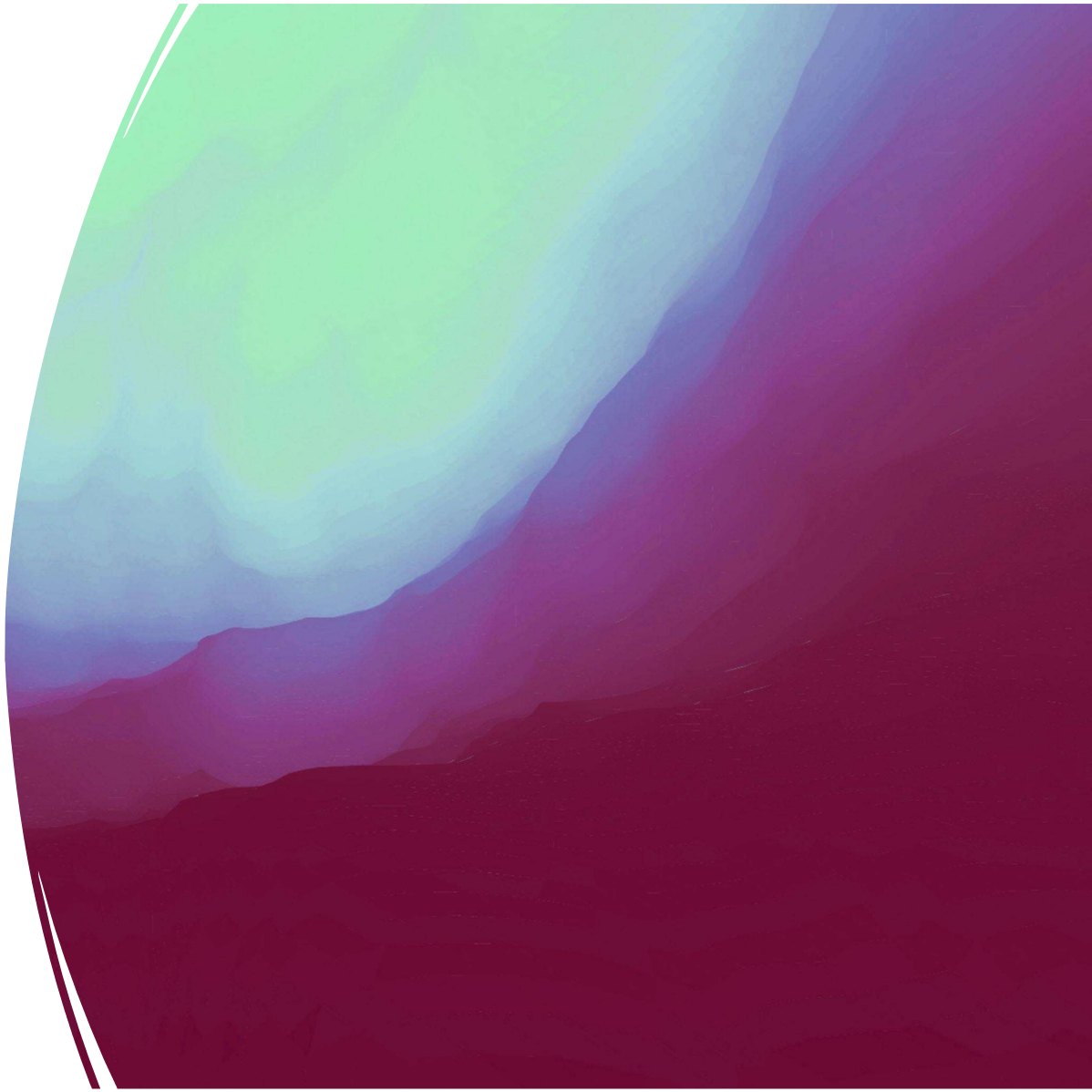
The Americans with Disabilities Act

Post-Secondary Education

Caren Hart



Georgia Schools and Contacts

- Kennesaw state: https://www.kennesaw.edu/dean-of-students/sds/index.php
- GSU: https://access.gsu.edu/
- North Georgia: https://ung.edu/student-accessibility-services/index.php
- GCSU: https://www.gcsu.edu/disability
- UGA: https://drc.uga.edu/
- Gwinnett Tech: https://gwinnetttech.edu/student-services/disability-services/
- Georgia Southern: https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/sarc/

