

News You Can Use
 John Gugerty, Column Editor

Excerpts from: Opening Doors to Postsecondary Education and Training: Planning for Life After High School. A Handbook for Students, School Counselors, Teachers, & Parents

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Overview of Transition To Postsecondary Education

This handbook is designed as a guide to help students with disabilities take another step in preparing for “life after high school.” While high school is an exciting time, what you do after high school can be just as exciting if you have done some careful and thoughtful planning. Students’ “Transition Plans” include:

- thinking about their strengths as individuals,
- knowing what interests them, and
- considering different types of work and jobs.

In addition, students must identify what knowledge and skills are needed for work and figure out how to get that knowledge and those skills. Finally, they must apply for, and get, fulfilling and rewarding work.

Students transition and go in many different directions after high school. Some choose to go right into the workforce. Some go into the military service. Still others go on to postsecondary education. Students with disabilities have all of these options too.

This guide deals with the last of these options, postsecondary education. Postsecondary education includes many kinds of education and training programs, technical college degree and certification programs, apprenticeship experience, two- and four-year colleges, private trade schools, on-the-job training, and more.

Deciding to Attend a Postsecondary Institution

Although 8th, 9th and 10th grades are early in your school career, they are important times to begin thinking about and planning for those things you will be looking forward to after graduation. You may want to continue your education or enter an apprenticeship program. Both of these options require career exploration and research. Most schools offer classes on career education. Make sure you are included.

Once you have narrowed your career choices, it is important to find out the required training and education for your choice(s). If further education is required, you need to find which schools offer a major or certification program. Your school counselor and/or school librarian can help you with this research. There may be special requirements for specific programs.

TIMELINE FOR PLANNING	
Thinking about how you want to live your life – explore options	
<input type="checkbox"/> Exploring Lifework* Options	Grades 7-9
<input type="checkbox"/> Exploring Postsecondary Options	Grades 8-10
<input type="checkbox"/> Exploring Student Choices	Grades 8-10
Planning and preparing for postsecondary education	
<input type="checkbox"/> Planning and Preparing – Academics	Grades 8-12
<input type="checkbox"/> Planning for a Career	Grades 9-10
<input type="checkbox"/> Planning for Personal-Social Choices	Grades 8-12
Exploring Postsecondary Choices	Grades 9-10
<input type="checkbox"/> Apprenticeship	
<input type="checkbox"/> Technical College	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2-year College	
<input type="checkbox"/> 4-year Independent College/University	
<input type="checkbox"/> 4-year State College/University	
Selecting a Postsecondary Institution	Grades 10-11
Applying to a Postsecondary Institution	Grades 11-12
*Exploring lifework options includes discovering your interests, talents, and abilities. Then you can start to plan for developing skills and knowledge that will lead to a job that will be a good fit for you.	

After High School, the Rules Change

The following charts describe general differences in various areas between public high school and postsecondary education.

LAWS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

HIGH SCHOOL

1. Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).
2. Covers ages 3-21 or until regular high school diploma requirements are met.
3. School attendance is mandatory.
4. Districts are required to identify students with disabilities through free assessment and the individualized education program (IEP) process.
5. Students receive special education and related services to address needs based on an identified disability.
6. Services include individually designed instruction, modifications, and accommodations based on the IEP.
7. Individual student's needs based on the IEP may be addressed by program support for school personnel.
8. Progress toward IEP goals is monitored and communicated to the parent(s) and/or the student.
9. Schools assist in connecting the student with community support agencies if so identified as a transition need according to the IEP.

POSTSECONDARY

1. Section 504 and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Accessibility and reasonable accommodations.
2. Covers students with disabilities regardless of age; schools may not discriminate in recruitment, admission, or after admission, solely on the basis of a disability.
3. Students decide to attend and will probably pay tuition.
4. Students are responsible for revealing and providing current documentation of a disability. They must be self advocates.
5. Formal special education services are not available.
6. Reasonable accommodations may be made to provide equal access and participation.
7. No formal program support for school personnel is provided.
8. Students are required to monitor their own progress and communicate their needs to instructors.
9. Students are responsible for making their own connections with community support agencies.

