Handbook for Students with Disabilities
Cecil College
Disability and Support Services

Alternative format available upon request
Created by: Rebecca Larson, LCSW-C
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Our Mission

Disability & Support Services provides a full complement of services consistent with the needs of students with disabilities, as well as special needs, through partnerships with students, faculty and staff; we promote self-awareness, self-determination and self-advocacy to enhance opportunities for academic success. Disability & Support Services adheres to the compliance standards related to Americans Disabilities Act (Disability), Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Health Insurance Probability & Accountability Act (HIPAA), Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). Cecil College is a member of the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) and supports the statements on Professional Standards and Code of Ethics and utilizes these codes as guidelines in services to students.

Disability (Americans Disabilities Act)

It is the policy of Cecil College to provide accessible programs, services, activities and reasonable accommodations for any student with documented disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The program of Disability & Support Services works to ensure students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to pursue an education based on their ability rather than their disability.

The ADAAA (Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008) define disability as any medical, physical, learning or psychological condition that substantially limits someone from a major life activity such as seeing, hearing, learning and self-care.

Disability services assist students with documented disabilities. These include, but not limited to the following: Learning Disabilities, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders, Psychiatric Disorders, Sensory Disabilities, Physical Disabilities and Health Impairments. Students registered with the Program provided reasonable accommodations, on a case-by-case basis, to afford equal opportunity with respect to the institutions programs, activities and services. Reasonable accommodations might include extended time for exams, exams given in low distraction reduced setting, peer note takers in class, audiotaping of class lectures, sign language interpreters, audio books, brailed books or class material. Our goal is to create accessible environment in which help students become independent, self-empowerment, self-advocacy, and development of strengths.

Support Services

Support Services are to provide students, as well as faculty and staff, with support services and available resources. Supportive services include, but not limited to, the following: crisis intervention, conflict resolution, education on various social issues, linkage to community resources for students and their families, advocacy on behalf of students and faculty, and education on various issues such as mental health, domestic violence, adult or child maltreatment and substance abuse.
## Disability Services

### Differences between High School and College for Students with Disabilities

#### Laws

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High School</th>
<th>College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)</td>
<td>Disability ADAA (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title II), ADAAA (Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 504 Rehabilitation Act of 1973</td>
<td>Section 504, Rehabilitation of 1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEA is about SUCCESS</td>
<td>ADA is about ACCESS</td>
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#### Required Documentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High School</th>
<th>College</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IEP (Individual Education Plan) and/or 504 Plan</td>
<td>A licensed professional, qualified in the appropriate specialty area for which accommodations are being requested. 504 plans and IEP's may or may not meet the required documentation. Reviewed on a case-by-case basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are provided evaluation at no cost to student or family</td>
<td>Student must get evaluation at his or her own expense. Available resources information available upon request</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation focuses on determining whether student is eligible for services based on specific disability categories in IDEA.</td>
<td>Documentation must provide information on specific functional limitations, and demonstrate the need for specific accommodations in an Academic Environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Documentation must clearly state the reasonable accommodations being requested and provide clear rationale for each accommodation being requested. (Please keep in mind not all recommended accommodations may be approved)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Self-Advocacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High School</th>
<th>College</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student is identified by the school and is supported by parents and teachers</td>
<td><strong>Student must self-identify to the Program of Disability Services</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary responsibility for arranging accommodations belongs to the school</td>
<td><strong>Primary responsibility for self-advocacy and arranging accommodations belongs to the student</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance</td>
<td><strong>Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Parental Role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High School</th>
<th>College</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent has access to student records and can participate in the accommodation process</td>
<td>Parents do not have access to the student records without student’s written consent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent can speak to Educators regarding student</td>
<td>Note * At Cecil College conversations regarding student will only take place in the presence of the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent advocates for student</td>
<td>Student advocates for self</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Higher Education and the Law

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 1990, as Amended (ADAAA, 2008) prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities and mandate the provision of reasonable accommodations to ensure equitable access to programs and services. Per these laws, “no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity.

A Disability defined as any medical, learning, physical or psychological impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; have a record of such impairment; or be regarded as having such impairment.

Medical, Learning, Physical or Psychological Disability may be (but not limited to) AIDS, HIV, Cancer, Cerebral Palsy, Diabetes, Epilepsy, Traumatic Head Injury, Specific learning disability, loss of limbs, Multiple Sclerosis, Muscular Dystrophy, Psychiatric Disorders, Speech Impairments, Spinal Cord Injuries, hearing impairments, and visual impairments.

Major Life Activities are defined as (but not limited to) walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, thinking, concentrating, and working.

Section 504 is a program access statute. Subpart E of Section 504 deals specifically with institutions of higher education. “It requires that an institution (public or private) be prepared to make appropriate academic adjustments and reasonable modifications to policies and practices in order to allow the full participation of students with disabilities in the same programs and activities available to non-disabled students.

Americans with Disabilities Act
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 reinforced the provisions of Rehabilitation Act by requiring that all public facilities, services and communications be accessible to persons with disabilities and that auxiliary aids and services be provided unless an undue burden would result.

Disability does not require colleges or universities to lower academic standards or fundamentally alter the nature of programs provided nor are reasonable accommodations intended for success within courses/programs. Adherence to the College’s code of conduct as well as adherences to faculty directions and instructions are expected.

