



## **Central Virginia Community College**

### **Overview of Disability Support Services for Students with Disabilities**

This handbook is provided to assist students and family members in securing information to better address each student's individual needs. The Counseling Department works with each student to assist them in reaching his/her personal educational excellence at Central Virginia Community College.

Disability accommodations are offered through the Central Virginia Community College Counseling Center. It is the Counseling Department's desire to help students make the transition into college life and connect the students with those services and resources needed to be successful in college.

In accordance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, CVCC provides reasonable accommodations to students with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities including learning.

If you are an individual with a disability and require or desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations, please contact the Counseling Center and schedule an appointment with one of our counselors to begin the documentation process. Please indicate that

the appointment concerns accommodations so enough time will be allowed to cover all issues. In accommodating space requirements, the faculty and staff will meet in the Counseling Department or another confidential office area to accommodate students using wheelchairs, crutches or other mechanical needs when consultation is required.

**Please Note:**

Documentation required will vary according to the type of disability. It will be necessary for the student to provide to the Counselor of Disability Support Services (DSS), the student's current (within the past three years) documentation of disability in the form of records that state the following information:

- A statement identifying the disability, date of current evaluation and date of original diagnosis
- Description of the diagnostic tests, methods and/or criteria used including specific test results and the licensed examiner's narrative interpretation
- A description of the current functional impact of the disability, presented with a rational relationship to the diagnostic assessments. For Learning Disabilities, current documentation is defined as using adult norms
- Current/previous accommodations including treatments, medications or assistive devices/services currently or previously used, with a description of the mediating effects and potential side effects of such treatments
- Description of the expected progression or stability and the impact of the disability over time, especially over the next 3-5 years
- A history of and the impact of previous accommodations

- Credentials of the diagnosing professional if not clear from the letterhead. Diagnosing professionals may not be family members or those with close personal relationships with the student

Documentation prepared for specific non-educational venues (i.e. Social Security Administration or Dept. of Veteran's Affairs, etc) may not meet these criteria. **An IEP or 504 Plan will not be considered sufficient documentation unless accompanied by a current and complete evaluation.**

Recommendations for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies and/or collateral support services will be considered within the context of the student's current academic program. The student's accommodations will be determined within the context in which the student must function.

For clarification, a listing of documentation required is located on the CVCC website ( [www.cvcc.vccs.edu](http://www.cvcc.vccs.edu) → "Resources" → "Disability Services").

## **How does a student with disabilities receive accommodations?**

**1. CVCC provides services for students with disabilities on all campuses; please phone the main campus to speak with a Disability Support Services Counselor at 434-832-7800; 1-800-562-3060; VTDD 434-832-7701; [www.cvcc.vccs.edu](http://www.cvcc.vccs.edu); [counselingdept@cvcc.vccs.edu](mailto:counselingdept@cvcc.vccs.edu) or set an appointment. The DSS office is located in the Counseling Center.** All counselors work together to meet the needs of our DSS students.

- a. Identifying accommodation needs is an individualized process based on the student's documentation and educational experiences. A student may simply state they have a particular disability ("I'm LD") or difficulty performing an academic task ("I have trouble reading tests"), may mention the student was in special education while in middle or high school, or may ask for a specific accommodation in a class.
- b. During the intake, students are given a complete explanation of the various services available to the student and how to access them (i.e., policies and procedures for disability services).
- c. Students are informed of their student rights and responsibilities, along with the rights and responsibilities of CVCC administration, faculty and staff. If documentation is insufficient to support all accommodation requests, the disability counselors notify the student, who may wish to provide additional information.

