Welcome to the OSSD at West Chester University!
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About West Chester University

- Founded in 1871 as an institute for teacher preparation
- Mascot: Rammy
- School Colors: **PURPLE** and **GOLD**
- Competes in NCAA Division II in 24 intercollegiate men’s and women’s sports
- 300+ student clubs and organizations
- WCU has 16 fraternities and 18 sororities
- 21 academic buildings
- 13 options for on-campus student housing
More about West Chester University

• WCU has 118 undergraduate programs and 80 graduate programs

• Undergraduate Student to Faculty Ratio 19:1

• Total Enrollment (2020/21 calendar year = 17,552 students
  - Undergraduate: 14,592
  - Graduate: 2,960

• Student Body Demographics: WCU students come from 29 different states and 74 different countries
  - 40% male, 60% female

• 92% of first-year students live in campus housing
About the Office of Services For Students with Disabilities (OSSD)

• Nicknamed OSSD

• On-campus office designed to assist students with various disabilities achieve success in college
  ➢ Learning
  ➢ Physical
  ➢ Emotional

• Located in the Lawrence Center at 705 S. New Street, West Chester PA 19383
Differences Between High School and College Regarding Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>High School</th>
<th>College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Advocacy</td>
<td>The school / classroom is primarily responsible for arranging accommodations</td>
<td>Student must self-identify to the college and are responsible for arranging accommodations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Role</td>
<td>Parent has access to student records and can participate and advocate for student</td>
<td>Parent does not have access to records, and student must advocate for self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>Teachers may modify curriculum and pace of assignments</td>
<td>Professors are not required to modify assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades and Test</td>
<td>Plans may include testing format modifications and makeup tests are often available</td>
<td>Grading and format changes are generally not available, but accommodations on HOW test are given are available (example: extended time)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## More Differences Between High School and College Regarding Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>High School</th>
<th>College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study Responsibilities</td>
<td>Tutoring and study support may be a service, and your assignments may be structured by others</td>
<td>Students with disabilities must manage their own time and can seek out tutoring sources available to all students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required Documentation</td>
<td>Individual Education Plan and/or 504 plan. School provides evaluation and is required to seek out and identity students with disabilities</td>
<td>High School Individual Education Plan and 504 Plan are not sufficient, student must self-identify and get evaluation at their own expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicable Laws</td>
<td>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (about Success)</td>
<td>Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (about Access)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Applicable Laws**
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (about Success)
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (about Access)
Resources Provided by the OSSD

**Academic Coaching** – specially trained graduate students work with OSSD-registered students to develop and enhance academic and life skills that affect their coursework and academic progress.

**Test Proctoring Center** – alternative testing site for students who receive testing accommodations

**Mindfulness** – helps students to incorporate healthy, mindful habits in their everyday lives through contemplative practice
More Resources at the OSSD

**Audio Books** – help provide audio versions of required readings and textbooks

**E-text** – an alternative to written text for students who need a combination of print and/or more interactive text

**Reading Technology** – programs which allow students to access e-text or online material

**Notetaking Technology** – SmartPen loaner program allows students to record lectures and upload notes to a computer for editing

**Alternate Text** – aids students with disabilities who have difficulty accessing traditional paperbound texts
Other Resources at West Chester University

- **SmartThinking** – free, online tutoring 24/7 remotely on a variety of topics, such as writing, math, and languages.

- **Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC)** – provides tutoring, success coaching and academic workshops

- **Counseling & Psychological Center** – offers individual consultations, group meetings, help with substance abuse, and more!

- **Academic Success Program** – special admissions program for students who do not meet current admissions criteria but who still show the potential to succeed in college
Self-Advocacy

• Defined as the action of representing oneself or one’s views or interests

• Helps an individual:
  ➢ Have more control over daily decisions
  ➢ Properly make decisions
  ➢ Empower oneself
  ➢ Speak up for oneself

• For students with disabilities, self advocacy is essential to receiving accommodations and communicating with professors and classmates
Tips and Advice from Students

• Don’t be afraid to put yourself out there and go to a new event
• Take classes that interest you
• Look for scholarships
• Take advantage of WCU resources
• Always ask questions
• Take your time!
More Tips and Advice from Students

• Form good relationships with your professors
• Utilize your professors’ office hours
• Get a planner to keep yourself organized
• Always take notes
• Join clubs on campus and get involved
• Always look out for networking opportunities
Thank you for your interest in the OSSD at West Chester University

Contact us at ossd@wcupa.edu

Presentation prepared by Lauren Cooperman, B.S. Honors College ‘21, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Honors 490 Capstone Senior Project