

Student Access Office

**Prospective & First-Year
Student Handbook**

Prospective & First-Year Student Handbook

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This Handbook is Available In Alternate Format
Such As Braille, Audio Tapes, Large Print Or
Computer Disk Upon Request

Welcome to the Disability Management System— Student Access Office (SAO)

The staff at the Disability Management System—Student Access Office (SAO) welcomes you to Duke University. The University is committed to equality of educational opportunities for qualified students with disabilities in compliance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Acts of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. The Duke University Disability Management System—Student Access Office is charged with exploring possible coverage and reasonable accommodations for undergraduate, graduate and professional students who are disabled for purposes of the ADA and Rehabilitation Act.

The goal of the SAO is to provide and coordinate accommodations, support services and programs that enable students with disabilities to maximize the quality of their experience at Duke University. Services and accommodations are provided to students with a variety of disabilities including but not limited to attention deficit hyperactivity disorders, learning disorders, psychological disorders, blindness or low vision, deafness or hard of hearing, mobility and chronic health, and other disabilities.

The staff of the SAO encourages students and helps them understand the nature of their disability and its impact on their living and learning at Duke University. Students are provided with opportunities to learn about their rights and responsibilities, about ways to request accommodations, and about the wide range of programs and opportunities available at Duke University on campus. The SAO staff also seeks to help students become self-advocates in the university setting. Students are encouraged to learn to speak and act on their own behalf and gain self-advocacy skills that can be applied throughout their undergraduate years at Duke, as well as after graduation in their chosen careers.

This handbook is designed to inform incoming Duke students, prospective Duke students, and other interested persons about the services available to students with disabilities at Duke University. It includes information about the SAO staff, the transition from high school to college, the rights and responsibilities of students with disabilities and of Duke University, and the procedures and policies governing the application and implementation of reasonable accommodations. Students, their families, and other interested persons are encouraged to contact the director of the SAO with any questions or concerns that they may have.

Duke University

Disability Management System— Student Access Office (SAO)

402 Oregon Street, Suite 102
Durham, NC 27708
(919) 668-1267
(919) 668-1329 TTY
(919) 668-3977 Fax

An Introduction to our Staff

Emma H. Swain, Ph.D.
SAO Director
eswain@duke.edu

Jim Baker
Disability Specialist
jbaker@duke.edu

Jennifer Holt
Disability Support Assistant
jholt@duke.edu

Emma Swain is the Director of the Student Access Office. She is the first point of contact for students who wish to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations. Request for consideration forms and documentation should be sent to her attention. Each student's request is considered on a case-by-case basis. Questions regarding documentation guidelines, types of accommodations available at Duke and other information about SAO should be directed to Dr. Swain.

Jim Baker is the Disability Specialist in the Disability Management System—Student Access Office. He is the contact person for students registered with the SAO. He meets with each student every semester to review his or her approved accommodations and works with the student to develop a plan of access for the semester. He arranges accommodations in the classroom, with housing and transportation, as well as arranging auxiliary aids such as note taking, interpreters and books in alternative format. He is available as a resource and/or counselor to students while they are attending Duke University.

Jennifer Holt is the Disability Support Assistant. She has the general responsibility of supporting the delivery of accommodations to students who are registered with the Disability Management System—Student Access Office, particularly in the areas of coordinating the note taker program, coordinating classroom accommodations and providing course materials in alternative format.

General Information About Disabilities At Duke University

Admissions at Duke University

Colleges are prohibited from making pre-admissions inquiries about disabilities. College applicants with a disability are not required to self-identify in the admissions process. Applicants need to be reminded that admissions to a particular program is dependent upon meeting academic standards and other requirements, regardless of disability status.

For an application for admissions, contact:

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions
Duke University
P.O. Box 90586
Durham, NC 27708
Phone: (919) 684-3214
Fax: (919) 681-8941

A student with a disability who has provided information in the admissions process concerning his or her condition should not assume that information will be forwarded to the Disability Management System—Student Access Office. Students who wish to be considered for reasonable accommodations should follow the procedures outlined in this handbook.