Differences Between High School and College

I.D.E.A vs A.D.A	Parental Role	Instruction
Grades and Tests	Study Responsibilities	Self-Advocacy

I.D.E.A vs A.D.A

- I.D.E.A (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) = Success
- A.D.A (Americans with Disabilities Act) = Access



Parental Role

High School	College
Parent has access to student records and can participate in the accommodation process	Parent does not have access to student records without student's written consent
Parent advocates on behalf of student	Student advocates for self

Instruction

High School	College
Teachers may modify curriculum and/or alter pace of assignments	Professors are not required to modify curriculum design or alter assignment deadlines
Students are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed, and often re-taught, in class	Students are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing which may not be directly addressed in class
Students seldom need to read anything more than once, and sometimes listening in class is enough	Students need to review class notes and text material regularly

Grades and Tests

High School	College
I.E.P. 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. How tests are given (extended time, test proctors) are appropriate academic adjustments when supported by disability documentation.
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 are rarely an option, without permission from professor
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

High School	College
Tutoring and study support may be a service provided as part of an I.E.P. or 504 plan (success vs. access)	Tutoring does not fall under a disability services office and is not considered an accommodation. Students with disabilities must seek out tutoring resources as they are available to all students.
Student's time and assignments are structured by others	Students manage your own time and complete assignments independently
Students may study outside of 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

Who Uses Accommodations?

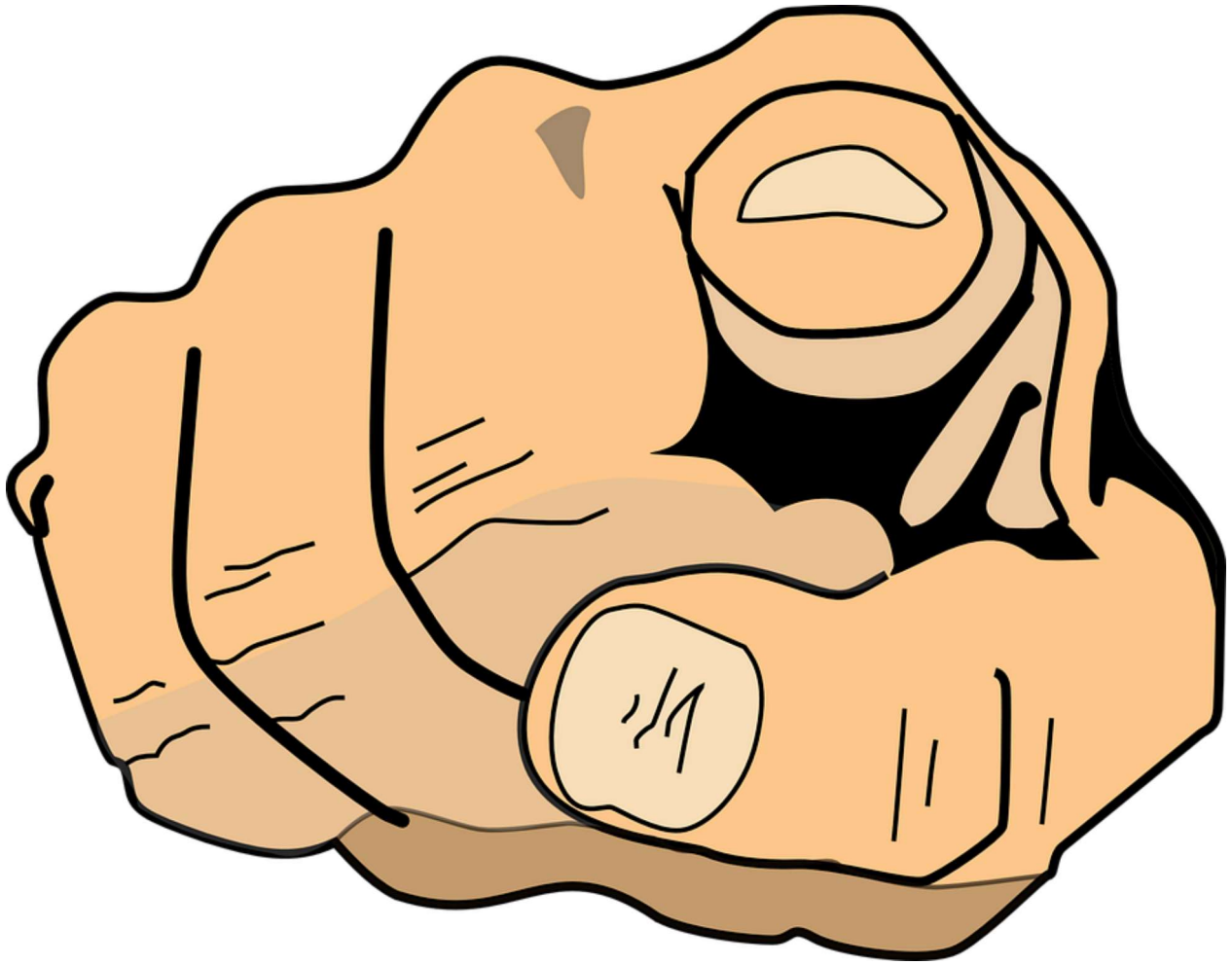
Disability	Percent
ADHD	34.7%
Psychiatric	24.2%
Learning Disability	23%
Physical/Systemic	11.2%
Cognitive/Traumatic Brain Injury	2.8%
Autism	1.3%
Vision	1.1%
Hearing	1.1%
Other	.7%