CLASSES

HIGH SCHOOL

1. Usually follow a school-directed schedule and proceed from one class to another.
2. General education classes dictated by state/district requirements.
3. Typically, a school year is 36 weeks long; some classes extend over both semesters. Summer classes may be offered but are not used to accelerate graduation.
4. Class attendance is usually mandatory and monitored carefully.
5. Classes generally have no more than 30-35 students.
6. Textbooks are typically provided at little or no expense.
7. Guidance is provided for students so they will be aware of graduation requirements.
8. Modifications that change course outcomes may be offered based on the IEP.

POSTSECONDARY

1. Individual students must manage their own time and schedules.
2. Class based on field of study; requirements may vary.
3. Academic year is divided into two separate 15-week semesters plus a week for final exams. (*Hint:* Some institutions are on a trimester schedule.) Courses are offered fall, spring, and summer semesters, and summer classes may be used to accelerate graduation.
4. Attendance policies may vary with each instructor. (*Hint:* Lack of attendance may impact performance.)
5. Classes may have 100 or more students.
6. Textbooks can be expensive. (*Hint:* An anticipated range for a full-time student is \$250-\$500 per semester.)
7. Graduation requirements are complex and vary for different fields of study. (*Hint:* You are responsible for monitoring your progress and seeking advice.)
8. Modifications that change course outcomes will not be offered. (*Hint:* Modified high school courses may not be accepted in the admission process.)

INSTRUCTORS

HIGH SCHOOL

1. Grade and check completed homework.
2. May remind students of incomplete assignments.
3. May know students' needs and approach students when they need assistance.
4. May be available before, during, or after class.
5. Have been trained in teaching methods.
6. Often provide students with information missed during absence.
7. Present material to help students understand what is in the textbook.
8. Often write information on the board or overhead to be copied for notes.
9. Teach knowledge and facts leading students through the thinking process.
10. Often take time to remind students of assignment and test dates.

POSTSECONDARY

1. May assume homework is completed and students are able to perform on a test.
2. May not remind students of incomplete assignments. (*Hint: It's your responsibility to check with your instructor to see if requirements are being met.*)
3. Are usually open and helpful, but expect students to initiate contact when assistance is needed.
4. May require students to attend scheduled office hours.
5. Have content knowledge but not necessarily formal training in teaching methods.
6. Expect students to get information from classmates when they miss a class.
7. May not follow the textbook, but lectures enhance the topic area. (*Hint: You need to connect lectures and textbook.*)
8. May lecture nonstop. If they write on the board, it may be to support the lecture, not summarize it. (*Hint: Good notes are a must or a tape recorder may be used.*)
9. Expect students to think independently and connect seemingly unrelated information.
10. Expect students to read, save, and refer back to the course syllabus. (*Hint: Syllabi are your way of knowing exactly what is expected of you, when assignments are due, and how you will be graded.*) The syllabus may be available on the course website.

STUDYING

HIGH SCHOOL

1. Study time outside of class may vary (may be as little as 1-3 hours per week).
2. Instructors may review class notes and text material regularly for classes.
3. Expected to read short assignments that are discussed and retaught.

POSTSECONDARY

1. Generally need to study at least 2-3 hours outside of class for each hour in class.
2. Students should review class notes and text material regularly. (*Hint: Use the time between classes carefully.*)
3. Substantial amounts of assigned reading and writing may not be directly addressed in class. (*Hint: It's up to you to read and understand assigned material or access support, such as books on tape.*)

TESTING

HIGH SCHOOL

1. Frequent coverage of small amounts of material.
2. Make-up tests are often available.
3. Test dates can be arranged to avoid conflicts with other events.
4. Frequently conducts review sessions emphasizing important concepts prior to tests.

