

Differences Between High School and College

Disability Accommodations and Services:

HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE
The applicable law is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	The applicable laws are the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA), and Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
IDEA is about success	ADA/ADAAA and 504 are about access
Fundamental modifications of programs and curricula are required	No fundamental modifications are required - only reasonable adjustments/supports
Education is a right and must be provided in an appropriate environment to all individuals	Education is not a right - students often must meet certain admission criteria
The school district is responsible for identifying a student's disability	Students must self-identify
The school district develops Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) to define special educational services	Student must identify needs and request services - no IEP exists and often is not considered sufficient documentation to verify a student's disability
The school district provides free evaluations	The student must obtain evaluations at his/her own expense
Student is supported by parents and teachers	Student is responsible for seeking assistance from the Disability Services office
Primary responsibility for arranging modifications belongs to the school	Primary responsibility for self-advocacy and arranging accommodations belongs to the student (who may seek assistance from Disability Services)
Personal services for medical and physical disabilities are required (i.e., Personal Care Attendant)	No personal services are required - however, the Disability Services office may assist the student in arranging for such services
Parent has access to student records and can participate in the IEP process	Parent does not have access to any student records without student's written consent
Parent advocates for student	Student must advocate for self

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Class Structure and Teacher Expectations

HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE
School year runs from September - June	School year is divided into semesters : from August to December, from January to May, plus summer sessions
Classes meet daily	Classes meet 1, 2, 3, or 4 times a week
Classes are generally held in the same building	Classes are held in many different sites on campus
The average length of a class is 35-45 minutes	Classes vary in length from 50 minutes to 3 hours
Daily contact with teachers is standard	Classes meet less frequently which will impact on access to instructors and assistance
The student needs the parent's permission in most instances	The student is an adult and parent permission is not required
Guidance counselors or other staff schedule support services for students	The student must make arrangements for support services
A main office exists as the center of activity for the building	The student is responsible for knowing where to go to obtain information and assistance
Classes consist of about 30 students	Classes can consist of up to 100 students
Teachers often take time to remind student of assignments and due dates	Professors expect student to read, save and consult the course syllabus (outline); this tells the student exactly what is expected of him/her, when it is due and how it will be graded
High school is paid for by tax dollars that go to the school district	The student is responsible for applying for financial aid or arranging some type of payment

More information can be found at the U.S. Department of Education website:

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

(Compiled from: Institute for Community Inclusion, 2004 <http://www.thinkcollege.net/professionals>)