A pamphlet outlining a student’s responsibility for those who are preparing for postsecondary education: “Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know your Rights and Responsibilities.” The pamphlet is here: www.ed.gov/about/programs/list/ocr/transition.html
Program of Civil Rights (OCR) in U.S. Department of Education explains the rights and responsibilities who are preparing to attend postsecondary schools. The pamphlet also explains the obligations of postsecondary schools to provide academic adjustments, including auxiliary aids and services, to ensure Cecil College does not discriminate on basis on disability. OCR strongly encourages students to know their responsibilities and those of postsecondary schools under Section 504 and Title II. Armed with knowledge improves students’ opportunities to succeed as they enter postsecondary education.

Frequently asked Questions and Answers:

Q: As a Student with disability leaving high school and entering postsecondary education, will I see differences in my rights and how addressed?

A: Yes. Section 504 and Title II protect elementary, secondary and postsecondary students from discrimination. Nevertheless, several requirements that apply through high school are different from the requirements that apply beyond high school. For instance, Section 504 requires a school district to provide free appropriate public education (FAPE) to each student with a disability in the district’s jurisdiction. Whatever the disability, a school district must identify an individual’s education needs and provide any regular or special education and related aids and services necessary to meet those needs as well as it meeting the needs of students without disabilities.

Unlike high school, postsecondary school is not required to provide FAPE. Rather, your postsecondary school is required to provide appropriate academic adjustments as necessary to ensure that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

Q. May a postsecondary school deny admission because of a student has a disability?

A. No. If you meet the essential requirements for admission, a postsecondary school may not deny any student’s admission simply because of a disability. Please note Cecil College is an open enrollment Higher Education Institution.

Q. Do I have to inform a postsecondary school that I have a disability?

A. No. However, if you want Cecil College to provide accommodations, you (the registered student) must self-identify yourself as having a disability to the Disability & Support Services. Likewise, you should let Cecil College/ Disability & Support Services know about your disability if you want to ensure assigned assessable facilities. In any event, your disclosure of a disability is always voluntary.
Q. **What accommodations must a postsecondary school provide?**

A. The appropriate accommodations must be determined based on your disability and individual needs. Accommodations may include auxiliary aids and modifications to academic requirements as are necessary to ensure equal educational opportunities. Examples of such adjustments are arranging for alternative text format, course substitution, note takers, sign language interpreters, extended time on quizzes/tests, and usage of testing lab.

Postsecondary schools are not required to lower or affect substantial modifications to essential requirements. For example, although your school may be required to provide extended time for testing, it is not required to change the content of the test. In addition, postsecondary school does not have to make modifications that would fundamentally alter the nature of a service, program, or activity or would result in undue financial or administrative burdens. Finally, postsecondary school does not have to provide personal attendants, individual prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature, such as tutoring or typing. Personal aides and individual prescribed devices are the responsibility of the student. Please visit the OCR website to learn more at [http://www2.ed.gov/about/programs/list/ocr/docs/auxaids.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/programs/list/ocr/docs/auxaids.html)

Q. **If I want Disability accommodations, what must I do?**

A. You, the registered student, must inform the Disability and Support Services you have a disability and request accommodations. You are required to complete an Intake appointment with the Disability and Support Services. You will also be required to provide documentation of your disability and impact on your educational needs. Please note others making contact on behalf of the student does not substitute for the student’s self-disclosure.

Q. **When should I request Disability Accommodations?**

A. You may request disability accommodations at any time; you should request it as early as possible. You should follow the Disability and Support Services procedures to ensure that there is enough time to review your request and provide appropriate accommodations. Please keep in mind, accommodations are not retroactive, the accommodations become effective when registration completed with Disability & Support Services.
Q. **Do I have to prove I have a disability to obtain accommodations?**

A. Yes. Disability and Support Services will require you to provide documentation stating you are diagnosed with a current disability and need accommodations.

Q. **What documentation should I provide?**

A. Disability & Support Services has a reasonable standard for documentation. Typically, required documentation prepared by an appropriate professional, such as a medical doctor, psychologist, clinical social worker or other qualified diagnostician. The appropriate professional cannot be of any relation to the student. The required documentation may include one or more of the following: a diagnosis of your current disability; the date of the diagnosis given; what tests were performed to determine diagnosis; the credentials of the professional/evaluator; how your disability affects a major life activity; and how the disability affects your academic performance. The professional/evaluator can and should provide any recommended accommodations. The documentation should provide enough information for you and Disability & Support Services to decide what is an appropriate accommodation for you. Please keep in mind, not all recommendations may be appropriate at a higher education level.

Although Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 plan, if you have one, may help identify services that have been effective for you, it may not be sufficient documentation. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis. If documentation does not meet the requirements, Disability & Support Services will provide you with local resources to have an evaluation completed. Disability & Support Services does not provide or pay for diagnostic evaluations.

Please be aware each registration for disability accommodations is handled on a case-by-case basis.

Q. **What if I disagree with the accommodations provided by Disability & Support Services Program?**

A. The Disability grievance procedure is as follows:

- **Informal Grievance Process:**
  Students with questions or a grievance about a decision made by the College related to reasonable accommodations should first communicate with the Disability & Support Services. However, students are not required to complete an informal complaint first; a student can submit a formal complaint at any time. The College and student may agree to resolve any grievance informally at any time during any formal or informal process.
• **Formal Grievance Process:**
  A Student or the College may elect to proceed to a formal grievance at any time.

