

# POSTSECONDARY SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES



# TRANSITION TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Many high school students with disabilities pursue Postsecondary education. This may include attendance at a technical college, a two or four-year college or university, or an inclusive Postsecondary education program. This stage in the transition process becomes more difficult because different laws govern the policies and educational practices of higher education institutions. Students and parents should become familiar with these laws to ease the transition to Postsecondary education.

If you would like more information about the responsibilities of Postsecondary schools to students with disabilities visit the following website and type “Students with Disabilities” into the search section: <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html>

## Primary Differences between High School and Postsecondary Education Programs:

High School	Postsecondary
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) governs services for students.	Services for students are governed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973</li> <li>• Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)</li> <li>• Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)</li> </ul>
Schools conduct assessments to determine eligibility at no cost to the student or parents.	The student must pay for or find appropriate funding for assessments which provide documentation to prove his/her disability
Schools provide services and accommodations at no cost to students or parents.	Student (not parent) must locate and identify the office of the Disability Service Provider and register with that office after admission to school
	Student must meet each agency’s requirements
	Student (not parent) must be able to discuss needs and request reasonable accommodations
	Student (not parent) must now apply for services

# GEORGIA'S POSTSECONDARY SCHOOLS

Georgia has a large network of public and private colleges, universities, technical institutes, and special purpose schools located throughout the state. Together, they offer over 415 different areas of study.

Postsecondary schools may be classified into four categories: two-year colleges, four-year colleges and research universities, technical institutes, and special purpose schools. Each school rewards some type of recognition of completion: a diploma, certificate, or degree.

- Two-year colleges offer freshmen and sophomore level courses leading to an Associate Degree. There are two types of Associate Degree programs:
  - Career program – the student earns an Associate Degree in Applied Science and is prepared for immediate employment.
  - Transfer program – the student earns an Associate of Arts or Science Degree. This degree is structured to allow the student to transfer earned credits to a four year college or university.
- Four-year colleges offer undergraduate degree programs. Students earn the traditional Baccalaureate Degree: the Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts. Programs for four years may vary in length; some programs may be completed in four years, others may require additional time.
- Technical institutes offer programs of study that lead directly to employment in over 85 fields, including customer service, cosmetology, auto mechanics, computer programming, and practical nursing. These courses continue for six weeks to years. Students receive a certificate or diploma after completing their studies.
- Inclusive Postsecondary Education Programs within college & universities offer programs for students who have or have not received a traditional high school diploma. Students audit classes with their peers and are supported by program staff, peer mentors, and the natural supports of their college/university community. Students receive a certificate from the college/university upon completion of the program.
- Special purpose schools offer highly focused studies in selected fields, such as art, technology, medicine, or religious vocations. These schools generally grant a degree when the required courses have been completed.

For a complete listing of colleges and universities in the University System of Georgia, visit [www.usg.edu](http://www.usg.edu). Georgia Learning Resource Systems (GLRS) publishes *The Georgia Transition Directory: Postsecondary Options* which is available online at [www.glr.org](http://www.glr.org). For more information on inclusive Postsecondary education programs visit [www.gaipsec.org](http://www.gaipsec.org).

# INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS PREPARING FOR POSTSECONDARY SCHOOLS

## Ways to Prepare for a Postsecondary Education:

- Learn to advocate for yourself.
- Learn to self-monitor your progress in classes.
- Take necessary coursework to meet Postsecondary institution requirements.
- Explore various schools, their requirements, and the kinds of supports they offer.
- Be involved in your IEP meetings.
- Know which supports and accommodations best meet your needs and be able to voice them.
- Check with your counselor and take all appropriate assessments for entrance into Postsecondary institutions. Your high school handbook will usually have a listing, explanation, and timeline for taking these tests.
- Explore and visit Postsecondary schools.
- Visit [www.gtrs.org](http://www.gtrs.org). Search for The Georgia Transition Directory: Postsecondary Options. This will provide a listing of Postsecondary institutions in Georgia, helpful resources, questions to ask the admissions office and the Disability Services Provider at your school.
- Also visit [www.gacollege411.com](http://www.gacollege411.com). This website will help you research careers and colleges and guide you through the steps of applying for schools. It also provides information on loans and scholarships.

## Providing Documentation of Your Disability

When you initially apply to school, you *do not* have to disclose your disability. Once you have been accepted, you should contact the Disability Services Provider on campus to meet and discuss procedures if you wish to receive possible accommodations.

Schools may set reasonable standards for documentation. Some may require more than others. Visit the school website or call the Disability Services Provider at your school and ask questions about their individual requirements and/or procedures. (Also see information below on the Regents Center if you plan to attend a 2 or 4-year college or university.)

Your IEP or Section 504 Plan *is not* sufficient documentation. If your documentation does not meet requirements, your school must tell you in a timely manner what additional documentation you need to provide.

## Regents Center for Learning Disorders

If you are planning to attend one of Georgia's colleges or universities, The Regents Center for Learning Disorders (RCLD) is an agency that will help you make that transition. The centers were created in response to a need to establish uniformity across the colleges and universities in the University System in the identification of students with learning disabilities. It is the goal of the centers to provide all students in the University System with access to a reasonable cost comprehensive evaluation to document possible learning disorders.

There are three RCLD's in Georgia. Each center can help you locate the Disability Services Provider for the specific college or university you wish to attend. These are the contact centers for all University System colleges and universities located in their region.

Regents Center for Learning Disorders at Georgia Southern University Statesboro, GA 30460 912-681-0100 <a href="http://services.georgiasouthern.edu/rclid/">http://services.georgiasouthern.edu/rclid/</a>	Regents Center for Learning Disorders at Georgia State University Atlanta, GA 30303 404-651-4662 <a href="http://www.gsu.edu/rclid">www.gsu.edu/rclid</a>	Regents Center for Learning Disorders at the University of Georgia Athens, GA 30602 706-542-4589 <a href="http://www.rclid.uga.edu/">http://www.rclid.uga.edu/</a>
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### What does the RCLD do?

- Help provide services to students with learning disabilities, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, acquired brain injury and related conditions.
- Provide specialized evaluations to document disabilities.
- Serve as a resource in identifying appropriate accommodations to meet the educational needs of the student.

### Eligibility

To be eligible for testing at an RCLD, a student must be:

- currently enrolled in one of the Board of Regents' colleges or universities in Georgia, or
- admitted for enrollment, or
- undergoing special admissions review.

Students must be referred to a center by the disability services office at their institution. If the disability services representative believes that testing is warranted, the student will be given a referral packet to complete.

Evaluation at an RCLD is not required to receive accommodations. An evaluation performed by any qualified professional can serve as documentation of a disability. However, the institution will review the evaluation in order to insure that it contains the information required by the Board of Regents. For a complete listing of acceptable assessments, see the Suggested Assessment Measures section in the RCLD website.

For The Official Guide on the RCLD visit the following website:

<http://www.gsu.edu/rclid/BORWEB/introduction.htm>



The University of Georgia

Regents' Center for Learning Disorders

## Project Bridge

### Secondary to Postsecondary Documentation for Students with Disabilities

**The University of Georgia Regents' Center for Learning Disorders (UGA-RCLD)** has started a new initiative called Project Bridge. Many secondary students with disabilities are preparing to graduate and transition to postsecondary institutions. Under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, 2004)*, secondary programs are required to provide each student with disabilities a *Summary of Performance (SOP)* as their primary disability documentation. Unfortunately, many times these SOP do not match the documentation requirements at postsecondary institutions or for entrance-level examinations. The student with disabilities cannot access accommodations at a postsecondary setting or on a high-stakes examinations (e.g., SAT, ACT, GED, Compass) without the support of specific documentation requirements.

