

## Supporting your College Student: Tips for Parents

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College life poses different challenges for students with disabilities. When students begin college, they are considered adults by college faculty and staff, and it is assumed they will be managing their daily lives independent of parents, schoolteachers, staff or administrators. This responsibility in addition to a change in living environment, community, and course difficulty can be very stressful for students not prepared for the changes.

- Preparation for college starts early in your student's IEP meetings. Ask for a transition plan for your student to begin to take on some of the responsibility and self-advocacy for themselves, especially by the end of their senior year.
- Assist your student in determining how his/her strengths and weaknesses will be affected by each class and what they will need to be successful. Most students take three classes per quarter, and some of the course syllabi are online before the course begins so they can plan ahead.
- Attending classes, keeping up on the course readings and turning assignments in on time are all the responsibility of the student and are a good way to check on progress.
- The coursework in college is more demanding than high school courses. Most classes do not just require students to memorize course material that they are then tested on. Students must critically think about the subject matter, identify why it is important or how it fits into a larger schema, and perhaps write about it or be tested on the material in a completely different way. College is not just about memorization.
- Help/support your student in finding a work/life/school balance that works for them.
- If your student lives on campus and travels home frequently, encourage them to complete schoolwork while at home so they don't get behind.
- UC Irvine is on a 10-week quarter system with 1 week for final exams. The quarter goes by very quickly so encourage your student to keep pace with the class materials.
- Work with your student to determine appropriate boundaries which respects and helps foster/encourage their independence.
- Discuss with them what schedule keeping/time management system they will use (e.g. a Google calendar), or other scheduling application to monitor due dates and blocks of study time.