• 1. Students who wish to complete a formal appeal accommodation decisions must submit a written appeal letter to the Director of College Life, or designee. Written appeals should clearly define the basis of the appeal and a proposed resolution to the situation. Any relevant documentation be enclosed with the appeal. The Director of College Life or designee will develop an appropriate investigation process depending on the circumstances surrounding the reasonable accommodations grievance. The Director of College Life, or designee, will respond to the student filing the appeal in writing within fifteen (15) working days of receiving the appeal.

• 2. If the response of the Director of College Life, or designee, is not satisfactory to the student, he or she has five (5) working days, following the receipt of the response, to file an appeal with the Vice President of Student Services & Enrollment Management. All prior written responses related to the appeal be enclosed with this appeal. The Vice President of Student Services & Enrollment Management will respond to the student filing the appeal within fifteen (15) working days of receiving the appeal. The decision of the Vice President is final.

Nothing in this procedure prevents any individual who believes he or she may have been discriminated against from pursuing any and all legal remedies.

Q. **What if the identified accommodation is not working?**

A. You will need to make Disability & Support Services aware the accommodations are not working as you expected. You and Disability & Support Services should work together to resolve any problems. It may be too late to correct the problem if you wait until the end of the course or activity is completed. It may be necessary for you to discuss the issues with your treatment provider. Accommodations are not retroactive.

Q. **What if I feel faculty has denied the accommodations?**

A. You will need to make Disability & Support Services aware immediately. Disability & Support Services will work with faculty to ensure the appropriate accommodations provided to you.

Q. **What can I do if I believe Cecil College is discriminating against me?**

A. If a student or visitor believes he/she is or has been, subjected to discrimination due to their disability, they may contact Disability & Support Services directly. If you wish
to file a complaint with the Disability & Support Services Program, please follow the steps below:

All Disability complaints shall be submitted to Cecil College Disability & Support Services or, in the event, the complaint alleges a violation by Disability & Support Services, to the Director of College Life. All complaints must be filed in writing, contain the name and address of the complainant and describe the alleged violation.

The complaint must be filed within 90 calendar days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation. Cecil College will conduct an investigation, affording all parties with notice and an opportunity to be heard and to submit relevant information.

Disability & Support Services will issue a written decision on the complaint and the proposed resolution, if any, no later than 15 days after the conclusion of the investigation. Disability & Support Services will, subject to College procedures and any applicable laws or regulations, maintain the files and records relating to the complaint.

If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision or the proposed resolution of Disability & Support Services, the student may appeal within 15 calendar days of its receipt. The appeal request must be in writing, describe the basis for his or her appeal, and be submitted to the Director of College Life.

If the response of the Director of College Life, or designee, is not satisfactory to the student, he or she has five (5) working days, following the receipt of the response, to file an appeal with the Vice President of Student Services & Enrollment Management. All prior written responses related to the appeal enclosed with this appeal. The Vice President of Student Services & Enrollment Management will respond to the student appeal within fifteen (15) working days after the conclusion of their investigation. The decision of the Vice President is final.

If you believe, you or someone else has been discriminated against because of disability or if you have questions, concerns or suggestions related to disability or this policy, please contact Disability & Support Services at 443-674-1993. Nothing in this procedure prevents any individual who believes he or she may have been discriminated against from pursuing any and all legal remedies.

You may file a complaint against Cecil College with OCR or in a court. You may learn more about OCR complaint process from the brochure “how to file a discrimination complaint with the Program of Civil Rights”, www.ed.gov/ocr/docs/howto.html. You may reach OCR at www.ed.gov/ocr or by phone 1-800-421-3481.
Confidentiality

Due to the sensitive and personal nature of Disability & Support Services, all services and student records are strictly confidential. Information regarding diagnosis or treatment will not be released without written permission from the student. This means nothing you share with Disability & Support Services is revealed outside Disability & Support Services without your written consent. We do not disclose identifying information about our students to anyone including family or college officials, without consent. Disability & Support Services will not discuss the status of any student with individuals outside of the college without the student present.


Disabilities records kept in a separate secure file. Unless there is an “educational need to know” under FERPA, DISABILITY and Special Services personnel are unable to release information about you without your consent. If you discontinue your enrollment at Cecil College, you may contact the Disability & Support Services Program and request your file be destroyed. If you are not enrolled in courses for 3 years, your file including any paperwork will be destroyed.

Please note: Special Services provides crisis interventions and linkage to appropriate resources. There is a limitation of confidentiality for the following: Threats of violence and/or suicide taken seriously and appropriate steps completed. The law mandates any reports of child abuse or adult abuse reported to the local Social Services office. Disability & Support Services will adhere to the required mandated reporting law.

Due to the sensitive and confidential nature of files and meetings, Disability & Support Services office door remains locked at all times.