## 2. Provide the DSS Counselor with current and appropriate documentation of the student's disability.

- a. Documentation of the student's disability must be current, within the last three years. An IEP or 504 plan from the student's high school will not suffice as appropriate documentation. Documentation must provide a current diagnosis of the student's disability and its impact on the student's academic performance or participation.
- b. For ADHD/ADD and Learning Disabilities, results from an individually administered measure of academic functioning which minimally assesses performance in reading, writing and math, and is normed (tested) appropriately for the chronological age/education level of the student. This means that the tests must be adult normed. Students who were tested before the 11th grade generally are not tested on adult normed tests.
- c. For all other disabilities, any individually administered measure/evaluation deemed appropriate for the diagnosis by an examiner or medical professional.
- d. Reports must include all test scores, specific standard scores & grade equivalents & health, physical or mental assessments appropriate for the diagnosis, a specific diagnosis or summary of findings **AND a list of accommodations suggested by the examiner or medical professional.**
- e. Any additional information, such as a history of accommodations, to help CVCC Counselors insure the most appropriate accommodations are provided. *(Please note that an IEP or 504 plan is generally not detailed*

*enough and lacks adequate supportive information to be used as the sole source of documentation.)*

- f. The documentation submitted to CVCC must be signed by a qualified professional and must be mailed, faxed or hand-carried in an envelope sealed by the professional. The ADA Coordinator and DSS Counselor reserve the right to refuse documentation that is hand-carried by the student. CVCC does not pay for testing but will attempt to refer the student to community resources that may be able to assist the student.

**3. The DSS Counselor will review the student's documentation and determine if the student is eligible for services, once determined:**

- a. Accommodation letters based on documentation are given to the student to hand deliver to each of the student's instructors prior to or at the beginning of each semester. To ensure privacy and less distraction it is suggested students approach faculty either before class or make an appointment to meet with faculty.
- b. It is the student's responsibility to make an appointment with a DSS counselor prior to the beginning of each semester to make certain accommodations are in place for that semester.

**4. For students with permanent disabilities (i.e., para/quadriplegia, blind, deaf, learning disability, etc.) it is usually necessary to provide documentation once to be eligible for accommodations during their academic career at**

**CVCC.** However, for students with episodic disabilities, such as psychiatric, multiple sclerosis, chronic health conditions, etc., it may be necessary to periodically request additional documentation in order for a student to maintain eligibility for accommodations.

- 5. The Disability Support Services provides reasonable accommodations and services to qualified CVCC students with disabilities at no cost to the student.**
  
- 6. Students with disabilities must adhere to the same attendance policy as all students at the college.**
  
- 7. As a student with a disability at CVCC, what services does the student have the right to receive?**
  - Appropriate accommodations according to the student's disability based on documentation
  - Equal access to an education
  - Equal and fair treatment
  - Confidentiality in all matters of the student's documentation and educational records
  
- 8. As a student with a disability at CVCC, what are the student's responsibilities?**
  - Request accommodations in a timely manner from DSS once the student has provided complete documentation
  - Meet privately with faculty to discuss accommodations, personally delivering accommodation letters
  - Student needs to be their own advocate

- Update the student’s address, phone number and student information with the college
- Abide by the rules and conduct addressing all students of the college as stated in the college handbook

For a complete description see “Guidelines for Documentation of a Disability” available on the CVCC website ([www.cvcc.vccs.edu](http://www.cvcc.vccs.edu) → “Resources” → “Disability Services” or [www.cvcc.vccs.edu](http://www.cvcc.vccs.edu) → “Academics” → College Catalog).

## **Focus on Abilities**

The college approaches accommodating a student who has a disability with the attitude that he or she has the ability to do the work, but simply needs to accomplish some things in a manner that is unique to their needs or learning style.

## **Empowering Students**

It is the goal of the Counseling Department to empower students with disabilities to take charge of their life by becoming more knowledgeable and skilled in expressing the students’ needs, preferences and desires. The University of Washington conducted research with young people and adults with disabilities and came up with seven (7) empowering strategies:

1. Define success for self
2. Set personal, academic and career goals with realistic but high expectations
3. Understand one’s own abilities and disabilities and play to the strengths
4. Develop strategies to meet self-defined goals
5. Use technology as an empowering tool

6. Persevere while working hard, remaining flexible
7. Develop support network of family, friends and instructors

## **Students as Experts on Their Disability Needs**

There is a wide diversity among people within a given disability type, and a wide range of previous experiences that people have had in accommodating the student's disabilities. It is important to keep in mind that two people with the same disability may require different accommodations. For example, one student who is deaf may request an interpreter for exams, and another may not. Similarly, one student with low vision may request exams and handouts in large print, while another may be able to read the small print using a magnification device.