Consideration for Reasonable Accommodations

In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations for purposes of the ADA and the Federal Rehabilitation Acts, a student must have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities such as, but not limited to, hearing, seeing, speaking, breathing, performing manual tasks, walking, caring for one's self, and learning. "Substantially limiting" refers to an impairment that prevents an individual from performing a major life activity or significantly restricts the condition, manner, or duration under which the average person in the general population can perform the same major life activity. Documentation of a student's disability, therefore, should provide evidence of a substantial limitation to one or more major life activities. Students should review documentation guidelines posted on our website at www.access.duke.edu.

Please be aware that Duke University reserves the right to determine if a condition or diagnosis rises to the level of a disability under the ADA and what constitutes reasonable accommodations according to the documented nature of the disability.

Selecting Courses for your First Semester at Duke

Before registering for courses for your first semester at Duke you are welcome to call the SAO director or disability specialist to discuss how your disability may effect your course selections. For example, you may need ample travel time between classes. You may also call to schedule an individual conference with the director and/or disability

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specialist during freshman orientation or any time during the fall drop/add period. The SAO staff can provide you with information regarding your academic advisor, classroom locations, travel time between classes, and other logistical information. (See contact information on the staff page of this handbook or call 919-668-1267).

Foreign Language Requirements at Duke University

Students applying to Duke University should know that the foreign language requirement is fundamental to the Trinity College curriculum. Waivers and course substitutions for foreign language requirements are not currently available for any student at Duke including those with disabilities. Students who have foreign language learning concerns are encouraged to contact the SAO director.

Housing at Duke University

Housing is available for eight regular semesters at Duke University. If you have a disability that requires accessible housing accommodations, please contact the SAO as soon as possible to discuss your needs. This will enable the SAO to assist you in arranging accessible housing. Students must also complete and submit the first year housing form to Residence Life and Housing Services, which is responsible for undergraduate housing assignments.

Financial Aid at Duke University

Financial aid is available for eight regular semesters at Duke to students with demonstrated need. In addition, students who register for summer school will have their full demonstrated need met for two Durham or Marine Lab campus summer terms. These two terms need not be consecutive. Financial aid is also available to eligible students accepted to Duke approved study abroad programs. With the existence or extenuating circumstances and with the approval of a student's academic dean, financial aid may be made available to students who are granted an additional semester to complete their undergraduate program. For more information please contact:

The Undergraduate Financial Aid Office
2106 Campus Drive
Box 90397
Durham, NC 27708-0397
Tel (919) 684-6225
Fax (919) 660-9811
Email Address: finaid@duke.edu

Touring the Duke University Campus

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions conducts tours of the Duke University campus. If you or members of your group need accessible accommodations or disability related information, please call the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at 919-684-3214 in advance of your visit so that they can make appropriate plans—which may include your parking, transportation, and/or communication needs. If you have additional questions please feel free to call the Disability Management System—Student Access Office at 919-668-1267.

Transition from High School to College

Duke University follows the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Once enrolled in college, students move from the protection of Public Law 94-142 to protection under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The following chart highlights the differences.