Rights and Responsibilities

Students with disabilities rights include:
- Equal access to services, programs, facilities, and employment at Cecil College.
- Reasonable and appropriate accommodations and auxiliary aids determined on an individual basis.
- Confidentiality of information related to disability issues.
- Pursue accommodation requests that have not met through an appeal procedure at Disability and Support Services.
Students with disabilities responsibilities include:
- Self-identify disability status to Disability & Support Services by providing disability documentation, which meets the eligibility guidelines.
- Request necessary accommodations in advance of the need.
- Meet Cecil College Academic and Institutional standards.
- Comply with the Cecil College Code of Student Conduct.
- Follow the specific guidelines established for obtaining reasonable and appropriate accommodations and/or auxiliary aids.
- Notify Disability & Support Services of any changes to your schedules and/or status as a student at Cecil College.
- Notify Disability & Support Services of any concerns or difficulties in the receipt of accommodations.

Disability & Support Services Program has the right to:
- Maintain Cecil College’s Academic and Institutional standards.
- Request current documentation that adhere to Disability eligibility guidelines to verify the need for reasonable accommodations and/or auxiliary aids.
- Select effective communications and auxiliary aids in consultation with the student on individual basis.
- Deny an accommodation request and/or auxiliary aids if the documentation fails to verify the need for the requested service or if the documentation is not provided in advance.
- Refuse an inappropriate or unreasonable accommodation request and/or auxiliary aids that pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others, constitute an alteration to an essential element of a course program; or pose an undue financial or administrative burden to the college.

Disability & Support Services Responsibilities include:
- Provide reasonable accommodations for students’ disclosed disabilities so students have equal access to courses, activities and programs
- Provide policies and procedures information to students with disabilities
- Provide advice about accommodation options, reasonable accommodations, and/or auxiliary aids
- Provide appropriate supportive services to students, faculty and staff.

Faculty Members’ rights include:
- Establish course content and Academic Standards.
- Request written notification from the Disability & Support Services of a student’s need for accommodation. (Faculty and staff do not have the right to access disability documentation).
- Decide if an accommodation request meets the course academic requirements.
- Contact Disability & Support Services to clarify student request for accommodation, and/or auxiliary services.
Faculty Members’ responsibilities include:

- Provide recommended reasonable accommodations, and/or auxiliary aids in a timely manner.
- Work with Disability & Support Services and their respective Departments to facilitate recommended accommodations both within and outside of their classroom.
- Meet with students who have provided a faculty notification letter to discuss requested accommodations and establish the procedure for providing accommodations and/or auxiliary aids in the course.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding disability issues.
- Alter the form of a testing procedure to measure proficiency in course knowledge based on ability of the student, not the disability. (There may be an exception when the purpose of the test is to measure a particular skill.)
- Refer unregistered students to Disability & Support Services who have requested accommodations.
- Provide handouts and/or classroom materials in alternative formats (such as enlarged print for visually impaired students, printed copies of audio/transcription of audio materials, closed captions, etc.).
- Make course materials on reserve in the library available in alternative formats for students with disabilities.
- Ensure software and “new” technology is accessible before implementing.
- Contact Disability & Support Services for consultation regarding students with disabilities and accommodation concerns.

Registration with Disability & Support Services

As stated previously, students in higher education are required to self-identify and request accommodations. Students must register with Disability & Support Services and provide necessary documentation to receive Disability accommodations. Students with disabilities are not required to register nor are they required to receive accommodations if they do not wish to do so. Students are strongly encouraged to register with Disability & Support Services prior to the start of the semester but can register at any time during the semester.

Please be aware accommodations are not retroactive. Accommodations are effective upon registration with Disability & Support Services.

Steps for Registering with Disability & Support Services:

1) Obtain official documentation form a medical doctor/psychologist/clinical social worker or otherwise qualified professional. The documentation should include diagnosis, prognosis, limitations imposed by the disability, maintenance plan, and any educational recommendations.
2) The registered Cecil College Student contact Disability & Support Services by phone 443-674-1993, or email: disabilityservices@cecil.edu, or walk in Technology Building Room 301 to schedule an appointment.

3) During the appointment, the student and Disability & Support Services will review documentation, discuss requested accommodations, and complete Disability & Support Services Intake paperwork.

4) Within 5 business days, the student will be contacted via phone or email and provided a list of the identified reasonable accommodations for the student.

5) If the student does not agree with the accommodations, the student has the right to file a grievance (please refer to the grievance process stated on page 7 of this handbook)

6) If the student agrees to the accommodations, Disability & Support Services will notify all faculty listed on the student’s current schedule via Notification Letter. The student will also receive a copy of their Notification Letter.

7) The student will need to discuss any arrangements with the faculty prior to the assignment.

8) Each semester the student must contact Disability & Support Services via email, phone, or walk-in upon registration to inform Disability & Support Services student wants to continue obtaining accommodations. Disability & Support Services will complete schedule checks and notifications letters sent to their scheduled courses prior to the start of the course.

9) If the student should choose to not enroll in courses or complete drop/add, the student is responsible to notify Disability and Support Services program of the changes.

**Temporary Medical Conditions:**

Students experiencing short term or temporary changes in their medical, functional or mobility status advised to meet with Disability and Support Services. With authorization from Disability & Support Services, you may request parking permits from Public Safety on a limited basis while on campus. The use of crutches, walker may indicate the need for such a special parking permit. Other assistance may be available upon request. If your condition becomes permanent, you may want to register with Disability & Support Services officially.