### Project Bridge

As a solution to students with disabilities, the secondary school systems, and Department of Labor Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselors working with them, the *UGA-RCLD* began Project Bridge. The purpose of this project is for the *UGA-RCLD* to work along with secondary school systems in preparing an easier transition for students with disabilities from secondary to postsecondary institutions. The *UGA-RCLD* has over 25 years experience providing comprehensive documentation that provides support for students with disabilities to access accommodations at postsecondary institutions (academic college, technical college). The collaboration between secondary school systems, Vocational Rehabilitation, and the *UGA-RCLD* can be the bridge for students with disabilities to have a seamless transition to postsecondary learning environments.

### Bridging Product

A secondary school system and the student involved in Project Bridge would receive:

1. Comprehensive psychological evaluation documenting a student's overall cognitive, academic, and emotional strengths and weaknesses.
2. Accommodation suggestions individualized to a student's profile that are appropriate for testing and instructional situations.
3. Assistive technologies and alternative media suggestions appropriate to a student's learning needs.
4. Resources for postsecondary educational opportunities.

### Initiating the Process

Any school system interested in Project Bridge can find out further information by contacting:

Noel Gregg, Ph.D.  
University of Georgia  
Regents' Center for Learning Disorders  
338 Milledge Hall Athens, Georgia 30602

## Postsecondary Admissions and/or Placement Testing

Most colleges and universities establish standards for admission that may include: a minimum score on an admissions test, a minimum grade point average (GPA), and a certain program of study throughout high school. Information regarding the admissions requirements are available through each college, university, or vocational school's admissions office and can be obtained by contacting the institution. Placement tests are often administered in order to assist the school in obtaining information to guide you toward classes that strengthen and build logically upon your current skills and goals.

- **ASSET** - The ASSET (Assessment of Skills for Successful Entry and Transfer) advising, placement, and retention system is a series of short placement tests developed by ACT (American College Testing) that lets you and your school work together to help you succeed in your educational program. ASSET helps you identify your strengths as well as the knowledge and skills you will need in order to succeed in specific subject areas. ASSET also helps your school use this information to guide you toward classes that strengthen and build logically upon your current knowledge and skills.

Most institutions give the ASSET during orientation to incoming freshmen who have already applied and been admitted to the school. Some institutions may require you to take one or more of the ASSET tests before enrolling in a particular program or course.

ACT provides universal testing for the ASSET for students with disabilities who cannot test at university test centers. Nearly 700 schools and community colleges across the United States use the ASSET.

### Contact Information

ACT  
500 ACT Drive  
P.O. Box 168  
Iowa City, Iowa 52243-0168  
(319) 337-1000  
[www.act.org/asset/](http://www.act.org/asset/)

- **ACT (American College Testing)**

Many Postsecondary schools require a minimum score on the ACT for admission. Contact schools in which you are interested in attending to obtain information on scores and particular tests required.

ACT is committed to serving students with disabilities by providing reasonable accommodations appropriate to the student's disability. ACT has established policies regarding documentation of an applicant's disability and the process for requesting accommodations.

Contact Information

ACT

500 ACT Drive, P.O. Box 168

Iowa City, Iowa 52243-0168

(319) 337-1000

[www.act.org/aap/disab/index.html](http://www.act.org/aap/disab/index.html)

***\*The SAT and ACT do NOT flag scores achieved with special accommodations when reporting scores to colleges and universities.***

• **PSAT/SAT 1: Reasoning Tests; SAT II: Subject Tests (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/Scholastic Aptitude Test)**

Many Postsecondary schools require a minimum score on the SAT I: Reasoning Tests for admission. Contact schools in which you are interested in attending to obtain information on scores and particular tests required.

A student with a disability may be eligible for accommodations on the College Board test. A *Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Student Eligibility Form* must be submitted for each student requesting accommodations. To be eligible, the student must:

- have a disability that necessitates testing accommodations
- have documentation on file at school that supports the need for requested accommodations and meets the Guidelines for Documentation, and
- receive and utilize the requested accommodations, due to the disability for school based tests.

***\*\*Only one SSD form needs to be completed for each student. It will cover all noted College Board testing programs for as long as the student remains at his/her school, unless the school indicates that the accommodations have changed.***

Contact Information:

College Board Services for Students with Disabilities

PO Box 6226

Princeton, NJ 08541-6226

(609) 771-7137 (Voice)

(609) 882-4118 (TTY)

[www.collegeboard.com/ssd](http://www.collegeboard.com/ssd)

There are a growing number of Postsecondary schools that do not use SAT I or ACT scores for admitting a substantial number of students into a bachelor's degree program. Several of these schools are located in Georgia. Information that lists colleges and universities de-emphasizing tests by making admissions decisions about

substantial numbers of applicants who recently graduated from high school without using the SAT I or ACT are available through the FairTest list.

#### Contact Information

FairTest  
The National Center for Fair & Open Testing  
342 Broadway  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
(617) 864-4810 (voice)  
(617) 497-2224 (fax)  
[www.FairTest.org](http://www.FairTest.org)

e-mail: [fairtest@fairtest.org](mailto:fairtest@fairtest.org)

## Technical Colleges

The Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education (DTAE) oversees the state's system of 31 technical colleges and other programs. For a complete listing of colleges and more in-depth information, visit [www.dtae.org](http://www.dtae.org).

The Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education provides assurances that individuals who are members of special populations will be provided with equal access to recruitment, enrollment, job placement activities and the full range of technical education programs and activities available.

Contact the technical college of interest to determine any special documentation that you need to provide in order to receive services. Ask for the **Disability Services Provider**.

#### Documentation Guidelines

All disabilities that affect learning and/ or require a physical alteration will require documentation that verifies the disability, clarifies that area of learning affected, and states the accommodations recommended as appropriate. Students may not be able to receive the same accommodations in high school. The Summary of Performance and the IEP are not sufficient. More testing and documentation may be required. This testing is on an individual basis and will depend on the disability. For further information see above discussion of Project Bridges.

#### Attributes of attending a Technical College

- Cost, tuition, and fees are usually lower than traditional colleges
- Opportunity to live at home
- Small class size and more contact with instructors
- Learning Support Courses
- Study Skills Course/ Workshop
- Supportive Community Environment (Voc Rehab)
- Diverse student populations
- ESL classes through Adult Literacy Programs

- Non-traditional careers
- Earn Associate degrees, Diplomas, and/or Certificates, GED

Many technical colleges use the ASSET Student Success System, a testing and advising program for placing students into postsecondary institutions. The ASSET helps identify your strengths as well as the knowledge and skills you will need in order to succeed in specific subject areas. There are three tests of basic skills in writing, reading, and numerical reasoning with more advanced tests in algebra and geometry. There is generally not a minimum passing score but one that indicates areas in which you are strong and areas in which you may need help. Ask the Disability Services Provider for specifics on how the scores are interpreted. Visit <http://www.act.org/asset/index/html> and download the *ASSET Student Guide* with test-taking tips and sample questions.

