responsibility
District develops Individual Education Plan (IEP)	Parent/school develops plan	Student identifies accommodation needs
Entitled to services identified on IEP	Services determined by plan	College services not automatic; each college decides eligibility & services
District ensures that the IEP is implemented	District/parent/student responsible	Student responsible for own progress
Teacher advocate	Parent/student advocate	Student advocates for self
Fundamental alterations to program of study permitted as identified on IEP	Fundamental alterations to program of study permitted as identified on 504 plan	None allowed: Accommodation may not alter fundamental nature of course or impose an undue burden on an institution
Personal services: e.g., transportation, personal attendant	None provided	None provided

*The term K-12 refers to the years in school from kindergarten through the end of high school.

Protecting Your Rights

LEGAL RIGHTS FOR ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES

Protection of rights for people with disabilities began with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Since then, two important laws, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, have been enacted. What do these laws provide to you as a college student?

- Both laws prohibit discrimination solely on the basis of a disability.
- Both laws require a college to provide reasonable accommodations so that a student with a disability has equal opportunity to take part in a college's programs, activities, and courses.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

As a student with a disability you:

- Must identify your disability and present verification of your disability from a qualified professional to either the disability support office or your professor.
- Must request the accommodations you want from your professor and give reasonable time to arrange them.
- Must comply with the student code of conduct adopted by the college and all other applicable statutes and regulations related to student conduct.
- Must monitor your grades in classes and ask for help at the first sign of a problem.

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Must provide reasonable accommodations based on the problems the disability causes. The institution may not discriminate against you solely on the basis of your disability.
- Does not have to provide the accommodations you request. The institution does have to negotiate reasonable accommodations. The accommodation may not cause an undue financial burden to the institution.
- Does not have to alter admissions or graduation requirements, or change the basic nature of an individual course. This policy is specifically defined in both Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Steps to Self Advocacy

Self-advocacy is the ability to identify and explain your needs.

1st step to self-advocacy is to say to yourself, "I am the one who is responsible for my success or failure."

2nd step is to ask yourself, "How does my disability affect me as a student? How do I explain my disability to others? What are my abilities and how can I use them to lead me to success?"

3rd step is to develop good communication skills to request accommodations and services. Successful students plan ahead so they can effectively explain their needs.

4th step is to recognize when you need help and to ask for it.

5th step is to be organized. It relieves stress and demonstrates good planning ability. Here are some helpful hints:

- Use a day planner to record appointments, class schedules, work schedules, exam dates, and assignment due dates.
- Plan a reasonable school, study, social, and work schedule. Allow time for rest and recreation.
- Establish a regular study schedule and study 2-3 hours for each hour you spend in class.
- Organize long-term projects in a step-by-step manner. Schedule deadlines for each step in your day planner.
- Arrive to class on time with homework and assignments completed.
- Discuss and arrange disability services and accommodations you will want at the beginning of each semester with your instructor.
- Allow time for the unexpected such as traffic jams on the way to campus, illness, transportation glitches, or work schedule changes.

Now take some time to think about explaining your disability and accommodations to a professor or your counselor. What would you say? Please fill in the blanks below:

My disability causes the following problems in learning: (e.g., difficulty taking notes, finishing tests on time) _____

These problems mean I would like: (list the accommodations you will request)