Many students are comfortable with their disabilities and very familiar with the accommodation process that works for the student. Those who have limited experience with what accommodations the student needs to succeed in class may be, for example, freshmen, students whose disabilities are recent or have changed over time and students who are taking a certain type of class for the first time, such as a computer class or lab science.

Not all students will feel at ease initiating the arrangements needed for appropriate accommodations. There are a number of reasons why students become apprehensive within this process. Some of these may include:

- Drawing attention to the student's differences
- Acquiring labels that stigmatize
- Experiencing negative reactions in the past
- Asking for accommodations others may perceive as unfair
- Lacking confidence in approaching those in power

- Having never been required to assess the student's own needs and initiate required action(s)

## **Accommodation Examples**

The Counseling Department will determine accommodations as mandated under federal law. Please remember that student needs are highly individualized and what works for one student with a particular disability may not be effective for another student with the same disability. Examples of accommodations are numerous. Below is a list of some common accommodations.

- Extended time for exams
- Reduced distraction testing room
- Large print exams
- Braille exams
- Oral testing
- Interpreters
- Transcribers
- Lab assistant
- Notetakers
- Copies of overheads and PowerPoint
- Taping lectures
- Books on tape or digital format
- Accessible room and/or furniture

## **Transition to College:**

Transition is a major part of preparing for college, remaining in college and completing your academic work toward a college degree. Several areas of interest are listed related to the college

experience, academic adjustment, time management and study skills required to meet college criteria.

## **There Are No IEP's in College**

**By Amy G. Dell**

The laws affecting college students with disabilities and the process of obtaining assistive technology in college are completely different from the kindergarten to high school world. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is not in effect in higher education. Colleges have no legal responsibility to identify students with disabilities or involve parents in decision making. Parents are often surprised to learn that there are no IEP's in college.

Rather, in higher education the relevant law is a civil rights law – it protects people with disabilities from discrimination in admission to college and participation in college activities. The two federal laws that provide this protection are Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (originally passed in 1973, with subsequent reauthorizations), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (passed in 1990). The ADA states: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity."

In other words, a disability cannot be grounds for excluding a person from a college, an academic program, a class, a residence hall or a college activity, if the person is qualified.

## **Reasonable Accommodations**

Under Section 504 and the ADA, colleges must provide – at no cost to the student — “reasonable accommodations” to make the college programs accessible to students with disabilities. Examples are scheduling a class in a first floor classroom to accommodate a student who uses a wheelchair, providing sign language interpreters for a student who is deaf and arranging for extended time on tests for a student who has learning disabilities. In many cases providing an effective assistive technology tool is considered a “reasonable accommodation.” Section 504 and the ADA use the term “auxiliary aids and services” to refer to devices and services that make programs and materials available to people with disabilities.

Of particular relevance to the topic of assistive technology is that although colleges are required to provide auxiliary aids and services, the colleges are not required to provide the most sophisticated technology available. It is acceptable for a college to provide a different technology product from the one which the student had requested. For example, the college may provide a different brand of screen reading software than the one originally requested.

## **Procedures for Obtaining Assistive Technology in College**

In higher education the responsibility for documenting a disability and requesting accommodations falls on the student, not the educational institution. The college is not required to find or assess

students who have disabilities. If a student chooses to keep his/her disability a secret, that is his/her prerogative, and the college is not required to provide any accommodation. The chart below summarizes the obligations of colleges and students with disabilities under the ADA.

What is particularly important to note is that the student must specifically request a piece of assistive technology as an accommodation if he/she believes it will provide access to the curriculum and an equal opportunity to demonstrate his/her knowledge. The accommodation must be clearly linked to the student's particular needs.

