

What's Happening on College Campuses?

Postsecondary Education for Students with
Disabilities

*National Secondary Transition Technical
Assistance Center*

May 2007



Kristine Wiest Webb, Ph.D.
Associate Professor: Special Education
University of North Florida
Jacksonville, FL 32224
(904) 620-1807
kwebb@unf.edu

"Oh, my bags are packed, I'm ready to go...
I think.....

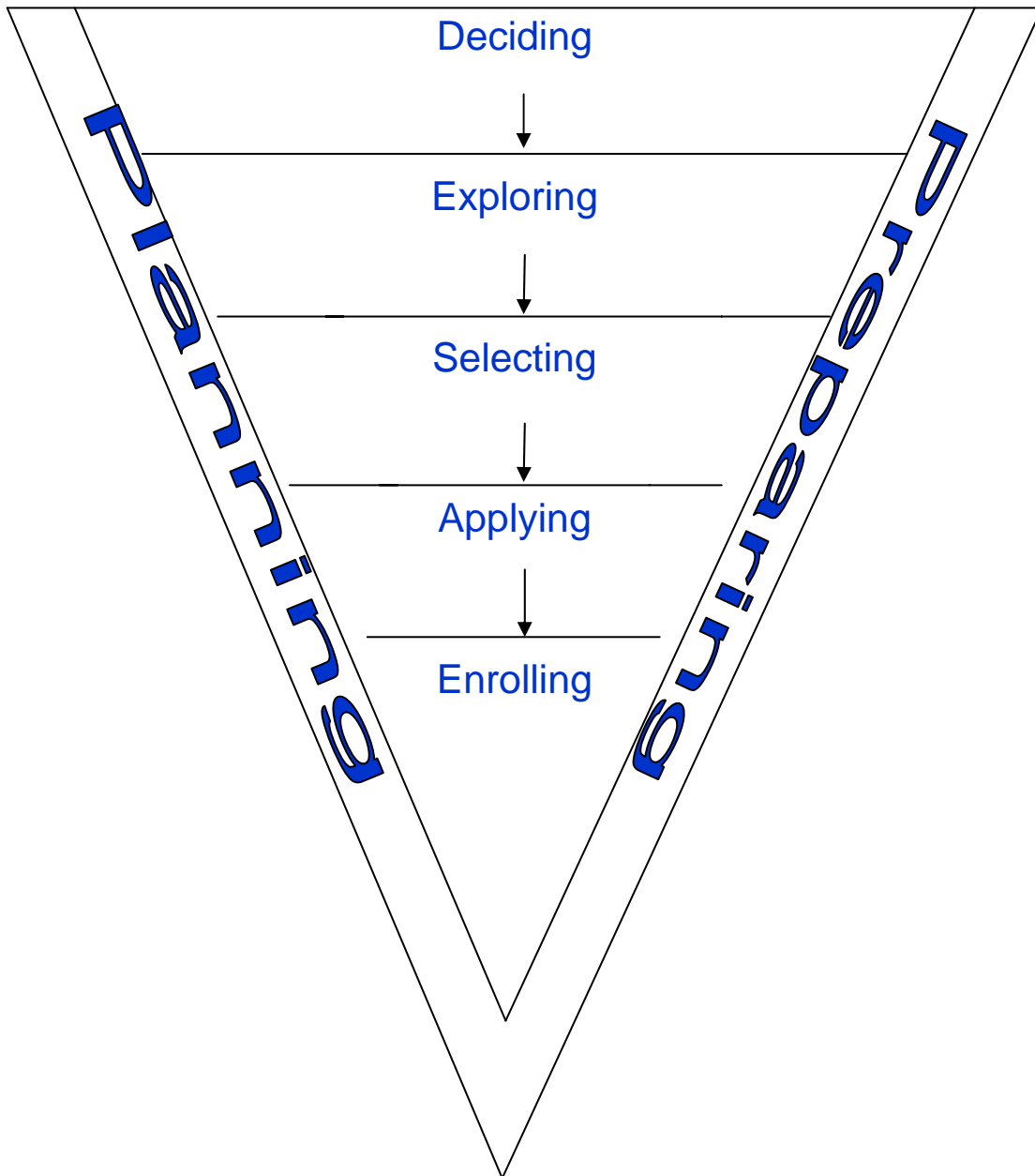


What do students **need** in order to begin their careers in postsecondary education?

Think of skills, abilities, tools, information, and characteristics that will help students make a successful transition to postsecondary education. List them below.

