



Technical College: What's It All About?

A fact sheet about technical college and disability-related services written by youth for youth.

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What should I think about BEFORE I apply at a technical college?

Educational Issues:

- Are you motivated to do your best and work hard?
- Have you visited the campus(es) you are interested in?
- Are you familiar with assistive technology that may help you succeed in school (e.g. Kurzweil, Dragon NaturallySpeaking, Write: OutLoud)?

Health Issues:

- Do you have health care coverage?
- Have you found a pharmacy that takes your health insurance?
- Have you found a doctor you can see while you are at school?
- Where will you get equipment serviced (i.e. wheelchair repairs, computer problems)?
- Bring copies of your medical records with you to school.
- Are your immunizations up to date (i.e. hepatitis, flu shot, Pneumococcal)?

How do I choose a technical college?

Career:

- Talk to people who have gone to a technical college and ask what they like about it.
- Think about what the campus is like (social activities, level of student activity on campus).
- Think about the college setting (location, size of campus).
- Make a transition plan with your high school guidance counselor, case manager, regular or special education teacher so you have all the high school credits you need to go to college.
- Call to make sure the disability services center can provide the accommodations you need – how barrier free is the campus?

Health:

- If you have health issues that could mean you have to go to the hospital, does the nearest hospital have the expertise to treat you?
- Does the campus health center have experience treating people with disabilities?
- What is the school's policy if you miss classes because of a health or disability issue?

Why go to a technical college?

- Smaller classes, so you get more attention from your instructors.
- Cheaper than most four year colleges.
- Takes less time to get your degree or diploma (usually 2 years or less).
- High employment rate for graduates.
- Can transfer most credits to a 4-year university easily.

How do I apply for disability services?

- Apply early!
- You must go to the disability services office on the campus you are attending to request disability-related accommodations.
- Visit the disability services office no later than one semester before you will start classes to make sure you have time to meet their documentation guidelines and so the services you need will be ready for you on the first day of classes. This is especially important if you need a Sign Language Interpreter, taped or scanned

textbooks, or Braille materials.

- You will be asked for documentation of your disability, which you can usually get from your medical doctor, psychiatrist, psychologist, or neurologist. Each campus has their own guidelines for what they will accept for documentation and will give this info to you.
- There is no IEP in college. Services are individualized.

What will help me be successful at a technical college?

- Things that worked in high school may not work in college. Think about new ideas for helping you learn best. Here are some common accommodations to think about:
- Note takers so you can concentrate on the lecture.
- Taped or scanned textbooks.
- Adaptive testing (extended time, computer for essays) adaptive equipment (i.e. software).
- Attendance or environmental issues related to health.

Other important information

- See your disability services counselor once a week to make sure your services are being received and to avoid problems.
- Get to know the head of the disability services office. This person can help if you get stuck.
- Introduce yourself to the Dean of your academic department in case you need help later.
- If you have problems with a test, see your disability services counselor right away.
- Talk to your teacher if you have problems in class or you don't understand the material.
- Join a study group for your class if you are having problems learning the material.
- Use the Learning/Tutorial Center!
- If your teacher offers a study session – use it!

What types of degrees can I earn from a technical college?

- Associate degree
- Short-term diploma or certificate
- Apprenticeship program
- One- or two-year technical diploma
- Liberal Arts program
- Advance Technical Certificate

How is technical college different from high school?

High School	College
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adults remind you of your responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You are responsible for your activities and the decisions you make.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You are usually told what to do and corrected if you're out of line.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You must accept the consequences of your decisions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grades are usually given for homework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grades are usually only given for tests and major projects.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assignments are usually short, reviewed, and taught more than once.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You will have much more reading to do and assignments will not necessarily be reviewed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classroom accommodations are taken care of by your IEP team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is up to you to find the Disability Services Office to disclose your disability and arrange for classroom accommodations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classmates are the same age.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classmates include people of all ages.

For more information...

- Wisconsin Technical College System – www.witechcolleges.com
- Opening Doors to Postsecondary Education and Training – dpi.wi.gov/sped/pdf/tranopndrs.pdf
- Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities – www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html
- Preparing for college – www.thinkcollege.net/ and www.collegeispossible.org
- Staying Healthy – www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/preventing.htm