<b>College and Student Obligations Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)</b>	
<b>College Obligations Under the ADA</b>	<b>Student Obligations Under the ADA</b>
<b>Ensure that qualified applicants and students have access to the college's programs</b>	<b>Self-identify that he/she has a disability (following the specific college's stated policies and procedures)</b> <b>Provide appropriate documentation of disability</b>
<b>Provide reasonable accommodations for the student's documented disabilities</b>	<b>Request specific accommodation(s)</b>
<b>Demonstrate a good faith effort to provide the student with meaningful access</b>	<b>Follow the agreed-upon procedures for using accommodations</b>

## **Legal and Procedural Differences Between the ADA and IDEA**

Learning that the IDEA does not apply to higher education and that college students have a much greater responsibility if the students are to receive accommodations (and parents have a greatly reduced role) is often a shock for students and the student's parents. Unlike the IDEA, which, under its "zero reject" policy, guarantees an education to all school-aged children, regardless of ability, the ADA protects only those individuals who meet the stated qualifications of a college or program. The phrase "otherwise qualified" in the ADA means that only those people who are able to meet the technical and academic qualifications for entry into a school, program or activity are protected by the ADA. This means that although colleges are required to make what are called minor academic adjustments, the colleges are not required to make substantial modifications to the college's curricula or course requirements. A good example of how this differs from the kindergarten to high school world is that although a reasonable accommodation may be extended time on tests and/or a distraction-free environment for testing, the law does not require colleges to modify the contents of an exam. Another example is that colleges are not obligated to provide students with disabilities more intensive tutoring services than the college provides to non-disabled students. The chart summarizes the major differences between the requirements and procedures of the IDEA and the ADA.

**Comparison of the Requirements and Procedures of  
the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)  
and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

	<b>IDEA (K-12)</b>	<b>ADA (College)</b>
<b>Rights guaranteed by the law</b>	Free, appropriate public education (FAPE)	Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability
<b>Who is covered</b>	Every child Concept of zero reject	Students who are "otherwise qualified"
<b>Identification and evaluation of students with disabilities</b>	District is responsible for identifying students with disabilities, evaluating them, and covering costs	College has no such responsibility. Student must self-identify and provide appropriate documentation If an evaluation is needed, the expense is the student's responsibility
<b>Determining Services</b>	Individualized Education Plan (IEP) developed by team  Curriculum modifications and special programs are common	Reasonable accommodations, including auxiliary aids and services, must be requested by student  Academic adjustments that equalize opportunity for participation are required; Substantial modifications to curriculum and lowering standards are not required
<b>Personal devices and services such as wheelchairs, hearing aids, and personal care attendants</b>	Provided by district if determined to be necessary (and included in IEP)	Colleges are not required to provide these
<b>Role of parents</b>	Parents must be included in decision-making	College students are over 18 and are considered adults. No parent consultation is required
<b>Appeals process</b>	Right to due process as spelled out in the law	College grievance procedure, then file a complaint with the USDOE Office of Civil Rights

Adapted with permission  
(<http://www.tcnj.edu/~technj/2004/transition.htm>)

# **Transition: High School to College**

## **Importance of Transition Planning in High School**

In order to access and use technology tools effectively in college, students with disabilities must be adequately prepared in high school. The differences between the protections and procedures of the IDEA and the ADA described make transition planning in high school especially important for students in special education who want to go on to college. Transition plans for students with disabilities who want to attend college must include the teaching of appropriate assistive technology skills *and* self-advocacy skills so that when the students get to college, students will be able to assume the increased responsibilities associated with accessing accommodations.

The following is an edited list highlighting some of the major differences between high school and college.

