

# Effective College Planning: A Student's Guide

This college-preparation booklet was specifically written for you, a student with a disability, who is thinking about going to college. It was written by a group of people who work with students with disabilities at higher education institutions throughout western New York who have seen through the years what it takes for students like you to succeed in college.

Included are questions for you to consider, a timeline that helps you begin preparing for college, a glossary of terms you'll need to understand, and a list of contact people at the various colleges, universities and support agencies in our area. **New to this edition is an activities section—you'll find it in the appendix.**

As you read this booklet, you may have questions about planning for college. Please feel free to contact any of the people listed in the back for more information. We look forward to meeting you!

**Good Luck!**

**The Members of the WNY  
Collegiate Consortium of Disability Advocates, 2003**

# So let's begin—here are some important questions to consider--

## Is college for me?

The straight truth is this: in college, the student with a disability must be *more motivated*, be a *better manager of his or her life*, and *work harder* than most other students. The students with disabilities who do best are the ones who

- Have a clear goal in mind,
- Understand how to work *with* their strengths and *around* their weaknesses
- Can manage time
- Are persistent and optimistic

## What college degree do I need for the career I have chosen?

The place to begin your work is in your guidance office. Talk with your counselor to get help finding information on careers. You might want to use *Choices* or *Discover* software, which is available in many guidance offices. These programs help you match your strengths and aptitudes with careers, and then go further to give you information about those careers including salary range, nationwide job availability and education needed.

## Do I have the ability and determination to be successful in college?

Even if you're still not sure what your career goals are, it is important to think about whether you have the *ability* and the *determination* to be successful in college. Perhaps the most important thing to understand is that in college you need all the same competencies as any other student *plus* whatever special skills or strategies are needed to cope with your disability. It is better to start acquiring skills in an environment you know well (that is, high school) rather than waiting until you arrive on the college campus. Coming to a college

comfortable with yourself and your needs can make the difference between success and failure.



Look in the appendix for **Activity One: Personal Knowledge and Skills Assessment**. Do this activity to get a better feel for whether you have the abilities and skills to do well in college.

## How is college different from being in high school?

Good question! Here are a few ways in which college will be different from your high school experience. In college--

- Students are responsible for monitoring their own progress and for recognizing they need additional help. And, **there is no Resource Room in college.**
- Classes meet less often and for fewer hours per week.
- Instruction is mainly by lecture so taking good notes is essential!
- An entire course is completed in 16 weeks or less which means there is *more work* to do and *less time* in which to do it.
- Final grades may be based on just two or three test scores.
- There will be more major writing assignments.
- Students need to be able to juggle assignments, job and/or family responsibilities, plus any sports or any other volunteer activities, etc.

## What kind of college student with a disability is successful?

So much depends on beginning college with the right attitude! The student that succeeds

- Knows his or her own strengths and weaknesses well
- Has a clear sense of his or her goal
- Is organized and manages his or her time well
- Is positive, independent, and flexible
- Uses good communication skills
- Knows when to seek help
- Is knowledgeable about academic policies and deadlines
- Has a strong commitment to completing his or her degree

# What should I be doing while I'm still in high school that will prepare me for college?

Here is a timeline for college preparation we suggest you follow.

## Freshman Year

- Attend College Night/ Disability programs (CCDA's at UB in the fall and/or Penn-York in the spring)
- Begin Regents or college-prep classes
- Participate in clubs and sports
- Begin career exploration
- Volunteer activities
- Begin or continue using technology (computer, textbooks on tape, tape recorder, etc.)

## Sophomore Year

- Continue activities from last year
- Collect college catalogs
- Take PSAT test with accommodations, if needed
- Talk with resource teacher or school psychologist about your disability and how it impacts your learning

## Junior Year

- Continue activities from last year
- Take SAT test with accommodations, if needed
- Attend College Night programs
- Begin narrowing down your college choices
- Visit college campuses and information programs
- Have psychological testing updated with adult norms if you have a learning disability or attention deficit disorder

## Senior Year

- Continue activities from last year
- File college applications
- Contact the disability services offices of colleges you're interested in
- Apply for VESID services (or OVR in PA) in September
- File financial aid forms in January
- Have psychological testing updated with adult norms if not done in junior year



By completing **Activity Two: Comparing Colleges**, in the Appendix, you can focus your college search. **Activity Three: Comparing Disability Support Services** will help you find out critical information about what you can expect at the college you choose.