A temporary medical condition may not legally qualify as a disability and thus, may not be covered either under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 or under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Therefore, it is possible that students experiencing temporary medical conditions will not qualify for legally mandated accommodations. However, Cecil College recognizes temporary medical conditions may arise that can adversely affect a student’s ability to fully participate in their academic endeavors. Disability & Special Services will assist these students in coordinating short-term support both as a courtesy and as a demonstration of commitment to student support.
Timeframes for Requests:

If your accommodations require alternative formats of texts or materials, please make your request at a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the start of the semester. If you are unable to do so, please be aware Disability & Support Services attempts to provide you with the alternative material as soon as possible. Students will be required to show proof of purchase prior to any request for alternative textbooks granted. Students are also required to sign an alternative textbook agreement with Disability & Support Services.

Audio Recording of Lectures
If an accommodation allows for audio recording of lectures, the student will be required to sign an audio recording agreement with Disability & Support Services.

Testing Lab
If a student has the accommodation of testing in a low distraction area such as the Testing Lab, students are required to adhere to all rules of the Testing Center to include providing a photo I.D. Students are also required to discuss these alternative arrangements with their Instructors prior to any quiz or test.

Community Resources available:

Cecil County Division of Rehabilitation Services
Upper Chesapeake Corporate Center
103 Chesapeake Blvd. , Ste. B
Elkton, Maryland 21921
Phone: 410-996-0620, Fax: 410-996-0626
http://cecil.md.networkofcare.org/mh/services/agency.aspx?pid=CecilCountyDivisionofRehabilitationServices_678_2_0

Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services
http://dors.state.md.us/dors

Americans with Disabilities Act (DISABILITY) www.Disability.gov

Association on Higher Education & Disability (AHEAD) www.ahead.org

SAMHSA’s National mental health information center www.mentalhealth.org

Academic Software, Inc. (ASI) www.acsw.com

Additional resources available upon request to Disability & Special Services Program.
An Open Letter to Parents of Students with Disabilities About to Enter into College
By: Jane Jarrow

“Dear Parents,
I have been working in the area of students with disabilities at the college level for more than 30 years, but that is not why I am writing you today. I am writing as a parent, and thus as someone who shares all of your current anxieties. My daughter, who graduated from high school in early June, will be going away to college this Fall. She has Cerebral Palsy, uses a wheelchair, and has limited speech capabilities, so you can be assured that I have been involved in the educational programming and planning she has received during her years in the public school system. I wanted to be involved, but I also needed to be involved since, by law, the school could not do anything for, to, or with my daughter regarding her disability without my permission. I sat through countless IEP meetings over the years. I was insistent on certain issues of academic support when I needed to be, and agonized over everything from teacher selection to her successful social integration with classmates. And now, as I prepare to pack her up and take her off to college in the Fall, I recognize that this role has ended for me – and the word “anxious” doesn’t even begin to describe my feelings.

If you are worried that your child with disability will have a difficult time making a successful transition to college without your involvement…. then you are probably right to be worried. Very few children with disabilities can succeed at the college level. On the other hand, students with disabilities survive and thrive on college campuses across the country. If you still think of your son or daughter as “your child”, and they still are comfortable in accepting that role, it is time to take a careful look at where you have come from and what lies before you. As parents, it is time for us to step back and allow/encourage/gently nudge our SWD’s (Students with Disabilities) to assume significant independent responsibility for their own lives, both academically and personally.

As you and your SWD prepare to visit campus for the initial meeting with a disability service provider at the college, you would do well to think about what can be accomplished at this initial meeting, what needs to be said – and who is going to say it!!! As I approach that same milestone, I find myself a little panicky, realizing that there are things about her disability and how it impacts her functioning that I know and that the disability services providers need to know, and that I may not have many chances to say. There is no doubt that I can explain those things fully than my daughter can explain them (or even understand them!). And it doesn’t matter. Much as I hate it, I know that SHE has to be the one to convey all this crucial information (not me!), for a number of reasons.

First, colleges and universities provide services and support to SWD under very different laws than those that governed services in the K-12 system. As a parent, I have no rights under Section 504/ADA in speaking for my SWD who is in college. (If you aren’t sure what “Section 504/ADA” means in this context, perhaps the disability service provider you meet
with will have gathered some information that helps explain the differences between settings, both legally and personally. Two of my favorite websites for learning more are at: http://www.ed.gov/about/programs/list/ocr/transition.html and http://www.heath.gwu.edu/

The services and support available to SWD are sometimes very different than what was provided in high school, and the college is under no obligation to continue the services given in high school or to adhere to the recommendations of an outside diagnostician. The college will make its own determination of what services and support to offer, based on the documentation of disability and their interview with your SWD. There are no IEP’s in college, there is no place to sign off with parental approval. Indeed, the college doesn’t legally have to care whether I am satisfied or not. My daughter is responsible for her own destiny now.

More importantly, while this may be your last chance to convey all that important information on to the college, it is your SWD’s first chance to convey that information all by himself/herself. Do not spoil the opportunity, and do not interfere. Remember, while you and your SWD are learning more about the campus, resources and the people who will be there to help when needed, the disability service provider is learning more about your son/daughter, as well. You want their first impression to be one that is positive and reassuring. The service provider is anxious to find out whether your SWD is mature enough to handle the responsibilities and independence of college life. Here are some specific suggestions for helping your SWD to shine in this newly focused spotlight:

- **Do not** be insulted if you are not invited to sit in on the initial meeting between your SWD and the disability services folks. Some institutions have found that is helpful for them to speak directly (and alone!) to the student in order to get a feel for how knowledgeable and confident he/she is in sharing information about the past services, what works and doesn’t work, and what accommodations they hope to have at college level. You will get a chance to ask your questions, but recognize that it may come later, rather than sooner.