POSTSECONDARY

1. Usually infrequent (2-3 times a semester). May be cumulative and cover large amounts of material. (*Hint: You need to organize material to prepare for tests.*) Some classes may require only papers and/or projects instead of tests.
2. Make-up tests are seldom an option and may have to be requested.
3. Usually, scheduled tests are without regard to other demands.
4. Faculty rarely offer review sessions; if so, students are expected to be prepared and to be active participants, or find study groups.

GRADES

HIGH SCHOOL

1. Given for most assigned work.
2. Good homework grades may assist in raising overall grade when test grades are lower.
3. Extra credit options are often available.
4. Initial test grades, especially when low, may not have adverse effect on grade.
5. Graduation requirements may be met with a grade of D or higher.

POSTSECONDARY

1. May not be provided for all assigned work.
2. Tests and major papers provide the majority of the grade.
3. Generally speaking, extra-credit options are not used to raise a grade.
4. First tests are often "wake up" calls to let you know what is expected. (*Hint: Watch out! They may account for a substantial part of your final grade. Contact the instructor, academic advisor, or student accessibility personnel if you do poorly.*)
5. Requirements may be met only if the student's average meets departmental standards. (*Hint: Generally a 2.0 (c) or higher.*)

OTHER FACTORS TO CONSIDER

HIGH SCHOOL

1. State and/or district policies may determine eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities.
2. Parents typically manage finances for school-related activities.
3. Parents and teachers may provide support and guidance and setting priorities.

POSTSECONDARY

1. Postsecondary institution policies may determine eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities.
2. Students are responsible for money management for basic needs and extra spending money. (*Hint: Outside jobs may be necessary and one more "activity" to consider for time management.*)
3. Students are responsible for setting their own priorities.

Planning and Preparing

HOW AND WHEN DO I DEVELOP A TIMELINE FOR TRANSITION PLANNING TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION?

Students begin with *themselves* – asking, "What are my abilities and interests?" "What do I want and need from my everyday life as an adult?" "What do I like and dislike about school work, chores at home, jobs I've had to do, hobbies, and volunteer commitments?"

Start taking positive steps by staying involved in your transition process. The key to successful transition to postsecondary education is **early planning**. It is essential for you to maintain high academic standards and expectations throughout your elementary, middle, and high school years.

Skill development and practice (time management, independent living, mobility skills, the ability to ask for specific help when you need it) are also important. The following questionnaire will help in planning for your transition.

Questions Students Should Ask Their IEP Team Members or Support Network

The following are questions, recommended skills, and steps needed in planning for postsecondary education. Check them off as you address each area.

HOW DO I DEVELOP SELF-ADVOCACY SKILLS?

Find effective ways to explain your disability and your specific needs. Practice with a teacher and counselor.

Communicate strengths and weaknesses (course and types of assignments that were easier or more difficult).

Explain skills that can help you learn.

Explain academic areas where you may need accommodations (extended test-taking time, note taker, lecture notes, books on tape, and so forth.)

Explain current services provided (accommodations or extra help that have been successful).

Approach instructors at the beginning of the course regarding what accommodations are needed.

Explain legal rights (IDEA, ADA, Section 504).

Communicate what is a reasonable accommodation.

Actively participate in your IEP meetings by sharing your interests and postsecondary goals with the team.

Make sure transition plans are documented in your IEP.

HOW AND WHEN DO I DEVELOP A TIMELINE FOR TRANSITION PLANNING TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION?

Schools assist students in writing
Pre-High School

Develop Measurable Postsecondary Goals at the age of 14 (or younger if determined by the IEP team). The goals are for education or training, employment and, if appropriate, independent living.

- ___ Plan for high school classes (consider college prep classes).
- ___ Develop a list of postsecondary options of interest.
- ___ Develop an understanding of disability and learning styles.
- ___ Develop study skills.
- ___ Start saving money.
- ___ Identify transition needs and career planning goals through the IEP process.
- ___ Remediate and/or compensate for basic-skill deficits.