## What about the college admissions process?

Students with disabilities apply to college in the same way all other students do. They research schools that interest them, go visit those colleges, meet students and staff, and ask questions.

However, it is important to understand that all colleges are different when it comes to admissions requirements! You will need to ask each college you apply to what their admissions requirements are. What is the minimum high school average that is acceptable for regular admissions, honors programs, or for special scholarship consideration? What range of SAT or ACT scores is the college looking for? Will there be placement testing?

You don't have to tell the Admissions office about your disability, either on the application or during any interview, but you may want to tell them so that they will give you information about services for students with disabilities. Also, some colleges allow students with disabilities to ask for special consideration during the admissions process and/or on placement testing, if it is needed. If you need to provide documentation of your disability **do not send your disability documentation to the admissions office. Contact the disability services office and find out exactly where your documentation should be sent.** These offices go by a variety of different names like disability support services, disabled student services, 504/ADA office... you can find them by looking in the index of your catalog.

## How do I go about setting up the help I may need in college?

Keeping in mind that ***there is no resource room in college***, you will need to get in touch with the college's disability services office in order to request the help you may need. One of the major differences between high school and college is that it is now entirely up to you to ask for what you need, to self-advocate. The disability services office is the place to do this.

Colleges and universities are obligated to provide *reasonable accommodations* to students with disabilities who are qualified to be there. For example, if in high school you needed extended time for your tests you would make a request to the disability services office that you be allowed this accommodation. You will be expected to provide documentation that shows you need this accommodation-- most students bring copies of their most recent psycho-educational evaluation, their IEP, and/or a 504 plan. If your request is deemed reasonable, the disability services office will help you make arrangements with your instructors for the extended time on your tests.

You will need to meet with the disability services provider *every semester* about *each class* that will require accommodations. Accommodations are made on a case-by-case basis for each person, each course, and each semester.

## **Now what's this about documentation?**

As mentioned before, you need to provide the disability services office with documentation that

- Verifies that you have a disability *and*
- Clearly supports your request for specific accommodations.

If you have a learning disability or attention deficit disorder, guidelines have been established that spell out exactly what needs to be in your documentation. Many disability services offices at the colleges in our region keep these guidelines on hand and will be happy to send them to you—just give one of us a call.

Students with other kinds of disabilities need to provide documentation from an appropriate qualified professional like an audiologist, ophthalmologist, physician, psychiatrist or psychologist, depending on the disability.

This is particularly important if you have been labeled E.D. (Emotionally Disturbed) on your IEP. Colleges can only offer assistance to students with specific disabling conditions like depression, bipolar, generalized anxiety disorder, etc.—conditions that only a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist can diagnose. If you have any question about what documentation is needed, call the college's disability services office.

## What other kinds of accommodations are typically granted?

Again, in college every accommodation is made on a case-by-case, course-by-course basis. But the kinds of things colleges have arranged include, but aren't limited to, the following.

- Alternate testing formats, time limits and locations
- Permission to tape record lectures
- Sign-language interpreters
- Textbooks on tape
- Note-takers and scribes
- Use of adaptive technology

## What about tutoring?

Tutoring is not considered an accommodation. Most colleges and universities offer individualized academic help in one form or another. You probably can't expect to get daily and/or drop-in support in your courses; however, you *may* be able to find services like:

- Writing centers--designed to assist you with writing and editing papers
- Math labs--a place where you can go for assistance with your math assignments
- Peer tutoring—where you would work with other students who have taken the course you are taking
- Professional tutoring
- Credit or non-credit courses designed to build basic skills in reading, writing, and math—these are sometimes called “developmental” or “remedial” courses and do not count toward your degree.



Knowing what kind of learner you are is important, especially for students with learning disabilities. **Activity Four: Learning Style Assessment**, in the appendix may give you a better understanding of how *you* learn and help you find ways to work with your strengths and improve your weaknesses.

## **Do I need to take a foreign language in college?**

Maybe. If you are attending any SUNY college such as Buffalo State, Fredonia, University at Buffalo, yes, you will be required to take 1 or 2 years of a foreign language depending on how much you had in high school. You are probably not required to take foreign language at a community college unless you plan to transfer to a 4-year college. There are many colleges that require 1, 2 or even 3 foreign language credits for admission. This is an excellent question to ask when you visit colleges or are browsing their catalogs and websites.

