



What to do if a student tells you they have a disability and want accommodations for their disability

When students request accommodations for a disability, they need to be directed to Jen Reese in the Office of Accessibility.

During High School, students received services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). At the adult level we function under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). How is this different?

- Students are not entitled to a free, appropriate education, rather students have civil rights and they must advocate for themselves in order to enjoy those rights.
- Students must meet all entrance and academic requirements whether they receive academic accommodations or not.
- There is no “IEP like” process in the post-secondary setting. Accommodations aim to create an opportunity for success, however success is not guaranteed.
- Students are adults who are assumed to manage their own lives. Federal privacy laws require the student’s written permission to allow academic and non-academic information to be shared with parents.
- Post-secondary institutions are required to make accommodations available to level the playing field; however, accommodations cannot alter the fundamental nature of the program or course.
- It is the civil right of a student to refuse accommodations that they do not wish to use, and if accommodations are not requested, it is assumed that the accommodation is not desired.
- The post-secondary institution does not assume the costs associated with obtaining a current and relevant evaluation. This cost is assumed by the student.
- Student disability information is maintained separate from the educational record. The student has the right to disclose their disability to whomever they choose; however, they must disclose their disability to the Office of Accessibility staff in order to receive academic accommodations and support. Students have the right to privacy under ADA.
- The Office of Accessibility staff typically does not contact an instructor without the express permission of the student. Each student must initiate an accommodation discussion with each instructor at the beginning of every class. If the student has been approved, they will bring you a “Verified Individualized Services and Accommodation Form”
- Students are responsible for coordinating their own personal care and the services needed to meet medical and other needs.