



Kids As Self Advocates

## Questions about College

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by Maia Wroblewski

*Maia, a college student, is just finishing her freshman year at a major university. Before she chose to go there, she did a lot of research to find out if this was the right school for her. Maia shares some of the questions she thinks it may be important to ask. Use her, and add your own!*

If you are getting ready to go to college for the first time, here are some questions that might help you make certain that all of your needs will be met.

How will I get a room for my needs?

1. Does the college have rooms that are accessible if you use a wheelchair for mobility?
2. Does the college have air conditioned rooms if you have seasonal allergies or cannot tolerate heat.

Will they serve food I can eat?

1. What if I have an allergy?
2. Will they have at least some foods I can eat?
3. Can I have a refrigerator in my room so that I'll always have food that is fine for me?
4. Is there a place to make your own food?
5. Do they list the ingredients for all foods that are served in the cafeteria?

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Latex Allergy

1. Do they use latex free gloves when handling my food?
2. Latex free gloves when cleaning the bathroom and other parts of the dorm.
3. Is the mattress on the bed or bed pillows latex foam rubber.
4. What about carpets?

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5. Requesting that balloons not be used in common areas.

#### Other Health Needs

1. Who would I talk to if I begin to feel ill?
2. Is there a campus medical center?
3. How will I get my medications? Is there a campus pharmacy?
4. Will the campus Health Center coordinate with my doctors and specialists?
5. Will I be able to have these health services covered by my parent's health insurance or will I have to travel home for medical care?

#### Transportation

1. Does the campus have a bus system? If so are the buses accessible, or do they provide para-transit?
2. What is required to get an accessible parking place on campus?
3. Are all of the buildings accessible?

#### Other Access Issues

1. Are computers, technology on campus accessible to me?
2. Are there alternative alarm systems, such as flashing lights in all campus buildings?
3. How much assistance can I expect to have outside of the classroom, for example note takers, access to the professor's notes, tutors, alternative examination methods, policy on longer timelines or make up work related to frequent absences, and attendance policies.

#### Campus Life:

What is the campus policy to assure that professors will understand my accommodations?

What documentation is required about my needs?

If I miss a class can I get the notes and assignments?

Are there other ways of receiving the lecture i.e. on tape, with closed captioning, having a note taker

How accessible are the rooms and buildings for classes?

What if I need assistance getting to class, or during class?

-Is this covered by the college or will I need to hire someone?

Are there alternatives to assignments I cannot complete due absences involving my disability?

If I am missing a lot of class due to my disability is there a program that would help tutor me while I am absent?

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How will I contact my teachers if I am unable to come to class?

Will I be able to get extensions?

What if I need extra help (tutor, one-on-one)?

Many campuses now have disability resource centers. They should be able to help you get these questions and questions specific to your unique needs answered. Keep in mind that it may take some time for your campus to be able to arrange for accommodations to meet your needs. I started planning with my college in the spring, the last semester of my senior year. These questions and the responses of colleges also helped me to make the choice of where I would attend. I hope that this get you to think of your questions and to get started on your college degree. An important step to your future success.

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