Postsecondary Service Delivery Models

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Simply attending and graduating from high school is no longer a guarantee of employment. Students with disabilities need to attend college like their nondisabled peers in order to secure a good-paying job, but in order to do this, they must have special support systems in place. Fifteen colleges in the United States offer such assistance to these students. Most programs go beyond simply tutoring and include a learning specialist to assist the students with their learning, which can be anything from working on executive functioning skills to note-taking, to test-taking strategies, to being able to regulate one's emotions. An explanation of each program is included in this chapter.

INTRODUCTION

As was mentioned in Chapter 1, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce (2016), only 35% of adults who have an identified disability and who have graduated from high school are employed within the work force. Of these, only 45% have earned an undergraduate degree or higher. Based on these statistics, some colleges and universities are going beyond providing simple accommodations of extended time to complete an assessment or project within a college classroom. They have added services to assist adults with exceptionalities with skills that most nondisabled persons probably do not struggle with and take for granted but that can deter a person with an

exceptionality from obtaining gainful employment. These skills include being a self-advocate, managing one's time effectively, organizing oneself and one's course materials, improving reading and listening comprehension, writing in a scholarly manner, implementing study skills that fit the individual student needs in general and in a specific course, getting prepared to take a test, and effectively conducting research for an assignment. Gaining these skills will not only assist pupils with getting through college courses and earning a degree but also will benefit them once they earn gainful employment and throughout the rest of their lives. Below is a description of 15 colleges throughout the United States that offer these services to students with an identified disability.

MUSKINGUM UNIVERSITY, OHIO

The PLUS Program at Muskingum University has three tiers to assist students who have an identified disability. All students who want to become involved with this program start at Tier 1 (full service) and work their way to Tier 3 (independence). In Tier 1, the student meets individually with a consultant for 2 to 4 hours weekly. At one of the first meetings, the student and consultant will develop a learning plan that will be followed during the course. Depending on what the student feels are areas that need improvement, the following may be included: assistance with academic and executive functioning support such as self-monitoring to ignore distractions in the classroom, regulating emotions, paying attention in class, staying focused to complete tasks, getting and keeping organized, and flexibly thinking about an issue or situation in several different ways and accepting other's opinions on the topic. Students at this tier are also given an hour of tutoring for each academic course they are taking, and the college recommends that the students take a reduced course load. As the students move through the tiers, the time spent with and the support received from the consultant becomes less and less. Students are taught how to advocate for their own needs and are provided mentors if needed. For more information, see https://www.muskingum.edu/plus/services.

McDANIEL COLLEGE, MARYLAND

McDaniel College's Academic Skills Program is similar to the Muskingum program in that the student with an exceptionality works weekly with an academic counselor on time management, organization, self-advocacy, and

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