Ninth Grade

- ___ Contact a guidance counselor and design a class schedule.
- ___ Develop a clear understanding of the nature of your disability and how it affects learning.
- ___ Take courses or participate in groups that promote skills in time management, studying, assertiveness training, stress management, and exam preparation.
- ___ Prepare for all classes.

___ Explore career options (interest inventories, career fairs, discussion with school personnel and parents).

___ Develop skills for academic independence (time management, study skills, note taking, and so forth).

___ Participate in extracurricular activities (athletic and nonathletic).

___ Continue to remediate and/or compensate for basic-skill deficits.

___ Determine what types of courses are necessary for admission (keep in mind, modified courses may not be acceptable for admission to some postsecondary institutions).

___ Investigate assistive technology tools (communicative device, unique computer needs, TTY, and so forth). Learn to use as many kinds of software as you can (word processing, spreadsheets, and web site design will be especially helpful).

Tenth Grade

___ Continue academic preparation and remediation/compensation strategies, and identify any assistive technology needs.

___ Identify interests, aptitudes, and accommodation needs.

___ Continue or develop self-advocacy skills (asking for help, communicating needs to instructors, and so forth).

___ Meet with guidance counselor to discuss colleges and college requirements.

___ Find out if the schools you are interested in require or recommend that

candidates take the ACT or SAT exams. If they do, make preparations to take the appropriate exam.

___ Attend college fairs.

___ Visit colleges and other postsecondary education training options.

___ Gather information about college programs and about services offered for students with disabilities.

___ Identify application deadlines for postsecondary support programs.

___ Investigate eligibility requirements and services available through the WI Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and other adult service providers such as Human Services, Center for Independent Living (CIL) and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) partners.

___ Participate in volunteer and paid work experiences.

Eleventh Grade

___ Continue academic preparation and remediation/compensation strategies, assistive technology needs, and self-advocacy skills.

___ Focus on matching interests/abilities and career goals to appropriate postsecondary education choice.

___ Identify appropriate postsecondary choice.

___ Take ACT or SAT with or without accommodations.

___ Establish a tentative career goal.

___ Identify people to write recommendations for you.

___ Invite DVR counselor and other appropriate adult agency representatives to IEP meeting for discussion and planning of post high school options. Complete application, eligibility and Order of Selection (OOS) process and begin discussion about the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) process.

___ Tour postsecondary campuses.

___ Investigate services offered by postsecondary setting and determine which settings match individual needs and goals.

___ Learn to use local public transportation options.

___ Obtain picture identification card or driver's license.

___ Obtain documentation of disability from current assessment (within two years of graduation date) because colleges require assessments.

Twelfth Grade

___ Strengthen self-advocacy skills (your legal responsibilities after the age of 18).

___ Prepare transition packet for disability documentation that includes: evaluation reports, transcripts, test scores, current IEP, medical records, writing samples, and letters of recommendation.

___ Role-play interviews.

___ Talk with students who are receiving services at colleges and other postsecondary education training settings about their experiences.

___ Schedule an interview/tour with institutions of interest.

___ Prepare applications.

___ Jointly develop the IPE with DVR counselor which identifies goals, services, and responsibilities. Develop service plans with other adult service agency providers as appropriate.

___ Schools provide students with a summary of performance (SOP), which includes a review of academic achievement, functional performance, and recommendations, which assist the student in achieving his or her measurable postsecondary goals.

HOW DO I SELECT A COLLEGE?

___ Talk to people who have graduated from your school and have gone on to postsecondary study. Talk to counselors, teachers, and family friends about programs and schools that match your interests.

___ Explore programs at several potential institutions to determine if they match career interests and goals.

___ Investigate the college climate.

___ Investigate the college setting.

___ Investigate the college admission requirements.

___ Investigate available services and history of providing accommodations.

HOW DO I MATCH MY INTERESTS AND NEEDS WITH COURSE OFFERINGS OF THE COLLEGE?