High School	College
Student is identified by the school and is supported by parents and teachers	Student must self-identify to Disability Services
Primary responsibility for arranging accommodations belongs to the school	Primary responsibility for self-advocacy and arranging accommodations belongs to the student.
Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance	Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance

Self-Advocacy

- *Adapted from Association on Higher Education and Disability*

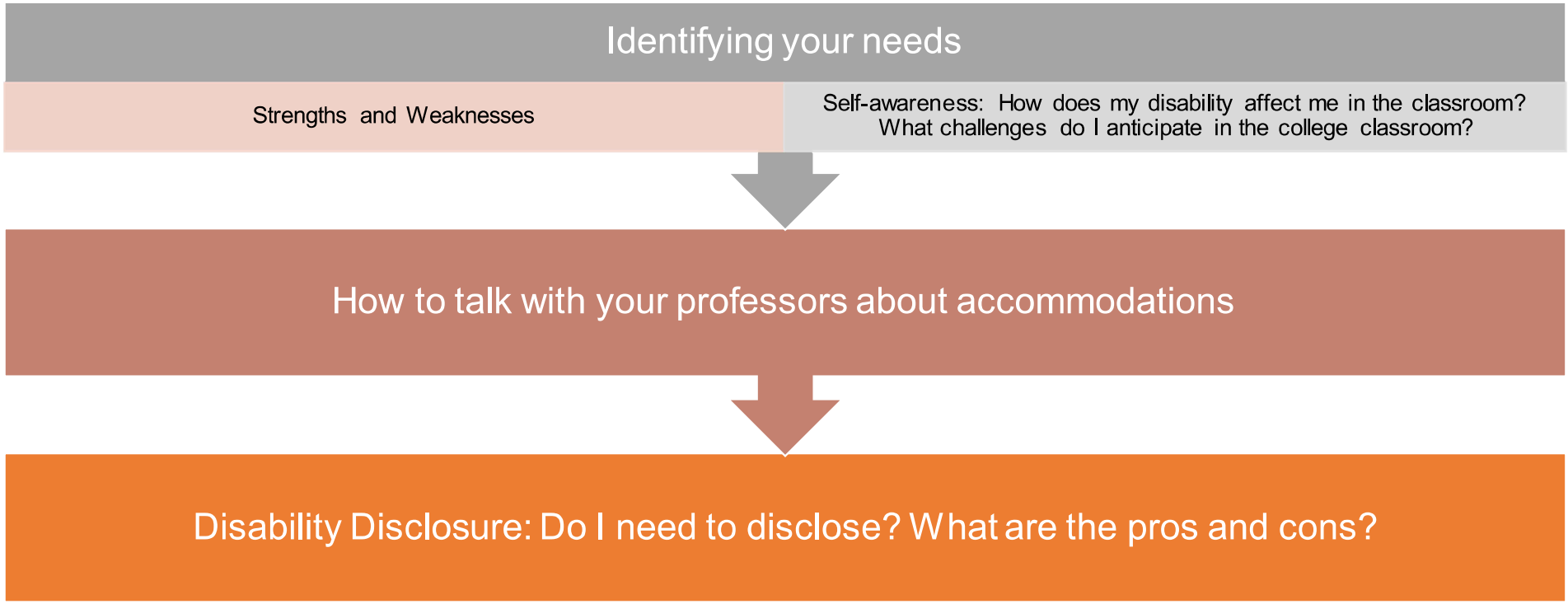
Self-advocacy begins with YOU!



