

Neurodivergent Student FAQs for Parents/Guardians

I am concerned about my student adjusting to campus life. Any recommendations?

Your student's summer before beginning their time at Penn is a time with mixed emotions. They will be happy and excited to start this new chapter in their life, but there may be some feelings of anxiousness or uncertainty. You and your student can rest assured that Penn has an array of resources to aid in acclimating to campus life. Academic Advisors, University Life, College Houses and Academic Services are only a few examples of the many resources here to help your student adjust to their newfound independence.

How can you help? Being informed is a great way to support your student. Read over the services that departments around campus provide so you know who to turn to when your student has questions. And, most importantly, encourage your student to engage with these resources! Students are often timid when asking for help. Remind them these resources are here for their use and they are always happy to hear from students.

My student needs to apply for an academic and/or medical accommodation. When should they start that process?

As early as possible! Once your student has accepted their admission and sets up their PennKey, they can access the [MyWeingartenCenter](#) portal to begin the self-identification process. Starting this process in the summer helps ensure your student has the appropriate accommodations for their needs.

How can my student register their Emotional Support Animal to live with them in the College Houses?

[Residential Services](#) offers a comprehensive overview of the process on their website. You can also check the [Weingarten Center](#) website for guidance about the process.

My student has a specific dietary need or restriction. What resources do Weingarten and Penn Dining offer?

Penn Dining makes every effort to ensure students with dietary restrictions are accommodated in the dining locations. You can reach more about their offerings on the [Penn Dining Dietary Accommodations website](#). If your student needs to consult with Disability Services on their dietary needs, they can request a meeting with a specialist through the [MyWeingartenCenter](#) portal.

Will there be support in keeping my student on track with deadlines?

The Weingarten Center works with students in all 12 schools at Penn. First-year students are encouraged to attend academic workshops, such as Mastering the Ivy League. The workshop topics include time management, handling the college reading load, and exam prep strategies. Students can also set up an individual meeting with a Learning Specialist. Some students continue to meet with a Learning Specialist on a regular basis.

How can I prepare my student to live in a large city and what resources does Penn offer for the adjustment?

Penn Public Safety offers a myriad of resources to keep Penn and its surrounding communities safe. One of these resources is Penn Guardian, an app that allows students to contact Public Safety via phone or text message. You can reach more about emergency preparedness and other safety resources on the Public Safety website.

What happens if my student's learning style is different than their professor's teaching method?

Students can consult with their academic advisor to receive guidance of how to handle their concerns about a professor's teaching style. The Weingarten Center is another resource for a student to gain a perspective of how to handle the academic requirements of the course.

What are some academic resources my student should take advantage of as they adjust to Penn?

A variety of opportunities await your student. Start with getting to know peers in each class and form study partnerships. Working with peers is a great way to form friendships while learning and reviewing course material. Teaching assistants (TAs) represent another important resource to thrive in a course. The Weingarten Center and Penn Libraries are additional supportive approaches in handling academic demands.