- If you are invited to sit in on the meeting with the disability service folks, **DO** acknowledge your SWD as the authority on their disability-related needs by making it clear that you believe they have all the answers! Try focusing your visual attention on your son/daughter instead of trying to make eye contact with the interviewer. If you look to your SWD, so will the professional.

- **Do not** begin any sentence with “She/He needs to have....”, Instead you can try, “In high school, she/he had....” Or “the person who tested him/she suggested...” but it would actually be better if you said nothing at all! Try to talk as little as possible in the meeting. This is not your meeting. Remember, you are there as an observer, not as a participant.
• **Do** take some time prepping your SWD in advance on the issues that you think need to be discussed – the things that you would say if you had the chance. Make a list of topics you would bring up, explain why you think each is important, and make sure your SWD has the list in hand when she/he goes into the interview. Rehearse with your son/daughter, if they will let you. If they are typical teens and aren’t comfortable sitting through that kind of rehearsal, settle for making them sit and listen while you demonstrate how you would approach certain subjects. For example, “I think you should tell them about how the teachers arranged for extra time for you on tests when you were in high school. I’d probably say, “In high school, I was allowed extra time for tests in English because it takes me a long time to put my thoughts in writing, but I never needed it in Math.” Your SWD may not acknowledge the strategies you share, but you may be surprised to hear those words come out of his/her mouth at the interview!

• **Don’t interrupt.** If you disagree with something the disability service provider says, or if your SWD says something that you know is incorrect, or if you see SWD agreeing with/to something when you know they have no idea what they are agreeing to—Don’t Interrupt! Let the interview play out. Give the disability service provider a chance to draw your SWD out further, give your SWD an opportunity to clarify matters, or simply wait to see if the confusion/disagreement remains. It is important to know just how independent and accurate students are in describing their needs. You will get your chance.

• **Do** prompt your son/daughter to speak up and share those important points as the interview progresses. Instead of explaining to the disability service provider why Johnny needs a calculator in math classes, turn to Johnny and say “why don’t you explain to Ms.____ why it is important for you to have a calculator for math and science classes. Is it because you have trouble lining up columns, or because you have trouble remembering basic math facts or ______? Given an open ended question that encourages your SWD to flesh out the response. At the same time, you are hinting to the interviewer that there is an issue here to be discussed (see? I told you that you would get your chance!)

Why not take notes as the interview progresses? When your son/daughter has exhausted the list of topics to discuss, and the disability service provider has shared all the information they thought was important, it is YOUR turn to talk. Go ahead and ask your questions. The most important thing to remember now is that you do not want to undermine your son/daughter’s credibility. If you have more information to share on a given subject, try starting the sentence with, “As Susie told you, she has used...” and then add whatever you need to top of the information already given. If you think your SWD gave incorrect information, tread carefully. You might say, “I was surprised to hear Jane say____. I would have said ________, because ....” You’ll get your point across without directly contradicting what your son/daughter said. Your goal is to assure both SWD and the disability service provider that you are supportive of their budding understanding, and simply want to share another viewpoint.
An old adage maintains:
There are only things a parent can give to a child.........
One is roots. The other is wings.
It is time for our kids to solo. That is a scary thought for us, as parents, and it is sure
to be scary for them, too. That’s OK. This is what we have all been working towards
for a long time. Remember, your son/daughter will call, email, or text if they need
you. They know what you can do for them, but now it is time for them to go it alone.
Take a deep breath, cross your fingers, wish them well – and walk away. All will be
well!

Best of Luck
Jane Jarrow
Proud (and Terrified) Mom”
Appendix A Consent & Agreement with Disability & Support Services

Consent and Agreement with Disability & Support Services - CECIL COLLEGE

I, ______________________________________________________________, agree to the discussed accommodations with Cecil College Disability & Support Services. I understand I am responsible for notifying Disability & Support Services in the event I should need or desire additional accommodations to achieve academic success. I understand I may be asked to provide documentation from a qualified person(s) to support the additional changes to my accommodations.

1. I agree to allow the disclosure of my agreed upon accommodations to my professors at Cecil College. I am aware Disability & Support Services will copy me on each email.

2. I agree to contact, via email, Disability & Support Services upon registering each semester to request letters of accommodations be sent to my professors. I am aware I must specify which courses and professors in this email. I understand it can take up to two weeks for the letters of accommodation to be sent.

3. I understand that if I do not request accommodations each semester that accommodation letters will not be sent to my professors.

4. I agree to allow my documentation forms to remain with Disability & Support Services at Cecil College. If I choose not enroll in courses at Cecil College, I will notify Disability & Support Services. I understand when I re-enroll at Cecil College, I will need to contact Disability & Support Services to request reinstatement of my accommodations.