Another test that may be required for admission to technical schools is the COMPASS (Comprehensive Computer Adaptive Testing System). COMPASS is a computerized test that provides important information about individual skills and preparation for college-level courses. It is an untimed, adaptive computer-based test that measures skill in reading, writing and mathematics. Although the COMPASS is not a pass-fail test, it assists colleges in placing students in courses and providing diagnostic information. For more information, contact schools to which you are applying to determine if they require a COMPASS score for admissions. Online information on the COMPASS is available at [www.compass-test.com](http://www.compass-test.com).

#### **Requesting Testing Accommodations for the COMPASS or ASSET Tests**

- Contact the Disability Service Center at the school
- Submit documentation to the Disability Services coordinator—NOT the Admissions Office
- Coordinator will determine appropriate accommodations and schedule testing with accommodations if needed

#### **Possible Accommodations for the ASSET**

- Extended time
- Frequent breaks
- Oral or on tape/ scribe
- Use of calculator
- Separate room
- Braille or large print
- Interpreter

#### **Possible Accommodations for the COMPASS**

- Use of built in calculator
- Can take one section at a time—separate days if necessary
- ESL version available at some colleges

#### **Technical Colleges**

<b><u>Technical Colleges</u></b>	<b><u>Main Number</u></b>
Albany Technical College	229-430-3500
Athens Technical College	706-355-5000
Atlanta Technical College	404-225-4461
Augusta Technical College	706-771-4000
Central Georgia Technical College	478-757-3400
Chattahoochee Technical College	770-528-4545
Coastal Pines Technical College	912-379-0041
Columbus Technical College	706-649-1800

Georgia Northwestern Gwinnett Technical College	706-295-6963
Georgia Piedmont Technical College	678-323-7960
Gwinnett Technical College	770-962-7580
Lanier Technical College	770-531-6300
Moultrie Technical College	229-892-7000
North Georgia Technical College	706-754-7725
Oconee Fall Line Technical College	478-275-6589
Ogeechee Technical College	912-287-6584
Savannah Technical College	912-443-5700
South Georgia Technical College	229-931-2394
Southeastern Technical College	912-538-3100
Southern Crescent Technical College	770-228-7348
Southwest Georgia Technical College	229-225-4096
West Georgia Technical College	706-845-4323
Wiregrass Georgia Technical College	229-333-2100

**University System College with  
Technical Divisions**

Bainbridge College	229-245-2510
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When beginning to request services an adult with a disability must ask to speak with the Disability Services Coordinator of the post secondary school. Only the person with the disability will be able to contact the school.

## **Accommodations at Postsecondary Schools**

### Registering for Accommodations:

- Self-identify to the designated disability services coordinator at the chosen institution.
- Provide adequate documentation of the disorder to the disability services office.
- Complete required registration with the disability services office and sign release form.
- Request accommodations each semester.
- Some institutions may have additional requirements to receive accommodations and services.

## Typical Accommodations in College for Students with Disabilities

Low Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Class assignments in electronic format</li> <li>▪ Large print handouts, signs</li> <li>▪ Assistance with note-taking</li> <li>▪ Closed Captioning on videos</li> <li>▪ Seating where lighting is best</li> <li>▪ Use of magnification software for computers</li> </ul>
Blindness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Audio-tape/ CD text books</li> <li>▪ Braille or electronic lecture notes, handouts or textbooks</li> <li>▪ Assistance with note-taking</li> <li>▪ Raised line drawings and tactile models of graphic materials</li> <li>▪ Adaptive lab equipment (ex.. talking thermometers and calculators)</li> <li>▪ Computers with optical character readers, voice output, Braille screen displays, and printers</li> </ul>
Hearing Impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interpreters, Closed Captioning for videos, FM system</li> <li>▪ Assistance with note-taking</li> <li>▪ Teacher face student when talking</li> <li>▪ Written assignments, lab instructions, demonstration summaries</li> <li>▪ Visual aids, Visual warning systems for lab emergencies</li> <li>▪ Repeat questions and statements from other students</li> <li>▪ Electronic mail</li> </ul>
Learning Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assistance with note-taking</li> <li>▪ Use a recorder during class lecture</li> <li>▪ Course/ lecture outlines</li> <li>▪ Extended time on tests/ exams, alternative testing arrangements</li> <li>▪ Visual, oral, and tactile demonstrations incorporated into teaching</li> <li>▪ Computers with software for spell/ grammar check and voice output</li> <li>▪ Faculty asked to avoid having student read out loud in class</li> </ul>
Mobility Impairments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adjustable tables, lab equipment within reach</li> <li>▪ Class materials in electronic format</li> <li>▪ Extended time, alternative test format</li> <li>▪ Alternative keyboard and mouse</li> <li>▪ Classrooms, labs, and field trips held in accessible locations</li> </ul>
Health Impairments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assistance with note taking, use of tape recorder</li> <li>▪ Flexible attendance requirements</li> <li>▪ Extended time on tests, exams</li> <li>▪ Alternative testing arrangements</li> <li>▪ Assignments in electronic format—web/ email</li> </ul>

Psychological Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Extended time</li> <li>▪ Use of tape recorder, or other assistance with note taking</li> <li>▪ Alternative testing arrangements—non-distracting room</li> <li>▪ Flexible attendance requirements</li> </ul>
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## **Financial Assistance**

There are many different sources of financial assistance for Postsecondary students, as well as financial assistance specifically for students with disabilities.

Here are some recommendations:

- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form, which is available online, at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>. as well as at any financial aid office. Most high schools also have them available.
- Explore financial aid and grant options. Check with the financial aid offices of the postsecondary institutions being considered. Use free scholarship searches online.
- The Social Security Administration has plans to help students pay school expenses and work while retaining social security benefits. See the SSA web site at <http://www.ssa.gov/disability/> or call 1-800-772-1213.
- Based upon individual needs and eligibility, the state Vocational Rehabilitation Agency may provide financial assistance for fees, books, and other school and work-related expenses. To find the number for the Vocational Rehabilitation office nearest you, look in your phone book in the state government section. State Vocational Rehabilitation Services often have web sites, as well. Search for “vocational rehabilitation” and the name of your state.

For students considering schools in Georgia, obtain a copy of Georgia’s Postsecondary Schools from the Georgia Student Finance Commission at [www.gsfc.com](http://www.gsfc.com) or by phone at (770) 724-9000. The Georgia Student Finance Commission also has information on the HOPE Scholarship and other grant programs.

## **Inclusive Postsecondary Education Programs**

Postsecondary educational (PSE) opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities have been expanding for decades. However, PSE remains a reality that few families consider – or are educated about. Some creativity may be needed to address issues of safety, supports, funding and access, but, attending college can contribute to growth among individuals with intellectual disabilities in many of the same ways traditional students benefit from PSE: academic and personal skill building, independence, self-advocacy, friendships, and, perhaps most importantly, employment skills.

For students considering inclusive PSE programs, more information can be found through the Georgia Inclusive Postsecondary Education Consortium at [www.gaipsec.org](http://www.gaipsec.org) or by phone at the Center for Leadership in Disability at Georgia State University 404-413-1289 and nationally through Think College at [www.thinkcollege.net](http://www.thinkcollege.net).

### **PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR POSTSECONDARY SCHOOL DURING THEIR HIGH SCHOOL YEARS**

Parents, counselors, teachers and students may use this list as an important reminder of important skills and necessary steps to take as a high school student with a disability moves to Postsecondary school.