___ Determine field of study, interest, or possible major.

___ Identify/match college with interest/field of study.

___ Participate in job-shadowing experiences and write down what skills and knowledge the jobholder used to get things done. Look for courses and college experiences that build that knowledge and those skills.

___ Inquire about class sizes.

___ Inquire about support classes (time management, study skills, writing labs, and so forth).

HOW DO I MATCH MY NEEDS TO THE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES OFFERED AT THE COLLEGE?

___ Inquire about learning support programs and services available.

___ Inquire about counseling support programs and services available.

___ Inquire about mentoring and/or tutoring programs.

___ Inquire about special assistance for the application process.

___ Inquire about possible requirement waivers for admission.

WHAT ARE THE FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS?

___ Determine tuition, books, transportation, and housing costs.

___ Determine tutoring fees.

___ Investigate availability of scholarships.

___ Investigate availability of financial aid.

___ Investigate availability of work-study opportunities.

___ Investigate employment opportunities (on and off campus).

___ Determine with family members the amount of financial support they can offer.

WHAT HOUSING ACCOMMODATIONS ARE AVAILABLE?

___ Determine whether to live on campus or at home.

___ Investigate on-campus housing (rules, computer availability, study rooms, and so forth).

___ Investigate off-campus housing.

___ Inquire about support services (special floor considerations, assistance).

___ Obtain documentation, if single room is a required accommodation.

WHAT TRANSPORTATION PROVISIONS ARE AVAILABLE?

___ Inquire about accessible public transportation.

___ Inquire about parking for students.

___ Will you have access to a car?

___ Will you have access to a carpool?

What Will Get Me In?

1. Appropriate course selection in high school.
2. High school grades that meet requirements.
3. Admission tests, placement, or ability tests.
4. References and interviews.
5. Specific skills or on-the-job training.
6. Good verbal and quantitative skills.
7. Activities outside of classes.
8. Prior job skills and leadership roles.
9. Determination, self advocacy, and a positive attitude.

Other Things to Keep in Mind

HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPTS

High school graduation requirements are set by state and district standards. All post-secondary education institutions will require a copy of your high school transcripts noting the courses you took and your grades.

Your disability cannot be disclosed on any document. High school transcripts may denote modified grades or courses. Modified courses or grades often suggest learning outcomes have been significantly changed. Adaptations and/or accommodations for courses in which the learning outcomes remain the same for all students are not noted on the transcripts. Classes modified to the extent that they change the course outcomes may be acceptable according to the IEP goals and objectives but may not be accepted in the admissions process for postsecondary institutions. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the differences between modified courses and courses in which you require only adaptations or accommodations.

Make sure that you request in writing that the school district keep your records for more than a year.

You may want to consider taking a lower grade in a gen-

eral education class versus a higher grade in a self-contained special education class. It is your responsibility to check with your school counselor and special education teacher annually to ensure any modified courses you are taking allow you to obtain a regular high school diploma to meet the entrance requirements of postsecondary institutions.

STUDENT PORTFOLIO

If you are planning to undertake a postsecondary education, it is helpful for you to plan early. A portfolio designed to demonstrate your accomplishments and competencies may assist the admissions recruiter at the postsecondary institution. Take your portfolio to your visit and interview on a campus or send a copy with your application. Items you may want to include are:

- Work samples (reports, models, or pictures of projects you have completed, papers you have written evidence of your participation on teams or school activities, descriptions of volunteer work)
- Interest inventory results
- Letters of recommendation (teachers, school counselors, employers, administrators, coaches)
- State and/or district assessment results
- SOP, MPSG, and age appropriate transition assessments

After you are admitted to a postsecondary institution, you may be required to submit the following to the support/special services contact at the institution:

- Accommodations that will be needed
- Current documentation and description of disability
- Description of learning style

Questions You Should Be Prepared To Answer

- Why do you want to go to college?
- What are your career goals?
- In what would you like to major?

