



Transitioning from K-12 to Higher Education

Applicable Laws

K-12	Higher Education
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), section 11
Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973	Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Documentation

K-12	Higher Education
Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and/or 504 plan; may include information from neuropsychological evaluation or other diagnostic testing	IEP and/or 504 are not sufficient to determine accommodations. Documentation guidelines specify diagnostic testing in each category of disability
School is responsible for costs associated with neuropsychological evaluation or other diagnostic testing	Student must get evaluation at own expense
Documentation focuses on determining whether a student is eligible for services based on specific disability categories in IDEA	Documentation must provide information on specific functional limitations and demonstrate the need for specific accommodations

Advocacy

K-12	Higher Education
Student is identified by school and is supported by parents, teachers, and school community	Student must self-identify to Disability/Access Services
School is primarily responsible for arranging accommodations	Student is primarily responsible for arranging accommodations
Teachers approach students if they believe student needs assistance	Professors are usually open and helpful, but expect student to initiate contact if in need of assistance

Parental Role

K-12	Higher Education
Parent has access to student records and student support team and actively participates in accommodation process	Parent does not have access to student records or student support team without permission from student
Parent advocates for student	Student advocates for self

How to prepare for FSU

Disability/Access Services meets individually with incoming students who have indicated a disability and have provided current documentation. At this meeting, which takes place in the summer after new student orientation, the student and a representative from the office discuss the student's individual strengths, academic and personal goals, and appropriate accommodations. These meetings are individualized to the student, and we encourage their support system, including parents, to attend! This way, parents can help support their student become independent self-advocates. In the meantime, here are some other ways you can plan for the transition from high school to college:

Be sure your documentation is up-to-date.

Most college Disability/Access Services Offices request documentation generated within the last three years.

Take part in your academic planning.

Don't just attend your IEP meetings – ask questions to better understand your disability, strengths and weaknesses. Become involved in setting your goals.

Know your learning style.

Do you learn better by listening, reading, or doing? You may need to adapt your notetaking or studying styles for different courses based on the way you learn best. Having a strong understanding about how you learn will empower you to ask better questions and create better study methods.

Think about your schedule.

In college, you'll have a lot more freedom to make your own schedule, so consider when you learn best. Are you an early riser, or are early-morning classes harder for you? Is it better for you to have longer classes that meet twice a week, or shorter classes that meet more often? How do you manage your down time?

Think about your surroundings.

How, when, and where do you study? As you explore campus, identify some areas that may help you stay focused when doing homework or studying.

Stop or limit use of academic accommodations that aren't typically offered in college.

For example, if you're used to unlimited time to complete exams, scale back to extended time. Changes to course content or grading criteria are not offered in college, so avoid word banks or formula sheets on exams. Strive to turn in projects or long-term assignments on time. If you work with an aide or paraprofessional, try reducing the amount of time you spend together during the school day. If you utilize daily check-in with school staff, begin to taper those.

Experiment with technology.

Try screen readers or audio books, speech recognition software, audio recorders or notetaking software. These may come in handy in class and when writing essays in college.

Keep track of your own commitments.

Figure out the best way for you to remember medication schedules, appointments, school assignments, jobs, sports, special events, etc.