- Make sure psychological evaluations are up-to-date. Postsecondary schools vary on the requirements for evaluations. Many schools require that the evaluation be current within 3 years, but this is not always the case. Check with the institution to determine the requirements.
- Obtain all student records before graduation. Colleges, vocational schools, and vocational rehabilitation offices request these records to assist in providing appropriate services to individuals. Make sure all appropriate release forms have been signed.
- Consider a vocational assessment prior to graduation as a way to amplify present and future goals.
- Make sure the student has a firm foundation in independent study skills. In addition to high school assistance, consider special study skills classes/programs offered at community colleges, private agencies, summer programs, or individual tutoring.
- Consult with the IEP team to obtain a good understanding of how much support or special help the student is receiving. It is important to determine realistically whether minimal accommodations or an extensive disability support program will be needed at the Postsecondary level.
- Help students increase their independent living skills by:
  - Managing their own checking account
  - Doing their own laundry

- Demonstrating responsibility for chores within the home
  - Shopping for and preparing meals
  - Responding appropriately to telephone solicitors
- Encourage students to work at part-time jobs or volunteer positions.
- Make sure students have a good understanding of their disabling condition and have developed self-advocacy skills. Students should know how to articulate their strengths and weaknesses as well as what compensating techniques and accommodations work best for them.
- Help students understand how their disabilities are connected to social expectations with peers, families, and employers.
- Encourage students and provide them with opportunities to be their own advocates. A good first step is to encourage them to discuss their disabilities with their regular high school teachers, employers, or members of the community.
- Learn about section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Unlike IDEA, ***the responsibility is on the individual to initiate the provision of services and accommodations in Postsecondary schools or the workplace.***
- Get information on special exam arrangements for the SAT or ACT. Students must complete a Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) application prior to taking these tests.
- Obtain two copies of all Postsecondary school applications (or duplicate the one received) or print a copy of on-line applications. Use one copy as a draft and collect all the information needed. Type the information on the application to be sent.
- Contact the Disability Services Director of any Postsecondary school that you may want to apply to. Get information on the types of services and supports that are available, the number of students with disabilities who are attending, if there are any special preadmission requirements (records, reference letters, etc.) when making application.
- Visit Postsecondary schools before making a definite choice. It is also important to also assess the communities in which they are located, determine living arrangements, resources.
- Consider having students begin their Postsecondary school experience in the summer semester, rather than the fall. Many Postsecondary schools have transition programs for students to have additional preparation for making the transition to Postsecondary school.
- Consider an appointment with a dentist, optometrist, medical doctor, etc. in order to determine if there will be any need for additional medical support and to reinforce management of medication.

- Encourage students to become actively involved in adult support organizations for individuals with disabilities.

Adapted from: Sullivan,C. (1987) Heath Resource Center. [www.heath.gwu.org](http://www.heath.gwu.org)

# **Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities**

U.S. Department of Education  
Office for Civil Rights  
Washington, D.C. 20202

*March 2007*

More and more high school students with disabilities are planning to continue their education in postsecondary schools, including vocational and career schools, two- and four- year colleges, and universities. As a student with a disability, you need to be well informed about your rights and responsibilities as well as the responsibilities postsecondary schools have toward you. Being well informed will help ensure you have a full opportunity to enjoy the benefits of the postsecondary education experience without confusion or delay.

The information in this pamphlet, provided by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in the U. S. Department of Education, explains the rights and responsibilities of students with disabilities who are preparing to attend postsecondary schools. This pamphlet also explains the obligations of a postsecondary school to provide academic adjustments, including auxiliary aids and services, to ensure the school does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

OCR enforces Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II), which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. Practically every school district and postsecondary school in the United States is subject to one or both of these laws, which have similar requirements.

Although both school districts and postsecondary schools must comply with these same laws, the responsibilities of postsecondary schools are significantly different from those of school districts.

Moreover, you will have responsibilities as a postsecondary student that you do not have as a high school student. OCR strongly encourages you to know your responsibilities and those of postsecondary schools under Section 504 and Title II. Doing so will improve your opportunity to succeed as you enter postsecondary education.

The following questions and answers provide more specific information to help you succeed.

**As a student with a disability leaving high school and entering postsecondary education, will I see differences in my rights and how they are addressed?**

Yes. Section 504 and Title II protect elementary, secondary and postsecondary students from discrimination. Nevertheless, several of the requirements that apply through high school are different from the requirements that apply beyond high school. For instance, Section 504 requires a school district to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to each child with a disability in the district's jurisdiction. Whatever the disability, a school district must identify an individual's education needs and provide any regular or special education and related aids and services necessary to meet those needs as well as it is meeting the needs of

students without disabilities.

Unlike your high school, your postsecondary school is not required to provide FAPE. Rather, your postsecondary school is required to provide appropriate academic adjustments as necessary to ensure that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability. In addition, if your postsecondary school provides housing to non-disabled students, it must provide comparable, convenient and accessible housing to students with disabilities at the same cost.

Other important differences you need to know, even before you arrive at your postsecondary school, are addressed in the remaining questions.

### **May a postsecondary school deny my admission because I have a disability?**

No. If you meet the essential requirements for admission, a postsecondary school may not deny your admission simply because you have a disability.

### **Do I have to inform a postsecondary school that I have a disability?**

No. However, if you want the school to provide an academic adjustment, you must identify yourself as having a disability. Likewise, you should let the school know about your disability if you want to ensure that you are assigned to accessible facilities. In any event, your disclosure of a disability is always voluntary.

### **What academic adjustments must a postsecondary school provide?**

The appropriate academic adjustment must be determined based on your disability and individual needs. Academic adjustments may include auxiliary aids and modifications to academic requirements as are necessary to ensure equal educational opportunity. Examples of such adjustments are arranging for priority registration; reducing a course load; substituting one course for another; providing note takers, recording devices, sign language interpreters, extended time for testing and, if telephones are provided in dorm rooms, a TTY in your dorm room; and equipping school computers with screen-reading, voice recognition or other adaptive software or hardware.

In providing an academic adjustment, your postsecondary school is not required to lower or effect substantial modifications to essential requirements. For example, although your school may be required to provide extended testing time, it is not required to change the substantive content of the test. In addition, your postsecondary school does not have to make modifications that would fundamentally alter the nature of a service, program or activity or would result in undue financial or administrative burdens. Finally, your postsecondary school does not have to provide personal attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature, such as tutoring and typing.

### **If I want an academic adjustment, what must I do?**

You must inform the school that you have a disability and need an academic adjustment. Unlike your school district, your postsecondary school is not required to identify you as

having a disability or assess your needs.

Your postsecondary school may require you to follow reasonable procedures to request an academic adjustment. You are responsible for knowing and following these procedures. Postsecondary schools usually include, in their publications providing general information, information on the procedures and contacts for requesting an academic adjustment. Such publications include recruitment materials, catalogs and student handbooks, and are often available on school Web sites. Many schools also have staff whose purpose is to assist students with disabilities. If you are unable to locate the procedures, ask a school official, such as an admissions officer or counselor.

### **When should I request an academic adjustment?**

Although you may request an academic adjustment from your postsecondary school at any time, you should request it as early as possible. Some academic adjustments may take more time to provide than others. You should follow your school's procedures to ensure that your school has enough time to review your request and provide an appropriate academic adjustment.

