Accommodating Students with Disabilities at the Postsecondary Level

Cayuga Community College
Office of Accessibility Resources

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National Center for Education Statistics

You are not alone!

- 19.4% of undergraduate students enrolled in college have a disability.

- If a college's enrollment is 5,000 students, nearly 1,000 of them have a disability.

- Approximately 1 out of 5 students have a disability.

https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=60#:~:text=How%20many%20students%20in%20postsecondary,20%20percent%20for%20female%20students.

Office of Accessibility Resources (OAR)

- --Coordinates accommodations and services for students with disabilities taking courses in Auburn, Fulton, or Online.

- Learning

- Physical/Mobility

- Psychiatric/Psychological

- Autism Spectrum Disorder

- Medical

- Vision/Hearing

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

- Temporary Disabilities

Differences Between High School and College for Students with Disabilities

- Students are no longer provided services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

- Disability services are provided under the American's with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

- Colleges don't have the same legal obligations as high schools.

- Colleges don't have to provide the same level of supports and services students may have received in high school.

- **Students no longer have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan** but will receive *an accommodation plan*, which is reviewed each semester in a meeting with the student and the Accessibility Resources Coordinator.

Differences Between High School and College for Students with Disabilities

- Colleges do not provide a "resource room" type setting.

- Tutoring support is not an accommodation.

- Tutoring support is available at many campuses.

- Students are responsible for initiating requests for tutoring services.

- While some campuses may offer assistance with organization and study strategies, students are expected to keep track of their own assignments.

Differences Between High School and College for Students with Disabilities

- Students are expected to take the same tests and do the same work as other students in the course.

- Tests and assignments are not modified or shortened.

- Some accommodations may not be reasonable if they would constitute a fundamental alteration of an essential element of a course or program.

- Exam accommodations such as extended test time, a non-distracting environment, and assistive technology can be provided to students.

Differences Between High School and College for Students with Disabilities

Types of IEP supports that do not transfer to college:

- Clarifying directions on an exam unless it is for the entire class

- Redirection back to task during a test or in class.

- Checks for clarification by the teacher during class.

- Human readers – instead text-to-speech software or screen readers are available.

- Individual reminders to complete assignments.

Differences Between High School and College for Students with Disabilities

To summarize…

At the college level, students:

- Can decide if they want to request disability services.

- No longer have an IEP or 504 Plan but will have an *accommodation letter*.

- Talk to their instructors about their accommodative needs.

- Students are expected to take the same tests and do the same work as other students in the course.

Important Reminders when Registering with a College's Disability Services Office

- In order to receive accommodations in college, students need to register as a student with a disability. This happens with the ***disability services office***, not the admissions office.

- Documentation is not "automatically" sent by a school district.

- Accommodations do not "automatically" transfer.

- A student needs to request that their documentation be sent to a particular college. This can occur before the student leaves high school.

- College professors do not receive copies of a student's high school IEP or Section 504 plan.

Registering with the
Office of Accessibility Resources (OAR)

1. Submit copies of your confidential disability documentation (IEP, Section 504 Plan) to the OAR.

2. Complete the Confidential Self-Disclosure Form.

3. Schedule an *Access Meeting* with the Accessibility Resources Coordinator.

Follow These Steps

Setting Up Accommodations

- The *Access Meeting* is an interactive dialogue between the student and Accessibility Resources Coordinator regarding the student's needs.

- Appropriate accommodations and services are determined through **an interactive process** based on the disability documentation and the conversation between the coordinator and student.

Setting Up Accommodations

- Students are encouraged to take an active role in the Access Meeting and to identify their own needs based on past academic experiences and goals.

