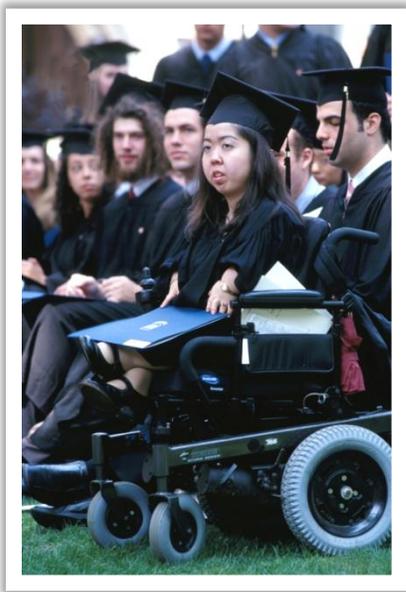


Disability Campaign.org

Accessibility in college and universities

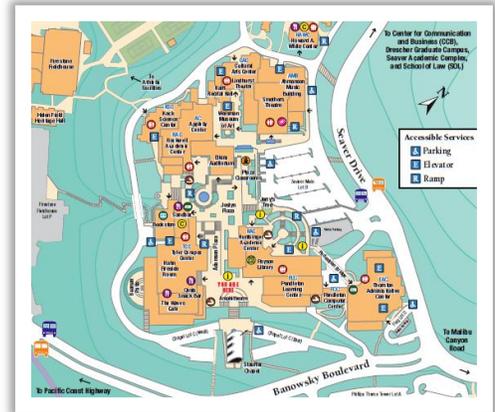


The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) along with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provides mandates that protect students with disabilities from discrimination in colleges and universities. However, not all colleges and universities are the same; some are more accessible than other colleges. Moreover, each college has guidelines on its accommodations for students with disabilities. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the student to assure that he/she receives the reasonable accommodations to meet his/her needs. Below are some things to consider in your college/university selection.

1. **Contact the school's disability services office.** Each school is unique in regards to location, classroom size, majors, etc. To check how accessible your school of interest is, contact its disability services office. Ask them what are the requirements, accommodations, and services they provide, as well as what is expected of you considering your specific disability.
2. **Complete appropriate documentation.** Most schools require you to provide proper documentation of your disability. You will need a document from a health care provider specifying what your disability is and what accommodations you need. Please note: Just because you have documentation, does not mean that college will be able to meet all your needs or accommodate you to the fullest.

3. **Consider visiting the campus.**

As much as you read about a college, visit its website, or see pictures of it, there is nothing like actually visiting the campus in person. If circumstances permit, consider visiting the campus. Some campuses provide maps that outline what portions of the campus are more accessible than others are. Consider the campus parking, busses or shuttles, restrooms, elevators, classroom sizes, etc.



4. **Check for available housing options.** You will want to live where you feel comfortable. Your home may be very accessible to you, but not all college dorms or housing options provide the same options. If you are moving away from home, check with your school of interest for possible accommodations. Consider that you may have a roommate who may not be familiar with your disability needs. Just as you will have to accommodate to living with someone new, your roommate will have to accommodate to you! Living with other students with or without disabilities will be a new experience that can be pleasant.

5. **Connect with other students with disabilities.**

This may give you a general understanding of what it is like to go to college with a disability. Talk about what it's like to eat in the cafeteria, have a note taker, study in the library with an assistance dog, or how to approach professors when you need further assistance.



Possible accommodations include:

- Accommodation Letters to give to professors
- Note takers
- Priority registration

- Extended Time on exams
- Distraction reduced exam rooms
- Materials in alternative text
(e.g. books on CD, digital text, etc.)
- American Sign Language interpreters
- Real-time captioning
- Use of an assistive learning device



Remember, just because you have a disability and provide appropriate documentation, doesn't mean a college or university will provide all the accommodations you need or want.

Accommodations made will provide an equal educational opportunity for all students—meaning although you may have more time for testing, all exams will have the same difficulty level. When considering the costs for your studies, remember your school may not cover the costs for some accommodations. Some modifications may just be too costly for your school—for example, a renovation of a 100-year-old campus building that was not built to accommodate students with disabilities. Just as the school will need to be considerate of you, you must consider the school, its students, professors, and staff as they seek to accommodate you. Do not hesitate to contact your school's disability services office if you have any questions or hesitations.

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