### **Do I have to prove that I have a disability to obtain an academic adjustment?**

Generally, yes. Your school will probably require you to provide documentation that shows you have a current disability and need an academic adjustment.

### **What documentation should I provide?**

Schools may set reasonable standards for documentation. Some schools require more documentation than others. They may require you to provide documentation prepared by an appropriate professional, such as a medical doctor, psychologist or other qualified diagnostician. The required documentation may include one or more of the following: a diagnosis of your current disability; the date of the diagnosis; how the diagnosis was reached; the credentials of the professional; how your disability affects a major life activity; and how the disability affects your academic performance. The documentation should provide enough information for you and your school to decide what is an appropriate academic adjustment.

Although an individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan, if you have one, may help identify services that have been effective for you, it generally is not sufficient documentation. This is because postsecondary education presents different demands than high school education, and what you need to meet these new demands may be different. Also in some cases, the nature of a disability may change.

If the documentation that you have does not meet the postsecondary school's requirements, a school official should tell you in a timely manner what additional documentation you need to provide. You may need a new evaluation in order to provide the required documentation.

### **Who has to pay for a new evaluation?**

Neither your high school nor your postsecondary school is required to conduct or pay for a new evaluation to document your disability and need for an academic adjustment. This may mean that you have to pay or find funding to pay an appropriate professional for an evaluation. If you are eligible for services through your state vocational rehabilitation agency, you may qualify for an evaluation at no cost to you. You may locate your Georgia's vocational rehabilitation agency through the following Web page: [www.vocrehabga.org](http://www.vocrehabga.org)

### **Once the school has received the necessary documentation from me, what should I expect?**

The school will review your request in light of the essential requirements for the relevant program to help determine an appropriate academic adjustment. It is important to remember that the school is not required to lower or waive essential requirements. If you have requested a specific academic adjustment, the school may offer that academic adjustment or an alternative one if the alternative would also be effective. The school may also conduct its own evaluation of your disability and needs at its own expense.

You should expect your school to work with you in an interactive process to identify an appropriate academic adjustment. Unlike the experience you may have had in high school, however, do not expect your postsecondary school to invite your parents to participate in the process or to develop an IEP for you.

### **What if the academic adjustment we identified is not working?**

Let the school know as soon as you become aware that the results are not what you expected. It may be too late to correct the problem if you wait until the course or activity is completed. You and your school should work together to resolve the problem.

### **May a postsecondary school charge me for providing an academic adjustment?**

No. Furthermore, it may not charge students with disabilities more for participating in its programs or activities than it charges students who do not have disabilities.

### **What can I do if I believe the school is discriminating against me?**

Practically every postsecondary school must have a person—frequently called the Section 504 Coordinator, ADA Coordinator, or Disability Services Coordinator—who coordinates the school's compliance with Section 504 or Title II or both laws. You may contact this person for information about how to address your concerns.

The school must also have grievance procedures. These procedures are not the same as the due process procedures with which you may be familiar from high school. However, the postsecondary school's grievance procedures must include steps to ensure that you may raise your concerns fully and fairly and must provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints.

School publications, such as student handbooks and catalogs, usually describe the steps you

must take to start the grievance process. Often, schools have both formal and informal processes. If you decide to use a grievance process, you should be prepared to present all the reasons that support your request.

Students with disabilities who know their rights and responsibilities are much better equipped to succeed in postsecondary school. We encourage you to work with the staff at your school because they, too, want you to succeed. Seek the support of family, friends and fellow students, including those with disabilities. Know your talents and capitalize on them, and believe in yourself as you embrace new challenges in your education.

## **Keys to Success: Attitude, Self-Advocacy And Preparation**

The attitude and self-advocacy skills of students with disabilities may be two of the most important factors in determining their success or failure in postsecondary education. Students with disabilities need to be prepared to work collaboratively with the institution's disability coordinator to enable them to have an equal opportunity to participate in an institution's programs and activities. To ensure that students with disabilities possess the desired levels of self-advocacy to succeed in postsecondary education, high school educators may want to encourage the students to:

***Understand their disabilities.*** Students with disabilities need to know the functional limitations that result from their disabilities and understand their strengths and weaknesses. They should be able to explain their disabilities to an institution's disability coordinators or other appropriate staff. As part of this process, students should be able to explain where they have had difficulty in the past, as well as what has helped them overcome such problems and what specific adjustments might work in specific situations. To assist students in this area, high school educators can encourage high school students to be active participants in their IEP or Section 504 meetings. High school personnel also can suggest that students practice explaining their disabilities, as well as why they need certain services, to appropriate secondary staff or through role-playing exercises to prepare them to engage in such conversations with confidence in a postsecondary setting.

***Accept responsibility for their own success.*** All students, including those with disabilities, must take primary responsibility for their success or failure in postsecondary education. Students with disabilities, in particular, are moving from a system where parents and school staff usually advocated on their behalf to a system where they will be expected to advocate for themselves. An institution's staff will likely communicate directly with students when issues arise and are generally not required to interact with students' parents. In general, students with disabilities should expect to complete all course requirements, such as assignments and examinations. Students with disabilities need to identify the essential academic and technical standards that they will be required to meet for admission and continued participation in an institution's program. Students also need to identify any academic adjustments they may need as a result of their disabilities to meet those standards and how to request those adjustments. Students with disabilities need to understand that, while federal disability laws guarantee them an equal opportunity to participate these laws do not guarantee that students will achieve a particular

outcome, for example, good grades.

***Take an appropriate preparatory curriculum.*** Because all students will be expected to meet an institution's essential standards, students with disabilities need to take a high school curriculum that will prepare them to meet those standards. If students with disabilities plan to attend a rigorous postsecondary institution, they, like their peers without disabilities, need to make high school curriculum choices that support that goal. High school guidance counselors and state VR agency counselors, in particular, can play an important role in students' curriculum planning.

For all students, good study skills and the ability to write well are critical factors of success in postsecondary education. High school educators can help students in these areas by offering or identifying opportunities, such as workshops, courses or tutoring programs that emphasize the importance of reading, writing and good study skills. In addition, staff should encourage students to enroll in classes that will focus on writing and study skills in their freshman year of postsecondary education.

***Learn time management skills.*** Although a primary role of high school educators is to provide monitoring, direction and guidance to students as they approach the end of their high school career, staff also need to prepare students to act independently and to manage their own time with little to no supervision. High school educators can assist students by identifying resources that will help them learn time management and scheduling skills.

***Acquire computer skills.*** Because postsecondary students use computers to complete a multitude of tasks, from registering for classes to accessing course material and obtaining grades, it is essential that students learn to use computers if they are to be prepared for postsecondary education. Ideally, students with disabilities need to start using computers as early as possible in school to increase their familiarity with, and their comfort level in using, computers. Students with visual impairments, hearing impairments, learning disabilities or mobility impairments may have problems with inputting data or reading a computer monitor. Assistive technology can help certain students with disabilities use computers and access information.

***Consider supplemental postsecondary education preparatory programs.*** A variety of institutions of postsecondary education have summer programs in which students can participate while they are still in high school, or after graduation, to ease their transition to postsecondary education. These programs often expose students to experiences that they are likely to encounter in postsecondary education, such as living in dorms, relating to other students and eating in dining halls. The programs may also focus on instruction in certain subject areas, such as math or English, or in certain skills, such as computer, writing or study skills, that can prepare a student to be successful in postsecondary education. High school educators can assist students with disabilities by identifying such program opportunities in their area of residence.