High School	College
Applicable Laws: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I.D.E.A • Section 504 • Rehabilitation Act 	Applicable Laws: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) • Section 504 • Rehabilitation Act
Required Documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I.E.P. (Individual Education Plan) • 504 Plan • School provides evaluation at no cost to the student • School conducts evaluations at prescribed intervals 	Required Documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies according to the disability. • I.E.P and 504 plans alone are not sufficient. • Documentation must include a written report describing the impairment, a diagnosis and all test results and/or medical information used to arrive at the diagnosis. If the documentation is incomplete or not current, the student is responsible for obtaining and submitting additional documentation. • Student must get evaluation at own expense.
Student Role: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student is identified and supported by parents/teachers • Primary responsibility for accommodations belongs to the school. 	Student Role: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student must self-identify to the Disability Management System—Student Access Office (SAO). • Students wishing to request accommodations must follow SAO policies and procedures.
Parental Role: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents have access to student records and participate in the accommodation process. • Parents advocate for students. 	Parental Role: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the student’s responsibility, not the parent’s, to request and arrange his or her own accommodations. Students advocate for themselves, with support of the SAO as needed.
Teachers/Professors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers may modify curriculum and/or alter pace of assignments. • Teachers use a multi-sensory approach. • Weekly quizzes, midterms, finals, and frequent graded assignments provide students with an on-going indication of their academic progress. Teachers arrange regular parent/teacher/student conferences to report and discuss student’s progress. • Attendance is taken and reported. 	Teachers/Professors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professors are not required to modify the fundamental nature of a program. • Professors tend to rely on lecture and may or may not use a multi-sensory approach. • Grades are generally based on fewer tests and assignments and students must independently monitor their learning in the course on a frequent and regular basis. Students are responsible for requesting and arranging individual conferences with their professors. • Responsibility for class attendance rests with the individual student, and since regular and punctual class attendance is expected, the student must accept the consequences of failure to attend.
Grades: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades may be modified based on curriculum. 	Grades: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades reflect the quality of work submitted.

Factor—Rights—Responsibilities

Factors at Post-Secondary Level

- Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Disability Management System--Student Access Office (SAO) Procedures

Responsibilities of Students with Disabilities

- Meet qualifications.
- Self-identify.
- Provide documentation.
- Follow established institutional procedures (see steps for requesting accommodations).
- Request accommodations in a timely manner each semester by meeting with the Disability Specialist.
- Notify the Disability Specialist if there are difficulties securing accommodations or with the quality of the accommodations.

NOTE: Receiving services or accommodations at the high school level, or at another college or university does not necessarily mean that Duke University will conclude that the student is disabled and/or agree to provide the student with the same services or accommodations received at the other educational institution.

Rights of Students with Disabilities

- Equal access to courses, programs, services and activities
- “Reasonable” accommodations
- Right to File a Grievance/Complaint

Responsibilities of the University

- Give notice of available services.
- Ensure that programs, services, and activities when viewed in their entirety are accessible.
- Explore and provide appropriate reasonable accommodations.
- Ensure that all information will be maintained and used in accordance with applicable confidentiality requirements.

Rights of the University

- Identify and establish core competencies and technical standards
- Request and receive current documentation
- Determine reasonable accommodations

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- Deny a request for accommodations or change an accommodation that is listed on the signed Accommodations Agreement in specific situations when an accommodation would change the fundamental nature program and/or pose an undue burden.

Procedures For Requesting Consideration For Reasonable Accommodations

1. A student who wishes to be considered for reasonable accommodations at Duke University must identify to the **Disability Management System—Student Access Office (SAO)**.
 - A. Undergraduate students entering Duke University for the first time—who has been accepted and has indicated his/her intention to enroll—will receive the **Welcome to Duke University packet** which contains a Request for Consideration for Reasonable Accommodations Form and a cover letter containing information regarding consideration for reasonable accommodations at Duke University. The letter also contains information regarding documentation requirements and guidelines. These forms can also be obtained by contacting the Disability Management System-Student Access Office at our website or by calling (919) 668-1267.
 - B. A student who is currently enrolled at Duke University should contact the Disability Management System—Student Access Office at (919) 668-1267 for information. Accommodation Request forms can also be obtained by contacting the Disability Management System—Student Access Office at our website or by calling (919) 668-1267.
2. The student should return his/her Request for Consideration for Reasonable Accommodations Form/Exchange of Information Release, as well as their documentation to:

Duke University
Disability Management System—Student Access Office
Box 90142
Durham, NC 27708
3. The Student Access Office reviews the student’s documentation to determine if it is appropriate and complete. If additional information or clarification is needed, the director consults with the student and/or appropriate health care provider. If additional documentation is needed it is the student’s responsibility to provide it.
4. The SAO completes a careful review of the student’s documentation to determine whether or not the student is disabled under the ADA and/or Rehabilitation Act and eligible to receive accommodations at Duke University.
5. When it is determined that a student is disabled under the ADA and/or Rehabilitation Act and eligible to receive accommodations, the director reviews the suggested accommodation list with the Disability Specialist, and when appropriate, with the designated undergraduate disability liaison, and/or

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assistant/associate dean to determine if the suggested accommodations are reasonable in the context of the undergraduate academic program.

6. After accommodations are determined to be appropriate, the student is sent a letter asking him/her to make an appointment, to meet with the SAO Director. During the meeting, the director discusses with the student the accommodations that have been recommended. The student and the director sign and date and Accommodation Agreement. Procedures for implementing accommodations are discussed and the student's rights and responsibilities are reviewed. The student is also apprised that individual circumstances may warrant modification of the accommodations agreed upon and listed on the Accommodations Agreement. The original agreement is kept in the student's SAO file, the student receives a copy of the agreement, and when accommodations are needed in areas such as housing and transportation, those offices are notified.

NOTE: If in the future, a student wishes to discuss the possibility of receiving accommodations not listed on the signed Accommodations Agreement, the student should make an appointment to meet with the Director of the Disability Management System—Student Access Office. Additional documentation may be needed.

7. The director of the Disability Management System—Student Access Office makes an appointment for the student to meet with the Disability Specialist who arranges accommodations.

NOTE: Student must request accommodations each semester. It is the student's responsibility to schedule an appointment to meet with the Disability Specialist each semester in order to arrange for accommodations.

8. If a student disagrees with the eligibility and/or accommodation decisions made by the Disability Management System—Student Access Office, it is recommended that the student meet the SAO Director to discuss his/her questions and concerns.
9. Any student who disagrees with the eligibility and/or accommodation decision made by the Disability Management System—Student Access Office, has the right to file a grievance/complaint. Information regarding the filing of a grievance and/or complaint is available by contacting the Office of Institutional Equity at (919) 668-6214.

DUKE UNIVERSITY
Disability Management System--Student Access Office
REQUEST FOR CONSIDERATION FOR REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS--Undergraduate
All information obtained in diagnostic medical, psychological, and educational reports will be maintained and used in accordance with applicable confidentiality requirements

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name: _____

Social Security Number: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____
Street City State Zip

Telephone Number: _____ Current e-mail Address: _____
Area Code Number

You will be attending or are attending: _____ Trinity College _____ Pratt School of Engineering

Classification: _____ Beginning Student or _____ Transfer Student Semester you will begin: _____
_____ Current Student _____ Other (please explain) _____

II. BASIS FOR REQUEST

What is the nature of your Impairment? (Check all that apply.)

_____ Learning Disorder(s) _____ Blindness or _____

_____ Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder(s) _____ Deafness or Hearing _____

_____ Chronic Health (please explain nature of impairment) _____

_____ Mobility (please explain nature of impairment) _____

_____ Psychological Disorder(s) (please explain nature of impairment) _____

_____ Other (please explain nature of impairment) _____

Please list the accommodations you received in high school and those you may request at Duke.

Accommodations received in high school: _____

Accommodations requested at Duke: _____

III. EXPLANATION OF INFORMATION

To explore possible coverage and reasonable accommodations, it is often necessary for the staff of the Disability Management System--Student Access Office to discuss the documentation the student has submitted to our office with providers such as licensed physicians, psychologists, or other qualified professionals, and to discuss the student's impairment with their parents and Duke University faculty and professional staff.

I hereby give permission for members of the staff of the Disability Management System--Student Access Office at Duke University to exchange information regarding the documentation I have submitted to the Disability Management System--Student Access Office with my provider(s) (physician, psychologist, or other qualified professional), and to discuss my impairment with my parents and Duke University faculty and professional staff. I understand that my refusal to authorize consent may result in a denial of accommodations.

