

St. Petersburg College Services for Students with Disabilities Transitioning from High School to College

Making the transition from high school to college is new and exciting. It can also be challenging for students. St. Petersburg College wants to help make the transition as smooth as possible.

St. Petersburg College provides support services for students with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Students with disabilities are admitted to SPC as part of the regular student body and are enrolled in mainstream courses. Students who desire accommodations are required to self-identify, provide current and approved documentation and request services from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (OSSD) on their campuses. To be considered to receive accommodations, you will need to do the following:

1. If you think you'll be attending SPC, make an appointment with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (OSSD) on the campus where you expect to take most of your classes. When you call, ask what paperwork will be required to qualify for your type of disability. Contact names and phone numbers are listed on the last page of this brochure.
2. During your appointment, the campus Learning Specialist will review your documentation and let you know if you qualify for services. If your documentation is sufficient, the Learning Specialist will complete some forms, prepare an accommodation letter and explain how to set up services each semester. He or she will discuss the accommodations you qualify for, talk with you about the differences between high school and college (your accommodations may change or be provided differently at the college or university level), and provide suggestions for your success at the college level to help make your experience at SPC a positive one.
3. When you know your class schedule, ask your Learning Specialist to provide you with enough copies of your accommodation letter for each class. YOU will be responsible to give your accommodation letter to your Instructors and to request new letters at the beginning of each new session.

****Please note that although your parents are welcome to join you for your first appointment, once you reach the college level, faculty, counselors and staff are required by law to work directly with you. ***WE ARE PROHIBITED BY LAW FROM SHARING INFORMATION WITH YOUR PARENTS WITHOUT YOUR WRITTEN CONSENT***.**

Differences between High School and College

The biggest change students experience when reaching college is the level of responsibility they have for their own success. Self-advocacy is encouraged and your Learning Specialist will guide you in the best way to approach your Instructors and other college staff to express your needs and questions. Other differences exist as well. Because you will be more successful if you are aware of these differences before entering college, we have listed some of the major differences below.

	High School	College
Contact with teacher	Teacher-student contact closer and more frequent	Instructor-student contact more difficult to arrange and less frequent
Counseling	Counseling by teachers or guidance counselors is personalized. Guidance personnel are more easily available. Parental contact is constant.	Counseling must be sought by students and is less available. Student information may not be shared with parents.
Dependence	Student told what to do in most situations. Follow-up on instructions is often the rule.	Student is more often expected to be independent. Self-sufficiency is required.
Freedom	Student is supervised by parents, teachers, and school administrators on a daily basis	Student has much more freedom. Student must accept responsibility for his/her actions.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I use my IEP to receive accommodations at SPC?

SPC has determined that the IEP is not sufficient documentation to qualify you for services because it is an educational plan based on IDEA and high school needs and accommodations that may not be appropriate for college accommodations under the ADA. An IEP does not have a diagnosis by a qualified evaluator, such as a school or clinical psychologist or Medical Doctor. Under ADA law, SPC must have official documentation of your specific disability or disabilities on file that is signed by an evaluator or medical professional qualified to make a diagnosis.

The last time I was tested for a Learning Disability was in elementary school. Can I use these scores as documentation for college disability services?

No. ***SPC requires current documentation in order to qualify a student for services***. The Campus Learning Specialist will review your documentation and let you know if additional information or testing is needed.

I will be receiving a special diploma. Will I be admitted to SPC?

No. The State of Florida requires a standard diploma, college-ready diploma, FCAT waiver standard diploma, or GED to qualify for admission. A special diploma graduate is generally not permitted to enroll in SPC as a degree-seeking student. Students who meet the testing criteria and wish to appeal the state admission requirements may follow an appeal process as outlined in the SPC catalog.

What can I expect academically when I come to SPC?

College is academically challenging for most students. When you apply, you will take the College Placement Test (CPT) unless you present qualifying SAT or ACT scores instead. Any SPC counseling department can inform you of the scores needed to exempt the CPT. The results of this test will determine if you require College Preparatory classes before enrolling in your major field. You may need to take Pre-algebra and/or Developmental Reading and Writing to prepare you for the challenges of college work.

I have never seen some of the technologies being used at St. Petersburg College. What can I do to get help and advisement for technologies that might be of assistance for my particular disability?

College Learning Specialists can assist you with coordinating an appointment with our Assistive Technology Specialist for one-on-one or group training with a variety of technology solutions. However, you will still need to work to develop your computer skills to meet the need of your chosen degree program. In some cases current state policy does not allow you to utilize some assistive technologies for CLAST or other standardized testing.

St. Petersburg College Disability Services Contacts:

Allstate Center:	Gene Oskamp, Counselor/Learning Specialist (727) 341-4316 Voice
Clearwater Campus: (serving Epi Center)	Aimee Stubbs, Counselor/Learning Specialist (727) 791-2710 Voice/TTY (727) 791-2628 Voice/TTY
Health Education Center:	Stefanie Silvers, Counselor/Learning Specialist (727) 341-3721 Voice/TTY (727) 341-3769 Voice/TTY
Seminole Campus (serving E-campus):	Dr. Linda Giar, Counselor/Learning Specialist (727) 394-6289 Voice/TTY (727) 394-6234 Voice
St. Petersburg/Gibbs Campus (serving Downtown and Midtown Campuses):	Gene Oskamp, Counselor/Learning Specialist (727) 341-4316 Voice (727) 341-4758 Voice/TTY
Tarpon Springs Campus:	Barbara Thompson, Counselor/Learning Specialist (727) 712-5789 Voice/TTY