***Research postsecondary education programs.*** Students with disabilities may select any program for which they are qualified but should be advised to review carefully documentation standards and program requirements for their program or institution of interest. For example, students should pay close attention to an institution's program requirements, such as language or math, to avoid making a large financial and time commitment only to realize several years into a program that they cannot, even with academic adjustments, meet an essential requirement for program completion. Campus visits, which include visits to the disability services office, can be

helpful in locating an environment that best meets a student's interests and needs. In addition, while all institutions have a legal obligation to provide appropriate services, certain colleges may be able to provide better services than others due to their size or location.

***Get involved on campus.*** To help students avoid the isolation that can occur away from home during the first year of postsecondary education, high school educators should encourage students to live on campus and to become involved in campus activities. Attendance at orientation programs for freshmen is a good first step in discovering ways to get involved in the postsecondary education environment.

**To receive more information about the civil rights of students with disabilities in education institutions, you may contact ;**

Customer Service Team  
Office for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education  
Washington, D.C. 20202-1100  
Phone: 1-800-421-3481  
TDD: 1- 877-521-2172  
Email: [ocr@ed.gov](mailto:ocr@ed.gov)  
Web site: [www.ed.gov/ocr](http://www.ed.gov/ocr)

This publication is in the public domain. Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted. The publication's citation should be: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, *Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities* and *Transition of Students With Disabilities to Postsecondary Education: A Guide for High School Educators*, Washington, D.C., 2007.

## ***HOW IS COLLEGE DIFFERENT FROM HIGH SCHOOL?***

<b>FOLLOWING THE RULES IN HIGH SCHOOL</b>	<b>CHOOSING RESPONSIBLY IN COLLEGE</b>
High school is <i>mandatory</i> and usually <i>free</i> .	College is <i>voluntary</i> and <i>expensive</i> .
Your time is structured by others.	You manage your own time.
You need permission to participate in extracurricular activities	You must decide whether to participate in co-curricular activities.
You can count on parents and teachers to remind you of your responsibilities and to guide you in setting priorities.	<i>You</i> must balance your responsibilities and set priorities. You will face moral and ethical decisions you have never faced before.
Each day you proceed from one class directly to another, spending 6 hours each day--30 hours a week--in class.	You often have hours between classes; class times vary throughout the day and evening and you spend only 12 to 16 hours each week in class
Most of your classes are arranged for you.	You arrange your own schedule in consultation with your adviser. Schedules tend to look lighter than they really are.
You are not responsible for knowing what it takes to graduate.	Graduation requirements are complex, and differ from year to year. You are expected to know those that apply to you.
<b>Guiding principle: You will usually be told what to do and corrected if your behavior is out of line.</b>	<b>Guiding principle: You are expected to take responsibility for what you do and don't do, as well as for the consequences of your decisions.</b>
<b>GOING TO HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES</b>	<b>SUCCEEDING IN COLLEGE CLASSES</b>
The school year is 36 weeks long; some classes may extend over both semesters.	The academic year is divided into two separate 15-week semesters, plus a week after each semester for exams.

Attendance is mandatory and carefully monitored	Attendance policies vary with each class. Professors may not formally take roll. Keep in mind that lack of attendance may impact your performance.
Classes generally have no more than 35 students.	Classes may number 100 students or more.
You may study outside class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and this may be mostly last-minute test preparation.	You need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class.
You seldom need to read anything more than once, and sometimes listening in class is enough.	You need to review class notes and text material regularly.
You are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed, and often re-taught, in class.	You are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing which may not be directly addressed in class.
Textbooks are typically provided at little or no expense.	You must buy your textbooks... and they can be quite expensive.
Guiding principle: You will usually be told in class what you need to learn from assigned readings.	Guiding principle: It's up to you to read and understand the assigned material; lectures and assignments proceed from the assumption that you've already done so.
<b>HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS</b>	<b>COLLEGE PROFESSORS</b>
Teachers check your completed homework.	Professors may not always check completed homework, but they will assume you can perform the same tasks on tests.
Teachers remind you of your incomplete work.	Professors may not remind you of incomplete work.
Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance.	Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance.
Teachers are often available for conversation before, during, or after class.	Professors expect and want you to attend their scheduled office hours.
Teachers have been trained in teaching methods to assist in imparting knowledge to students.	Professors have been trained as experts in their particular areas of research.
Teachers provide you with information you missed when you were absent.	Professors expect you to get from classmates any notes from classes you missed.
Teachers present material to help you understand the material in the textbook.	Professors may not follow the textbook. Instead, to amplify the text, they may give illustrations, provide background information, or discuss research about the topic you are studying. Or they may expect <i>you</i> to relate the classes to the textbook readings.

Teachers often write information on the board to be copied in your notes.	Professors may lecture nonstop, expecting you to identify the important points in your notes. When professors write on the board, it may be to amplify the lecture, not to summarize it. Good notes are a must.
Teachers impart knowledge and facts, sometimes drawing direct connections and leading you through the thinking process.	Professors expect you to think about and synthesize seemingly unrelated topics.
Teachers often take time to remind you of assignments and due dates.	Professors expect you to read, save, and consult the course syllabus (outline); the syllabus spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due, and how you will be graded.
Guiding principle: High school is a teaching environment in which you acquire facts and skills.	Guiding principle: College is a learning environment in which you take responsibility for thinking through and applying what you have learned.
<b>TESTS IN HIGH SCHOOL</b>	<b>TESTS IN COLLEGE</b>
Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material.	Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material. You, not the professor, need to organize the material to prepare for the test. A particular course may have only 2 or 3 tests in a semester.
Makeup tests are often available.	Makeup tests are seldom an option; if they are, you need to request them.
Teachers frequently rearrange test dates to avoid conflict with school events.	Professors in different courses usually schedule tests without regard to the demands of other courses or outside activities.
Teachers frequently conduct review sessions, pointing out the most important concepts.	Professors rarely offer review sessions, and when they do, they expect you to be an active participant, one who comes prepared with questions.
Guiding principle: Mastery is usually seen as the ability to reproduce what you were taught in the form in which it was presented to you, or to solve the kinds of problems you were shown how to solve.	Guiding principle: Mastery is often seen as the ability to apply what you've learned to new situations or to solve new kinds of problems.
<b>GRADES IN HIGH SCHOOL</b>	<b>GRADES IN COLLEGE</b>
Grades are given for most assigned work.	Grades may not be provided for all assigned work.

Consistently good homework grades may raise your overall grade when test grades are low.	Grades on tests and major papers usually provide most of the course grade.
Extra credit projects are often available to help you raise your grade.	Extra credit projects cannot, generally speaking, be used to raise a grade in a college course.
Initial test grades, especially when they are low, may not have an adverse effect on your final grade.	Watch out for your <i>first</i> tests. These are usually "wake-up calls" to let you know what is expected--but they also may account for a substantial part of your course grade. You may be shocked when you get your grades.
You may graduate as long as you have passed all required courses with a grade of D or higher.	You may graduate only if your average in classes meets the departmental standard--typically a 2.0 or C.
Guiding principle: "Effort counts." Courses are usually structured to reward a "good-faith effort."	Guiding principle: "Results count." Though "good-faith effort" is important in regard to the professor's willingness to help you <i>achieve</i> good results, it will not <i>substitute</i> for results in the grading process.

