

Disability Services at the Post-Secondary Level

***A Guide to Accessing Support in College
From the Ogle County Educational Cooperative (OCEC)***

This packet is designed to give students, parents, teachers, and case managers some information about how students with disabilities receive services and accommodations at college. The information contained in this packet applies to disability services *in general*. Obviously, students with differing disabilities (a learning disability vs. vision impairment) may have very different needs in the college setting and will access those needs in different ways. However, the starting point for both individuals is the same.

The Disability Office

Each college or university will have a department or office that is responsible for helping students with disabilities access reasonable accommodations that will help them be successful in college. Each college may call this department something different, like “Disability Services” or “Student Needs Office.” In this packet, several local community colleges, private colleges, and universities in Illinois are listed, and contact information for the disability offices are given. When students with disabilities go to college, they need to contact this office ***as soon as possible***. These offices often require students to register, apply for services, or provide detailed documentation of a student’s disability. Students should not show up on campus the first day of class and expect that accommodations and services are ready and available for them to use if they have not had contact with the disability office.

Documentation of a Disability

All colleges or universities will require some kind of documentation of the students’ disability in order for them to receive services. Students and families should be aware that public schools (meaning grade school or high school) take the responsibility of documenting a student’s disability and planning the accommodations and services they need; at the college level, it is the student’s responsibility to provide documentation to the school and advocate for their learning needs with the individual instructors that they work with. This is often a new responsibility for college students, and the staff at the disability services office will be able to help.

Most college offices will say that an IEP or a 504 plan from high school *by itself* is not sufficient documentation to receive services in college. However, in many cases, especially at 2-year colleges, the most recent case-study evaluation they received in school is enough documentation. Other schools will require a *clinical* diagnosis (versus an educational diagnosis that is received in school); this means that the student will need a diagnosis from a psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, clinical social worker, or other qualified professional. Students should plan

to submit their documentation early so they have the chance to provide additional documentation if the disability office requests it.

*A note for school psychologists, social workers, and related service providers. Most schools surveyed in creating this document require “recent” documentation, suggesting that testing within 3 years would be acceptable. Practically all colleges still require test results from both aptitude and achievement tests.

Accommodations and Services Offered in College

The types of accommodations and services offered in college may be very different than what are offered at the high school level. This is because special education services in high school are governed by one set of laws, whereas services in college are governed by a different set of laws.

Colleges are *only* responsible for providing reasonable accommodations to help students have equal access to learning. Colleges are not required to provide specialized instruction to help students learn better. For example, a student with a reading disability may be allowed to have extra time on a test, the test read aloud to them, or a textbook on tape. However, (unlike in high school) they are *not* entitled to special classes or teaching to help them become better readers. Even though colleges are not required to provide specialized teaching, many of them do provide free tutoring services to all students. Usually, these kinds of services (like tutoring, counseling, advisement) are available to all students, not just students with disabilities.

Colleges will often want to know the types of accommodations that students needed in high school in order to help them plan for the services they need in college. Students should be ready to talk about the kinds of services they have used in the past and advocate for their needs.

In the school listings below, many of the “typical” accommodations are what were reported or advertised by the college. Students should be aware that they do not have free choice to pick which accommodations they will need; colleges have the final say about what accommodations are appropriate.

Using the school listings

Information in this next section was gathered from local disability coordinators and college/university websites. For each school, you will find the school name, disability department name, contact information, brief description of eligibility and documentation requirements, and services available to students. Most schools have very specific documentation guidelines in order to register for services, so students should make contact early, well in advance of attendance. In most cases, many of the services listed for each school are available through the disability office. However, students should note that many services (e.g., tutoring and counseling) are available through other offices like College Learning Centers, Counseling Centers, and Student Services Centers. Students should make themselves aware very early of all of the supports that are available to them in college. These schools are listed in alphabetical order.

School: **Black Hawk College, Moline, IL**

Department name: **Disability Services**

Contact: **Susan A. Sacco, Coordinator**

Phone: **309-796-5900**

Eligibility and documentation requirements: Recent documentation of disability, contact Disability Services Coordinator for more information.