- In many cases this is the first time that students are self-advocating and providing input into the decision-making process surrounding their accommodations.
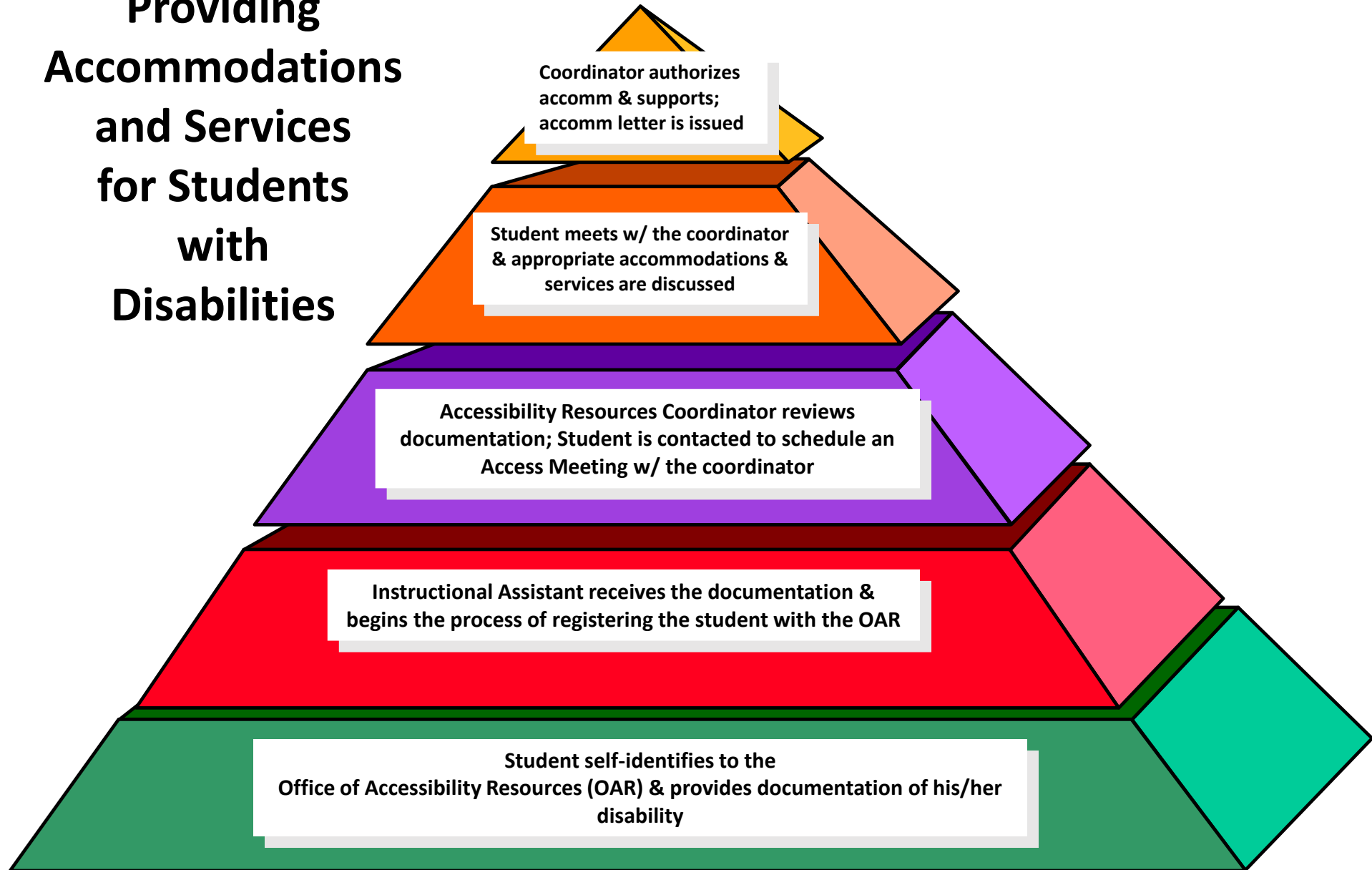
Setting Up Accommodations

- At the conclusion of the **Access Meeting**, students receive the Confidential Accommodation Letters which state the accommodations and supports that they will need.

- **Important Point!** Students are responsible for providing their accommodation letters to their instructors and discussing their needs with them.

Providing Accommodations and Services for Students with Disabilities

Coordinator authorizes accomm & supports; accomm letter is issued

Student meets w/ the coordinator & appropriate accommodations & services are discussed

Accessibility Resources Coordinator reviews documentation; Student is contacted to schedule an Access Meeting w/ the coordinator

Instructional Assistant receives the documentation & begins the process of registering the student with the OAR

Student self-identifies to the Office of Accessibility Resources (OAR) & provides documentation of his/her disability

To Disclose or Not to Disclose…

- Some students are very open and comfortable disclosing to their instructors that they have a disability.

