

Services for Students with ASD



We are pleased that you are considering EIU for your university education! Faculty and staff at EIU are committed to helping students succeed and achieve! Many students face challenges in transitioning from high school to college, and those challenges can be greater for students with ASD. EIU has a variety of supports and services for students with ASD including the **Academic Success Center and the STEP program**. This handout highlights some of the differences between high school and college as well as the types of services provided by the programs at EIU. We want students and families to have the information to choose services that will best facilitate their success.

Many students think college is pretty much like high school, only bigger, but there are some very significant differences. Academic success in college requires greater organization, initiative, time management, problem-solving, and independence. College life has less routine, greater choices for how to spend unscheduled time, greater daily living responsibilities, and new types of social situations. There is no Special Education at the college level. Educational rights covered by IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) do not apply to post-secondary education. Colleges comply with the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act), Section 504.

Differences in Courses & Non-Academic Time

High School	College
Teachers impart knowledge and facts, sometimes drawing direct connections and leading you through the thinking process. Tests are frequent and over small amounts of material; teachers often have review sessions or study guides for exams. Time in class is provided to work on assignments. Only a couple hours of studying outside of class may be required before exams or assignments are due.	There are big differences across professors in teaching styles and expectations. Students need to understand expectations and adjust as necessary. Students apply, integrate, and evaluate information from a variety of sources for classes. Grades may not be provided for all assigned work. Tests cover large amounts of material. Grades on tests and major papers usually encompass most of the course grade. Students are expected to read and regularly study outside of class time to keep up on upcoming projects and exams. You cannot write a big paper or study for a big exam in one night and get good grades.
Teachers will usually approach students who are having academic difficulty. Many teachers give frequent reminders, accept late work, and give extra credit.	Students must ask the instructor for help or seek out tutoring services (if available) or writing assistance from a variety of campus entities. Students are expected to use information from syllabus and instructors give few reminders. Late work is not accepted; extra credit is rare.
Class attendance is mandatory. The high school day is a structured routine between 8:00-3:00. Seven hours daily (35 hours per week) is part of this structured routine. Parents or extra curricular activities often provide additional structure and routine when the school day is over.	College classes have attendance policies and although it is very important to be in class to learn and succeed, no one makes you go to classes. The student is responsible for going to class. You will be in class only 12-18 hours per week. Schedules vary day to day and semester to semester.
Parents may provide support for many aspects of daily living such as laundry, meals, physical and mental health, planning and organizational support, help with problem-solving, help with time management and supplying reminders. Social activities often involve family or close friends.	Students must develop a level of independence in these aspects of daily living and be able to utilize campus resources to do their laundry, eat in the dorms or other dining options, access health services or counseling services when needed. Time management, problem solving and navigating social aspects of the dorm and other campus life are typically independent endeavors.

Differences in Academic Support Services for Disabilities and Accommodations

High Schools must . . .	In College, the STUDENT. . .
Identify and assess students with disabilities	Must self identify or disclose disability and provide results of evaluation to document disability to designated office
Develop an Individualized Educational Program with appropriate education including modified program & appropriate related services. Students with IEPs may have a different amount or type of work for classes. The high school coordinates the provision of all services, monitors progress, and evaluates results.	Must request specific accommodations and provide supporting evidence through documentation. Must be able to meet regular course/practicum/internship requirements. Colleges provide reasonable accommodations to students who qualify, which may include things like a quiet test environment or extra time on tests. Students earn grades with the same expectations and grading scale as the rest of the students in the class.
Discuss academic progress with parents/guardians	Is considered an adult with privacy and confidentiality protections, so faculty and staff cannot talk with parents or guardians about the student's academic progress without written permission from the student



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ASC

Academic Success Center

The Office of Student Disability Services within the Academic Success Center offers a variety of services for students with documented disabilities and collaborates with students to determine reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids, and support services that are individualized and based upon disability documentation, functional limitations, and an assessment of needs. Students are encouraged to use advocacy skills to facilitate the provision of authorized accommodations specific to class needs. Eastern does not provide personal assistance or equipment (i.e. homework assistance, typing, personal laptops, or personal aids). There is approximately 1 staff member per 100 students in ASC. The average contact time between staff and student is an initial meeting, documentation, and 2 follow-ups per semester. <https://www.eiu.edu/disability/index.php>

The FOCUS program is a free program in which a limited number of students with disabilities are selected by the ASC director to meet individually with a student mentor once weekly. The purpose of this program is to provide participants with skills and supports to achieve academic success at the college level. The student mentors are the staff of the program and their time is the equivalent of a 1 to 25 staff to student ratio. The contact time between the student mentor and the student is one 30-60 minute weekly meeting. <https://www.eiu.edu/disability/focus.php>

STEP

Students' Transitional Education Program

STEP is a fee-based program for admitted EIU Students with autism. Students in STEP receive services to develop executive functions, social interactions, and problem solving skills necessary for academic, social, and campus living success. Students start in the Full STEP program where more intensives services focus on developing insight, skills, and strategies necessary to succeed on campus. Students may transition to the Maintenance STEP program where supports fade and the student must self-regulate. STEP has limited enrollment, an interview and application process, and a commitment of 8-10 hours a week from students, who are managing their daily personal needs if they are living on campus. The Director, part-time Program Administrator, 2 graduate assistants, and ~20 student mentors serve the approximately 25 students in the program. Applications and interviews are typically conducted in the Fall, with admission decisions completed by January for the following Fall. <https://www.eiu.edu/step/>

SERVICES	Academic Success Center	STEP Transition Program
Accommodation Letter	X	
Must be registered with ASC	X	X
Student informs faculty regarding disability and accommodations.	X	X
Educate faculty how to support the student	X	X
Interdisciplinary team support	X	X
Priority registration for students permanently registered w/ASC	X	X
Speech-Language-Hearing (SLH) Clinic Services available for all EIU students	X	(Holds spots for individual, group therapy for STEP students) X
Counseling Services available for all EIU students	X	X
Collaboration, education, and communication with Residential Life staff regarding features, needs of students with autism	X	X
Provide training on Autism	X	X
Teach compensatory study strategies	Focus	X
Provide weekly 1:1 academic check-up meeting with graduate assistant	Focus	X
Coordinate early move-in options with Residential Life		X
Conduct individualized campus orientation tours and support navigating campus after move-in		X
Establish daily schedules/routines to promote time management, task prioritization		X
Weekly 1:1 conference with graduate assistant to support insight, planning, time management, academic problem solving, decision-making		X
Communicate with faculty; request progress updates and insight		X
Provide Academic Update to parents three times per semester		X
Provide Overall Status Update to parents three times per semester		X
Communication with parents as needed		X
Weekly STEP Class to develop executive functions and social skills		X
Guided Study Tables to foster use of study strategies, develop critical thinking skills, and improve task-monitoring		X
Consultations to help determine majors, minors, and areas of interest		X
Explore career interests and resume development in preparation of meetings with Career Services		X
Strongly encouraged physical fitness activities tailored to student's interests		X