Services available to students: test taking accommodations including extended time, alternate setting, reader, or scribe, note-takers, books in alternative formats, a wide range of assistive technology, sign language interpreters. Tutoring, counseling, advising, and career services are also available to all students regardless of disability.

Website: <http://www.bhc.edu/index.aspx?NID=251>

School: **Highland Community College, Freeport, IL**

Department name: **ADA Services, Project Succeed**

Contact: **Dawn Zuehlke, Coordinator (ADA Services), Virginia Ware, Director (Project Succeed)**

Phone: **Dawn Zuehlke, 815-599-3605, Virginia Ware, 815-599-3583**

Eligibility and documentation requirements: Recent IEP or recent evaluation with specific description of needed accommodations.

Services available to students: Testing accommodations, individual instruction in writing and study skills, skill-building and personal enrichment workshops, writing and math tutoring by instructors, referrals to peer tutors for content areas, transfer assistance, transfer planning, visits to 4-year colleges, peer mentorship opportunities to develop study skills and college survival skills.

Website: <http://www.highland.edu/admissions/ProjectSucceed.asp>

School: **Kishwaukee College, Malta, IL**

Department name: **Disability Services**

Contact: **Disability Services**

Phone: **815-825-2086 (voice) or 815-825-9106 (tty)**

Eligibility and documentation requirements: Recent documentation of accommodations and current academic skills levels. IQ scores required, though may not be recent, as well as a specific clinical or educational diagnosis (e.g., learning disability, Other Health Impaired, etc.)

Services available to students: Call Disability Services for more information specific to accommodations. Free tutoring and counseling services are also available to all students.

Website: http://www.kishwaukeecollege.edu/student_services/disability_services.php?page=81

School: **Illinois State University, Normal, IL**

Department name: **Disability Concerns**

Contact: **Ann Caldwell**

Phone: **309-438-5853 (Voice) 309-438-8620 (TTY)**

Eligibility and documentation requirements: If services were accessed in public education, most recent IEP is required. Other documentation forms are found in the Documentation Requirements section of the website listed below.

Services available to students: Exam accommodations including alternate setting and extended time, reader or scribe for testing, classroom accommodations including note takers, typists, and accessible

seating, communication accommodations, alternative formats and assistive technology accommodations. Other University services are available through the Academic Assistance office.
Website: <http://www.disabilityconcerns.ilstu.edu/>

School: **Illinois Valley Community College, Oglesby, IL**

Department name: **Disability Services Office**

Contact: **Judy Mika and Tina Hardy, Coordinators**

Phone: **(Judy) 815-224-0350, (Tina) 815-224-0284**

Eligibility and documentation requirements: Recent documentation of the disability including description of how the disability substantially limits one or more major life activities (e.g., learning). Psychiatric disabilities, including ADD/ADHD require a DSM-IV diagnosis. Specific guidelines for documentation and forms are found at the website listed below.

Services available to students: extended test time, test reader, distraction free test environment, note-taking services, alternate formats for texts, scribing services, assistive technology such as: Premiere Assistive Technology, Zoomtext, Dragon Naturally Speaking, or JAWS, sign language interpreters, captioning, physical accommodations such as: height adjusted desks/tables, preferential seating, adaptive technology (track ball mouse, screen magnifier, alternate keyboard). Project Success is a TRiO program designed to help students transitioning to college and transitioning to careers. Also, free counseling and tutoring services are available to all students.

Website: <http://www.ivcc.edu/specialpopulations.aspx?id=11938>

School: **Northern Illinois University, Dekalb, IL**

Department name: **Center for Access-Ability Resources (CARR)**

Contact: **Nancy Kasinski, Director**

Phone: **815-753-9734**

Eligibility and documentation requirements: Type of documentation depends on the type of disability. See Guidelines for Documentation section of the website listed below.

