

# Speaking the College Language: How to be a Savvy Student

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# What will we cover in this session?

- The importance of knowing the language of college
- Vocabulary
  - Admission Process
  - Campus Structure and Systems
  - Disability Services
  - Social Communication
- Speaking the college language - Recommendations
- Q&A

# Importance of Speaking the College Language

Students with knowledge of and skills in using college language are better able to:

- Navigate postsecondary admission processes
- Understand campus community
- Self-advocate for needed services and accommodations
- Communicate with and establish a social and peer networks

## Examples

# Admission Process

- Confusing and often stressful for both parents and students
- Requires students to jump through many hoops (usually) while still in school
- Needs awareness and knowledge of one's own postsecondary goals, needs, and preferences
- Requires students to analyze, reflect, compare, and contrast information while understanding terms (that may vary from institution-to-institution)

# Vocabulary for Admission

- Early action
- Early decision
- Open enrollment
- Priority date/deadline
- Best “fit”
- Demonstrated interest
- Disclosing a disability

# Admission - Case Study

Jason was a junior with ADHD at a public school in New York City. He had worked hard to achieve success in high school and was excited to pursue a college education. His parents were once told by a teacher that Jason would be “lucky to finish high school,” and now he was the first in his family to consider a college education! As Jason learned about the college admission process, he was nervous that the process was going to require months of planning, adherence to strict deadlines, applying for accommodations for standardized testing, and completing a lot of paperwork. Additionally, he needed to learn a whole new language related to the college search, applying to college, and applying for financial aid before he could even begin these processes. With mounting anxiety and doubts about his ability to get through the process increasing, Jason asked his teacher, “Is it even worth it?”

# Vocabulary for Navigating Campus Structure and Systems

- Terms to describe college offices, procedures, systems, and people are different from those used in secondary education
- Colleges often use an abundance of acronyms  
DCAS; CSD; LRC; ARC; OAR
- Terms and acronyms often vary from institution-to-institution

# Vocabulary: Structure and Systems

- Resident assistant/advisor
- Academic advisor
- Syllabus/GPA/Transcript
- Semester/Quarter/Trimester/Summer Session
- Learning Management System (LMS)/Course Management System (CMS)
- Student Management System: Power Campus/People Soft/Banner
- Informed consent/FERPA
- Channels of communication
- Internships vs work study



# Campus Structure and Systems - Recommendations

- Student handbook
- Academic affairs website
- Course catalog
- Academic advisor
- Residence assistants (RAs)
- College mobile apps -  
[https://www.landmark.edu/about/download\\_app](https://www.landmark.edu/about/download_app)
- Greek houses

# College Structure and Systems

## Case Study

- Student signs up for courses at the beginning of the semester and then does not do well on the mid-term exam. She decides to drop the course and does so by simply not showing up for class. She thinks it will show up as a course withdrawal on her transcript. It shows up as a “failed grade”. What should the student have done?

# Disability Services

- Disability services offices vary in size, structure, and programs offered
- Disability services offices are focused on **equal access, not necessarily academic success**
- Accommodations provision is an **interactive process (new)**; students must advocate for tools for **success**
- Students must **self-disclose a disability** to receive accommodations

# Vocabulary: Disability Services

- Disability documentation
- Reasonable accommodation
- Disability services professional
- Disability Services/Accessibility Services/Learning Resource Center

# Disability Services Case Study

- Student meets with the disability services coordinator and says that she her “preference” is to take one test a day for the final exam period.
- Is this a reasonable accommodation request?
- What about a student requesting to bring in “memory cards” and “study notes” into the test?

# Social Communication and Engagement

- Social capital
- Spoken vs. written vs. text communication
- Acronyms

# Vocabulary: Social

- Woke - Easter Eggs - Noob - FTW - FOMO
- Salty - Shookt - Lit - On Fleek
- Extra - Big - Breaking the seal
- Adulthood - Ghosting - Bae - Shade - Frenemy
- Retro
- Nerd/Geek

# Social Engagement - Case Study

- Student is registered with disability services. He was diagnosed with ASD as a child. In one of his college courses, a student sitting next to him, says, “I love your handwriting; can I have a copy of your notes?” Another time, she says, “your notes are the absolute best, would you mind making me a copy your notes?” He thinks she has a crush on him and follows through on all her requests.

Do you see a problem here? How would you prepare this student for communication that may not be as simple as it looks?



# Speaking the College Language

## Recommendations

- I vs. You language
- Working with DS personnel to identify “self rules” for communication
- Identify personal support network of faculty and peers to call upon as needed (your flock)
- Awareness of non-verbal communication cues
- Research commonly used millennial vocabulary
- Social media and online communication – less formal, easily misunderstood, and full of traps

# Glossary of Terms

- [http://www.stlouisgraduates.org/sites/default/files/files/Glossary%207\\_15\\_12\(1\).pdf](http://www.stlouisgraduates.org/sites/default/files/files/Glossary%207_15_12(1).pdf)



# Q & A

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