Adapted from the SMU Altshuler Learning Enhancement Center

## **Transitioning to Inclusive Post-Secondary Programs in Georgia**

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IPSE, or *Inclusive Post-Secondary Education Programs*, provide students with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities an opportunity to be included in an important cultural rite of passage: College.

These students' inclusion has been mandated throughout their K-12 career, but previously, they have been denied the post-secondary opportunities enjoyed by their more typical classmates. They show up for school, work hard, and overcome obstacles, only to watch as the rest of their graduating class, their brothers, their sisters, and their team-mates leave high school to continue developing as young adults and realizing their dreams as they become contributors to their families, their communities, and their cultures.

Increasingly, colleges and universities throughout Georgia are identifying champions on their campuses who resonate with the desire and the drive of these young adults and their families who want to pursue a college experience. At the time of this writing, Kennesaw State University has an established IPSE program—The Academy for Inclusive Learning and Social Growth. (website) Emerging programs include Georgia Tech's Inclusive Post-Secondary Academy (IPA)(website). Columbus State GOALS (website) and University of Georgia's Fanning Leadership Institute, Albany Technical College (website) and East Georgia/Georgia Southern. Entry requirements, application timelines, and documentation recommendations will vary from program to program. Some, like the Academy for Inclusive Learning at Kennesaw State University and the IPA program at Georgia Tech offer on-campus residential opportunities, where students can live in the dormitories. In most IPSE programs, students audit University classes alongside their typical peers with support from mentors or designated classroom peers. The intent is not for the curriculum to be modified, but that the IPSE students be allowed to access the content and intent of the classes, and participate in assessments of comprehension in such a way that they can share the defining experiences of post-secondary study with their typical peers.

Completers of these programs typically earn a certificate, rather than a degree, awarded by the college or the department. There are several reasons for this, including two important ones. First, traditional entrance requirements-- including qualifying SAT/ACT scores, and a High School diploma earned through completion of Carnegie Units and end of course tests-- are usually waived. Successful applicants may present a General Education Diploma earned by either Carnegie Units or Access Credits, a Special Education Diploma, or, in some cases, a Certificate of Attendance or other completion credential. Also, program participants typically audit classes, and may take a mixture of both University and program-specific courses that are non-credit bearing within the post-secondary structure.

Inclusive Post-Secondary Programs in Georgia		
Program	Institution	Website
Academy for Inclusive Learning and Social Growth	Kennesaw State University	
Inclusive Post-Secondary Academy	Georgia Tech	
GOALS Program	Columbus State University	
	Albany Tech	
	East Georgia College/Georgia Southern	
	University of Georgia	

### ***Diploma Requirements:***

Like traditional post-secondary programs, entrance requirements to IPSE programs vary. However, typically, the ISPE programs in Georgia accept students who hold a completion credential from an accredited secondary education program. This may be from a private school or a public school, but the program may require documentation (a diploma and/or a transcript) from a school accredited by an accreditation body, such as the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) or the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools. (for a complete list of recognized accreditation bodies, see here: <http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/agencies.aspx> )

Completion credentials may be a Diploma from a public or private school, a General Education Diploma, a General Education Diploma earned with Access Credits, or other credential that the ISPE program is approved to accept. Check with the IPSE program for specific requirements.

### ***Evaluation requirements***

ISPE programs in Georgia, at this writing, **do not** require applicants to submit results from the SAT, the ACT or the Compass. This is one of the primary differences between ISPE programs and traditional college programs.

Applications for ISPE programs, however, do usually require a current psychological (within 3-5 years) or a psychologist’s letter affirming eligibility. Other documentation that can be helpful can include Achievement testing results, work samples, and recommendations from teachers.

Readiness evaluations for this relatively new field are under development. The College-Ready Rubric is one such instrument. A one-on-one interview identifies the level of independence in each Transition Plan domain, and results can be submitted in the application packet. For more information on the College Ready Rubric, contact [kwade20@kennesaw.edu](mailto:kwade20@kennesaw.edu) .

## Transition Planning:

Young adults and their families begin planning for college while still in high-school, and even before. This should also be true for young adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities who want to enter an IPSE program. The Transition Plan is an important vehicle for addressing the careful planning that goes into creating a future that includes college.

As mentioned elsewhere in this manual, the Transition Plan is required to address Desired Measurable Post-Secondary Goals in Education, Employment, and, if appropriate, Independent Living. A Desired Measurable Post-Secondary Goal in Education might read: *After graduation from high school (student name) will attend an Inclusive Post-Secondary Program at Georgia Tech.*

Following the Desired Measurable Post-Secondary Goals, the Case Manager, (with input from the IEP team) will create Annual Transition Goals and Activities that are individualized for the student, and speak to the increase of independence possible for the current academic year.

Logically, it follows that some of the Annual Transition Plan Goals and Activities for a student with a stated interest in an Inclusive College Program should be written with a thought toward incrementally moving the student toward this outcome.

The table below gives some recommendations regarding appropriate Goals/Activities for each Transition Plan Domain.

Domain Area	Description	Goal Recommendations
Education/Training	<i>Goals based on Academics, Functional Academics, life-centered competencies, or career/technical or agricultural needs and job training.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Record assignments on smartphone calendar or app</li> <li>-Create schedule for assignment completion</li> <li>-Navigate textbook by using Table of Contents/Index/Pictures and captions</li> <li>-Type and submit homework assignments as email attachments</li> </ul>

Development of Employment	<i>Goals based on occupational awareness, employment related knowledge and skills and specific career pathway knowledge and skills.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Develop a problem-solving strategy for work-related situations</li> <li>-Participate in role-plays to prepare for possible conflict-resolution opportunities in the workplace</li> </ul>
Community Participation	<i>Goals based on knowledge and demonstration of skills needed to participate in the community.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use smartphone technology to manage schedule.</li> <li>-Text responsible adult when he arrives at unfamiliar destination</li> </ul>
Adult Living/Post-School Options	<i>Goals based on skills for self-determination, interpersonal interactions, communication, health/fitness, and the knowledge needed to successfully participate in Adult Lifestyles and other Post-School Activities.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Budgets money to manage expenses for food/clothing/self-care items and entertainment</li> <li>-Uses gift card to manage purchases</li> <li>- Use smartphone app to manage budget.</li> </ul>
Related Services	<i>Goals based on Related Services that may be required now to help a child benefit from regular and special education and transition services</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Review accommodations and evaluate effectiveness &amp; discuss with case manager</li> <li>-Open case with Vocational Rehabilitation counselor</li> </ul>
Daily Living	<i>Goals based on adaptive behaviors related to personal care and well-being to decrease dependence on others.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Launder own clothing</li> <li>-Practice using coin laundry</li> </ul>

## ***Critical entry-level skills:***

**Independence:** Students in an inclusive post-secondary program must be able to self-regulate on a college campus. A significant difference between the secondary and post-secondary setting is the amount of oversight provided by the programs. In high school, it is not unusual for students to be rigidly supervised for seven to eight hours per day. In college, students may audit a class for 90 minutes from 9-10:30, and then be at liberty for several hours until the next audit class at 4pm. During this time, she will need to self-schedule lunch, a study session, a sensory break, a trip to the bookstore for a binder needed for class, and a restroom break. Being able to manage these events without an external structure is very important. Empowering students by helping them recognize and address these needs and events is a vital piece of transition planning.

