Toolkit for Transition: Using AT to Support Transition to College
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What Are We Talking About Today?
- Transition and It’s Importance
- Differences between High School and College
- Trends in AT Usage
- Preparing for College with a Disability
- Timeline for Transitioning to College
- Assistive Technology in College

Transition
What is Transition?

*The process or period of changing from one state or condition to another*

Why is it Important?

"...federal data shows that only 41 percent of these students [with disabilities] graduate from two-year colleges within eight years; that rate drops to roughly one-third for those attending four-year schools. These numbers are significantly lower than graduation rates for the general student population..."

Quoted from the website: [https://www.bestcolleges.com/perspectives/college-barriers-disabilities/](https://www.bestcolleges.com/perspectives/college-barriers-disabilities/) and take from the following report: *The Transition Outcomes of Young Adults with Disabilities up to 6 Years After High School* by the National Center For Special Education Research.
Importance of Support

"...students attending public four-year institutions ... registering for disability services had second-year retention rates at 1.6 percentage points higher than their peers."


Invaluable Supports

Having a thoughtful, intentional transition process, starting early in the student’s high school career, focusing on the resources and supports that can be built into the student’s college or university experience, can only increase the likelihood of persistence, retention, and graduation.

Differences Between High School and College
Common Differences

- Four common differences between high school and college
  - Disability Laws
  - Accommodations
  - Responsibility
  - Expectations

Differences in Law

K-12
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act – IDEA
  - Access to a Free and Appropriate Public Education in the least restrictive environment possible
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
  - Schools must provide reasonable accommodations to students

College
- Americans with Disabilities Act – ADA
  - Equal access to people with disabilities
- Sections 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
  - Colleges must provide reasonable accommodations to ensure access to college

Differences in Accommodations

K-12
- Accommodations sometimes are more human based
  - Generally across high schools in the US
  - Different specialty schools – like Groves

College
- Accommodations are Technology based
  - Text-to-Speech
  - Speech-to-Text
  - Notetaking Technology

- Why?
  - Legally colleges have been told to do this
  - Gives students more independence
  - Takes out human error factor
Differences in Responsibility

K-12
• School’s responsibility to determine eligibility and support students.

COLLEGE
• Student’s responsibility to seek out support
• Student is required to disclose disability to receive support and accommodations
• We’re here to support, but we won’t seek you out.

Differences in Expectation

K-12
• Adjustments in and out of classroom based on IEP or 504 Plan
  • Smaller assignments
  • Different type of exam
  • Less reading
• Focused on Success

COLLEGE
• Expectations are the same as any other student
  • Complete the same work
  • Same time frame
  • Same assignments
• Focused on Access
  • We don’t ensure success
  • How and what supports can we provide so you can complete the same work as everyone else?

Modification vs. Accommodation

• An Accommodation changes how a student learns the material –
  • Tape recording of a lecture
  • Alternative format textbooks

• A Modification changes what a student is taught or expected to learn –
  • Shorter version of a reading
  • Only doing the even problems of a homework set
  • Writing 3 pages of a 10 page paper

In Higher Ed, we focus on Accommodations, not Modifications
• One of the biggest myths I debunk for students coming into college
Myths of College

Myth 1 answered:
Accommodations a student had in high school will follow them to college.

- Accommodations students had in high school like on an IEP or 504 Plan will not follow them to college
- Colleges use these documents to better understand what students used before and how it worked
- Colleges will come up with their own list of reasonable accommodations

Myth 2 answered:
Students can have shorter assignments, take shorter tests, or have different assignments.

- Colleges don’t prove Modifications
- Colleges provide Accommodations
- Focus on doing the same work as a student’s peers
- How do we support a student to accomplish the same expectations as their peers?
Myth 3 answered:

Students can have extended time on their assignments and papers or these assignments just don’t have due dates.

- Extended deadlines on assignments is very, very rare
- Only in extenuating circumstances is this appropriate
- Assignments have due dates
- If students have unlimited deadlines, it can compound making it hard to stay on track

Myth 4 answered:

Just like high school, there won’t be much work outside of class for students to do.