Think about your own postsecondary experience. **Circle** the skills, abilities, tools, information, and characteristics that you believe you had when you began your postsecondary experience. **Underline** the ones you wish you could have had!

OPEN Model
*Opportunities in Postsecondary Education
through Networking*



Webb, K. W. (2000). [Transition to postsecondary education: Strategies for students with disabilities.](#) Austin, TX: ProEd.

Name:

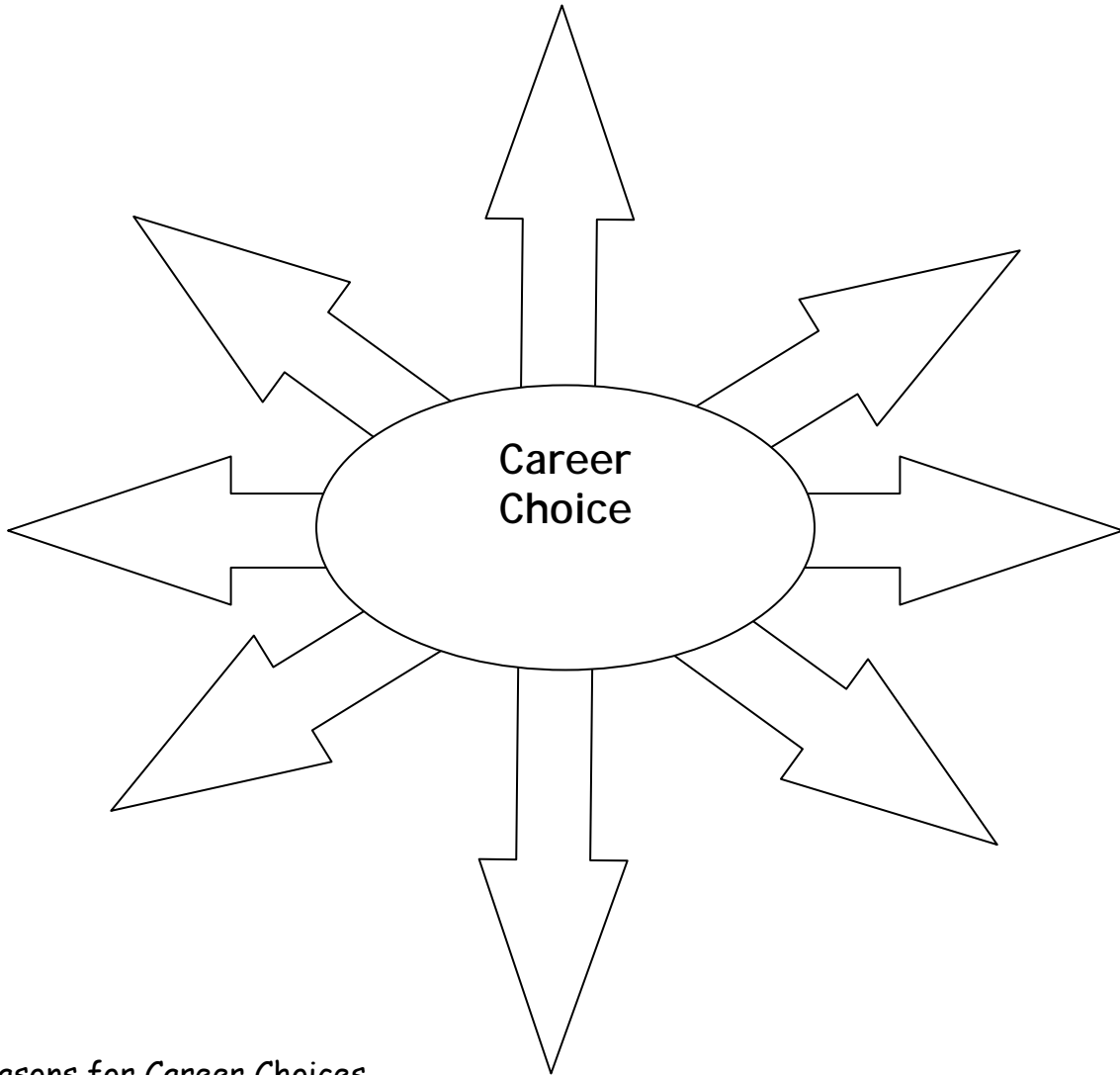
Hobbies, passions, interests, leisure activities
I do now:

Related careers

Hobbies, passions, interests, leisure activities
I would like to try in the future:

Related careers

Circle of Opportunities



Reasons for Career Choices

Reason #1 <i>Related jobs or careers</i>	Reason #2 <i>Related jobs or careers</i>	Reason #3 <i>Related jobs or careers</i>

Interviewing a Professional!

