

TRANSITIONING FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE: PREPARING STUDENTS WITH AUTISM/ASPERGER SYNDROME

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What are the issues facing students with AU/Asp as they transfer to college?

SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONAL & STUDY SKILLS
ANXIETY SEPARATION ANXIETY
ACADEMICS

What are the needs of students with AU/Asp who attend college?

BEING ADVOCATES FOR THEMSELVES
ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

What are we doing to help?

TAKE DUAL CREDIT CLASSES TO HELP WITH TRANSITION TO COLLEGE
GO TO COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO GET USE TO COLLEGE ETC
MUST HAVE A SUPPORT SYSTEM AND KNOW HOW TO FIND A SUPPORT SYSTEM

If have 12 hours of college can go to Tech and possibly other colleges as a transfer rather than a freshman so possibly don't look at SAT scores so closely.

CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS WITH AU/ASPS:

- *Impairments in *social interaction* (nonverbal behaviors, relationship development, spontaneous sharing, social/emotional reciprocity)
- *Impairments in *communication* (spoken language, initiate/sustain conversation, repetitive language, imaginative play)
- *Restrictive, repetitive, stereotyped patterns of *behavior* (preoccupation with interest, compulsive routines/rituals, repetitive mannerisms, preoccupation with objects)
- **Asperger Syndrome* – Impairment in social interaction, repetitive patterns of behavior, no significant delay in language or cognitive development. (APA, 1994)

NEEDS OF STUDENTS PREPARING FOR TRANSITION TO COLLEGE

- *Possessing self-advocacy skills
- *Utilizing academic accommodations
- *Knowing personal strengths and interests
- *Knowing how to compensate for weaknesses
- *Possessing effective learning/study strategies
- *Differences between high school and college
- *Necessary disability documentation

HIGH SCHOOL VS COLLEGE

ISSUES

Laws

HIGH SCHOOL

IDEA, Section 504- promotes student success

COLLEGE

ADA, Section 504-promotes students' equal access to programs and services

Basis of services

IEP, school assessments

IEP not acceptable, recent documentation required from licensed professional that identifies student's limitations to learning

Student's relation to the School

Dependent, uninvolved in educational contract, open discussion with staff

Expected to know when to get assistance, understand their disability & needs, know & use campus resources/services, be a self-advocate.

Services

Entitled to services, resource room, course waivers, test/grade modifications.

Must self-identify to receive services, determined based on documentation & justification of functional limitations

Relations with parents

IEPs developed with parents, Reports to parents, parents Informed when student is in trouble

Parents generally excluded because of FERPA/Buckley Amendment, discussion possible only with signed authorization by student.

Structure and accountability

Teachers and parents very involved

More freedom and responsibility, community policies & consequences

Time

In class all day, after school time structured

Less time in class & varies each day more free time, many social opportunities, employment.

Classes

Directed by teacher, work done in class, in class all day

Attendance optional, out-of class reading & assignments, 4-6 classes each semester, expected to be an independent learner.

Other differences to be aware of:

Size of campus

Expectations that student must write a great deal, homework, tests, projects and time frames.

Can work schedule to meet strengths, may be skip math until later if that is a weakness or if reading is a weakness

only take one heavy reading class a semester.

Need to understand that will still have to take classes they don't like or want to take. So in the beginning they need to know their interests and if classes are available to meet their interests. This helps with the adjustment to college.

They have to take the (necessary disability documentation) written proof of their limitations/accommodations to each professor. Must know personal strengths and interest and how to compensate for their weaknesses. This especially applies to study skills and organizational skills. How to write a paper or how to dictate it so someone else could type it.

They also need to know their learning styles, skills and strategies.

Be aware of support services.

ADA requires accommodations to be made. NOT ALL CAMPUSES AND COLLEGES ARE ALIKE!!!!!!!!! The support services can be found on the school's website.

CONTINUUM OF COLLEGE SUPPORT SERVICES (McGuire and Shaw, 1989)

There are 5 levels of support services

LEVEL ONE- No service available - meets minimal requirements under Section 504. ADA requires accommodations.

LEVEL TWO- Decentralized and Limited Services - No formal contact person (usually an assistant dean), Limited services, Few established policies, Student dependent on sympathetic faculty.

LEVEL THREE – Loosely Coordinated Services – Contact person available, Generic support services available , Peer tutors available to help at-risk students, Students referred to other on-campus resources, Services available only during the academic year,

LEVEL FOUR – Centrally Coordinated Services – Full time learning disability coordinator, Services often housed in disability student services office, Accommodations provided for testing and course work (Possibly a testing center), Established policies on admissions and service delivery, Strong emphasis on student self-advocacy, Peer support groups, Specially trained tutors may be available, Student required to provide documentation of learning disability, Services available throughout the year.

LEVEL FIVE- Data-Based Services-(Above and beyond ADA and usually charge a fee for the services, sometimes may have a scholarship to provide services) Full time learning disability director, Learning disability assistant coordinator, Full range of accommodations provided, Development of individualized semester plans, Tutoring available from trained staff and graduate –level interns, Data based contact records and service use profiles generated for annual report. Also as student progresses some of the services fade away.

TYPICALLY AVAILABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Course substitutions (Math disability, no algebra)

Extended time on tests (Take tests in testing center)

Laptop computers for class notes.

Note taking services (Prof gives copy of notes or has someone take notes for them, recorders rarely are listened to again unless they are an auditory learner.)

Priority registration (for people on meds. Or who need physical assistance because it takes them longer to get into the building etc)

Screen reading software
Spell checkers
Test reader/test scribe (Reads test or writes their answers for student –usually at the testing center)
Testing in a less distracting environment (testing center)
Textbooks on tape/cd or e/text.

TYPICALLY AVAILABLE SERVICES (for all students and maybe provided by students)

Academic advising/course registration Career counseling
Diagnostic evaluations (usually interest inventories)
First Year Seminar (good when transfer in to meet people)
Individual coaching
New student orientation (also look for ones for people with disabilities)
Organizational skills training (must go)
Peer mentoring Personal counseling
Self-advocacy training (must ask for and go)
Social skills/communication training (also good)
Strength based assessments Study skills training
Support groups/counseling Transition assistance Tutoring

NEEDS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH AUTISM/ASPERGER SYNDROME

Self-advocacy (no one else will do this for them)
Collaboration with family (can help with understanding of all concerned with student's permission)
Registration and course selection (need understanding professors, not the dry ones)
Scheduling and time management (set schedule up if needs breaks/down time or tight schedule if gets distracted and would forget to go to class)
Executive functioning ***** APPROPRIATE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR AND CONDUCT*****
Appropriate classroom conduct (Civility in classroom policy-teacher and college)
Writing papers (how to organize thoughts)
Taking exams
Taking notes
Presentations/public speaking (lots of presentations/ social interactions/group projects/study groups)
Communication/social skills
Social anxiety (Wolf, Brown, and Bork 2009)

SUGGESTIONS FOR PREPARING STUDENTS WITH AU/ASPS FOR TRANSITION TO COLLEGE

Deciding what type and size of college to attend and where the student is going to live
Assessing/teaching independent living skills
Discussing when and how to disclose one's disability. You don't walk up and say hello my name is _____ and I'm autistic etc.
Identifying necessary social supports
Identifying appropriate academic supports and accommodations
Identifying strategies to assist in adjusting to the college environment