



Differences Between High School and College Accommodations and Academics

Many freshman students struggle during their first year in college because they have a difficult time adjusting to the differences between high school and college. The increased freedom, less structure, variable class schedule, limited access to teachers and increased need for self monitoring and personal initiative can be challenging for any student. Students with disabilities accustomed to accommodations that built in more structure and support into their pre-college education can have a difficult time making the normal transition from high school to college.

Following are major differences between high school and college academics:

High School	College
Classes 6 hours a day/ 5 days per week. Approximately 30 hours a week	Classes vary 1-5 times per week, limited instructor contact, 28 weeks or, 336 hours of in-class time
20 to 35 students class size	30 to several hundred students class size
Relatively easy access to teacher in class, before or after school	Limited access to teacher often via teacher assistants or specific office hour appointments
Consistent schedule with little variability	Variable class days and times
Frequent small homework assignments with 1-3 hours of study time per day	Larger, long-term projects with 3-4 hours per day of study time per 1 hour of class
Grades average based on test scores, home work, participation, make up tests and extra credit	Grades dependent on fewer tests covering larger amount of information. No make up tests, credit for home work, participation, or extra credit
Structure provided by teachers, staff and parents	Student is responsible for structure, schedule, planning, organization and follow through
Educational support services are built-in and required by law	Student must take initiative, seek out, self-identify and request needed academic support or accommodations
Free time, study time, attendance and socialization monitored by parents	Free time, study time, attending class and socialization managed by student

Activities of daily living (health, meals, hygiene) monitored by parents	Responsibilities for activities of daily living are student driven and independent
Attendance and assignments monitored. Consideration for differences in learning styles reflected in teaching style	Attendance rarely monitored, lecture is primary teaching method. Multiple reading sources, notes from lectures and library research emphasize integration of knowledge
Legal guidance is provided by Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and applies to qualified students with disabilities. Parents are included and active part of team	Legal guidance provided by Section 504, and the Rehabilitation Act and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and applied to qualified students. Parents do not have to be consulted regarding a student's educational plan or grades
The parent is the student's legal guardian	In college the student is considered to be his/her own legal guardian
Modifications or accommodations that change course outcomes may be offered based on the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or 504 plan.	Colleges are not required to provide modifications if it effects essential course requirements. Reasonable and appropriate accommodations are based on the student's disability documentation, and individual need to provide equal access and participation.

Postsecondary institutions are required to:

- Make all programs and services physically accessible to all students
- Provide auxiliary aids, note takers, and appropriate equipment to ensure the participation of students with disabilities in college classes and activities
- Accommodate the academic participation of qualified students in college classes and activities

Postsecondary institutions are not required to:

- Provide specific auxiliary aids as long as the college provides assistance that allows equal opportunity
- Provide academic modifications if these modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the course or program or place undue burden on the institution
- Lower admission criteria for applicants with disabilities
- Diagnose a disability or conduct testing and assessment of learning difficulties, physical, or mental impairments
- Provide personal attendants
- Provide personal or private tutors
- Prepare "Individualized Education Programs" (IEPs)

Get Ready for College with ADHD Life Coaching! Go to www.CoachingforADHD.com now