Conduct lessons in your class about interviewing professionals. Discuss appropriate language, dress, and conduct during interviews.

Develop an interview format. Examples of questions students could ask include questions listed on the following page.

Ask students to script their interview questions and rehearse the interviews in class. Classmates can role-play, offer feedback, and learn from each other.

Arrange an interview with a professional in the student's number one career choice. The interview may be conducted on the telephone, in person, or through e-mail communication.



Sample Interview Questions:

Does your profession require post-secondary education?

If yes, how many years of study are required?

What type of post-secondary education is required (college, vocational school, and other training schools)

What school would you recommend for training in this profession?

What prerequisite classes should I take in high school?

What extra-curricular activities would help me prepare for this profession?

What strengths or talents do you believe are necessary in your profession?

What is a typical day for you?

What are the advantages of working in your profession?

What are the disadvantages of working in your profession?

What advice would you offer to a person entering your profession?

Other questions or comments?



*How is college
different from high
school?*

Activities for Postsecondary Preparation

- ✓ Develop an information sheet that lists characteristics of education in high school and college (see following page for sample worksheet).
- ✓ Divide students into small groups and ask them to complete the high school portion of the worksheet. Discuss results in class.
- ✓ Invite a panel of college students with disabilities to your class. A representation from several colleges in your area would offer students a wider scope of possibilities. Instruct students in your class to develop questions based on the college portion of the worksheet. Students may record panelist's responses by videotaping, cassette recording, or taking notes. Spend class time discussing and summarizing the session with the college students. Direct students to record the summaries on the college column of their worksheets.
- ✓ Target one row of the worksheets per day. Ask students to reflect how this change will impact them academically, emotionally, and socially. Reflections may be done as essays, oral presentations, role-plays, small group discussions, or student-teacher conferences. Ask students to organize these assignments in their portfolios in preparation for their T-IEP meetings.

Differences between High School and College

Characteristics	High School	College
Time in class		
Size of class		
Campus size		
Interaction with teacher		
Assignments		
Study time		
Tests		
Attendance in class		
Teaching style		
Notetaking		
Library use		
Independent thinking		
Time management		
Freedom		
Resources and support		
Social environment		

Characteristics of Post-secondary Institutions

Mark each item Y for yes N for no Make additional notes on a separate page	4-year state college/university	4-year private college/university	2-year college	Community college	Technical institute	Vocational school	Military education	Apprentice-ship	Home study distance learning	Adult education
SAT/ACT tests required										
Open admission										
Housing on campus										
Program for students with disabilities										
Bachelor's degree granted										
Work experiences or internships										
Remedial or developmental classes										
Average class size (write in number)										
Average tuition/costs for 1 year (write in number)										

An activity for the Postsecondary Grid...

Assign each student a different post-secondary option. Direct them to identify a person who is attending, or has attended the post-secondary option assigned to them. With assistance from students, devise an interview script for the students to follow. Examples of questions are included below.

Why did you decide to attend _____?

What other options did you consider?

Describe the climate on campus.

Would you describe the climate as very competitive, competitive, relaxed, or very relaxed?

In what ways were you given support to succeed?

What are the advantages of attending this type of school?

What are the disadvantages?

If you could step back in time, would you attend this school?

Study Skills Questionnaire

Time Management

- Do you usually have a well organized study schedule?
 - Do you see yourself as someone who uses his or her time effectively?
 - Do you study for one to two hours per day with full concentration?
 - Do you usually allow enough time for long-term assignments (e.g., term papers, lengthy reading assignments, etc)?
 - Do you finish your work far enough ahead of time to be able to proofread and to make corrections?
 - Do you accurately estimate how long it will take you to get work done?
 - How often do you hand assignments in late or ask for extensions?
-

Notetaking

- Do you understand the notes you have taken in class?
 - Do you feel that you can study from your notes (even if the test is two months later)?
 - Do you share/compare notes with other students in the class?
 - Are your notes legible?
 - Have you ever used a tape recorder to supplement your notes?
 - Do you date all your notes and class handouts?
 - Are you able to keep up with all important information while the teacher is lecturing?
 - Is it easy for you to select what information is important while you take notes?
-