**Academic Environment:** (includes operations and logistic variables)

- Instruction mainly in lecture format, but many instructors use PowerPoint or an online component to enhance class
- Reading assignments complement but do not always duplicate lectures
- More students on campus
- More social distractions
- Classes meet less frequently and fewer hours
- Less busywork
- Tasks are less structured and more ambiguous

- Ability to use library effectively, a critical skill
- Student responsible for what the student has learned in high school and other courses
- Discussions in class seek to raise questions with no clear right or wrong answer
- More emphasis on understanding theory

**Grading** (includes differences about how grades are earned)

- Harder to earn an A or B
- Simple completion of assignment often earns only a C or even lower
- Semester grades often based on 2 or 3 tests
- Student progress not monitored by teacher
- Exam questions often difficult to predict
- More major writing assignments
- Essay exams common

**Knowledge Acquisition** (includes differences on how to study and learn)

- Strong reading comprehension skills very critical
- Taking good notes very important
- Few visual and study aids are provided
- Identifying the main idea most important
- Students must have good communication skills
- Students must seek out additional sources of information on their own
- Student must recognize the need for help and ask for it
- Student must monitor their own progress
- Paying attention in class more important
- Studying and study skills more important

**Support** (includes the significant differences in the amount of support students received in and out of the classroom)

- Relationships with family and friends change
- Less teacher-student contact
- Less individual feedback from teacher
- Teachers may not be student-centered
- Behavior problems not tolerated
- More academic competition for grades
- Less personal environment
- Students often do not get much direction

**Stress** (includes concerns and perceived pressures experienced)

- Increased work load and faster pace
- Student expected to be more independent and more accountable for the student's behavior and work
- More difficult to earn high grades
- Entire course completed in 16 weeks or less
- Increased financial responsibilities
- New and increased social pressures
- Expectation that students know what the student wants from college and from life

**Responsibility** (includes changes associated with differences in college role versus high school)

- More choices and decisions to make
- More self-evaluation and monitoring required
- More independent reading and studying
- More responsibility for managing time and commitments
- Student must identify and attain own goals
- Students responsible to seek and locate help

- Student more responsible to self, whomever in paying bills (including college costs)
- Student must self-motivate interest in learning and being successful

### ***CVCC offers FREE tutoring services through the Student Success Center.***

- Students should make an appointment to be certain a tutor is available contact: 434-832-7827; [ssc@cvcc.vccs.edu](mailto:ssc@cvcc.vccs.edu) or [www.cvcc.vccs.edu](http://www.cvcc.vccs.edu) → “Resources” → “Testing Center Info”
- Hours for the SSC are: 9:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday and 9:00 a.m. – noon on Friday
- Students should bring the student’s course materials including the syllabus, assignments and graded materials

Testing Center—Some online classes require proctored testing; sometimes students get sick and miss a test; sometimes a student with disabilities needs alternative testing conditions. Whatever the reason, testing services are provided through the Student Success Center.

The Library provides a lot of resources and support to help students be successful including the ability to work with a librarian online from home. Students can contact the library at 434-832-7750; email: [library@cvcc.vccs.edu](mailto:library@cvcc.vccs.edu); or on the website: [www.cvcc.vccs.edu](http://www.cvcc.vccs.edu) → “Academics” → “Library”.

### **Enrollment Process**

It is very important that all students understand the enrollment process. For example, students need to know their user name and

EMPL ID and how to get reactivated after the student has been out for a year; when the student can drop and add classes; the last dates to withdraw from classes with no penalty; how the student's program plan impacts financial aid; and when the student will be dropped from classes for non-payment. These are only a few of the issues students need to be aware of as the student goes through the enrollment process. The class schedule is an important tool in keeping on top of all the details surrounding enrolling in classes at CVCC. Meeting with a counselor each semester to discuss your class schedule and accommodations is encouraged.

### **Steps for Enrollment into CVCC:**

- Fill out CVCC application (including in-state application, if applicable)
- Take placement test (contact Counseling Department 434-832-7800; 1-800-562-3060; VTDD 434-832-7701; counselingdept@cvcc.vccs.edu; www.cvcc.vccs.edu)
- Make an appointment with a CVCC counselor to interpret your placement test scores
- Enroll in classes

## **Academic Terms You Need to Know**

**Academic Year** – The year is divided into two 16 week semesters (fall & spring) and a 10 week summer session. These semesters have two shorter sessions within them.

