

Reframing Assumptions: A Guide for SARC Students Starting College

Starting college with a disability may be overwhelming and you may be concerned that other people have assumptions about you – or even that you have assumptions about your ability to be successful. Here are 10 common ways to reframe your thinking.

1. *"I might not be successful in my classes because of my disability."*

Reframe: Your disability does not define your ability. With the right accommodations and support, you can have an opportunity to fully engage and succeed.

2. *"If people can't see my disability, they'll think I'm faking or just trying to get out of work."*

Reframe: Many disabilities are invisible. Your documentation and accommodations are valid. If issues arise, talk with the SARC staff.

3. *"Using accommodations gives me an unfair advantage."*

Reframe: Accommodations level the playing field. They don't change what you're expected to learn; they simply make your courses accessible.

4. *"I have to handle everything on my own."*

Reframe: Self-advocacy is important, and highly encouraged, but you're not alone. Working with professors and SARC staff builds success and belonging. Connect with university resources and if you are unsure, consult the SARC for additional support.

5. *"Professors already know what I need."*

Reframe: Every student is unique. Share your FNL (Faculty Notification Letter) early. Communicate how and when accommodations are needed - don't assume they know.

6. *"I might slow down the rest of the class."*

Reframe: Inclusive classrooms help everyone learn. Flexibility and varied approaches to learning make classes stronger for all students.

7. *"I shouldn't talk to my professor about my disability."*

Reframe: You don't need to share your diagnosis, but, after presenting your FNL, you can talk about what supports your access and learning. The FNL is meant to be a communication tool between you and the faculty.

8. *"Accommodations mean I'm getting special treatment."*

Reframe: Accommodations are your civil right. They ensure equal access, not special favors.

9. *"If I need this much support, maybe I don't belong in college."*

Reframe: College is for you, too. Accommodations remove barriers so you have an equal opportunity to meet the same academic standards as everyone else.

10. *"It's going to be a burden to ask for what I need."*

Reframe: Asking for support is part of being successful. The SARC is here to help if you encounter challenges or issues.

Remember: Your accommodations are tools for success, not signs of weakness.

You belong here, and the SARC is here to support you along the way.