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.


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. 1: Student in a quiet testing area.

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.