Services available to students: Priority registration, exam accommodations and adaptations, adaptive technology in computer labs, course substitution assistance, access to assistive/adaptive technology, alternative text materials, peer note-taker assistance, sign-language interpreters, route-training and sighted guides, accessible housing and transportation, service animals. Several other University supports are available through the Office of Student Academic Success.

Website: <http://www.niu.edu/caar/>

School: **Rockford College, Rockford, IL**

Department name: **Disability Support Services**

Contact: **Disabilities Coordinator, Lang Center for Health, Wellness, Counseling and Disability Services**

Phone: **815-226-4083**

Eligibility and documentation requirements: Call disabilities coordinator for more information.

Services available to students: See Disabilities Coordinator for more specific information related to accommodations and support. Career Services and Writing Center services are available to all students.

Website: <http://www.rockford.edu/?page=LangDisServices>

School: **Rock Valley College, Rockford, IL**

Department name: **Disability Support Services**

Contact: **Lynn Shattuck, Coordinator**

Phone: **815-921-4139**

Eligibility and documentation requirements: Documentation of the disability including description of how the disability substantially limits one or more major life activities (e.g., learning). Also, the evaluation should include specific recommendations for assistive/support services at the post-secondary level. Visit the website listed below for specific documentation guidelines.

Services available to students: Textbooks or materials in alternate format, assistance with note taking, specialized computer programs, sign language interpreters, extended test time, requesting a syllabus in advance, tests read, use of adaptive software (e.g., Kurzweil), preferential seating. Aside from these kinds of accommodations offered through Disability Support Services, there are other, free services like advising, counseling, and tutoring that are available to all students regardless of disability.

Website: **<http://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/StudentServices/DisabilityServices/index.cfm>**

School: **Sauk Valley Community College, Dixon, IL**

Department name: **Student Needs Office**

Contact: **Jessica Edwards, Student Needs Coordinator**

Phone: **815-288-5511 ext. 246, TDD 815-288-5511 ext. 206**

Eligibility and documentation requirements: Recent documentation (within 3 years – but exceptions may be necessary depending on individual circumstances) of disability with DSM-IV diagnosis. Specific guidelines for documentation and forms are found at the website listed below.

Services available to students: Exam accommodations (e.g., extended time, alternate setting), tape-recorded lectures, note-takers. Other services available through Student Support Services: academic counseling, career counseling, personal counseling, transfer advising, free personal tutoring, campus visits, cultural activities, resource materials, free laptop lending, help with financial aid applications.

Website: **<http://www.svcc.edu/UserMenu/current/sneeds/index.html>**

School: **University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, IL**

Department name: **Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES)**

Contact: **Brad Hedrick, Director**

Phone: **217- 333-1970 (V/TTY)**

Eligibility and documentation requirements: Prospective students are required to complete the Disability Services Application and provide recent documentation of disability. Specific documentation requirements are listed in the Documentation Requirements section of the website listed below.

Services available to students: A large array of accommodations are available including testing accommodations, assistive technology, text conversion and alternative formats, learning disability counseling, captioning services, course selection, interpreter services, note-taker services, counseling and psychological services. The University of Illinois also houses one of the nation's premier accessible dormitories for students with substantially limiting physical disabilities who require personal assistance and/or nursing care. Tutoring, counseling, and career services are also available to all students.

Website: **<http://www.disability.uiuc.edu/>**

Appendix and Resources

- The Office of Civil Rights has published an excellent document on their website related to transition: Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities. It can be found at:
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>
- TRIO programs are federally funded programs in high schools and colleges designed to help economically disadvantaged, first generation college students as well as students with disabilities succeed in school. Find out if your college offers services funded by TRIO. Visit the website at: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/index.html>
- Wrightslaw.com publishes a brief list of excellent resources related to students with disabilities in college. This list is available in the appendix of this document.
- The National Center for Learning Disabilities publishes a document about the differences in services in high school versus college. Find this document in the appendix.

Help for College Students with Disabilities from [Wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com)

Parents of disabled kids are often surprised to learn that their college-bound children are no longer eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act. Although college students with disabilities are protected from discrimination under Section 504, some professors take a dim view of students who request accommodations.

