



Office of Special Services

HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE  
TRANSITION INFORMATION

# Counseling Department – Office of Special Services

## HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE TRANSITION

### DIFFERENCES IN HIGH SCHOOL AND HIGHER EDUCATION SPECIAL SERVICES

ISSUE	HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE
<b>Responsibility for identifying students with disabilities</b>	<b>School initiated</b>	<b>Student initiated</b> – student must self-identify to Special Services Counselor
<b>Documentation &amp; supporting need for accommodation</b>	<b>School provides</b> - Umbrella coverage in all academics	<b>Student provides</b> - each accommodation must be documented and accommodations are specific to area of disability.
<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Decided by school district</b> – Testing may carry over many years	<b>Documentation must be less than 5 years old.</b>
<b>Responsibility for providing accommodations</b>	<b>High School</b>	<b>College – reasonable accommodation</b>
<b>Modifications</b>	<b>Academics modified to meet level of student</b> – shortened assignments, textbooks at reading level, grades for effort, revisions and assistance on tests, exemptions from tests	<b>Student accommodated to meet level of academics</b> – books on tape, cassette recorders, note takers, extra time on tests, alternative location for testing
<b>Responsibility for planning course of study</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Student</b> – Schedule appointments with advisor/counselor outside of registrations periods for assistance.
<b>Advocating to obtain Services</b>	<b>Parent, student &amp; school</b> ARD, 504 and IEP meetings	<b>Student</b> learns to advocate for self with support from parents, family & Special Services Counselor
<b>Deciding on Coursework</b>	<b>School</b> - IEP team including student	<b>Student</b> – with help of student initiated meetings with Advisor/Counselor
<b>Related Services</b>	<b>School</b> – provides all services related to educational needs including rehabilitation and personal needs	<b>College-</b> provides physical and academic access only. Personal needs are student’s responsibility.
<b>Responsibility for student behavior</b>	<b>School and Parents</b> are held responsible for some student actions and behaviors	<b>Student</b> - is an adult and held responsible for all actions and behaviors and is expected to adhere to the institution’s Student Code of Conduct.



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## BASIC SKILLS REQUIRED FOR SUCCESS IN COLLEGE

Students who will be successful in college need a set of basic skills. This is not a comprehensive list of skills, but can guide and direct students who are considering college.

### Students should be able to:

- Demonstrate self-reliance** Much of college requires student initiation and participation. Unlike elementary and secondary schools, higher education educates adults, and the expectations are that each adult student is responsible for his/ her education. The institution is there to assist the student in an acquisition of knowledge, but ultimately, the student is responsible.
- Seek sources of support** Most colleges and universities have counseling and tutoring centers. It is the student's responsibility to seek out these centers and initiate contact for assistance.
- Read college level textbooks** Even developmental classes and books require a high reading level. The goal of a developmental class is to move a student to a college reading level within 1-3 semesters.
- Write competently** Writing in complete sentences and with complete thoughts is essential in almost all college classes, even those that are not English classes. College level writing must be demonstrated before any college level courses may be taken.
- Have basic level math skills** Developmental math classes move *extremely* fast. The developmental classes are designed to move students to college levels very quickly. If the student is confused, he/she is responsible for seeking tutoring.
- Think abstractly** Discussions in classes will include world events, require critical thinking skills and higher-level thought processes. Students will be required to demonstrate these higher order processes on a daily basis in both oral and written forms.
- Have an adult maturity level** Attendance, seeking academic assistance, being academically competitive, being aware of drop, withdrawal and payment deadlines, being aware of institutional policies, etc., are all the student's responsibility.
- Students must also behave in an adult manner. Outbursts or disruptions in classes, distractions, inability to complete assignments in a timely manner will all have consequences at the college level.
- Have time management skills** Students must be able to prioritize tasks and be able to manage multiple demands.
- Have a reasonable level of competency with technology** At most colleges, registration, homework assignments, tests and other information will probably be online a high percentage of the time.
- Have a reasonable level of competency with assistive technology** Use of Jaws, RFB&D, recorders, scanners, etc., will be necessary for those with physical and/or learning disabilities. Students will need a working knowledge of what assistive technology works best for each class. Students may need access to assistive technology at home.
- Have realistic goals** Everyone must make choices. Not all students are able to go into the career of their dreams. Students need to know their strengths and struggle areas. Accommodations do not make up for extreme deficits.



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### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS REQUESTING SPECIAL SERVICES**

- Schedule appointments with the Special Services Counselor during semesters while registration is *NOT* open. Once registration begins, the counselor will have far less time to focus on any one student.
- Have up to date documentation for a disability. In most cases the documentation should be no more than 3 years old and rarely over five years old.
- It is essential to know the current functioning level of the student. As students get older, their level of functioning may change. Testing done when a student is 13 will not be accurate when assessing an 18 year old.
- Bring all documentation to meetings with the Special Services Counselor. ARD notes, IEP's 504 meeting notes, etc., will help the college counselor assess the accommodations that can be made available to a student.
- Have assistive technology needs defined and have training on the technology before coming to college.
- Have a clear understanding of what self-advocacy is and how to be a self-advocate by knowing how IDEA differs from ADA and 504 in the college setting.
- Plan for your transition to college. Visit several campuses. Talk with students, Special Services Counselors and professors. Ask questions. Pick up catalogs and schedules from each campus. Know what different colleges offer in terms of special services and academics.
- The job you train for will be where you spend the most time for years to come. Take the decision seriously. Do not choose a college based on the school's atmosphere. Choose a college on the basis of how well it will prepare you to be successful in your career.

Adapted from Alvin Community College (Used with permission)

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**POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION  
RESOURCE LIST FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

**WEBSITES**

Colleges for students with special needs in Texas

<http://home.swbell.net/jraneri/college.htm>

Help for college students with special needs from Wrightslaw.com

<http://www.wrightslaw.com/flyers/college.504.pdf>

Services for students with special needs

<http://collegeboard.com/ssd/prof/index.html>

Collegiate Consortium Disability Advocates

<Http://www.ccdanet.org>

Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)

<http://www.ahead.org/index.htm>

AHEAD in Texas

<http://ahead.org/txahead/>

**HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS**

Advocacy, Inc. (Houston) 800-880-0821

Social Security Benefits 800-772-1213

Independent Living 713-974-4621

Blind of visually impaired 713-880-0721  
Division for Blind Services

Transition to College 281-333-1330  
Division for Rehabilitative Services (DARS)

The Work Source – Employment assistance:

Alvin 281-585-3303

Clear Lake 281-335-8282

Galveston 409-770-9915

Texas City 409-949-9055

Online [www.workintexas.com](http://www.workintexas.com)

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