Student Signature

Date

Return this form to: Dr. Emma Swain, Director
Disability Management System--Student Access Office
Box 90142
Duke University
Durham, NC 27708

2/10/04

Documentation Information

Duke University is committed to equality of educational opportunities for qualified students with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students who request to be considered for reasonable accommodations must submit current written documentation from a licensed physician, psychologist, or other qualified professional. A school plan such as an **IEP** or **504 Plan** is not sufficient documentation, but may be helpful.

Documentation guidelines are provided in the interest of assuring that documentation appropriately verifies eligibility and may support some or all requests for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids. A diagnosis of a disorder/impairment alone does not automatically qualify an individual for an accommodation under the ADA.

For the purpose of receiving consideration for reasonable accommodations at Duke University, an individual must have an impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as, but not limited to hearing, seeing, breathing, performing manual tasks, walking, caring for oneself, and/or learning (i.e., reading and writing). To be substantially limited requires a showing that, in comparison with the average person, an impairment significantly restricts the condition, duration, or manner under which a person can perform a major life activity.

Documentation guidelines can be obtained by calling the Disability Management System--Student Access Office at (919) 668-1267 or by accessing the Duke University web-site at <http://www.access.duke.edu>. Guidelines are available for attention deficit hyperactivity disorders, learning disorders, psychological disorders, blindness or low vision, deafness or hard of hearing and mobility or chronic health

It is the responsibility of the student to obtain his or her documentation and present a **copy** to the Disability Management System--Student Access Office. Correspondence regarding adequacy of the documentation will be sent to the student. It is also the student's responsibility obtain additional information or testing when requested to do so.

Please be aware that Duke University reserves the right to determine if a condition or diagnosis rises to the level of a disability under the ADA and to decide what constitutes reasonable accommodations according to the documented nature of the disability as well as the fundamental nature of the program.

Documentation should be sent to the Director, Disability Management System--Student Access Office, Box 90142, Duke University, Durham, NC, 27708.

Questions concerning documentation should be directed to the director of the Disability Management System--Student Access Office at (919) 668-1267.

Classroom Accommodations

Students who are approved for classroom accommodations, undergraduate students meet with the Disability Specialist to discuss each of their classes and determine which of the approved academic accommodations would be appropriate for each class. Because accommodations are tailored to specific courses and those courses change each semester, students must meet with the Disability Specialist at the beginning of every term. Together, the student and the Disability Specialist discuss the academic demands of each course and complete an Accommodation Request Form which the student signs.

When the Disability Specialist mails the student's letters of accommodation to faculty members, the student and the student's academic dean are copied. It is the responsibility of the student to schedule an appointment with his/her instructor to discuss how the academic accommodations recommended in the letter from the SAO will be implemented in the classroom.

Examples of academic accommodations that might be warranted include, but are not limited to the following:

- Extended test times to complete quizzes, tests, and examinations.
- Provision of readers for tests and exams as required.
- Administration of test and examinations in a quiet room with minimal distraction.
- Provision of a scribe for tests and exams as required.
- Large Print (tests, articles);
- Provision of books in alternative format.
- Provision of Sign Language interpreter/transliterators.
- Priority seating;
- Relocation of classes when necessary.
- Provision of a note taker to supplement student notes.

Duke University offers a variety of assistive technology to students, including:

- Kurzweil 3000
- Computers and scanners
- Dragon Naturally Speaking
- Zoom Text
- Inspiration
- AlphaSmart Notebooks
- Ergonomic keyboards
- WYNN Reading Software
- Tape recorders (4 tracks/cassettes)
- High Speed Scanner for textbook reproduction

Some students with disabilities may also need additional accommodations that are not directly associated with class work. If a student with a disability needs housing

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accommodations, particular adjustments to Duke and its physical plant (such as curbs-cuts or strobe lights in rooms), accessible van point-to-point transportation to and from classes, phones for emergency situations, and the like, that student should first make her/his needs known to the Director of the SAO. In turn, the Director will ask the Disability Specialist to speak to the appropriate University agents in order to implement the adjustments and services. The Director of the SAO is the person to go to first with any accommodation requests and questions.