- Why did you choose this college/university?
- What were your favorite high school courses?
- What were your extracurricular activities?
- Do you plan to work while going to school?
- What are your preferences and interests?

Staff from student support programs may ask these questions:

- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- How does your disability affect your academic performance?
- How do you compensate for your disability?
- What assistance, accommodations, or assistive technology did you receive in high school

that were effective?

- What assistance/accommodations do you think you will need to be successful in college?
- Do you plan to take a full load of courses?
- How much time do you study each day, and how do you plan your time?
- Are you willing to put in extra effort compared to other students to earn a college degree?

WHAT CLASSES MUST I TAKE?

Your high school will require you to complete specific courses for graduation. These courses will be valuable no matter what career choice you make.

Whether you choose to go to a technical college, a two- or four-year college or university, the military, an adult apprenticeship, or into a career immediately after graduation, the areas of knowledge described in the chart will make it easier for you to choose from many career options.

Each college and university has formal entrance requirements; ask your guidance counselor or check a school's Internet site for more information.

Required Courses	* Required Content Standards	** Years required to graduate from High School	Years required to be admitted to Technical College	*** Years required to be admitted to 4-Year College
English	Reading/literature, Writing, Oral Language, Media and Technology, Grammar, Research and Inquiry	4	4	4
Social Studies	Geography, History, Political Science, Citizenship, Economics, and the Behavioral Sciences	3	3	3
Math	Mathematical Process, Number Operations and Relationships, Geometry, Measurement, Statistics and Probability, Algebraic Relationships	2	2	3
Science	Science Connections, Nature of Science, Science Inquiry, Physical Science, Earth and Space Science, Life And Environmental Science, Science Applications, Science in Personal And Social Perspectives	2	2	3
Physical Education	Active Lifestyle, Physical Skill Development, Learning Skills, Understanding Physical Activity and Well Being, Health-enhancing Fitness, Respectful Behavior, and Understanding Diversity	1.5		
Health	Health Promotion And Disease Prevention, Healthy Behaviors, Goal Setting and Decision Making, Information and Services, Culture, Media, Technology, Communication, and Advocacy	.5		
Electives	Vocational Education, Driver's Education, Music, Visual, and Performing Art		varies	varies
Foreign Languages	How To Communicate With Other Cultures: Communication, Culture, Connections, Comparisons, Communities			varies
Computer Science & Literacy	Keyboarding, Computer Operations and Terminology, Problem-solving, Applying Computer Technology, Testing Software, Social and Economic Impact of Computers		varies	varies

*Wisconsin model academic content standards **Required by Wisconsin Statute; local districts may have additional requirements ***General Recommendations

Postsecondary Education Exploration Worksheet

EXPLORING CHOICES, SELECTING, AND APPLYING FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Make and use a copy of these pages for each college you are considering.

Name of College: _____

Internet Address of College: _____

Services, Programs, & Characteristics	Comments/Questions
CHARACTER AND SETTING	
Highly competitive academically	
Moderately competitive	
Not competitive	
Average class rank of current freshman class	
High school grade point average of incoming freshman class	
Average SAT/ACT score	
Size of college	
Size of city/town	
Sororities/fraternities on campus	
Clubs or organizations of interest	
Sports activities (participant or spectator)	
Other	
GETTING THERE/GETTING AROUND	
Miles from home	
Car pools available	
Public transportation available	
Access to buildings	
Effect of weather, construction, & other factors on mobility access	
Cafeteria/food availability	
Access to support services	
Access to fitness facilities	
Access to computer labs	
Other	

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- The Internet
- School counselor
- Internet listings of careers, technical and trade schools, colleges and universities
- School and college catalogs
- Computer guidance systems
- Career information in the library
- Graduates and current students
- Employers
- People of all ages who enjoy their jobs

“College is a challenge. However, students must remember that there is pure exhilaration in starting the race, but the payoff is in the completion!”