We collected these resources to help you learn self-advocacy skills and make the transition from high school to college.

The resources are divided into three categories: your rights and responsibilities under Section 504; the importance of planning and preparing; and keys to success. Good luck!

Section 504: Your Rights & Responsibilities

FAQs About Section 504 and Post Secondary Education

<http://www.pacer.org/publications/adaqa/504.asp>

Section 504 Subpart E: Postsecondary Education

http://www.ocean.edu/campus/student_services/drc/asd/mmedia/docs/minfo3.htm

“College Students and Disability Law” by Stephen Thomas.

Comprehensive article about Section 504, ADA, qualifying as a ‘person with a disability’, admission, accommodations, and dismissal. Includes guidelines for higher education practitioners; legal references.

<http://www.ldonline.org/article/6082>

Know Your Rights and Responsibilities

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

Questions and Answers on Disability Discrimination under Section 504 and Title II

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/qa-disability.html>

Policy Statement: Disability Harassment in Colleges (U. S. Department of Education)

<http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/PolicyDisabilityharassment-2.pdf>

Do You Have Questions About Special Education?
Visit Wrightslaw! Open 24 Hours a Day, 365 Days a Year!
<http://www.wrightslaw.com>

Planning & Preparing for College

College Planning for Students with Learning Disabilities

<http://www.ldonline.org/article/6130>

Getting Ready for College: Advising Students with Learning Disabilities

<http://www.ldonline.org/article/6132>

College: Continuing and Higher Education for Students with Disabilities - Wrightslaw

<http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/college.index.htm>

Financial Aid Guides and Resources – Wrightslaw

<http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/fin.aid.index.htm>

Steps to College

<http://www.nacacnet.org/MemberPortal/News/StepsNewsletter/>

Keys to Success in College

Study Strategies

<http://www.d.umn.edu/student/loon/acad/strat/>

Study Skills Guide

<http://www.csbsju.edu/academicadvising/helplist.htm>

Ten Traps of Studying

http://campushealth.unc.edu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=470&Itemid=65

Sample 504 Plan: Accommodations in the Classroom and for Testing

http://www.ocean.edu/campus/student_services/drc/ADA%20form.pdf

Cornell Note Taking System

http://www.clt.cornell.edu/campus/learn/LSC_Resources/cornellsystem.pdf

Self-Advocacy for College Students

<http://www.ldonline.org/article/6142>

Planning for Successful Transition for All Students

<http://www.heath.gwu.edu/node/338>

Success in College for Adults with Learning Disabilities

<http://www.ldonline.org/article/6002>

Do You Have Questions About Special Education?
Visit Wrightslaw! Open 24 Hours a Day, 365 Days a Year!
<http://www.wrightslaw.com>

Making the Transition from High School to College for Students with Disabilities:

Developed for NCLD by Colleen Lewis, Director
Office of Disability Services, Columbia University

KNOW THE DIFFERENCES

High School	College
<p>Special Education Model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School personnel “find you” and decide what eligibility for services and supports 	<p>Accommodations Model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must request help; no one will come to find you.
<p>Where you receive services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Education classroom, Resource Room, related service provider room (e.g. speech) 	<p>Where you receive services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differs from one every to another (“Office of Disability Support Services,” “Disabled Student Services,” “Special Services”,...)
<p>Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated by school psychologist or CSE appointed staff person School develops IEP from documentation and test results Paid for by school 	<p>Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must provide “proof” of your disability (e.g. HS records, independent reports e.g. medical, mental health, educational) Colleges can set their own guidelines for documentation (e.g. no more than 3 years old, adult assessment measures,...) High schools are not required to do a comprehensive evaluation before graduation After HS, you re responsible for paying for new evaluations
<p>Special Education Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides the mandate and funding to schools for in-school special education services as well as transportation/ buses to school, physical, occupational, speech therapy, and tutoring 	<p>Civil Rights Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Colleges are required only to offer accommodations & support services; not services of a personal nature. Tutoring is not required under ADA. Some colleges offer tutoring through disability services and some colleges have tutoring centers for all students. Foreign Language waivers & other course substitutions are not automatic

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

While still in high school you need to:

1. Find out about your disability:

- Talk to your parents, high school special education teacher, or guidance counselor to learn about your specific disabilities
 - Understand the academic impact of your disability
 - Understand your areas of strength and weakness
 - Understand how your disability might affect future employment and/or career choices
 - Make sure that you have current documentation (request updated testing or a re-evaluation before you leave HS)
 - Read your disability documentation and understand what it says.

