

Our Mission

To encourage and foster self-confidence, self-advocacy, and growing independence; To understand students' strengths and weaknesses and help them learn and apply skills and strategies to successfully navigate the communication, planning, and problem solving demands of college life.

Our Approach

Structured supports, scheduled guidance, skill-teaching, individualized coaching, peer and graduate mentors, fostered independence and accountability.

Contact Us

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STEP at EIU

Services for College Students with Autism

FULL PROGRAM: All students start in Full STEP and may shift to Maintenance as they develop skills and strategies necessary to maintain success with greater independence.

Early Move-In & Orientation: Early move-in dates facilitate settling in, navigating campus, locating buildings and classrooms; social events and extended orientation.

Strategic Schedules: Color-coded schedules include the student's academic classes, STEP services, other daily obligations or routines; frequently updated to reflect level of need.

College 101: Weekly small group for new students supporting acclimation to college routines and tasks (e.g., email etiquette, reading a syllabus, selecting study skills, preparing for advisement meetings or office hours, locating services on campus, etc.).

Individual Weekly Meetings: One-on-one coaching to anticipate, prioritize, organize, and monitor; academic and problem-solving guidance; self-appraisal and strategy use analysis.

Structured Study Tables: Goal-oriented, supported study times in quiet, small group environments (6 hours weekly required)

Academic Engineering: Weekly small group work to facilitate more reliable and independent grade monitoring, syllabus/due date checking, assignment analysis.

Procedural EF Group: Weekly class targeting foundational executive function skill development, particularly time estimation, strategic planning, task initiation, and task monitoring.

EF Coaching Group: Weekly class facilitating increasingly independent use of executive function skills and strategies; emphasis on analysis, reflection, anticipation, and decision-making.

Social Navigation Group: Weekly small group practice initiating and adapting social interactions; application of perspective-taking and flexible social thinking for college environment.

Academic Exploration: Guided discussions to assist students determining majors or minors; support preparing for academic advising meetings and course selection

Work-Life Transition Group: Support developing resumes, identifying internship possibilities, preparing for meetings with career services professionals, developing communication for interviews

Monthly Social Events: Structured, monthly gatherings to foster social interaction with peers and mentors.

Peer Mentors: Trained undergraduate students paired with your student for the academic year; weekly informal interactions provide support, encouragement, guidance.

Parent Communication: Written reports twice per semester convey student's strengths, areas of need, development of self-regulation, academic progress; individualized goals and recommendations for the next academic term are identified. Phone calls and/or emails are also utilized to maintain communication.

Education & Advocacy: Support addressing unexpected or high-stress situations; outreach and collaboration with offices across campus to facilitate success as students work to meet university requirements.

Clinical Analysis & Referrals: Record review and assessment of executive functions, social communication, and/or language/reasoning skills; referral for therapy as appropriate at the EIU Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic.

FULL PROGRAM Fees: \$3,000 per semester

