

Differences Between High School & University Disability Services

High School

College/University

Applicable Laws/Accommodations

I.D.E.A. (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)	ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act 1990, Title III)
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
Modifications ensure success/individualized education	Accommodations ensure equal access/opportunity

Required Documentation

School is responsible to find, assess and remediate disabling conditions	Student is responsible for cost of obtaining documentation
Documentation focuses on substantiating a diagnosis in an area of eligibility	Documentation must verify a substantially limiting disability with the current impact/functional limitation and provide clear nexus between impact of condition and requested accommodations

Student Role

Students are identified/supported by parents/teachers	Students must self-identify to disability services
Students often depend on teachers/school officials to provide additional resources or supports	Primary responsibility for identifying needed accommodations, as well as initiating and utilizing them belongs to the student
Students are often more passive in their role and parents often do much of the advocating for the student	Students must meet essential requirements (admissions/classes/degrees)
	Timely notification of disability services if difficulties are encountered with implementation of accommodations or of changes/additional needs regarding disability
	Students advocate for themselves

Parental Role

Parents have access to student's records and may participate in the process	Parents must have consent from student via university process to access student's records
Parents advocate for students	Parents serve as a support role & are encouraged to know about available resources

Instruction/Grades	
Teachers: trained to teach including a multi-sensory approach; often teach to meet variety of learning styles	Professors: experts in their field; may or may not use multi-sensory approach; tend to rely on lecture
Teachers may modify curriculum and/or alter curriculum and pace of assignments	Professors are not required to alter essential requirements (curriculum, assignments, deadlines, etc.)
Regular testing and graded assignments	Testing and assignment frequency varies widely
Short reading assignments often discussed and re-taught in class	Substantial amounts of reading and writing are required which may not be addressed in class
Sometimes listening in class is enough	Students need to review class notes/material regularly
Attendance: excused vs. unexcused	Attendance often essential and cannot be altered
Grades may be modified	Grades reflect the work submitted
Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material; make-up tests often provided for missed tests	Testing is infrequent & may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material; make-up tests are rare
Teachers often take time to remind students of assignments and due dates and are willing to extend deadlines; make-up tests are often available	Instructors expect students to know the course syllabus (outline); the syllabus spells out what is expected, when assignments are due, and how grades will be calculated

Study Skills & Responsibilities	
Tutoring/study support may be a service provided as part of an IEP/504 Plan	Tutoring/study support typically is not considered an accommodation but may be available to all students
Time and assignments are largely structured by others	Students must manage their own time and affairs, monitor deadlines and complete assignments according to established due dates
Majority of work is often completed within class time	Majority of work completed outside of class time. Students may need to utilize additional resources or methods to acquire course material

Disability Service Provider Role	
Primary responsibility for modifications belongs to schools	Determines eligibility for accommodations under ADA/Section 504 based on current impact/functional limitations of condition based on student request(s)
School created 504 Plan or Individualized Education Plan with area of eligibility and modifications <i>for</i> students	Creates accommodation plan/letter outlining individually approved accommodations <i>with</i> students
School seeks out students and reminds/creates/ coordinates additional resources, as needed	Coordinates accommodations and make referrals to other resources based on student feedback

Information from the U.S. Department of Education/Office for Civil Rights with adaptations.

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

“Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities”