

Accommodation vs Modification

What is an accommodation?

Accommodations are supports and services provided on college campuses so **qualified** students with disabilities have equal access and opportunity to benefit from classes, programs and activities. Academic accommodations must be **authorized** by a specific office on campus—generally known as the *disability support services office*—and are **determined on an individual basis**.*

Accommodations are offered to **college students**, as a right under ADA.

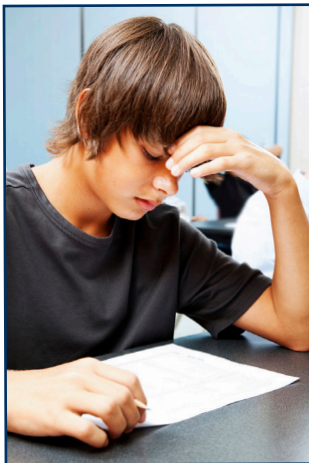


Fig. 1: Student in a quiet testing area.

Virginia Commonwealth University, Going to College. (2009). *Getting Accommodations*. Available online at <http://www.going-to-college.org/campuslife/accommodations.html>

What is a modification?

Usually a **modification** means a *change in what is being taught to or expected from the student*. Making an assignment easier so the student is not doing the same level of work as other students is an example of a modification. Modifications are made for students with disabilities who are unable to comprehend all of the content an instructor is teaching.

Modifications are offered to students with disabilities in **public schools** under IDEA.



Fig. 2: Student working with one-on-one attention.

Accommodations Often Used in College

- ⇒ Sign language interpreters for students who are deaf.
- ⇒ Computer text-to-speech computer-based systems for students with visual impairments or Dyslexia.
- ⇒ Extended time for students with fine motor limitations, visual impairments, or learning disabilities.
- ⇒ Large-print books and worksheets for students with visual impairments.
- ⇒ Trackballs and alternative keyboards for students who operate standard mice and keyboards.
- ⇒ Priority registration.
- ⇒ Exam accommodations (i.e., extended time on tests, readers, scribes, proctors).
- ⇒ Testing in a room with limited distractions.
- ⇒ Interpreters.
- ⇒ Textbooks in an alternate format.
- ⇒ Note taker.
- ⇒ Course substitution.

Modifications often used in High School (but disallowed in college)

- ⇒ Fewer questions on test (test covers less material).
- ⇒ Write a five page paper instead of a ten page one.
- ⇒ Using a different curriculum.
- ⇒ Less reading.
- ⇒ One-to-one support.
- ⇒ Not being held accountable for spelling.
- ⇒ Reminders to complete assignments.
- ⇒ Prompts to make up work.
- ⇒ Smaller class sizes.
- ⇒ Summary sheets/study sheets/Outlines of most important facts.
- ⇒ Presentation of materials in smaller steps.
- ⇒ Options to raise a lower grade/extra credit projects.
- ⇒ Assignment notebooks filled out and tracked by teachers/parents.
- ⇒ Additional time with teacher to review/drill.