Further Information

Students who wish additional information can contact:
Disability Management System--Student Access Office
Duke University – Box 90142
Durham, NC 27708
(919) 668-1267

Additional Academic Support Services Available At Duke University

The Academic Skills Instructional Program (ASIP)

During both the academic year and the summer sessions, students may arrange one-on-one college learning skills conferences with an ASIP staff member. ADHD coaching is also available for all Duke undergraduate students through the Academic Skills Instructional Program. (For more information call 684-5917 or go to the ASIP website at <http://aaswebsv.aas.duke.edu/skills/ASIPwebsite/asiphome.html>.)

Peer Tutoring Program

Students may receive peer tutoring in introductory-level courses in several disciplines through the Peer Tutoring Program. Courses for which tutoring is available include, introductory math, chemistry, physics, engineering, economics and biology as well as some foreign languages. Up to twelve hours of tutoring in each course is offered to students at no additional fee. (For more information call 684-8832 or go to <http://aaswebsv.aas.duke.edu/skills/PTPwebsite/>.)

The Writing Studio

The Writing Studio offers Duke University undergraduates an opportunity to meet with trained writing tutors to discuss individual writing concerns. Students schedule 50-minute appointments to develop their craft as a writer. Daytime and evening sessions are available. (For more information go to <http://www.ctlw.duke.edu/wstudio>.)

Learning Disabilities in the College Setting: A Different Ball Game Than High School

By Stephen S. Strichart

I am frequently surprised to find how many high school students with learning disabilities, and their parents, think that college is just a slightly more difficult version of high school. From this perspective, the major challenge is to get accepted into college. I don't agree with this perspective. I've found that given a little persistence, and in some cases a lot of money, most LD students can get into a college somewhere, albeit not always one of their first choices. The major challenge is not that of being accepted, but of being successful. Unfortunately, LD students are often poorly prepared for the increased demands of college.

IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

1. Public Law 94-142 no longer applies.

In high school, PL 94-142 mandates a free and appropriate education delineated in an IEP that spells out specific services. LD students receive these; they don't have to seek them out. This law does not apply at the college level. Instead, there is Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a far reaching, but rather non-specific law. To gain access to accommodations and services through this law, LD students must document and make their disability known, and in many cases, identify the assistance they need to succeed in college, and then self-advocate to get this assistance.

2. There is much less structure.

Programs for LD students at the high school level are extremely structured and supportive. Students take a specified schedule of classes that is the same each day. The same group of peers are in most of their classes. Teachers consistently review their expectations and monitor student progress. This is not the case in college, where each day's schedule can vary widely, and each class consists of a different group of students. College professors rarely take attendance, check to see if reading assignments are being done, or concern themselves with the quality of the notes being taken by students. Students have to analyze each class and professor to determine what will be required for success. This varies from class to class.

3. There is greater academic competition.

Unlike going to high school, going to college is a voluntary matter. Poor achievers and unmotivated students rarely reach the college campus. Consequently, students moving on to college find themselves in a "bigger pond" where peers have higher abilities and drive, and teachers have higher expectations. Memorization may have carried the day in high school, but high level analysis and synthesis is what is needed now. In terms of both the quality and the quantity of their work, LD students must be more productive than they have ever been before.

4. There is need for greater independence.

The nature of high school LD programs tends to foster dependence in students. This presents a major problem in the college setting, where students are required to function in a relatively independent manner. High school students don't have to declare a major, and for the most part, their course of study is prescribed. This, of course, changes dramatically in college. College students must make important career choices, and must carefully plan their sequence of courses, to include selecting from an imposing array of elective courses. They must make good use of the many hours they are not in class and learn to fully utilize the many learning resources available on campus. Further, students must learn to establish and maintain work and study schedules, while balancing their academic and social lives. Decision-making and problem-solving skills become paramount.