**Accreditation** – CVCC is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. This means our courses and programs meet an academic standard recognized by colleges and universities all over the United States. It also means our credits can transfer to other colleges.

**ADA** – The American with Disabilities Act which requires the provision of reasonable accommodations to those who self-identify and request services. Accommodations are different at the college level than at the high school level. See page 22 in the college catalog or the college website ([www.cvcc.vccs.edu](http://www.cvcc.vccs.edu)).

**Advisor** – this can be a faculty member to whom you are assigned and who is responsible for overseeing your program or one of the college counselors in the Counseling Center.

**Course/Credit Hours** – Course hours = the number of clock hours a student spends in the class or lab each week. Credit hours = the number of hours for which a student receives credit.

**Curriculum/Program** – Each student who is pursuing a specific major which will lead to a certificate, diploma or degree. The college catalog contains descriptions of each of the academic programs/curriculums CVCC offers. If you are not in a curriculum and need to be placed in one, a counselor will need to fill out a Curriculum Placement Form which will be signed by you and turned into the Admissions Office. All students receiving financial aid must be in a curriculum.

**Domicile** – This is an important issue in terms of tuition and refers to a student's permanent legal address. If you are under 24 years of age and do not meet certain exemption criteria, your legal domicile will be based on your parent's domicile.

**Enrollment Change Form** – If a class is closed or if a student wants to add a class after the last day in the semester to add a class, this form must be used to change your schedule. Students who wish to change their schedules after the first day of class should contact a counselor in the Counseling Department (434-832-7800; 1-800-562-3060; VTDD 434-832-7701; [counselingdept@cvcc.vccs.edu](mailto:counselingdept@cvcc.vccs.edu); [www.cvcc.vccs.edu](http://www.cvcc.vccs.edu)).

**Graduation Application** – Graduation is NOT automatic. Students expecting to complete the requirements for a degree, diploma or certificate must complete a graduation application for each award. These forms are available in the Office of Admissions and Records. Graduation applications must be submitted by the due dates as listed in the Academic Calendar for processing. Students may call the Counseling Department to verify these dates at 434-832-7800 or VTDD 434-832-7701.

**Prerequisites** – Courses in your program or the program itself may have prerequisites that must be completed before you can continue in the curriculum. Please check the course description in the back of the college catalog for specific descriptions. Please be aware that most of the health career programs have prerequisites to admission which must be completed before an application to that program can be obtained. Please check with the Counseling Department (434-832-7800; VTDD 434-832-7701), the college catalog or the website ([www.cvcc.vccs.edu](http://www.cvcc.vccs.edu)) for this information.

**Readmission** – If you have not been a student at CVCC in over 36 months you must fill out a new application for admission. If you have not been a student for a year, but have been here in the last three years, you must fill out an Application for Instate Tuition.

**Student Status** – this is based on your GPA and refers to your academic standing. You are expected to maintain a GPA of 2.0 and to be making progress toward graduation. You must have a 2.0 in all of your program classes to graduate. See the college catalog or the website ([www.cvcc.vccs.edu](http://www.cvcc.vccs.edu)) for an explanation of Good Standing; Academic Warning; Academic Probation; Academic Suspension and Academic Dismissal.

**Syllabus** – Critical document that tells students what is expected of them in a class. You should receive it the first day of class. It

provides an outline of the course, as well as due dates for assignments and testing dates.

**Transcript (official and unofficial)** – This is your academic record. It will list all courses you have taken at the institution including the ones you have withdrawn from. Students may print an unofficial copy of their transcript from their web account. An official copy must be ordered from the A & R office.

**Withdrawal from College or Classes** – A student is not officially withdrawn until the necessary paperwork has been filed and turned into the Office of Admissions and Records. Be aware of drop dates. Each semester will have a last day to withdraw from a course with a “W”.

Additional information is available on the website:  
[www.cvcc.vccs.edu](http://www.cvcc.vccs.edu) → “Resources” → “Disability Services”