5. I understand my records with Disability & Support Services will remain confidential on a secure shared network within Cecil College. I understand Disability & Support Services, program supervisor, and Vice President of Student Services & Institutional Effectiveness will have access to this database. I understand my record could be a part of a review/evaluation of the program by the aforementioned parties. I understand Disability & Support Services may have a work-study student assisting periodically with filing of records. I understand my information may be shared on a need to know basis.

6. If I desire to have any information disclosed with outside parties, including my parents or professors, I will sign a consent form with Disability & Support Services.

7. If I choose to not accept or desire my accommodations at any time during my enrollment at Cecil College, I will notify Disability & Support Services as well as my professors.

8. I understand most contact with Disability & Support Services will be through my chawk.cecil.edu email (if postal letter is requested, initial here______).

____________________________________  ____________________________
Student Signature                      Date of Agreement

____________________________________  ____________________________
Staff Member Signature                 Date
CONFIDENTIAL - Disability & Support Services
Release/Obtain Information FORM

Send all information requested to Disability & Support Services Program at Cecil College:

I __________________________________________________ agree to allow Cecil College Disability & Support Services Program:

○ RELEASE:
The following information pertaining to my disability:

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

To: _____________________________________________________________________________________
   (NAME of Individual(s) or Agency)

○ OBTAIN:
The following information pertaining to my disability:

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

From: ______________________________________________________________________________________
      (Name of Individual(s) or Agency)

Signature of Student/Date ___________________ Student ID# or DOB ___________________

Signature of Cecil College Staff Member/Date ___________________ Cecil College Staff Member Name ___________________

This consent will expire when the student is no longer enrolled at Cecil College or with the written notification from the student.
Appendix C – Intake Form

CONFIDENTIAL
Cecil College Disability & Support Services -
Student Intake Form Example

Date: _____________

Status: Please check one:
  o  New Student
  o  Return Student

Name: ___________________________  Student ID: ___________________________

Birth Date: ________________________  Cell # : _____________________________

Mailing Address:

Campus Email: ____________________  Personal Email: _______________________

Area of Studies: ___________________  Advisor: _____________________________

Emergency Contact Person: __________  Phone # __________________________

Relationship: _______________________

In the event of an emergency, do you grant permission for Cecil College to make contact with above person?
Please Circle:   YES    NO

Have you submitted DISABILITY documentation: yes no

Do you have supporting DISABILITY documentation: yes no

Diagnosis or Type of Disability:
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Date of Most recent Evaluation: __________  Name of Evaluator: ________________

What Accommodations would you like to receive?
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Is there any recommended accommodations on your evaluation you wish to not receive? If so, which ones?
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Describe how your disability may affect your learning at Cecil College:
Have you ever received Special Education Services such as IEP/504 plan? If so, when?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

What strategies, interventions or services have been helpful in the past?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Acknowledgment of Understanding:
Disability records are confidential, maintained by Disability & Support Services and are protected as an educational record under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Disability related information may be disclosed on a limited, need to know basis in order to provide accommodations and services with the permission of the student or as otherwise permitted under the University student or as otherwise permitted under the College’s student records policy. And/or if ordered to be released by a Court of Law.

The completion of this application is part of the Disability process at Cecil College. Appropriate disability documentation supporting the requested accommodations should be submitted as well. In the event, you do not have the required documentation needed, a list of available resources will be provided to you for you to set up an evaluation, if you choose to do so.

The documentation you submitted shall be reviewed to determine eligibility and possible services at Cecil College. If accommodations are determined to be appropriate, with your written consent to share, notification will be given to your teachers of the accommodations via email, completed by Disability & Support Service.

In the event you wish your Disability Records/Interactions to be shared with an individual outside of Disability & Support Services, you will need to sign a release of information/obtain information form.

My signature below indicates that I have read the above information and agree:

_____________________________________________  Date

Student Signature  Date

Please submit documentation of your disability, if available.

_____________________________________________  Date

Staff Signature  Date
Appendix D Example of Notification Letter to Professors

EXAMPLE

CONFIDENTIAL

Date:

To: Professor

From: Coordinator of Disability & Support Services

Re: Provisions of Disability Services

Student is enrolled in [Course Name] [Semester] and is a student registered with Disability & Support Services. The student provided the necessary documentation under Section 504 Rehabilitation Act of 1973 & Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The following adjustments will afford the student equal access to our programs at Cecil College.

The student and Disability & Support Services have met and agreed on the following accommodations:

*** LIST OUT ACCOMMODATIONS***

Your compliance is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions/concerns, please feel free to contact me at disabilityservices@cecil.edu or 443-674-1993.

Thank you,

Coordinator
Disability & Support Services
TC Room 301

cc: Student to receive a Copy of the letters
Appendix E Alternate-Format Instructional Materials Student Agreement

Alternate-Format Instructional Materials Student Agreement Form—Cecil College Disability & Support Services Program

Agreement on the Use of Recorded, Electronic or Other Alternatively-formatted Course Materials

- I agree that I am enrolled for the semester and the particular course(s) for which I am requesting alternatively formatted instructional materials (such as textbooks).

- I have provided Disability & Support Services with appropriate documentation of the disability that prevents me from using standard instructional material. I understand that this documentation will be kept on file at the college.

- I have purchased the required course materials to include textbooks.

- I agree that I will not copy or reproduce alternatively formatted instructional materials nor allow anyone else to do so pursuant to the requirements of the copyright revision act of 1976 as amended (17 U.S.C. § 101 et. seq.).

