

College Services and Programs

Structured Program

Colleges with structured programs offer the most comprehensive services for students with learning disabilities. The director and/or staff are certified in learning disabilities or related areas. The director is actively involved in the admission decision and often the criteria for admission may be more flexible than general admission requirements. Services are highly structured and students are involved in developing plans to meet their particular learning styles and needs. Often students in Structured Programs sign a contract agreeing to actively participate in the program. There is usually an additional fee for the enhanced services. Students who have participated in a Structured Program or Structured Services in high school such as a Learning Disabilities Resource Program, individualized or modified coursework, tutorial assistance, academic monitoring, note takers, test accommodations, or skill classes might benefit from exploring colleges with Structured Programs or Coordinated Services.

Coordinated Services

Coordinated Services differ from Structured Programs in that the services are not as comprehensive. These services are provided by at least one certified learning disability specialist. The staff is knowledgeable and trained to provide assistance to students to develop strategies for their individual needs. The director of the program or series may be involved in the admission decision, or be in the position to offer recommendations to the admission's office on the potential success of the applicant, or to assist the student with an appeal if denied admission to college. To receive these services generally requires specific documentation of the learning disability—students are encouraged to self-identify prior to entry. Students voluntarily request accommodations or services in the Coordinated Services category, and there may be specific skill courses or remedial classes available or required for students with learning disabilities who are admitted probationally or conditionally. High school students who may have enrolled in some modified or remedial courses, utilized test accommodations, required tutorial assistance, but who typically requested services only as needed, might benefit from exploring colleges with Coordinated Services.

Services

Services is the least comprehensive of the categories. Colleges offering Services generally are complying with the federal mandate requiring reasonable accommodations to all students. These colleges routinely require documentation of the disability in order for the students with learning disabilities to receive accommodations. Staff and faculty actively support the students with learning disabilities by providing basic services to meet the needs of the students. Services are requested on a voluntary basis, and there may be some limitations to the degree of services available. Sometimes, just the small size of the student body allows for the necessary personal attention to help the students with learning disabilities succeed in college. High school students requiring minimum accommodations, but who would find comfort in knowing that this person is sensitive to students with learning disabilities, might benefit from exploring colleges providing Services.