

# Inclusive Higher Education Criteria



To date, there are an increasing number of institutions of higher education that are creating inclusive opportunities for students with various disabilities. While options for inclusive and supportive educational placements at the elementary and secondary levels are becoming more prevalent across the U.S., there remains a need to create inclusive opportunities at the higher education level. The checklist below outlines characteristics of an inclusive post-secondary school or program.

## Checklist

- Students take classes in the same classrooms and buildings as everyone else at the postsecondary school.
- Students can access accommodations or tutoring through their school.
- Students are allowed to choose an area of study and the classes they want to take.
- Students can receive a diploma or certificate from the postsecondary school or program as long as they complete the appropriate coursework and requirements.
- Students are allowed, and encouraged, to participate in any extracurricular groups or clubs on and off campus.
- Students are given the opportunity and supports to live on campus in a dorm or apartment if they wish.
- Students with Down syndrome are required to follow the same guidelines, laws and rules that all students on campus must follow.
- Students are able to access their own money, tuition costs, grants or scholarships and are given the autonomy to control their own bank accounts.



**The models of best practice identified in inclusive residential colleges, such as Inclusive U at Syracuse University and Marshall University, should be studied and replicated. Training to meet the needs of diverse learners, including the population of students with varying degrees of disability, should be considered a prerequisite qualification for educators at institutions of higher education and local community colleges.**

## Action Required



Equal access to vocational training programs and inclusive higher education opportunities should be provided by all accredited colleges and universities.

Removal of barriers to accessing funding, such as federal aid, grants, or work study programs, for training or educational programs should be supported by supporting agencies and families.

College-level and vocational educators should receive regular training in accommodating and modifying instruction and materials to meet the needs of a diverse group of learners; some of which may have varying degrees of disability.

All universities that offer teacher training should require courses on inclusion of students with disabilities into the general education classroom and curriculum.

Students should be able to progress through general education courses, working at a level that is meaningful to the individual. All courses should be credit-bearing courses that are accommodated or modified in line with the student's needs. All progress should be recognized and celebrated.

Education and/or quality vocational training at a postsecondary level must build on skills and knowledge and contribute to the realization of individual potential and preparedness for adulthood. Appropriate opportunities will be tailored to individual needs and aspirations. A range of options for continued education should be available to this, and all, populations.

A vehicle should be added to federal data collection to include the number of students with disabilities being included as well as specific action steps to ensure the inclusion of all students in future years. Any district or state which is found to have stagnant or decreasing numbers of students included in the general education classroom should receive appropriate attention and support from state or federal Departments of Education.



For more information on higher education and training see Think College resources at <https://thinkcollege.net/>