

## Office for Accessible Education

A quick comparison of the service differences provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): A reference guide for students, families, and professionals

HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
Applicable Laws	
➢ IDEA	➤ ADA
> Section 504	➤ Section 504
Rights Guaranteed by Law	
Free, appropriate public education (FAPE)	Required to provide appropriate academic adjustments as necessary to ensure non-discrimination on basis of disability
Students Covered	
Every student; concept of zero reject regardless of ability	Student who is "otherwise qualified"; must meet stated qualifications of university
Identification and Evaluation	
<ul> <li>School district responsible for identifying students with disabilities</li> <li>IEP and/or 504 Plan developed by team</li> <li>School district provides evaluation at no cost to student</li> <li>School district conducts evaluations at prescribed intervals</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Student must self-identify to university's office of disability services and follow stated policies and procedures if he/she requests academic adjustment(s)</li> <li>Student must provide appropriate documentation of disability</li> <li>Student must request specific accommodation(s)</li> <li>IEP and/or 504 Plan not sufficient; documentation must include testing on which accommodations are based</li> <li>Student bears cost of evaluation if one required</li> <li>Student generally not required to be re-evaluated after initial documentation approval unless additional accommodations warrant more documentation</li> </ul>

Student Role	
<ul> <li>Student identified and supported by parents/teachers</li> <li>Primary responsibility for accommodations belongs to school</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Student makes decision whether or not to self-identify his/her disability to university</li> <li>Primary responsibility for accommodations belongs to student</li> </ul>
Parent Role	
<ul> <li>Parent has access to student's records and participates in accommodation process</li> <li>Parent must be included in decision-making</li> <li>Parent advocates for student</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Parent does not have access to disability-related records unless student provides written consent</li> <li>No parent consultation required</li> <li>Student advocates for self</li> </ul>
Teachers/Professors	
<ul> <li>Curriculum modifications and special programs are common</li> <li>Weekly testing, mid-term, final, and graded assignments</li> <li>Attendance taken and reported</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Academic adjustments that equalize opportunity for participation are required</li> <li>Substantial modifications to curriculum and lowering standards are not required</li> <li>Testing and assignment frequency varies</li> <li>Student responsible for class attendance</li> </ul>
Grades	
May be modified based on level/type of curriculum	Reflect work completed and submitted by student
Appeals Process	
Right to due process as specified by law	<ul> <li>Initial notice made via university internal grievance procedure</li> <li>File complaint with USDOE, Office of Civil Rights, if no resolution reached</li> </ul>