PARENTAL INFORMATION

Know the difference between Special Education in High School and Disability Services at the College level. The following website provides helpful information on transitioning from high school to college:  http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transitionguide.html

Typical First Semester Issues:

- The workload is much heavier in college for many students. Students should expect to complete many hours of independent reading and note taking, group meetings, writing short papers and research. Students with disabilities may need to double this time.

- Time management can be a problem for first-year students. In college, students may have large blocks of time between classes. Residence halls may not settle down until after midnight. The above two examples, in addition to the extra workload, catch many students off guard. Students should develop a weekly schedule of when classes meet and assign times to work on each class during the off times and stick to it. This is especially important for students who have problems with organizational skills and/or focusing.

- Grade expectations can be unrealistic. Students with disabilities who had excellent grades in high school may find their grades are not at that level the first semester of college. It takes time to figure out the best system on how to maintain grades and still balance living in a dorm, participating in activities, etc. Students with disabilities have many resources and support in high school but at the college level this decreases and the student works more independently.

- Poor Mid-Semester Grades. Mid-term grades serve as a warning sign that things might not be going well and therefore merits attention. Students should seek help at this point. Waiting past mid-terms could be too late.

- Students are used to having parents seek out help for them. In college, unless the student gives The Office of Disability Services permission to talk to parents, it will be the responsibility of the student to take care of their own needs. Students will have to sign a Release of Information prior to The Office of Disability Services being able to talk with the parents. Making this adjustment can be difficult for the student and also for a parent. In high school the parent was normally the advocate for the student. In college the student must become their own advocate.

- Read the Office of Disability Services Student Resource Manual located on the IC Website. Take time to read the booklet as it will answer a lot of questions you may have. You may also contact Alicia Gatti, ADA Coordinator with any questions by phone at (217) 245-3774 or email at alicia.gatti@mail.ic.edu