2. Actively participate in all transition related meetings (i.e. IEP, 504, IPE)

- Participate in self-advocacy training
- Learn to express your current and future needs, concerns, interests, and preferences
- Know what your rights & responsibilities are and what the grievance procedures are at your selected colleges

3. Develop a personal information file with disability related information:

- Disability documentation
 - Current high school records (e.g. grade transcript, standardized achievement testing scores)
 - Medical records (if relevant to educational progress)
 - Copy of current IEP or 504 plan
 - College Entrance Exam results/ info (SAT, ACT)
 - Psychological and educational evaluation records

4. Select and Plan College Choices

- Select the colleges you'd consider attending (important tip: do NOT chose schools by the amount of services that offer; make your initial selections based on whether the school offers the programs of study that most interest you)
- Visit each campus (make sure to meet the person(s) in charge of the Office of Disability Services)
- Do your homework! Consider:
 - What services/programs each prospective college provides through their disability support office or other office that handles disability accommodations
 - How often are services available? Are the service providers on campus and available on as as-needed basis?
 - Are there restrictions (e.g. times per week) or additional costs for using these services?

5. Apply—Good luck!

KNOWING YOUR OPTIONS

All colleges are required by law to provide accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Some colleges offer specialized programs that are highly structured and include a wide range of academic and behavioral supports. Other colleges offer support services that are less intensive and that require students to 'take the lead' in monitoring their progress and managing their special needs on campus.

Programs vs. Support Services

- **Programs** are specifically designed for students with disabilities and provide more in-depth services and accommodations. Not all colleges have these types of programs. When offered, the most common types are designed for students with learning disabilities and/or ADHD. These programs usually have costs in addition to tuition. These programs often provide one-on-one tutoring and sessions with a learning disability specialist.
- **Support Services** are the resources available at no cost for students with disabilities. Support services include reasonable accommodations, such as extended time for assignment and testing, note-takers, the use of a calculator, and preferential seating in classrooms.

CONGRATULATIONS! **YOU'VE BEEN ACCEPTED TO A COLLEGE!** **NOW WHAT?**

1. **Register with the college's disability services office or program. Remember you need to:**
 - Contact that campus office—they will not find you.
 - Provide disability documentation that is current & meets college guidelines.
 - Request that accommodations you will need (note-takers, assistive listening devices, testing modifications, textbooks on tape, etc.).
 - Request those accommodations **before** scheduled placement tests or you will not receive accommodations for those tests.
2. **Arrange other supports not provided by the school.**
 - Do you need things like counseling, medication management, or other supports? Who will provide them for you & how will they affect your schedule?
 - Develop back up plans for these supports.

SELF-ADVOCACY

What is Self-Advocacy?

- Self-advocacy means speaking or acting for yourself
- It means deciding what is best for you and taking charge of getting it.
- It means standing up for your rights as a person.
- It teaches others about our rights and responsibilities.

Why is it important?

- It helps us to develop assertiveness skills & good communication skills.
- It teaches us to make decisions and choices that affect our lives so that we can be more independent.
- It helps us to develop confidence about our abilities.

When will I use it (at college)?

- When you need additional accommodations.
- When you don't have access to some activity on the campus and you need to have that barrier removed.
- When you are having disability-related difficulty in a class and need some extra assistance.

How can I practice being a self-advocate?

- Understand what your disability is and how it affects you
- Understand your rights and responsibilities under the Section 504 of the Rehab Act and the ADA
- Use this information to achieve your goals and advocate for yourself