- Students spend less time in a classroom
- That time is made up for homework, projects, papers, and studying you do outside of class
- Students need to be organized, a self-starter, and on top of this so they don’t get behind

Myth 5 answered:

Students can leave their disability behind when they go to college.

- Who you are and what your disability is will come with you to college
- Many times students think they can leave their disability behind
  - “I only had a disability in high school.”
  - “College is different and I can do it without the support.”
- This mindset gets students into trouble more often than not
- Don’t abandon the supports that have made you successful
Assistive Technology in College

Recent Statistics

- 85% of students are not familiar with AT until they get to Postsecondary Education (2015 AT Survey Report, 2015)
- 91% of students say AT is Very or Somewhat Important to complete tasks successfully and independently (2015 AT Survey Report, 2015)
- "70% of degree-granting (postsecondary) institutions report assistive technology (AT) as a core support to meet the needs of students with a disability." (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013)

Colorado State University Study

- Colorado State University did a study on the perception of one's performance on school tasks and also the actual performance of school tasks in regards to AT
- Measured students' perceptions of how they did on tasks before AT was implemented and measured perceptions after it was implemented on the same tasks
- Qualitative
- Also measured their performance level on these tasks
- Quantitative
- "...student ratings of their performance on all of the common academic occupations of reading, writing, note-taking, test-taking, and studying significantly increased from pre-to-post AT intervention...as did the average overall performance rating..." (Malcom, 2016)
Why AT in College?

• Laws and Guidance in Higher Education say Technology should always be used in the place of a human if possible
• Dear Colleague Letter of 2010
• Federal Complaint Settlements against Universities and Colleges from the Department of Justice and the Department of Education

“...acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrative manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use.” - Courtesy of AHEAD

AT in College

• What students are using today in the K-12 Environment, may not be the technology the college they attend will have
• Different schools have access to different technology
• Students will want to ask the Disability Resource Office during their college search what technology they have access to
• Be prepared to talk about what features of the tool(s) you use
  • Word Prediction
  • Text-to-Speech
  • Recording lectures

AT and the Transition to College

• Colleges and universities are relying more on assistive technology
• Using this more often to help provide accommodations
• More accommodations are technology based than human or adjustment based
• Students need to come to college knowing about and using AT, if at all possible
Why Assistive Technology?
- Provides more access
- Provides independence
- Provides skill building
- Keeps a level playing field
- Less reliance on humans
- Less possibility for human error
- Long term solution

Common AT Accommodations

**AT TOOLS**
- Text-to-Speech
- Read&Write
- Kurzweil
- Microsoft Learning Tools
- Notetaking Device
- Smartpen
- Sonocent Audio Notetaker
- One Note
- Apps (Notability, Otter AI)

**COMMON NON-TECH SUPPORTS**
- Readers/Reading Coach
- Decreased amount of reading assignment
- Different reading assignment level
- Peer Notetaker
- Teacher Notes/Outline

Common AT Accommodations - 2

**AT TOOLS**
- Dictation
  - Google Voice Typing
  - Dragon
  - Dictate (within Microsoft Office Suite)
- Mind Mapping
- Grammar Checkers
- Executive Functioning
  - Planners, Organization Tools, Time Management Tools

**COMMON NON-TECH SUPPORTS**
- Writers
- Writing Coaches
- Decreased writing assignment length
- Teacher (parent, adult) helping manage executive functioning processes
Preparing for College

Valuable Skills
Two most valuable skills a student with a disability can have going into college:

1. Advocacy Skills
2. Assistive Technology Skills

Student Advocacy
- Important to get ready for college in high school
- Important to know the following:
  - What your disability is (the name)
  - How it impacts you
  - What you are doing now that makes you successful
  - What support you need
  - What technology you are using
- Elevator Speeches
  - 30-second to 1 minute speeches that cover important information about a student’s disability and useful accommodations
Contact with Disability Resources

- Each college in US needs to have a Disability Resource Office
- Contact them sooner rather than later
  - Encouraged to work with colleges during college search
  - Have a discussion about what they provide, including assistive technology
- Don’t wait until midterms when things aren’t going well (or the day before a test)
  - Better to have things set up ahead of time than when you need it
  - Don’t reacquire your disability at midterms
- No two offices look alike
  - Figure out what their office looks like and what accommodations they provide
- Pre-planning is essential to have the most amount of success in college
  - Help Us, Help You!

