

High School vs. College

What Students with Disabilities Need to Know



**Get started with
Disability Support Services**

Phone: (973) 313-6003

Email: DSS@SHU.edu

APPLICABLE LAWS

HIGH SCHOOL

IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

SECTION 504: Rehabilitation Act of 1973

IDEA = SUCCESS

Documentation

IEP (Individualized Education Plan) and/or 504 Plan

- School provides evaluation at no cost to the student.
- Documentation focuses on determining eligibility for services based on specific disability categories under IDEA.

COLLEGE

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act

SECTION 504: Rehabilitation Act of 1973

ADA = ACCESS

Documentation

IEP and/or 504 Plan may be insufficient

- Student must obtain evaluation at their own expense.
- Documentation must provide information of specific functional limitations and demonstrate the need for specific accommodations.

Advice: Learn the difference between success vs. access. In college, the law ensures equal access, but you'll need to self-advocate and express your needs.

SELF ADVOCACY

HIGH SCHOOL

- Student is identified by the school and supported by parents and teachers.
- Primary responsibility for arranging accommodations belongs to the school.
- Teachers approach the student if they believe additional support is needed.

COLLEGE

- Student must self-identify and provide supporting documentation/information directly to the DSS Office.
- Primary responsibility for arranging accommodations belongs to the student.
- Professors expect that the student will initiate contact when needing to access assistance or additional support.

Advice: Practice explaining your disability needs in high school so you are ready to speak directly to Disability Support Services (and your professors) at Seton Hall University.

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PARENTAL ROLE

HIGH SCHOOL

- Parents can access student records and can participate in the accommodation process.
- Parents can speak directly with teachers and support staff.
- The student is expected to communicate their needs independently.

COLLEGE

- Parents cannot access student records without student's written consent.
- The University communicates directly with the student and not with the parent.
- Parents can foster independence and encourage their student to independently seek resources and to self-advocate.

Advice: Build your new support network at Seton Hall. Introduce yourself early in the semester to Disability Support Services and the Academic Resource Center. Get involved with clubs and organizations on campus. Visiting your professors and Academic Advisor during office hours can make accommodations run smoother and will help you get the support you may need.

LET'S TALK ABOUT CLASSES...

HIGH SCHOOL

- Teachers may modify curriculum and/or alter pace of assignments.
- Student expected to read short assignments that are then discussed, and often re-taught, in class.
- Student seldom needs to review material often. Sometimes, listening alone is enough.

COLLEGE

- Professors are not required to modify curriculum design and/or alter assignment deadlines.
- Student assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing which may not be directly addressed in class.
- Student must review class notes and course material regularly.

Advice: Read and learn the syllabus for each class at the beginning of the semester. Enter important due dates and assignments in a calendar that makes sense to you and that you will review on a regular basis. You can set reminders if you use the Outlook calendar provided through the University. Set a time each week to review your week and plan your time based upon the week's assignments and deadlines. Plan time in your schedule for studying, working on assignments, for rest and for fun.

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WHAT ABOUT GRADING AND EXAMS?

HIGH SCHOOL

- IEP or 504 Plan may include modifications to test format and/or grading.
- Testing is frequent and covers smaller amounts of materials.
- Makeup tests are often available.
- Teachers take time to remind students of assignments and due dates.

COLLEGE

- Exam format and grading changes are rarely available. Adjustments to how exams are given are amenable to accommodation (reduced-distraction setting, etc.)
- Students must request to use any approved accommodations for upcoming exams in a timely fashion (not automatic unless requested in advance within prescribed time frames).
- Testing is usually infrequent and cumulative, covering large amounts of material. (Often, just a midterm and final exam!)
- Makeup exams are typically not an option.
- Professors expect students to read and follow the syllabus independently.

Advice: Keep up with the material and your assignments. Putting in time each day, will make studying for larger exams less cumbersome. After an exam, if you have questions or are unclear on what you missed, plan to visit your professor after class or during office hours.

WHAT WILL STUDYING LOOK LIKE?

HIGH SCHOOL

- Tutoring and “resource room” may be services provided.
- Student’s time is structured by others.
- Student may study outside of class for as little as 0-2 hours per week.

COLLEGE

- Students must independently seek out support services such as tutoring and the Academic Resource Center.
- Student manages time and assignments independently. Time management and study skills workshops are available through the Academic Resource Center.
- Student must study outside of class at least 2-3 hours for every hour spent in class.

The Bottom Line: In high school, the system is built around you. In college, you build your own support system. College is about independence. The more you practice self-advocacy, organization, and communication, the smoother your journey will be.