

This article tracks the judicial, statutory, and regulatory developments affecting students with disabilities in the last fifty years. It reviews the evolution of legal issues from the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the 1975 special education law (which provided the preparation for the influx of students with disabilities into higher education). It highlights the cases that framed the requirements for who is disabled, what it means to be otherwise qualified, and what reasonable accommodations must be provided. It notes the emerging attention to issues including documentation of disabilities, students with psychological impairments (particularly in the post Virginia-Tech era), the impact of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act in creating a greater awareness of disability rights, emotional support animals, access to technology, architectural barrier issues, programs abroad and field placements, the arrival of “millennials” on campus with their expectations and challenges, students with health impairments (HIV and others), and the relationship of professional education programs (medicine, law, and others) to the professional licensing process.