

Differences between High School and College

ACCOMMODATION PROCESS	
High School	College
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are implemented at the secondary school level with an aim toward success for all students entitled to a Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE) at their school district.	The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as well as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, guides college-level accommodation policy with an aim toward access .
Teachers and parents arrange services and assistance for the student.	Students must initiate a request for accommodations with Student Disability Services (SDS).
School districts are required to identify students with disabilities through free assessment and the IEP process.	Students are responsible for self-identifying and providing current documentation of a disability, along with functional limitations.
Teachers and parents arrange services and assistance for the student.	Students must initiate the request for accommodations.
Modification of instruction and curriculum may be offered based on the IEP.	Through an interactive process, reasonable accommodations are identified to remove institutional barriers and promote access and full participation. Students are responsible for meeting the standards of the course, and essential elements of the course's objectives are not modified.
PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT	
High School	College
Parent advocates for the student.	Student advocates for self.
Parent has access to student records and can participate in the accommodation process.	Parent does not have access to student records without student's written consent.
Parents communicate routinely with teachers, and can easily monitor students' academic progress.	Parents have no contact with instructors, and written consent is required to access student progress.
CLASSES	
High School	College
6 hours each day, 30 hours a week are spent in class.	Approximately 12-16 hours each week are spent in class. Students usually spend 2-3 hours on homework for each 1 hour spent in class.
Class is usually a semester, or 90 days.	DU is on a quarter system, which is 10 weeks + a 4-day final exam period for a total of 53-54 days per quarter.
Classes are structured and scheduled one after the other.	There are often hours between classes; class times vary throughout the day and evening.
Classes meet daily or every other day on a block schedule.	Classes may meet 1 to 5 times a week.
Missing classes for various reasons is permissible and students may still complete the course.	Absences generally aren't excused or unexcused. Class attendance is crucial for learning the content. Missing class may result in a lowered or failing grade, depending on course requirements.
Students may take the same subject all year.	Students will have new classes every quarter, as well as new textbooks.
General education classes are dictated by state and district requirements.	Graduation requirements are complex and vary in different fields of study.

INSTRUCTORS	
High School	College
Teachers approach students if they believe assistance is needed.	students are expected to contact their instructor or tutor if they need assistance.
Teachers are often available for conversation before, during, or after class.	Instructors typically have scheduled office hours for students to attend.
Students are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed, and often re-taught, in class.	Instructors often plan their courses so that students learn outside of class, including outside reading and research.
Teachers provide information missed if students are absent.	Instructors expect students to obtain notes from their classmates if they miss class.
Teachers remind students of assignments, due dates, test dates, and incomplete work.	Instructors expect students to read, save, and consult the course's syllabus (outline); the syllabus spells out exactly what is expected, when it is due, and how it will be graded.
STUDYING	
High School	College
Students are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed, and often re-taught, in class.	Students are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing, which may not be directly addressed in class.
Teachers may review class notes and text material regularly for classes.	Students should review class notes and text material regularly on their own.
Student time outside of class may vary (may be as little as 1-3 hours a week).	Generally, students need to study 2-3 hours outside of class for each hour of class.
TESTING and GRADING	
High School	College
Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material.	Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material.
IEP or 504 Plan may include modifications to test format and/or grading.	Grading and test format changes (i.e., multiple choice vs essay) are generally not available. Accommodations to HOW tests are given (extended time, distraction-reduced setting) are available through SDS.
Makeup and retake tests are often available.	Makeup tests are seldom an option; if they are, students need to request them. Retakes are not usually available.
Good homework grades may assist in raising the overall grade when test grades are lower.	Tests and major papers usually comprise the majority of a student's course grade.
Extra credit options are sometimes available.	Extra credit is generally not offered.
Initial test grades, especially when low, may not have an adverse effect on a student's final grade.	First tests count toward a student's final grade and often set expectations in a course.

References:

[accommodations-from-high-school-to-college.pdf](#)

[Differences.HighSchool.College.pdf](#)

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