- Others are concerned that they will be looked down upon or treated differently.

- The OAR treats disability information as **CONFIDENTIAL.**

- Instructors are provided with information about a student's accommodations, not his or her disability diagnosis.

To Disclose or Not to Disclose…

- Many students are comfortable with requesting disability-related accommodations as soon as they begin college.

- Some students say that they want to wait to use disability accommodations in college and "try it out for themselves" first.

To Disclose or Not to Disclose…

- It is the student's decision as to whether or not he or she wants to utilize disability accommodations for his or her college courses.

- It is recommended that students start out college with their disability-related accommodations and then reduce their support as needed. But ultimately it's the student's choice!

To Disclose or Not to Disclose…

Important Points to help make your decision!

- Accommodations are not retroactive!

- Students cannot retake previous exams they took without their accommodations.

- Accommodations begin as soon as the student provides the instructor with an accommodation letter, so future exams can be taken with accommodations.

To Disclose or Not to Disclose…

To Summarize:

- Accommodations are not retroactive! Students cannot retake previous exams they took without their accommodations.

- The OAR treats disability information as **CONFIDENTIAL.**

- Instructors are provided with information about a student's accommodations, **not** his or her disability diagnosis.

Examples of Exam Accommodations

- **Extended time**

- **Non-distracting environment**

- **Computer with spell/grammar check**

- **Use of a calculator**

- **Computer-read tests**

- **Scribe**

- **Scantron exemption**
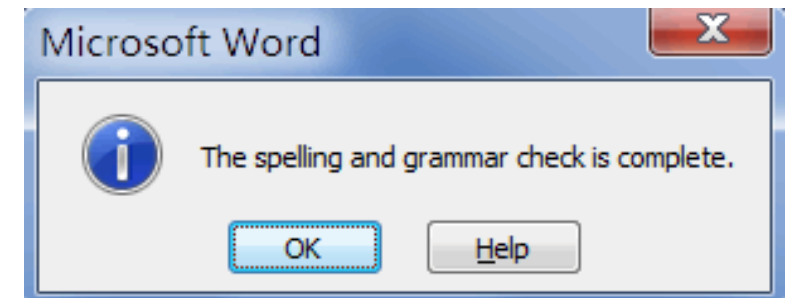
Examples of Support Services

- **Notetaking services**

- **Alternate Format**
    - **--Large print materials**
    - **--Electronic text (E-text)**

- **Assistive Technology**
    - **--Text-to-speech software**
    - **--Screen readers**
    - **--Speech-to-text software**

- **Sign language interpreters**

- **Amplification systems**

- **Accommodative furniture**
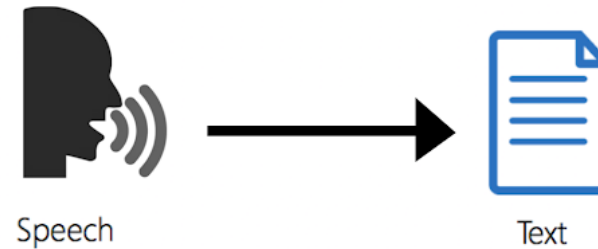
Types of Assistive Technologies

Text-to-Speech

- Kurzweil 3000

- Natural Reader

- Read&Write for Google Chrome

- ZoomText

- JAWS

Speech-to-Text

- Dragon Naturally Speaking

- Microsoft Word Dictation

Accessing Supports on Campus

- Students are considered adults and are encouraged to self-advocate.

- It's ok to ask for help!

- Support is available! Students should know what resources exist on their campus, so that they can seek assistance when needed.

Self-Advocacy: Know Yourself, Know What You Need, Know How to Get It

Accessing Supports on Campus

- Accessibility/disability services office staff collaborate with students, faculty, and staff around issues that may arise regarding students' disability-related needs.

- Students are encouraged to be self-advocates, but should view their accessibility/disability services office on their campus as a resource to assist with their advocacy skills and provide support and encouragement when needed.

Questions…

Office of Accessibility Resources
Contact Information

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