Differences between High School and College
For Students with Disabilities

**HIGH SCHOOL**

**Applicable Laws**

- I.D.E.A. (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)
- Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- I.D.E.A. is about Success
  - High School is mandatory and free.

**Required Documentation**

- I.E.P. (Individual Education Plan) and/or 504 Plan
  - School provides evaluation at no cost to student
  - Documentation focuses on determining whether a student is eligible for services based on specific disability categories in I.D.E.A.

**Self-Advocacy**

- Student is identified by the school and is supported by parents and teachers
- Primary responsibility for arranging accommodations belongs to the school
- Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance

**Parental Role**

- Parent has access to student records and can participate in the accommodation process
- Parent advocates for student

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**COLLEGE**

**Applicable Laws**

- Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- A.D.A. is about Access
  - College is voluntary and expensive.

**Required Documentation**

- High school I.E.P. and 504 are not sufficient.
- Documentation guidelines specify information needed for each category of disability
- Student must get evaluation at own expense
- Documentation must provide information on specific functional limitations, and demonstrate the need for accommodations

**Self-Advocacy**

- Student must self-identify to the Office of Disability Services
- Primary responsibility for self-advocacy and requesting accommodations belongs to the student
- Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance

**Parental Role**

- Parents/Significant others do not have access to student records without the student’s written consent
- Student advocates for self
**Instruction**

Teachers may modify curriculum and alter curriculum pace of assignments. You are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed and often re-taught in class. Students seldom need to read anything more than once, sometimes listening in class is enough.

Professors do not alter design of course or alter assignment deadlines. Students are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing which may not be directly addressed in class. Students need to review class notes and text and material regularly.

**Grades and Tests**

IEP or 504 plan may include modifications to test format and/or grading. Grading and test format changes (i.e. multiple choice vs. essay) are generally not available before test. Accommodations as to HOW tests are given (extended time, test proctors) are available only when supported by disability documentation through Disability Services.

Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material. Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material. Makeup tests are often available. Makeup tests and extra credit are seldom an option.

Teachers often take time to remind you of assignments and due dates. Professors expect you to read, save, and consult the course syllabus (outline); the syllabus spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due, and how you will be graded.

**Study Responsibilities**

Student’s time and assignments are structured by others. Students must manage your own time and complete assignments independently. Student’s may study outside class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and this may be mostly last-minute test preparation. Students need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class.

**Conduct**

Disruptive conduct may be accepted. Students who are disruptive and unable to abide by the institution’s code of conduct are deemed “not qualified” and can be dismissed.