

Guidelines for Documentation of a Mental Health Disability

A specific mental health disability must currently substantially limit some major life activity, including learning, to support eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities act of 1990. Documentation must, therefore, support this eligibility, as well as any requests for reasonable accommodations. The following guidelines describe the necessary components of acceptable documentation for students with psychiatric/psychological disabilities. Students are encouraged to provide their clinicians with a copy of these guidelines.

Psychiatric Disability/Psychological disorder documentation must include **all** of the following elements:

- A. Currency of documentation:** Documentation must be current, reflecting evaluation provided within the past year.
- B. A qualified individual must provide the evaluation:** The assessment must be provided by a licensed professional qualified to make the evaluation, such as a psychologist or psychiatrist. An assessment from a general practitioner typically does not suffice.
- C. Documentation should be comprehensive and must include the following:**
- **Current treatment and medications:** Documentation should include any counseling, specific therapies, and current prescription medications and any side effects, which would compromise academic functioning.
 - **Specific diagnosis:** This should not merely refer to symptoms and should correspond to a specific DSM-IV category.
 - **Impact on academic functioning:** Documentation should specify how an individual's psychological disorder impacts upon his or her performance in the academic context.
 - **Recommendations for academic accommodations:** Documentation should recommend reasonable academic adjustments that would grant students with psychiatric disabilities equal access to programs and curricula.

***Please note that the University and Student Access Office reserve the right to deny services or accommodations while the receipt of appropriate documentation is pending.**