## **Do I have to take math too?**

Most likely. While there may be a few certificate programs at the community college level for which there is no math requirement, most college programs require at least one college-level math course. In high school you should take 2- 3 years of math. Taking math during your senior year will help keep it fresh in your mind when you enter college. Many community colleges offer remedial math courses that do not count toward a college degree, but do help students build up to college-level math courses.

## **What types of financial resources are available?**

- You should apply for financial aid, TAP and PELL, like all other students.
- You should contact VESID (the NYS Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities) to see if you are eligible for their sponsorship. (716/847-3294)
- If you are legally blind, you should contact CBVH (the NYS Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped) to see if you are eligible for their support (716/847-3516)
- Check out the excellent HEATH website and look for their downloadable paper entitled "Creating Options: Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities": [www.heath.gwu.edu](http://www.heath.gwu.edu)

## **How can I get more specific help and information?**

Simple. Just look in the back at our list of contacts for the colleges/universities and agencies in western New York. Give one of us a call and if we can't answer your question, chances are very good we can point you in the right direction to get your question answered.

## Glossary

**Ability to Benefit:** A potential student who is not a high school graduate is recognized as having the ability-to-benefit from a college education after successfully earning a minimum passing score on one of the federally approved standardized tests. Note that "IEP diplomas" are not the equivalent of a NYS high school diploma or GED.

**Academic Advisor:** Students who are matriculated into academic programs are assigned a faculty member or counselor who assists the student in setting semester course schedules and monitors that the student meets all of that academic program's degree requirements.

**Accommodations:** modifications or reasonable adjustments to coursework and/ or testing that a post-secondary institution might make in response to a request from a qualified student with a documented disability.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** Civil rights/anti-discrimination legislation. ADA's main purpose is to extend the legal mandate of Section 504 beyond recipients of federal funds. It has five major titles that cover employment, public accommodations, private entities, telecommunications, and miscellaneous topics. In terms of post-secondary education, ADA reinforces the requirements of Section 504 and under Title III extends the requirements of equal program access to private colleges and universities that might have previously been exempt from the mandate of Section 504.

**Associates Degree:** The degree awarded by community colleges and private two-year colleges. There are four kinds: Associate of Science (A.S.), Associate of Art (A.A.), Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) and Associate in Occupational Studies (A.O.S.).

**Audit:** Student option for recording attendance in a course when no grade is desired.

**Baccalaureate (Bachelor's Degree):** An academic degree awarded to students who successfully complete undergraduate requirements in a planned, approved program (usually requiring four years of full-time study to complete). Community college and private two year college graduates often transfer to a four year institution to complete this degree after receiving their Associate Degree.

**Catalog:** The book published by a college (annually or biannually) which describes the programs offered at the college, the academic policies of the college, services available to students, and short descriptions of each course.

Students are governed by the degree requirements published in the catalog when they matriculated.

**College Level Examination Program (CLEP):** A standardized examination in college-level subject matter. The general examinations cover material offered in freshman-level English composition, humanities, fine arts, mathematics, natural sciences, and social science courses. Subject examinations cover material offered in specific advanced level

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courses. Passing a CLEP exam may allow a student to bypass taking a course in that subject area.

**Co-requisite:** A requirement that may be met either before registering for a particular course or program, or at the same time as that course or program.

**Course Substitution:** The substitution of a course for another required course that is specified in an academic program. Decisions regarding substitutions must be made on a case-by-case basis. Only courses that are non-essential can be substituted. Courses that essential to the program or that are required for licensure or certification cannot be substituted.

**Credit Hour:** Unit of measure that indicates the number of classroom hours per week that the class is held. Credit hours for laboratory, studio and physical education skills courses are often computed on a different basis.

**Cumulative Quality Point Grade Average:** The total of the student's grade points for all semesters divided by the total number of credit hours completed for all semesters. See also Quality Point Average.

**Curriculum:** An organized course of study approved by the State Education Department that results in a degree. Ex. Business; Environmental Science; Nursing.

**Developmental Courses:** Courses that prepare the student to complete the courses necessary for their degree. These classes are considered remedial and often do not count toward a degree.

**Dismissal:** Notification that a student can no longer attend that institution. Dismissal can be the result of poor grades resulting in Academic Dismissal or removal from the campus for behavior that violates the Student Code of Conduct.