**Behavior:** College is a universally stressful setting. Typical students can become stressed, and often struggle to find ways to address multiple deadlines, tenuous relationships with paramours and parents, and roommate conflicts. A student interested in an inclusive post-secondary program should recognize the potential for such a stressful environment to trigger problem behaviors. College programs have a low tolerance for behaviors that endanger other students, and because such programs are not regulated by IDEA, do not have to provide the significant level of supports that secondary programs must provide. A student who requires a behavior plan with constant or even frequent monitoring in order to follow rules and maintain positive social engagement will not be a successful applicant.

**Academics:** IPSE programs will vary widely on entry-level academic requirements. Some programs recommend at least a 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade reading level, but access to assistive technology can provide needed supports to make an audit situation successful. A frequent model applied by IPSE programs involves students auditing college courses alongside their typical peers, with support from mentors, both in and out of class. Rigor recommends that IPSE students attempt all assignments and tests as presented by the professor and approved by the department. If, after the good-faith attempt, it is determined that the student is not able to complete, a negotiation with the professor -- with the support of the mentor, or if necessary, the program coordinator or advisor -- may result in a reduction of the details of the assignment or test.

For example, instead of a five-page paper, students may complete a one-page paper on a topic selected from the same list that the professor provides to the class for this assignment. Testing accommodations may include: extra time, having a mentor read the test aloud and recording the answers, providing the option to take the test on a computer, or reducing the choices on a multiple-choice test from four to two. A more comprehensive listing of accommodations and their descriptions is provided in Table (??) It is vital to note, however, that the responsibility of the request to modify assignments lies with the student. Self-advocacy is a vital skill to develop in the college-bound student. The office of Special Student Services, which also may be known as disabled Student Services, or some similar name, can certainly be of assistance, but often the depth of accommodations required by these audit students is beyond the scope of that office, and they are often quite busy attending to their own caseload of students who have self-identified and qualified for assistance. Working with the student to learn how to negotiate with a teacher to demonstrate mastery of facts or skills is a vital component of preparation for an IPSE program.

<b>Possible assignment negotiations for Inclusive Post-Secondary Students</b>
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<b>Reduce number of pages required for a paper</b>	<u>Example:</u> <i>A five-page paper may be negotiated down to two pages. Care should be taken by the student to assure the professor that the intent is to complete a quality assignment that shows the professor the student has grasped the material presented</i>
<b>Present the assignment in an alternate electronic format</b>	<u>Example:</u> <i>Instead of a research paper, negotiate for a Power Point or Prezi on the topic, to be presented either to the class, or to a smaller audience (including the professor)</i>
<b>Adjust the format a quiz or test</b>	<u>Examples:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Converting discussion questions to short-answer with a word bank.</i></li> <li>• <i>Converting short-answer questions to multiple-choice</i></li> <li>• <i>Reducing the choices in a multiple-choice question from four to two</i></li> <li>• <i>Requesting that a test or quiz be completed on a computer rather than pen and paper</i></li> <li>• <i>Listing 10 facts learned as a replacement for an exam</i></li> <li>• <i>Participating in an oral examination, rather than a written assignment</i></li> </ul>
<b>Requesting extra time, or a time extension</b>	<u>Example:</u> <i>The student may negotiate a later due date for an assignment, especially if another major assignment is due at the same time. If the student suspects that extra time may be needed to complete an assignment or test, it is best to request this early in the process, rather than after the assignment is already late.</i> <u>Example:</u> <i>The student may ask to be able to use a scheduled study session with a mentor, or a pre-arranged time beyond the assigned classroom time, to complete a test, quiz, or in-class assignment</i>
This list represents a sampling of possible negotiation possibilities that the student can submit to the professor. Practicing these skills with a General Education teacher during high-school is highly advised.	

## **Motivation**

By far, the most accurate predictor of success for a student interested in an Inclusive Post-Secondary Program is MOTIVATION. College is not for everyone. This is true for more neurotypical students who enter college through traditional channels, as well as their peers who would qualify for ISPE programs. College participation can be stressful, difficult, and taxing, even with support. ISPE programs are looking for students who will reflect well on their programs... doubly important because these programs may be new on campus, and are often in the “pilot program” stage. Students who apply to ISPE programs should have a high level of *internal* motivation to succeed. Families are encouraged to engage in self-reflection. If one or

more of the parents are motivated, but the student is not, or is unsure, then the college experience will likely be unpleasant, and can even be unsuccessful.

## ***On-Campus Expectations***

ISPE students usually audit University Classes with support of Student Mentors, and may also participate in smaller support classes designed by the ISPE program staff. Some ISPE programs offer a residential option, so dorm living can be a choice, or the student may commute from home. ISPE programs vary as to the level of support offered in the dorms, or in near-campus housing. Some programs provide staff that will work on independence and self-help skills, and others expect students to maintain their own schedules, relationships, and medications.

Below is an example of a weekly schedule for an ISPE student:

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>8am</b>	<b>Ride bus to dining hall: breakfast</b>				
<b>9am</b>	COM 1101 w/mentor		COM 1101 w/mentor		
<b>10am</b>		KSU 1101 w/mentor		KSU 1101 w/mentor	
<b>11am</b>	Study session with mentor		Study session with mentor		Global class
<b>12pm</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	
<b>1pm</b>					<b>Lunch</b>
<b>2pm</b>		Social/academic support class			
<b>3pm</b>	Internship at Rec. Center		Internship at Rec. Center		Career class
<b>4pm</b>					
<b>5pm</b>					

## ***FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions***

### **How much do ISPE programs cost?**

Like any college, costs vary. Usually ISPE programs cost the regular tuition of the college, plus an additional program fee to cover the cost of supporting the students, paying the staff and student mentors. ISPE students also usually pay the fees associated with the college in order to participate fully in all the activities that their typical peers experience, including concerts, recreation facilities, clubs, and study-abroad opportunities.

The ABLE Act, recently enacted, allows persons with disabilities to save for life events, including college, without impacting other benefits. It is strongly recommended that families who are interested in saving for college talk to a financial advisor familiar with the new regulations that will develop surrounding the ABLE Act.

## **Are there scholarships available?**

Yes. Some scholarships are available that are disability-specific. For example, the National Down Syndrome Society offers a Scholarship. Autism Speaks awards scholarship funds directly to ISPE programs. These are dispersed internally, so the applicant needs to already be enrolled in the ISPE program. Various civic organizations offer private scholarships, as well. The first step (and an excellent Transition Plan Activity) is to fill out the FAFSA (website)

ISPE programs can apply for CTP (Certified Transition Program) status through ThinkCollege, a University Center for Excellence in Disability out of UMass Boston. Once CTP Status is approved, students can begin to apply for Pell Grants through FAFSA. Several of the ISPE programs in Georgia are pursuing CTP status, so check with your institution of interest.

The previous sources may be of help to you as you consider the transitional needs of your student. While these sources are provided to assist you in your search, it is your responsibility to investigate them to determine their value and appropriateness for your situation and needs. These sources are provided as a sample of available resources and are for informational purposes only. **THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION DOES NOT MONITOR, EVALUATE, OR ENDORSE THE CONTENT OR INFORMATION OF THESE RESOURCES. NONE OF THESE RESOURCES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED THE ADVICE OR GUIDANCE OF THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.**