

## General Differences Between K-12 Education & University Education

The Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) works with students to determine appropriate and reasonable accommodations for students with specific functional limitations due to disabilities. Because universities work under a different legal framework from high schools, our process may be different from what students have experienced in high school or other institutions. This document summarizes several of these differences. Nonetheless, our office is here to support students and work to ensure they receive reasonable accommodations.

A fundamental difference comes down to the difference between expectations for students and instructors in high schools versus universities. At the university, students are expected to be self-directed in their education; with respect to establishing disability-related accommodations, this means that students initiate the process and take responsibility for obtaining necessary documentation, etc. Therefore, at UC San Diego, students with disabilities should contact our office (<https://osd.ucsd.edu>) to initiate the interactive process.

Because the focus is on functional limitations, it is important that documentation identify the student's current functional limitations, particularly in an academic environment. While a diagnosis is often helpful, information from both medical providers AND the student, which outlines how the disability impacts the student today, will assist our disability specialists in determining reasonable accommodations.

In addition, our office strives to ensure equity in our process – that is, we set non-discriminatory standards and policies regarding documentation and its review that are applied consistently and uniformly to all students requesting accommodations. This may explain why some students may have received accommodations at another institution such as a community college, private university, school outside of California or the United States, but are not eligible currently to receive the same accommodations at UC San Diego.

### Applicable Laws

I.D.E.A (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)	A.D.A. (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990)
Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973	Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973
I.D.E.A. is about insuring student success	A.D.A. is about access to programs and services; success is the student's responsibility

### Required Documentation

I.E.P. (Individualized Education Plan and/or 504 Plan)	Documentation guidelines specify information needed for each category of disability
School provides evaluation at no cost to student	Student must get evaluation at own expense
Documentation focuses on determining whether student is eligible for services based on specific disability categories in I.D.E.A.	Documentation must provide information on specific functional limitations, and demonstrate the need for specific accommodations

### General Differences

Class schedules are arranged by school personnel	Students arrange their own schedules
General education classes dictated by the state and/or the district requirements	Classes are based on a field or program of study; requirements may vary
Class attendance is usually mandatory and monitored carefully	Attendance policies are set by individual instructor and vary

Textbooks are typically provided at little or no expense

Textbooks can be expensive and the student is responsible for obtaining them

Instructors and school personnel closely watch out for the students; guiding and correcting them if necessary

Students are expected to take responsibility for what they do and don't do, as well as for the consequences of their decisions

An academic year usually consists of 2 semesters (15 weeks each)

An academic year may consist of 2 semesters (15 weeks each) or 3 quarters (10 weeks each)

Personal care attendants are provided by the school

The student is responsible for finding, hiring, and paying for personal care attendants

Students may request non-academic accommodations in areas such as campus housing and dining

## Self-Advocacy

Student is identified by the school and is supported by parents and teachers

Student must self-identify to the Office for Students with Disabilities

Primary responsibility for arranging accommodations belongs to the school

Primary responsibility for self-advocacy and arranging accommodations belongs to the student

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

## Parental Role

Parent has access to student records and can participate in the accommodations process

Parent does not have access to student records without student's written consent

Parent advocates for the student

Student advocates for self

## Instruction

Teachers may modify curriculum and/or alter pace of assignments

Professors are not are not required to fundamentally alter curriculum

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

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

## High School Teacher vs. College Instructor

Grade and check completed homework

Assume homework is completed and students are able to perform on a test

May remind students of incomplete assignments

May not remind student of incomplete assignments as it is the responsibility of the student to check with instructor to see if requirements are being met

May know students' needs and approach students when they need assistance

Are usually open and helpful, but expect students to initiate contact when assistance is needed

May be available before, during, or after class

May require students to attend scheduled office hours

Often provide student with information missed during absence

Expect student to get information from classmates or instructional assistant when they miss a class

Present material to help students understand what is in the textbook

Instructors may not follow the textbook, and lectures enhance the topic area

in the textbook

Often write information on the board or overhead to be copied for notes

Teach knowledge and facts, leading student through the thinking process

Often take time to remind students of assignment and test dates

enhance the topic area

The instructor may lecture nonstop; when the instructor writes on the board that is to enhance the lecture, not summarize it

Expect students to think independently and connect seemingly unrelated information

### Grades and Tests

I.E.P. or 504 plan may include modifications to test format and/or grading

Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material

Makeup tests are often available

Teachers often take time to remind you of assignments and due dates

Grading and test format changes (i.e. multiple choice vs. essay) are generally not available.

Accommodations to HOW tests are given (extended time, separate testing locations) are available when supported by disability documentation

Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material

Makeup tests are seldom an option

Professors expect you to read, save, and consult the course syllabus (online); the syllabus spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due, and how you will be graded

### Study Responsibilities

Tutoring and study support may be a service provided as part of I.E.P or 504 plans

Student time and assignments are structured by others

Students may study outside of class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and this may be mostly last-minute test preparation

Tutoring DOES NOT fall under Disability Services. Students with disabilities must seek out tutoring resources as they are available to all students

Students manage their own time and complete assignments independently

Students need to study at least 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class