**Elective** (General Elective or Elective): A course from any of the college degree credit courses.

**F.E.R.P.A.:** The Family Educational Rights Privacy Act guarantees student confidentiality. Conversations with parents regarding confidential information without written consent from the student are illegal.

**Full-Time Student:** Status generally granted for a semester registration of 12 or more credits; an institution may grant full time status to a student with a disability enrolled for fewer than 12 credits if that registration is related to the impact of the disability on the student.

**Grade Point Average:** See Quality Point Average.

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**Grievance Procedure:** Each institution must have a published formal procedure for students to follow if they feel a college employee has treated them unfairly. The procedure is usually described in the college's student constitution.

**I.D.E.A.:** Legislation that replaced the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. The purpose is to ensure that all children with disabilities in the United States in grades K-12 would receive a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. IDEA mandates that school districts identify children with disabilities and design an Individualized Education Program (IEP) to meet the needs of each child. IDEA requires that all children with disabilities within a school district, including those with 504 plans, receive transition planning from age 12 until graduation or age 21. IDEA does not apply to pre-school or to post-secondary education.

**Imputed Credit:** Coursework that may be developmental or remedial and does not count toward graduation or a degree, but may count toward financial aid eligibility.

**Incomplete Grade:** Grade assigned by instructor to allow the student to finish course requirements after the course ends. At JCC, the student must initiate a request for this grade.

**Life Experience Credit:** A program that allows students to use their life experience to earn credit toward a degree.

**Liberal Arts:** Liberal Arts are those academic disciplines taught without regard to specific preparation for a vocation, falling within the behavioral and social sciences, the humanities, the natural sciences and mathematics, and the fine arts. Specifically excluded are all vocational courses such as accounting, nursing, or education courses.

**Major:** Academic major to which a student has applied and been accepted by the specific department. Students with an accepted major are eligible to register for courses in that department's 'majors only' (restricted) courses. A student may have two majors.

**Master Course Schedule:** Booklet containing the courses that will be offered in a given semester. This booklet is different each semester and is frequently available online.

**Master's Degree:** An academic degree awarded to students who successfully complete a prescribed course of graduate study (after a Bachelor's Degree).

**Matriculate:** The process of applying and being accepted into a degree program at a college or university. Being matriculated is important for academic advisement and financial aid purposes and allows the student to take advantage of all services within the school.

**Non-Matriculated Student:** An individual enrolled in courses at a college but is not working toward a degree. Non-matriculated students are not eligible for financial aid.

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**Open-Admission:** Admission to a school is “open” (meaning automatic) for students who are NYS residents and have a high school local or Regents diploma, or a GED. This type of enrollment is typical of New York state community colleges.

**Overload:** Students who are registered for more than 19 semester credit hours. This is possible only if a student’s advisor has granted permission and students have paid tuition at the part-time student rate for any credit hours over the 19 credit hour limit.

**Part-Time Student:** Students who register for fewer than 12 semester credit hours.

**Placement Test:** Test designed to measure the student’s ability in English and/or mathematics and then to prescribe what English and/or mathematics courses the student needs to begin with.

**Pre-Registration (Early Registration):** Continuing students are able to register for courses in the next semester at the end of the semester they are currently attending.

**Pre-Requisite:** A basic course that the student is required to take before registering for an advanced course.

**Priority Registration:** Permission given to students with disabilities to register early when the nature of the disability significantly impacts course selection and time scheduling.

**Probation:** Status of a student who may face dismissal if the grades or actions that prompted the probation are not improved within a designated period of time.

**Quality Point Average (Grade Point Average):** The total of the student’s grade points in a semester divided by the total number of credit hours completed for that semester. See also “cumulative quality point average”.

**Reasonable Accommodations:** Those academic adjustments, auxiliary aids and services, program modifications or physical access adjustments that are made to the programs, employment opportunities, activities, and services sponsored by the college to provide equal access to all otherwise qualified persons with disabilities.

**Registration:** The process of selecting the courses and sections of each student’s class schedule for a specific semester.

**Registrar:** The office on campus in charge of student transcripts, verifying students status at school, registering and issuing student semester schedules, grades, end of the term reports, and processing the student’s graduation certification.