Process for Working with Disability Resources

- Student contacts Disability Resources to set up appointment
- Collect your documentation
  - IEP
  - 504 Plan
  - Testing (Psycho-Educational Evaluation, Neuro-Psych Evaluation)
  - Any other things on paper that help us understand you
- Know your Disability
  - Name the Disability
  - Describe the impacts of your Disability
- Know AT tools and mastery level
  - What features of tool you are using?
  - School might not use the same tool that you used in high school

Intake Process

- Intake meeting with interview questions about your disability, impacts, and what supports in high school you used
- Present documentation about disability if requested or needed
- Interactive process to determine accommodations
  - Discussion of what is a reasonable accommodations for this class
- Accommodations implementation
  - Testing, Notetaking, Text-to-Speech, Residential
  - Assistive Technology
- Follow up and continued support, meetings, or help as needed or requested
  - If things aren’t working, come back and see us
  - We can talk about if adjustments can be made to your accommodations
  - The Interactive Process
Tools to Support Transition

QIAT
- Tool we use in college to gauge general AT knowledge
- Based off of the Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology and managed by Great Lakes ADA Center
- Tailored to students transitioning to college
- 10 indicators in a variety of areas of AT knowledge
  - Laws
  - Repair
  - Support

www.qiat-ps.org

How It's Used - QIAT
- Students transitioning to college - take tool as Junior or Senior (or before)
- Take it annually or a few times between start of transition process and going to college
- Incoming students take tool if they haven't taken it
- Use tool to set up action plan to help increase knowledge in areas
- Disability Resource Offices use it as documentation to help us determine accommodations
- Helps us understand a student's understanding of AT knowledge
- Helps to tailor the skills we can help you develop during your time with our office
- Helps us know where to meet the student at
Toolkit for Transition

- Tool to track which technology you used
- Created by two Minnesota AT Specialists
- Rate yourself on your mastery level
- Tools are broken down into impact area
  - Reading
  - Writing
  - Organization

www.toolkit4transition.com

How It’s Used – T4T

- Create a Toolkit Online
- Rate yourself on your mastery level of the AT tools you are using currently or in the past
- Rate skills on a 1-5 scale
- Free website with free accounts
- Edit open toolkits or create new ones each year
- Bring the toolkit(s) to your colleges during your visit so you can show them documentation of what you’re using and at what mastery level
- A talking point to help guide the conversation with the Disability Resource Office

Timeline
When to Begin? & What to Do?
A timeline for students, parents, teachers, and transition teams to support the transition to college with Assistive Technology starting during the student's Junior Year, and carrying them through their start and first semester of college.
- Can be adapted for students transitioning from community college or doing college coursework in high school.

Freshman and Sophomore Years
- Start talking about post-high school
  - College or university?
  - 2 or 4 year?
  - In-state, out-of-state?
  - Major of study?
  - What are your interests?
  - What do your family members do?
- Introduction to Assistive Technology in school during IEP Process
  - "Would AT support our student in their current school and their work, as well as when they transition to a college or university?"
  - Fill Out Toolkit4Transition and QIAT (if applicable)

Junior Year
- Research colleges regards Disability Resources and availability of Assistive Technology
- Visit prospective colleges
  - Inquire about Disability Resources and availability of Assistive Technology
  - Begin building your College Portfolio
- Complete Timeline4Transition (include in Portfolio)
- Complete QIAT-PS (include in Portfolio)
What’s a College Portfolio?