Reading Assignments

- Do you preview or survey your reading material and ask yourself questions before reading (do you establish a purpose for your reading)?
 - Do you usually know the main ideas expressed in a reading assignment?
 - Do you make a plan to divide a lengthy reading assignment into sections?
 - After completing a reading assignment, do you review the lesson to organize what you've learned?
 - Do you highlight or take notes when you read?
 - Do you use the dictionary when you come across unfamiliar words?
 - Do you use charts and graphs to aid your understanding when you read?
 - Do you use the overall structure of the textbook to help you approach reading assignments (e.g., table of contents, glossary, headings and subheadings, etc.)?
 - Can you concentrate on and comprehend material on topics that you do not find interesting?
-

Writing Assignments/Essays/Research Papers

- Do you tend to have trouble thinking of words to express your ideas?
- Is it harder for you to write as much as other students in your classes?
- Does it take you a lot longer to write than you think it should?
- Do you develop an outline for lengthier writing assignments before you start to write?
- Can you write in clear sentences?
- Is your writing punctuated correctly?
- Do readers find your writing well organized and logical?
- Do you have trouble with spelling?
- Do you approach writing in stages, first completing a rough draft and then refining your work?
- Can you proofread your own work and find your errors?
- Do you use a word processor or computer with a spellcheck?
- Do you ask others to read your reports and make suggestions?
- Can you use the library effectively to do research and gather information?
- Are you organized about keeping track of references and sources?
- Can you write a paper of a particular length?

- Are the topics you choose appropriate to the assignment length (not too broad, not too narrow)?

Examination Preparation

- Do you find that you have usually studied the right information for tests?
- Do you have strategies for memorizing material for exams?
- Do you feel prepared for most tests?
- Can you anticipate what questions might be on an exam?
- Do you prepare answers to possible essay questions before an exam?
- Do you study with other students in your class?
- Do you retain what you have studied when you get to the test?
- Do you usually begin studying well in advance or do you cram for exams?

Test Taking Behavior

- Are you ready for exams (e.g. get there early, know the right time, date, have pens/pencils, calculators, etc.)?
- Do you plan your exam time well (e.g., allow enough time for each section, know the point value of various questions, spend as much time on the end of the test as on the beginning)?
- Do you usually have enough time to check your work (e.g., content, grammar, punctuation, calculations)?
- Do you have strategies for dealing with complex questions (e.g., underlining key words, narrowing down multiple choice options, etc.)?
- Do you accurately read test questions and directions?
- Does test anxiety interfere with your performance on exams?
- Is your sense of how well you performed on an exam usually accurate?

General Question about YOU

- Do you usually recognize when you need help (and are you willing to ask for it)?
- Do you study in a place where you can concentrate?
- Do you have a routine time to study and do work (a time of day when you are most productive)?
- Do you pace yourself well when studying (e.g., take reasonable breaks, get back to work after breaks, etc.)?
- Are you able to make decisions about what you have to study?
- Can you set priorities (or do you generally put off the material you do not like)?
- Would your study habits enable you to be ready for a surprise quiz?
- Do you monitor your own comprehension (do you stop yourself when you are not understanding material)?
- What type of learner are you (do you learn best through or experiential methods)?
- In what way does your learning disability affect your schoolwork?
- Can you comfortably describe your learning disability to others?
- What strategies that help you learn (e.g., books on tape, one-to-one tutoring, study groups, re-reading material, using a study guide, etc.)?
- How much time each week do you get extra help?
- How much time each week do you study?
- Do you prefer small discussion classes or large lecture classes?
- Do you feel that you are aware of what extra help and accommodations you need (or would you find it helpful to explore various options with a learning disabilities specialist at college)?
- Are you easily distracted (and if so, how will you compensate for this in the college living environment)?

Source: Adapted from G. DuChossois and C. Michaels (1994). Post-secondary education. In C. A. Michaels (Ed.), *Transition Strategies for persons with learning disabilities* (pp.98-100). San Diego, CA: Singular Publishing Group, Inc.