**Satisfactory Academic Progress:** Students receiving federal and/or state financial aid must meet certain academic standards to remain academically eligible to receive aid. These academic standards are based on cumulative quality point average and total credit hours attempted and also apply to students not using financial aid. Students

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failing to maintain satisfactory academic progress may be placed on academic probation or dismissed.

**Section 504:** Civil rights/ anti-discrimination legislation that applies to any entity (business, organization, school etc.) that receives federal funds of any kind. The purpose of Section 504 is to give qualified individuals with disabilities equal access to programs and services available to the non-disabled person. It has different sub-parts that apply to elementary , secondary, and post-secondary education. The regulations for Section 504 give us the federal definition for person with a disability, otherwise qualified, programs and services etc.

**Sections:** Various classes of the same course in the same semester. They may have different days, times, instructors, and/or rooms, but course content will be the same.

**Student Code of Conduct:** Rules of behavior established by the college describing unsatisfactory behavior by a student. Violation of these published rules can result in probation or dismissal. The conduct code is usually published in the student constitution.

**Transcript:** The student's educational record. Official transcripts are sent from institution to institution or to potential employers at the student's request and bear the seal of the College.

**Withdrawal from Course:** When a student cannot continue in a course he or she must formally withdraw from that course. The withdrawal is not finalized until the Registrar's Office receives all necessary paperwork. Failure to complete the withdrawal process will result in an F grade for the course. A student cannot withdraw beyond established dates. The student withdraws ONLY from that course or courses but remains enrolled in the rest of the courses for which he or she is registered. Withdrawals may effect the student's "satisfactory academic progress" and have financial aid eligibility repercussions.

**Withdrawal from College:** Formal process utilized to change the status of an active student to one who is inactive. Discontinuance of attendance, notifying instructors, or mere telephone contact with college personnel does not constitute an official withdrawal. Students remain both academically and financially responsible for all incurred expenses until the withdrawal procedure has been finalized. Withdrawals may effect the student's "satisfactory academic progress" and have financial aid eligibility repercussions. In order to return to the college, the student must re-apply for admission.

## **Appendix**

**Activity One: Personal Knowledge and Skills Assessment**

**Activity Two: Comparing Colleges**

**Activity Three: Comparing Disability Support Services  
Offices**

**Activity Four: Learning Styles Assessment**



## Activity One: Personal Knowledge and Skills Assessment

Below is a checklist that highlights the skills and personal knowledge college students need. This is an activity that you should do *several times* so you can see how well you are improving in those areas where you indicate you are weak. You would be wise to ask a parent or teacher to fill one out about you, then sit down and discuss your answers. Pick 2-4 that need work and check your progress in 6 months.

Self-Knowledge	Yes	No	Working On	Don't Know
Do I have a clear and realistic educational/vocational goal?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can I name and describe my disability?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can I describe my strengths and limitations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do I know what accommodations I need? (e.g., extended time for tests, note-takers, books on tape)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do I know what adaptive equipment I need to use? (e.g. screen reader, 4-track tape player)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Academic Preparation</b>				
Can I use email, word processing and the Web?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have I had enough math preparation? (3 years recommended)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have I had enough foreign language to get into the school I want?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have I had at least 3 years of science including one lab science?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can I read and comprehend college-level material?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can I write a well-developed essay?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Study Skills

	Yes	No	Working On	Don't Know
Do I know how to use a library?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do I know when to seek assistance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can I take notes from a lecture?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do I know how to take notes from a book?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do I know how to study?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do I know how to take different kinds of tests?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Am I usually prepared for class?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Am I usually punctual and regular in attendance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are my assignments and notes neat?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Am I good at organizing my work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are my assignments completed on time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do I work well in groups?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Social Skills

Do I communicate appropriately and effectively with teachers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do I interact appropriately with peers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do I know how to interact with people who are of different race or culture?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do I know when a conversation or discussion is over?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do I know how to let someone know I like him or her?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can I handle rejection appropriately?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do I understand what it takes to share living quarters with a roommate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can I problem-solve and make good decisions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Life Skills**

	Yes	No	Working On	Don't Know
Do I know how to arrange transportation to go to and from school, job, internships?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do I use leisure time appropriately?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do I know how to locate assistance when needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do I understand my medical needs and am I able to express these needs to the appropriate people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can I manage my money?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can I do basic cooking and laundry?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can I do my own food and clothing shopping?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





## Activity Two: Comparing Colleges

The purpose of this activity is for you to learn how to find information in a college catalog or on a college website and to compare the same information at three different colleges that you may be considering.