MAKING THE ADJUSTMENT TO COLLEGE

Many of the recommendations that I offer may seem obvious and almost trivial. This may be true in the case of typical college students, but not for LD students. One thing my experience working with LD students has taught me is to never assume anything. With this proviso, I offer the following recommendations for college LD students.

1. Make your needs known.

Colleges are not required to seek out and identify LD students. What they are required to do is to respond to the needs of those students once they are identified. Consequently, LD students should make their needs known right from the beginning. They can do this by registering with the appropriate academic unit, and by discussing their needs with their professors in an open and positive manner. Once they understand the nature of a LD student's problem, most professors will do everything reasonable to assist the student to succeed in their class.

No one knows the needs of LD students better than the students themselves. Experience is the best teacher, and LD students have had much experience coping with the problems posed by their disability. Consequently, it is the students who are in the best position to articulate their special needs. While various support personnel on campus are willing and able to advocate for students with their professors, this is best done by the students. Professors may be leery of official forms apprising them of accommodations to offer to a given student. They may feel put upon or even intimidated when apprised that they are required by law to provide various accommodations. This is generally not a problem where a student personally make his or her needs known in non-threatening manner, offering suggestions as to how they can easily be met by the professor. Where necessary, LD students should stand behind their rights in an insistent, but reasonable manner.

2. Provide your own structure.

LD students must realize the importance of shifting from a reactive to a proactive student style. They must quickly determine the expectations of each of their professors and how best to meet these expectations. Ideally, students will meet with their professors before the semester begins. At this time they can obtain reading lists and course requirements,

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enabling them to prepare for the beginning of classes and get a head start on some of the work. Once they have determined what each course requires, students must establish priorities for the use of their study time, devoting more time to difficult subjects. They must gather and organize the materials and resources they need for each course. Planning and consistency become crucial. Students must develop and stick to an individualized study plan for each of their courses. This plan must be responsive to the academic calendar and the due dates for all exams and assignments. Students must plan ahead to allow sufficient time to complete all work as when required.

3. Increase your effort.

College requirements are both quantitatively and qualitatively greater than those experienced by students in high school. Consequently, LD students must apply themselves in a concerted and efficient manner if they are to succeed. Students used to an hour or so of homework each night must now be committed to spending two to three hours in preparation for each hour of class. While memorizing and repeating information in written or spoken form may have sufficed in high school, most college professors require students to demonstrate the ability to analyze, synthesize, and apply information to solve problems.

LD students should strive to improve their skills in a number of areas. They will need to develop an effective textbook reading strategy, devise effective study routines, and become more effective test takers. They will need to make full use of the library as a learning resource and become adept in the use of resources such as the dictionary, thesaurus, and encyclopedia. Certainly, they will benefit by developing word processing skills. Overall, LD students must become “active” students who rewrite their lecture notes, take written notes from their texts in their own words, and integrate information from a variety of sources. Further, LD students should seek help from their peers as appropriate. Teaming with a student who is doing well in a course can be very helpful when reviewing notes, writing and editing papers, and preparing for tests.

The college experience involves far more than just continued academic preparation. It is a time when LD young adults must make important personal decisions about their career and life goals. At first, LD students should not attempt to make decisions completely on their own.

Seeking the advice of a faculty advisor and utilizing career counseling services can help students to begin to identify the appropriate bases of the important decisions they must make. As they begin to make choices about a major and course of study, LD students initiate the process of becoming full independent adults. Each time they make decisions regarding which electives to take, how to manage time between classes, and with which groups and organizations to become involved, these students move further toward independence. LD students must become increasingly willing to make decisions on their own, ultimately claiming full ownership and responsibility for their decisions. LD students will undoubtedly find college to be more difficult than high school. But by being prepared for the differences between high school and college, and taking steps to

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accommodate to these differences, LD students can not only succeed in college—they can excel.

Strichart, Stephen S., "Learning Disabilities in the College Setting: A Different Ballgame Than Highschool," *Their World*: ed. William Ellis (New York: Center for Learning Disabilities, 1993) 117.
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