

College and Career Planning Information for Students with Disabilities
Taken From College Success for Students with Learning Disabilities
By Simpson and Spencer

1. Pre-College Career Planning: Asking the Right Questions

- What degree is needed in order to reach the career path you have selected?
- Does the college you are investigating offer a program of study that matches your career goals?
- Are there specific prerequisite high school courses that must be taken to enter into the program of study that matches your career goals?
- Do your skills and interests match your career goals?
- Will specific disability-related obstacles prevent you from reaching your career goals?

2. Common Differences Between Academics at High School and College.

At college:

- Less contact with instructors
- Less individual feedback
- More academic competition from peers
- More class lecture time
- Independent reading assignments required more often
- Classes met less often and for fewer hours
- Courses last 16 weeks or fewer
- Effective library skills are needed
- More emphasis is placed on understanding theory
- Courses may be offered online or by videotape
- Harder work is required for an A or B
- Semester grades may be based on just two or three test scores
- More major writing assignments are given
- Essay exams are more common

3. Pre-College Admissions Planning Questions

- What specific standardized assessments are required for college admittance?
- Is there a minimum expectation for scores on standardized assessments (range of acceptable scores)?
- Are specific provisions made during the applications process for students with disabilities?
- Will additional supporting materials be accepted for special review if minimum university admittance criteria are not met?
- Do you meet the expected academic criteria determined by the university (GPA)?

4. Questions to Ask a College

- What are the levels of services offered through your university's Student Disability Services Office?
- What is the process of obtaining accommodations through the Student Disability Services Office? How are such accommodations determined?
- What types of assistive technology devices are available to students with disabilities?
- What additional resources are in place for students with disabilities?
- Are staff members provided training or do they have experience working with students with your specific disability?
- If your specific disability directly impacts your ability to pass a required course, such as foreign language or mathematics, are course substitutions or waivers available?

5. Components of Self-Advocacy Skills needed for student self-advocacy at college.

- Know your disability and how it affects your learning.
- Learn your legal rights under IDEA, Section 504, and ADA.
- Determine reasonable accommodations directly related to your disability.
- Become more independent.
- Create effective study patterns.
- Manage your time.
- Practice and role play effective self-advocacy skills.

6. Roles of Individuals Involved in the Accommodation Process

Student Role

- Notify the faculty of Disability Services Office of your need for academic adjustments.
- Provide medical, psychological, and/or educational documentation to the DSS office.
- Participate in the process of determining and implementing appropriate academic adjustments.
- Inform the DSS office when academic adjustments are not working or need to be modified.

Faculty Role

- Refer student to DSS office.
- Participate in the process of determining and implementing appropriate academic adjustments.
- Identify course components for academic adjustments to be determined.
- Request assistance from the DSS office with respect to implementation of academic adjustments.

Student Disability Services Office Role

- Maintain medical, education, and/or psychological documentation in a confidential manner.

- Determine if condition is a disability in accordance with state and federal laws.
- Identify and assist with implementation of appropriate academic adjustments.
- Request updated documentation as needed to determine if academic adjustments need to be modified.
- Provide information and referral to campus and community resources to resolve disability related issues.

7. Becoming a More Independent Student: Study Skills Checklist

- Do I know how to do research in a library?
- Do I know how to do research online?
- Do I know how to do research using an online library?
- Do I know how and when to seek tutorial assistance?
- Can I take notes from a lecture by hand?
- Can I take notes from a computer?
- Can I take notes from a tape recording?
- Do I know how to take notes from a book?
- Do I know how to take notes from a video course?
- Do I know how to take notes from an online course?
- Do I know how to mark important information in a reading passage?
- Do I know how to study for different kinds of tests?
- Do I know how to take different kinds of tests?
- Do I need extra time for tests?
- Am I usually prepared for class?
- Am I usually on time for class?
- Do I skip classes often?
- Are my schoolwork and notes neat?
- Am I good at organizing my work?
- Do I organize my notes effectively?
- Are my assignments completed on time?
- Is my behavior in class appropriate, and not distracting to others?
- Do I stay focused in class?
- Can I do my share of a group project?

8. Web site that specifically addresses financial aid for students with disabilities, under “Creating Options: Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities”.

- <http://www.heath.gwu.edu>