A compilation of all pertinent information that can be provided to Disability Resources to streamline the transition

These documents can help to support and guide the Transition to college & Assistive Technology implementation process.

What is in the College Portfolio?

Table of Contents
Student Information/Bio
- Interests
- Possible Majors
- Strengths
- Areas of Growth
Other Pertinent Information
Disability and Accommodation Information
- Disability Diagnosis
- Impacts of Disability (functional limitations)
- Accommodations used in high school
- Accommodations effectiveness (did they work?)
- Accommodations seeking in college
- Other Pertinent Information

What is in the College Portfolio? cont.

- Documentation
  - IEP or 504 Plan
  - Medical Documentation
  - Psychodiagnostic, Neuropsychological or other evaluation
  - Verification Letter from medical provider or doctor
  - Weight of documentation: diagnosis, impacts of disability (functional limitations), recommended accommodations and/or accommodations used previously

- Assistive Technology
  - Toolkit4Transition inventories
  - QIAT-PS Inventories and Action Plans
  - Other Pertinent Assistive Technology Documentation
Fall Term Senior Year

- Apply to your colleges
- Update documentation of your disability
  - Documentation should confirm your disability and how it impacts you
  - IEP
  - 504 Plan
  - Medical records (if applicable)
- Once obtained, include documentation in student’s Portfolio

Spring Term – Senior Year (January – May)

Once accepted and you’ve chosen a college:
- Submit documentation to the college
- Schedule a meeting with Disability Resources to talk about coming to campus and accommodations you may need
- Complete an updated Toolkit4Transition from your senior year
- Complete another QIAT-PS from knowledge gained during your senior year
- Add updated Toolkit4Transition and QIAT-PS to the student’s Portfolio

Summer after Senior Year (June – August)

- Work with the Disability Resource office to implement Assistive Technology
  - Assessment
  - Installation
  - Training
  - Follow-Up
- Bring your Portfolio to Disability Resources
  - Include copies of your Toolkit4Transition, QIAT-PS, Documentation, and other important information
- Schedule appointment to finalize accommodations you’ll use in your classes during the fall
- Strive to get this done before classes begin so you’re ready
Start of College (September – end of first term)

• Schedule meetings as need and as issues arise with Disability Resources

• Schedule appointment to finalize accommodations for fall class if not done during the summer

• Schedule meetings if you have questions on your Assistive Technology, if it is not working for you, or is no longer being effective

• Schedule and attend meetings to implement Assistive Technology if you haven’t already done so – recent decision, recent transfer, out of state student, etc. who has not been able to attend this

Next Steps Document

Next Steps Document Example

• Following a laid out timeline, students will be better prepared for the transition to college with Assistive Technology

• Students will have gained insight into their disability and gained skills in communication and self-advocacy

• Allows for the gathering of a portfolio to present to Disability Resources to get a clear picture of the student
Common AT Tools

Augsburg’s AT Web Resource
Augsburg has compiled a list of tools
• Website available to everyone
• Free and low cost tools
• Broken down into categories

http://www.augsburg.edu/class/groves/assistive-technology/everyone/

Favorite AT Tools to Support College Students
• ReadWrite and ReadWrite for Google by Texthelp
• Kurzweil
• Built-in Office 365 tools—reading & writing
  • Many schools are becoming 365 campuses
• Sonocent Audio Notetaker— notetaking
• Smartpen— notetaking
• OneNote— notetaking
• Mercury Reader—distraction free reading in a web browser
• Select to Speak— text-to-speech in web browser
Favorite AT Tools to Support College Students cont.

• EquatIO by Texthelp
• Dragon Dictate/Dragon Naturally Speaking
• Google Voice Typing
  • many schools are becoming GSuite Schools in higher ed
• Cold Turkey – distraction free on computer
• Strict Workflow - Chrome Extension for distraction reduced environment
• Google Calendar, Google Keep, Google Tasks – organization/task management

Questions!?

Contact Me!

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