— Tiffany, college student with a disability

Services, Programs, & Characteristics	Comments/Questions
MAJOR FIELD OF STUDY	
Minimum ACT score of: _____	
Minimum SAT score of: _____	
Acceptance of nonstandard administration of ACT/SAT	
Open admission/no admission requirements	
Waived ACT/SAT scores	
Class ranking based on high school grade point average	
Admissions interview	
Modified admission for students with disabilities	
Foreign language/math/other specific requirement	
Documentation of intelligence and achievement tests	
Recommendations from high school faculty	
MAJOR FIELD OF STUDY	
Availability of major in chosen career	
Full time years of study for a degree or certificate	
Part time years of study for a degree or certificate	
Requirements for admission into the program of study	
Requirements to remain in the program of study	
CLASSES	
Orientation classes	
Learning-strategies classes	
Study-skills classes	
Time-management classes	
Developmental-reading classes	
Basic English classes	
Basic mathematics classes	
Foreign language/math/other requirement waived	
Other	
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	
High tuition fees	
Moderate tuition fees	
Low tuition fees	
Scholarships available	
Financial aid available	
Work study jobs available	
Book or materials rental fees or costs to purchase	
Tutoring fees	
Room and board costs	
Costs for special services	

Services, Programs, & Characteristics	Comments/Questions
SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	
Alternative test administration (computers, oral, other)	
Extended time for tests	
Flexible format for completing assignments	
Note-takers	
Readers	
Scribes/writers	
Taped textbooks and alternative formats for course materials	
Assistive technology available	
Computers available	
Study groups	
Subject matter tutoring	
Modified instruction	
Opportunities for counseling with support staff	
Peer support group	
Opportunities to receive diagnostic testing	
Development of educational plan	
Career Placement Services	
Interpreters	
Other	
COUNSELING SERVICES	
Student advisors	
Career counselors	
Financial advisors	
Personal counselors	
Health-care providers	
HOUSING	
Off-campus housing availability and affordability	
Residence halls and dining halls on campus	
Halls with no drinking or smoking	
Single-occupancy rooms	
Co-ed halls	
Male-/female-only halls	
Limited guest visitation	
Quiet floors for study	
Study rooms available	
Internet access in rooms	
Computers in residence hall	
Cooking facilities available	

Adapted from Weist-Webb, K. *Transition to Post-secondary Education: Strategies for Students With Disabilities*. Austin, TX: ProEd, 2000.

Who Stays in Postsecondary Education

Students with disabilities should consider the challenges they will encounter in postsecondary education. You can compensate for the challenges by demonstrating the characteristics of other successful students.

CATEGORY	SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS	UNSUCCESSFUL STUDENTS
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal-oriented Determination, perseverance Self-discipline Willingness to work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of goals or career ideas Immature Procrastinates
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic background Knowledge of study and compensatory techniques Knowledge of learning style Time-management skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of academic preparation Protected in high school Learned helplessness Lack of study and time management Disorganized
Self-Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-awareness Self-acceptance Knowledge of laws, policies, and resources Assertiveness skills Problem-solving skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unrealistic expectations Denial of disability, embarrassment Lack of knowledge of legal rights Lack of self-esteem and self-confidence Lack of effective communication techniques Lack of problem-solving skills

(Hecks-Coolick and Kurtz, 1997)

Final Thoughts

Life is a giant buffet of choices. You are the one who makes the decisions about what you want, where you go, and how successful you will be. Many students with disabilities have successfully completed postsecondary experiences and have wonderful careers. You are the key to your own success. You have the support of your parents, teachers, counselors, and other students, but the adventure is yours. If you plan ahead, develop goals, and are willing to explore your interests and communicate what you need, who knows all that you will be able to accomplish. Begin planning. "It's your future now."

Appendix A

OPENING DOORS TO

secondary Education & Training

FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

THE CHALLENGE...