College Exploration Worksheet

(Name of College)

Services, Programs & Characteristics	Information	A good match for me because...
<i>COLLEGE CLIMATE</i>		
Highly competitive		
Competitive		
Moderately competitive		
Not competitive		
Average class rank of Freshman class		
High school grade point average of freshman class		
Average SAT/ACT score		
Size of college		
Size of city/town		
Sororities/fraternities on Campus		
Clubs or organizations in areas of interests		
Sports activities (participant or spectator)		
<i>Other</i>		
<i>COLLEGE SETTING</i>		
Miles from home		
Car pools available		
Public transportation available		

Learning Support Services and Programs

Questions	Yes	No
<i>Data-based Services</i>		
Does the program have a full-time learning disability director?		
Does the program have a learning disability assistant coordinator?		
Does the program provide a full range of accommodations?		
Does each student in the program have an Individualized Semester Plan?		
Is tutoring available from staff and graduate-level interns who are trained in learning disabilities?		
Does the program maintain data-based records of all contact with students?		
Does the program maintain data-based records of services used by students?		
<i>Centrally Coordinated Services</i>		
Does the program have a full-time learning disability coordinator?		
Are services housed in the disability student services office?		
Are accommodations provided for testing and coursework?		
Are there established policies on admissions and service delivery?		
Is there a strong emphasis on student self-advocacy?		
Are student support groups available?		
Are specially trained tutors available?		
Are students required to provide documentation of their learning Disabilities?		
Are services available all year, including summer school sessions?		

<i>Loosely Coordinated Services</i>		
Does the service have a contact person?		
Are generic support services available (e.g. taped textbooks, readers, note takers, alternate test administration)?		
Are peer tutors available to at-risk students?		
Are students referred to other on-campus resources?		
Are services available only during the academic year?		
<i>Decentralized and Limited Services</i>		
Are services provided without an official contact person?		
Are services for students with learning disabilities limited?		
Does the program function with few established policies?		
Are students dependent on building relationships with sympathetic faculty?		
<i>No Services Available</i>		
Does the college or university meet minimal requirement under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act?		
Additional Questions	Comments	
How long has the program been in existence?		
How many people work for the program?		
Are there fees for services to students with learning disabilities?		
How many students with learning disabilities are registered with the program?		
How often does the average student use the program?		
Could the director or assistant director attend the T-IEP meeting?		

(Adapted from *Resource Guide of Support Services for Students with Learning Disabilities in Connecticut Colleges and Universities*, by J. M. McGuire and S. F. Shaw (Eds.), 1989 (revised 1996, 1999), Storrs, Neag School of Education, University of Connecticut. Copyright 1989 by University of Connecticut).

Evaluation of Final Choices

4 = an excellent match with my interests and needs

3 = a good match with my interests and needs

2 = a fair match with my interests and needs

1 = a poor match with my interests and needs

Final College Choices

College Components	College Name	College Name	College Name	College Name
Programs for students with learning disabilities				
Other support resources (examples: computer labs, library)				
Cost of college tuition, books, housing, other expenses				
Location of college				
College climate				
Overall strength of academic program				
Strength of program in my career Choice				
Housing				
My desire to attend this college				
Total (cumulative, or count the number of 3s and 4s)				

Activities for Application Process

- ✓ Students should apply to their highest choices late in the junior year or early in the senior year of high school. Admission applications can be obtained by mail, telephone, or electronic requests from each college or university.
- ✓ A growing number of institutions have created an on-line electronic application that may be found on college websites. Because most colleges and universities charge a non-refundable admissions fee, students may need to limit the number of times they submit a formal application. It is advisable to check fees on each application.
- ✓ Develop a chart to assist the students as they create checklists and timelines for application requirements. Keep in mind that ACT or SAT scores must be sent from the testing agencies. Unless the student requested that his/her scores were to be sent to the chosen college on the day of the test, the scores may be sent after application deadlines. If evaluations, recommendations, or transcripts are required, plan to give school personnel sufficient time to complete these requests.
- ✓ Print a computer-generated calendar that begins with the present date. Ask students to write dates from the previous activity in the calendar. Review the calendar daily with students

- ✓ Ask students to compare the following list of required information with their college applications. Create a two-column checklist with the left column devoted to required information and the right column designed to give students space to write their specific information. Information included on the checklist could include:

- Social Security number
- Complete address and telephone number
- Names of parents or guardians
- Emergency addresses and phone numbers
- Birthplace of student
- Ethnicity (optional)
- Occupation of parents or guardians
- Highest level of education attained by parents
- Names of family members who attended the college and dates of attendance
- High schools attended and dates of attendance
- Graduation date
- High school code (available from school counselor)
- Dates that student took SAT or ACT
- Religious preference (optional)
- E-mail address
- Semester student plans to enroll
- Dates of residence (for in-state tuition)
- Dates that income tax was filed by parents/student
- Driver's license number
- Voter registration number
- Vehicle registration number

Important Information to Explore:

- ✓ Financial aid
- ✓ College essays
- ✓ Dealing with students who are not accepted to their first choices
- ✓ Connecting with support services on campus