**Before you start:** pick three colleges you are interested in attending. Your guidance counselor can provide some assistance in getting catalogs or web addresses.

Next, pick a major you may be considering (e.g. business, nursing, history, elementary education).

Name of major being compared: \_\_\_\_\_

Now, find the information requested below in each catalog or website and fill in the chart. If you can't find that information, leave the space blank. If you decide to visit that college later, add that item to your list of questions to ask.

	College 1:	College 2:	College 3:
What kind of college is this? (2 or 4- year school, public, private, business college, etc.)			
Where is the college located (urban? rural? small town?)			
How many students are enrolled?			
Does the college offer the program you are interested in?			

How much is the tuition?			
	<b>College 1</b>	<b>College 2</b>	<b>College 3</b>
Does the catalog or website have a section that talks about students with disabilities?			
What is the name of the disability office?			
How do you contact in the disability office?			
What is the highest level math course required by your program?			
Does your program require a foreign language?			
Are remedial or developmental courses available?			
What academic support services are available? (e.g. tutoring)			
Do graduates take an exam to become licensed or certified?			
Can students transfer into the college or program from another college/ university?			

Will the degree you earn transfer to another college for further study?			
	<b>College 1</b>	<b>College 2</b>	<b>College 3</b>
How many credits are required to complete your program?			
How many of those credits are in "general" education courses?			
How many of those credits are in "core" courses related to the program?			
Does the college provide accessible on-campus housing? (if applicable)			
Are there any clubs or activities that interest you?			
Other noteworthy items:			



### Activity Three: Comparing Disability Support Services

Use the table below when you are investigating college catalogs/ websites or when you are visiting college campuses.

Name of institution \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person for services for students with disabilities \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number of office \_\_\_\_\_

What are the office hours? \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail or website address \_\_\_\_\_

**Checkmark those services you need that are available:**

<b>Accommodations/ Modifications</b>	<b>Available?</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Instructor notification		
Note-takers		
Alternate test locations		
Test reader or tape-recorded versions scribes		
Scribes or voice-input computers		
Assistive/ adaptive technology (what kinds?)		

<b>Alternate print formats</b>		
<b>Evening hours</b>		
<b>Counseling</b>		
<b>Tutorial service</b>		
<b>Special classes</b>		
<b>Reader services</b>		
<b>Tape recorded textbooks</b>		
<b>Assistive listening devices</b>		
<b>Equipment loan</b>		

What other services are available for students with disabilities?

Are there any organizations, clubs or support groups on campus for students with disabilities?

Are there any special programs for students with disabilities?



## Activity Four: Learning Styles Assessment

This next exercise should help students assess what kind of learner they are. We all have different learning styles, be it visual, auditory, tactile, or any combination of these abilities. It is particularly important for students with disabilities to understand their own learning styles, to capitalize on their strengths, and to work around their weaknesses. Once students determine their profile, the next section suggests strategies and accommodations they might want to use in the college environment.

To the Student: read each question carefully and think carefully about how it applies to you. **Keep in mind that you are thinking about learning new, difficult information.** On the line next to the question, put the **number** of the response that you choose:

