



Office of Disabilities Services

Disability Services • M244
Passaic County Community College
Phone: 973-684-6395
Email: ods@pccc.edu
Online: pccc.edu/ods

INFORMATION AND TIPS FOR PARENTS

The following information will be extremely helpful to you as your student starts his/her college career:

- **By law (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 – FERPA), the College cannot share information about a student without that student’s written permission.** Any information about how a student is doing in his/her classes must come directly from the student to you. We know you have worked hard at communicating with your student in the past, but it may be very important now to listen to your student and discuss with him/her the ups and downs of college life.
- **The College recommends that students spend at least 2 to 3 hours of study outside of class for every one hour spent in class.** It will be very difficult for any student to work more than 20 hours per week if that student is carrying a full-time class load (12 or more credits per semester). A job that permits flexibility in scheduling work hours can be a real plus for the student balancing the many demands of college.
- **Your student is considered an adult on our campus, and he/she will be confronted with making many decisions.** This applies to disability services also. Your student will have to participate in an intake interview, at which time the services available will be explained. Your student will need to make a decision about which, if any, services he/she will use and then follow up on those services. If a student does not actively pursue services, we will assume that he/she has made a decision not to use the services. If the student changes his/her mind in the future, he/she needs to contact our office, and we will help the student put the services in place for the future.
- **The choosing of classes is another area of decision making that will confront your student.** DS will provide guidance, but the ultimate responsibility for class choices lies with the student. Students can obtain curriculum guides for the various majors and concentrations at PCCC online. If the student wishes to transfer to another college, the other college makes the decision about what classes they will accept from PCCC. The website <http://www.njtransfer.org> can be very helpful in the transfer process.
- **If your student is undecided about a career direction, encourage him/her to make use of PCCC’s Office of Career & Professional Readiness.**
- **It is important your student not only accumulate credits (approximately 64 needed for a PCCC Associate’s Degree), but also perform well in his/her classes.** A grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 (“C”) is required for graduation, and transfer schools require a minimum GPA of 2.5. “F’s” will not transfer and usually “D’s” do not. Most students take more than two years to complete an AA or AS degree at PCCC. When students focus on completing their degrees in a hurry, we often witness decisions that result in poor academic performance.
- **College may not be the right choice for everyone.** If your student has shown a serious commitment to college, but at some point decides this is not the right place for him/her at this time, we view this as positive information about him/herself that the student has gained. We often see students return to college at a later time, and we also see students who decide never to return and are successful in life.

We encourage you to remember you are also undergoing a transition as your student starts college. Both your student and you will be experiencing changes. We know you want to provide an environment that will enable your student to transform into a happy, **independent** adult. This may not always be easy, but it will be rewarding in the long run. Hang in there!



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College and Student Obligations Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

College Obligations Under the ADA

Ensure that qualified applicants and students have access to the college's programs

Provide reasonable accommodations for the student's documented disabilities

Demonstrate a good faith effort to provide the student with meaningful access

Student Obligations Under the ADA

Self-identify that s/he has a disability (following the specific college's stated policies and procedures)

Provide appropriate documentation of disability

Request specific accommodation(s)

Follow the agreed-upon procedures for using accommodations

Legal Differences between the ADA and IDEA

Learning that the IDEA does not apply to higher education and that college students have a much greater responsibility if they are to receive accommodations (and parents have a greatly reduced role) is often a shock for students and their parents.

Unlike the IDEA, which, under its "zero reject" policy, guarantees an education to all school-aged children, regardless of ability, **the ADA protects only those individuals who meet the stated qualifications of a college or program.**

The phrase "**otherwise qualified**" in the ADA means that only those people who are able to meet the technical and academic qualifications for entry into a school, program, or activity are protected by the ADA. This means that although colleges are required to make what are called **minor academic adjustments**, they are not required to make substantial modifications to their curricula or course requirements.

- A good example of how this differs from the K-12 world is that although a reasonable accommodation may be extended time on tests and/or a distraction-free environment for testing, the law does not require colleges to modify the contents of an exam.
- Another example is that colleges are not obligated to provide students with disabilities more intensive tutoring services than they provide to non-disabled students.

Passaic County Community College is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action institution. No person, in whatever relationship with the College, shall be subjected to discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, gender identity or expression, affectional or sexual orientation, marital status, familial status, liability for service in the Armed Forces of the United States, disability or nationality, or other protected categories or activity (i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the complaint process). Sexual harassment is a form of unlawful gender discrimination and, likewise, will not be tolerated.