All Wisconsin K-12 and postsecondary education institutions are committed to providing reasonable opportunity and equal challenges to all students,

WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT
OF PUBLIC
INSTRUCTION

ELIZABETH BURMASTER
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

WHAT ARE YOUR RIGHTS?

The term “disability” means different things in public schools and postsecondary institutions.

When serving students with disabilities, public K-12 schools must comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which requires them to identify, document, and provide services based on an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP serves as a monitoring and communication tool for parents, students, and school personnel and provides connections for community services (for example, employment opportunities or adult living). IDEA entitlements end when the student reaches age 21, or when the requirements for high school graduation are met, and the student receives a regular high school diploma.

When serving students with disabilities, postsecondary institutions must comply with Section 504/Americans with Dis-

abilities Act (ADA), which stipulates they:

- cannot discriminate in college recruitment, admission, or after admission solely based on a student’s disability;
- are required to make individualized, reasonable accommodations at no charge;
- must make modifications “as necessary” to ensure academic requirements are not discriminatory;
- inform students of available services, academic adjustments, and the name of the coordinator of support services; and
- must provide written information on how to access services or request accommodations.

It is important to start planning EARLY for postsecondary education!

WHAT ARE YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES?

Students within high school need to:

- participate in transition planning by attending meetings,

beginning at age 14 or younger, if appropriate,

- talk to their IEP team to discuss interests and preferences, and address postsecondary education planning, and
- learn self-advocacy skills.

Upon turning 18, students with disabilities are legally adults in charge of their own future. Although laws (504/ADA) also protect them, they have responsibilities as they enter postsecondary education. Students should:

- understand their disability and provide current documentation verifying the disability,
- advocate on their own behalf,
- contact support/special services personnel at the college, technical college, or university,
- notify instructors regarding needed accommodations, and
- arrange for those support services not available in the postsecondary education setting.

WHAT ARE INDIVIDUAL ACCOMMODATIONS?

It is important to understand the distinction between accommoda-

tions (ensuring access to programs and services) and modifications (making changes to programs and services). Postsecondary educational institutions must provide needed accommodations including but not limited to:

- special needs counseling
- assistive technology
- testing accommodations
- taped textbooks
- note-takers, readers, and interpreters
- learning/study skills support together.

ARE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AVAILABLE IN POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS?

Simply put-no! Postsecondary institutions may provide academic adjustments if they do not change course outcomes or program requirements or place an undue burden on the institution. However, accommodations must be provided.

Remember... Accommodations are intended to ensure program access that allows students with disabilities to compete equally with their nondisabled peers. Not all accommodations are appropriate for every student.

However... Students with disabilities can succeed in the postsecondary environment by demonstrating the following characteristics of a successful student:

- Be motivated and goal-oriented
- Be academically prepared
- Demonstrate self-advocacy skills
- Demonstrate organizational skills
- Demonstrate time-management skills

Talk to your instructors and negotiate needed accommodations from the first day of class (or earlier, if possible). Don't wait until the end of the semester!

WHAT POSTSECONDARY OPPORTUNITIES EXIST IN WISCONSIN?

University of Wisconsin System: Wisconsin has 13 four-year institutions offering under-

graduate and/or graduate programs as well as 13 two-year institutions.

Independent Institutions

Wisconsin has 21 private colleges and universities.

Technical College System

Wisconsin has 16 technical colleges offering one- and two-year associate degrees in fields ranging from accounting development. Some technical college credits transfer to colleges or universities.

Other Postsecondary Options:

See the State of Wisconsin Vocational Approval Board website for a complete listing (<http://eab.state.wi.us>) of other postsecondary options.

Admission requirements vary among postsecondary institutions. Students should discuss the kinds of classes, grades, and entrance requirements needed with a school counselor and the IEP team.

WHERE TO START?

- Ask a school counselor for the post-secondary handbook for students with disabilities, "Opening the Second Door," for additional information and suggestions.
- Refer to the following list of postsecondary institutions.
- Check the websites for additional information.

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