

Transitioning from High School to the University of Wyoming

UW Disability Support Services / 307-766-3298 / UDSS@uwyo.edu / Knight Hall Room 109

Welcome to the University of Wyoming! Transitioning from high school to college can be an exciting yet challenging time. UW Disability Support Services is here to help! Check out our quick guide to learn some of the most crucial differences between high school and college for students with disabilities.

Understanding the Differences

- **Independence:** College offers more independence compared to high school. Students are responsible for managing their time, assignments, and schedule. Parental involvement and access to information is limited.
- **Class Structure/Pace:** College classes are typically larger and faster paced than high school classes. Students should choose classes to maximize success and know the start and end date of each class to stay on top of coursework.
- **Rights and Responsibilities:** Students have the right to reasonable accommodations that ensure equal access to education. Students are responsible for advocating for themselves and establishing accommodations each semester.

	High School	College
Relevant Laws	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	Section 504 & 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Acts (ADA), ADA Amendments Act of 2008
Outcomes	Access to a free and appropriate education	Equal access to, and meaningful participation in, postsecondary education
Documentation	School district is responsible for evaluating and providing academic modifications	Students are responsible for providing documentation from a medical/educational professional that states the student's name and diagnosis
Accommodation Process/Plans	Students/parents and their school district work together to implement a 504 or IEP. Services may include individually designed/modified instruction	Students work with their DSS coordinator to establish accommodations. Reasonable accommodations are determined using the interactive process and documentation
Parental Involvement	Parents are often advocates and provide substantial input	Adult students are responsible for self-advocacy. Parents may be involved at the student's request
Monitoring Progress	Parents and teachers may provide reminders and check for work submission	Students are responsible for monitoring their progress, schedules, and deadlines. They are expected to seek help from instructors and DSS if needed

Navigating the Accommodation Process for Students

1. **Contact DSS:** Apply to DSS via our website <https://www.uwyo.edu/udss/index.html> to register at any time within your postsecondary education. You can upload documentation here or give it to your coordinator within your first DSS-registered semester.
2. **Develop an Accommodation Plan:** Work with your coordinator to develop an accommodation plan tailored to your needs that fits within a college environment. This plan may be different than your high school accommodations.
3. **Communicate with Professors:** Once your accommodation plan is in place, your coordinator will email this to your professors. Communicate with your professors to discuss how accommodations will be implemented in each class and address any questions or concerns you may have.
4. **Reestablish Accommodations:** Each semester, you will need to contact your DSS coordinator to tell them you want to continue receiving accommodations and provide an updated list of professors and classes.

5 Tips for Success in College from DSS

1. **Know What DSS Does:** DSS offers academic, housing, dining, and other accommodations. We also do more than accommodations – ask us for resources!
2. **Start Early:** Contact DSS, register for classes, and reach out to your professors early to prevent unwanted surprises later!
3. **Be Open with Your Coordinator:** We are here to support you! Be open with your coordinator so we can make sure to offer you the best support possible. Ask questions about accommodations, assistive tech/software, and life after college.
4. **Monitor your UW email:** The main form of communication in a college environment is email. Check your email every day! Know that most staff members/professors will try to respond within 48 business hours but that this isn't always possible.
5. **Reach Out if You're Struggling:** If you didn't reach out early in the semester, that's ok! DSS is still here to support you.



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