- I will not share alternatively formatted materials with anyone.

- If and when I 1) re-sell my copy of the standard instructional materials, or 2) drop the course, I will return the alternatively-formatted instructional materials to the Disability Services Program.

- I understand that any violation of this agreement may be considered a violation of the college’s Student Code of Conduct and may result in penalties including suspension and expulsion. Violations may also constitute a violation of federal and/or state laws and may result in civil or criminal prosecution, payment of fines or other monies to the copyright holder, and/or incarceration. Furthermore, if I violate this agreement, the publisher may not be required to provide electronic formats of any other instructional materials to the college for me to use.

I have read and understand the policies and procedures outlined above and agree to comply with them.

______________________________________________  ___________________
Signature of Student                                      Date

______________________________________________
Signature of College Representative

Read to student prior to signing by: ____________________________

---End of Document---
Appendix F Note Taker Agreement

NOTE TAKER AGREEMENT

The Disability & Support Services Office seeks note takers to assist students who, because of a specific limitation, require note-taking assistance in their courses.

As a note taker I agree to follow these guidelines:

1. I am enrolled as a student at Cecil College and am in good academic standing.
2. The student for whom I am taking notes and I are both enrolled in the same section of the same course.
3. After the first one or two class sessions, I will present my notes to the professor for review and comment.
4. I will provide a copy of my notes to the student after each class session. I will use the following method:
   
5. I will not provide notes to the student if he/she does not have an excused absence from class.
6. I have completed all HR paperwork, including LiveScan fingerprinting on __________ (date).

Role can be documented and supported on resumes as well as school applications. Disability & Support Services upon request will provide a reference letter to note takers who successfully completed their agreements.

Student Note taker  Student receiving notes

Note taker Signature  Date

Notes will be presented in the following form:
   NCR paper obtained from the Disability & Support Services Program
   Photocopies to be made at Disability & Support Services Program
   Livescribe pen copy/audio

Course:  Professor:

Faculty review of student note takers' notes:
   The notes are well organized, clear and easy to read.
   The notes cover all of the main points well.
   Other comments:

   Faculty Signature
Appendix G Audio Recording Agreement

Disability & Support Services
Audio Recording Agreement

Students registered in Disability & Support Services with a documented disability and who require assistance taking or reading notes have the right to audio-record lectures and/or instructional material for personal study use only.*

Material recorded for this purpose may not be shared with other people without the consent of the lecturer. Information contained in the audio-recorded lecture is protected under federal copyright laws and may not be published or quoted without the express consent of the lecturer and without giving proper identity and credit to the lecturer. I have read and understand the above policy on audio-recorded lectures at Cecil College, and I agree to abide by the above policy with regard to any material I recorded while enrolled as a student at Cecil College while I receive accommodations through Disability & Support Services. I understand that failure to abide by this policy is a violation of the Cecil College Code of Conduct & Academic Dishonesty Policy may result in a referral to the Director of College Life for disciplinary action.

__________________________________________________
Student Signature

__________________________________________________
Student’s Printed Name

__________________________________________________
Date

__________________________________________________
Witness
Disability Grievance Complaint Procedure with Disability & Support Services

Any student grievance complaints for American Disabilities Act (ADA): a claim alleging any actions prohibited by Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C 12101, et. Seq

If a student or visitors believe, they have been discriminated based on their disability or perceived disability in any way by the College, the student has the right to file a grievance complaint.

The Disability grievance procedure is as follows:
(An Informal Grievance is not a precondition to a formal complaint; you may file a formal complaint at all time)

Informal Grievance Process:
Students with questions or a grievance about a decision made by the College related to reasonable accommodations should first communicate with Disability & Support Services. The College and student may agree to resolve any grievance informally at any time during any formal or informal process.

Formal Grievance Process:
• All Disability complaints shall be submitted to the Cecil College Disability & Support Services or, in the event, the complaint alleges a violation by the Coordinator of Disability & Support Services, to the Director of College Life.

• All complaints must be filed in writing, contain the name and address of the complainant and describe the alleged violation.

• The complaint must be filed within 90 calendar days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation.

• Cecil College will conduct a formal investigation, affording all parties with notice and an opportunity to be heard and to submit relevant information.

• The Coordinator of Disability & Support Services will issue a written decision on the complaint and the proposed resolution, if any, no later than 15 days after the conclusion of the investigation.

• Disability & Support Services will, subject to College procedures and any applicable laws or regulations, maintain the files and records relating to the complaint.

• If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision or the proposed resolution of the Coordinator of Disability & Support Services, the student may appeal within 15 calendar days of its receipt. The appeal request must be in writing, describe the basis for his or her appeal, and be submitted to the Director of College Life.

• If the response of the Director of College Life, or designee, is not satisfactory to the student, he or she has five (5) working days, following the receipt of the response, to file an appeal with the Vice President of Student Services & Institutional Effectiveness. All prior written responses related to the appeal enclosed with this appeal. The Vice President of Student Services & Institutional Effectiveness will respond to the student appeal within fifteen (15) working days after the conclusion of their investigation. The decision of the Vice President is final.

If you believe, you or someone else has been discriminated against because of disability or if you have questions, concerns or suggestions related to Disability or this policy, please contact Disability & Support Services at 410-674-1993.