**1 - NEVER APPLIES   2 - SOMETIMES APPLIES   3 - OFTEN APPLIES**

- \_\_\_ 1. I work better in a quiet place.
- \_\_\_ 2. I am not skilled at giving verbal explanations for directions.
- \_\_\_ 3. I have trouble reading if the print is small, blurry, or smudged.
- \_\_\_ 4. It is hard for me to read other people's handwriting.
- \_\_\_ 5. I cannot study sitting at a desk.
- \_\_\_ 6. If I can't think of a word I call it a 'whachamacallit'.
- \_\_\_ 7. I remember something better if I write it down.
- \_\_\_ 8. My eyes get tired fast although the eye doctor says they are OK.
- \_\_\_ 9. It is hard for me to understand what a person is saying when there are other people talking, or there is music playing.
- \_\_\_ 10. I remember things I hear better than things I read or see.
- \_\_\_ 11. When I read, I mix up words that look alike, like *them* and *then* and *bad* and *dad*.
- \_\_\_ 12. I don't like to read directions first; I would rather just start doing.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. I enjoy doodling and even my notes have lots of pictures, arrows, etc. in them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. I think better when I have the freedom to move around.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. I often get lost or am late if someone TELLS me how to get to a new place and I don't write the directions down.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Before I follow directions, it helps me to SEE someone else do it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. I had trouble learning to read out loud when I was younger.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. It helps to use my finger as a pointer when reading to keep my place.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. If I am taking a test, I can 'see' the textbook or notebook page where the answer is.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. If I had the choice to learn new information by lecture or a textbook, I would choose to HEAR it rather than read it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. I tend to solve problems through a more trial-and-error approach, rather than a step-by-step method
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. When trying to remember someone's telephone number, it helps if I try to picture it in my head.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. I find myself needing frequent breaks when studying.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. My written work doesn't look neat to me. My papers have crossed out words and erasures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. It's hard for me to understand a joke that someone tells me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. I understand how to do something best if someone TELLS me rather than if I read the directions myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. It helps me to LOOK at the speaker when I am listening. Looking helps me focus on what she is saying.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. I learn best when someone SHOWS me how to do something and then I have the opportunity to do it myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. Handwriting is tiring; I press down really hard with a pencil or pen.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. I do not get lost easily even in a strange place.

Find the corresponding question on the inventory and write your answer on the line:

1 _____	3 _____	2 _____
7 _____	4 _____	5 _____
9 _____	8 _____	6 _____
13 _____	10 _____	12 _____
15 _____	11 _____	14 _____
17 _____	18 _____	16 _____
19 _____	20 _____	21 _____
22 _____	24 _____	23 _____
25 _____	26 _____	28 _____

Totals

_____	_____	_____
<b>Visual</b>	<b>Auditory</b>	<b>Tactile</b>

### Interpreting the scores:

Find each numbered question from the list and place your answer of 1, 2, or 3 on the line matching that question on the chart above. When you have filled in all the numbers, add up your total in each column. The higher the score, the BETTER you are at using those skills. For example, if your total scores are: visual 19; auditory 25, tactile 23 you are learn BEST by listening, than using a hands-on approach. You are not as comfortable with a textbook or a chart that no one has explained to you.

If your high scores are in auditory (listening skills) and tactile (hands-on skills), with a low score in visual, this would indicate that you are probably weak in reading and comprehension, but do very well with oral directions and hands-on or paper and pencil tasks.

College faculty will use combinations of visual, auditory and tactile teaching techniques to differing degrees. The chart on the next page will help you identify strategies and accommodations that you can use to reinforce learning in those modes where you are weak.

## Compensatory Strategies and Accommodations

	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Possible Accommodations</b>
<b>To improve VISUAL learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Use slides, charts, diagrams, and illustrations to reinforce learning</li> <li>➤ Use color coding to organize notes, note cards and textbook underlining</li> <li>➤ Write questions in margins of textbook</li> <li>➤ Convert notes to charts and matrix format</li> <li>➤ Use a calculator for computations</li> <li>➤ Use graph paper for math computations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Copy of instructor's overhead transparencies</li> <li>➤ Use of computer software and spell checker</li> <li>➤ Watch videos, etc. more than once</li> <li>➤ Extra time on tests</li> <li>➤ Enlargement of print materials to make print easier to read</li> <li>➤ Use of a calculator</li> <li>➤ Use of a note taker</li> </ul>
<b>To improve AUDITORY learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Participate in study group</li> <li>➤ One-to-one tutoring</li> <li>➤ Brainstorm ideas for writing into a tape recorder</li> <li>➤ Tape record notes and lectures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Tape recording classes</li> <li>➤ Tests read or recorded</li> <li>➤ Use of textbooks on tape</li> <li>➤ Use of voice input for computer</li> <li>➤ Use of computer with voice output</li> <li>➤ Extra time for tests</li> <li>➤ Alternate test location</li> <li>➤ Using an assisted listening device such as an FM amplification system</li> </ul>
<b>To improve TACTILE learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Recopy or type class notes</li> <li>➤ Convert notes to study or 'flash' cards</li> <li>➤ Use of models for studying</li> <li>➤ Additional time for lab classes and study</li> <li>➤ Study or lab partner</li> <li>➤ Frequent repetition of task until it is learned</li> <li>➤ Role playing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Assigned lab partner</li> <li>➤ Tests and assignments in electronic format</li> </ul>

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