

Differences Between High School & College Disability Student Services

What are the laws that govern disability services?

-High schools are covered by IDEA, Rehabilitation Act of 1973: Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 & 2009).

-In addition to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (& 2009), Colleges/Graduate Schools are also covered by the California Education Code: Title 3.

What is the difference between entitlement and rights, in regards to Disability Services?

-In High School, the applicable laws grant that students are entitled to services. As such, the school districts are required to identify disability needs, assess the limitations of those disabilities, provide appropriate interventions and accommodations, and then periodically re-evaluate the student's progress.

-In College, the laws are written in the logic of civil rights (as opposed to educational entitlement), and grant that a student has a right to access services, but the laws also specify that a student must assert and claim their right to equal access. This distinguishing feature alone has all sorts of implications on how Disability Services are handled between high school and college.

Whose responsibility is it to identify a disability?

-In High School, the school district has this responsibility to uncover students with learning challenges. However, in college, the student is responsible for pursuing diagnostic testing/assessment and providing the corresponding documentation of a disability. This means that the student must provide documentation that verifies the presence of a disability, and the documentation must indicate the degree of limitation that the disability has on the student.

Where do I go for an assessment?

College students may go to any qualified health professional to obtain their documentation. Please refer to the Disability Services Homepage or Handbook for guidelines and qualifications necessary to be considered "qualified." We recommend the Biola Counseling Center for current Biola University students, as they offer discounted rates for our students.

Typical documentation for most learning disabilities should be updated every three years. If you were tested at your high school in the recent history, chances are, you do not need to be retested specifically as you begin college.

Who pays for assessments or evaluations of a potential disability?

The student is responsible for any charges accrued as part of a diagnostic process. All costs associated with academic accommodations are covered by the university.

Are there certain guidelines that documentation of disability must adhere to?

-The student is responsible for providing documentation; the student needs to be aware that the documentation they provide must follow certain guidelines. However, the typical diagnostic psychological evaluation report includes the necessary information. Please refer to The Learning Center website or handbook for these guidelines.

Once a disability is identified, now what?

-In High School, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is designed for the student by the school district to address the identified needs. The IEP is then presented to the student and his or her parents.

-In College, the student is responsible for identifying and presenting his or her own needs to The Learning Center. Accommodations are then granted on a case-by-case basis dependent upon the identified needs, course of study and the documentation of disability.

Who is responsible to insure that the student's needs are met over time?

-In High School, the school district is responsible to insure that the IEP is carried through. The school district is also responsible to periodically re-evaluate the IEP to insure that it still addresses the student's needs.

-In College, once accommodations have been deemed appropriate, the student and The Learning Center work as a team with the faculty for implementation. Students should remain in contact with the Learning Center if any changes to the accommodations are felt to be necessary or evolve over time.

Who advocates for the student's accommodation plan?

-In High School, parents, teachers and school district representatives meet to discuss the student's potential IEP (Individualized Education Plan).

-In College, the students must advocate for themselves with the support of The Learning Center.

What kind of alterations to the classes are possible?

-In High School, changes that alter the fundamental nature of the classes are allowed in areas such as the program of study, graduation requirements, and instructional methods.

-In College, accommodations may NOT alter the fundamental nature of a degree, graduation requirements, course academic integrity, or instructional methods.

What about personal care assistant and transportation?

-In College, personal care services (every day living assistance outside of the classroom: personal hygiene, eating, dressing, transportation) are the student's responsibility to arrange. The Learning Center is happy to be a resource for whatever questions arise to the best of our ability.