Your rights as a student

- Equal access to academic content and educational opportunities.
- Full participation in student activities.
- Reasonable accommodations if you have gone through the appropriate process with Disability Services.
- File a formal or informal complaint if you feel discriminated against.
- Confidentiality of all disability related information.

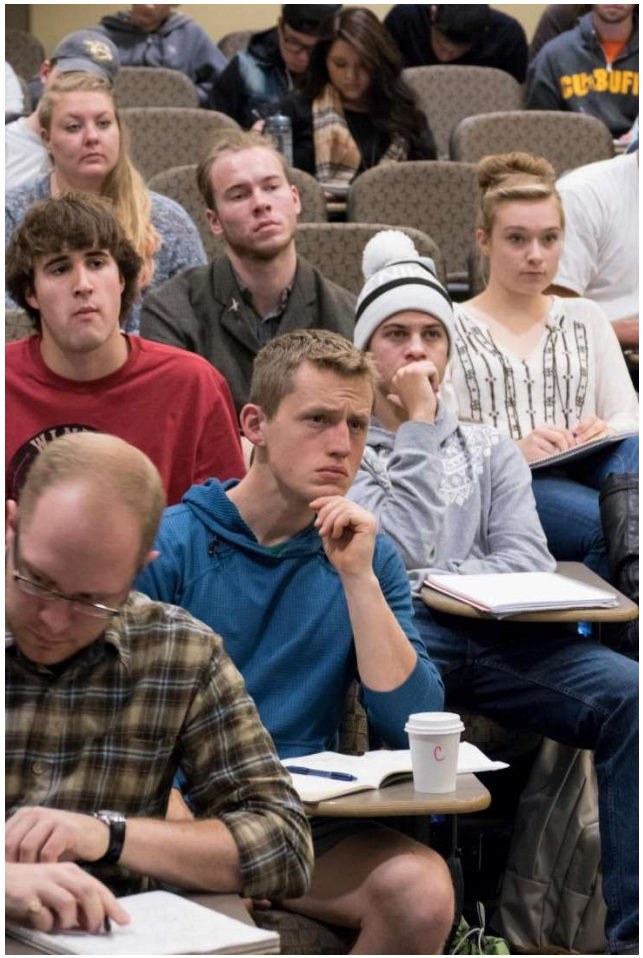
Self-Advocacy: What's important to know?



Identifying your needs

- Do your academic goals take into consideration your strengths, challenges & interests?

- What are the (or the anticipated) roadblocks to your academic success?



Disability Disclosure

- Who do I need to disclose my disability to?
- What are the pros/cons of disclosing?



Discussing your accommodations with your professors

- Choose a time to meet
- Come prepared
- Ask questions
- Follow up with an email outlining what you agreed to
- Never hesitate to contact Disability Services



The conversation

- Introduction
  - "Hi Professor_____, I'm _____ and I'd like to set a time to speak with you if possible. Could I come in during office hours?"

- Explanation
  - "I'd like to talk with you about my accommodation I've received from Disability Services."

- Request
  - "My accommodation allows for 1.5 extended time on tests in a distraction reduced environment. How can we make this work in your class?"

Self-Advocacy overview

- **Understand your disability**
- **Understand your rights**
- **Take the initiative to seek assistance**
- **Keep in regular communication**
  - Parents, family, professors, teachers, access coordinator, etc.
- **Let your professors and your access coordinator know how accommodations are working for you**
- **Recognize that living with a disability can be challenging**