

Services for Students With Disabilities

Guidelines for Documenting a Psychological Disability

Students seeking support services from the Office of Student Services on the basis of a previously diagnosed psychiatric disability must submit documentation that verifies their eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The documentation must describe a disabling condition, which is defined by the presence of significant limitations in one or more major life activities. Merely submitting evidence of a diagnosis is not sufficient to warrant academic accommodations.

Similarly, nonspecific diagnoses, such as "adjustment problems," "emotional difficulties," "mood disturbance," and/or "test difficulty/anxiety" in and of themselves do not constitute a disability.

The guidelines below are intended to allow Student Services to determine eligibility for services and appropriate accommodations. A comprehensive report of any testing conducted (including test scores, if relevant) should be included with the verification form. A list of selected test instruments is provided.

1. A formal assessment of your current psychiatric and health status, and a formal diagnosis of a disabling condition must be provided by a licensed treatment provider (e.g., psychiatrist, licensed clinical psychologist, licensed social worker).
2. The assessment must be current. Accommodations are based on an assessment of the current nature and impact of your disability. Because psychiatric conditions may change over time, current evaluations are critical for providing reasonable accommodations. In general, this means that evaluations must have been completed within the last twelve (12) months prior to accommodation requests. In addition, depending on the nature of the disability, evaluations may need to be updated on a semester-by-semester or yearly basis.
3. The evaluation must be comprehensive. Evidence of significant limitations in the educational setting (e.g., on learning or social functioning) must be provided. Minimally, the evaluator must include:
 - A diagnostic interview, which includes relevant background in support of that diagnosis. A DSM-IV code must be provided.
 - The dates of evaluation and/or treatment, in order to establish a history of the condition and recency of evaluation. The evaluation should include treatments (e.g., medication, therapy) currently in use and provide a description of the expected progression of the disability over time (i.e., permanent/chronic vs. short-term/temporary).
 - If pertinent with respect to learning issues, the results of a complete neuropsychological or psychoeducational evaluation should be provided. These findings must demonstrate that your functional limitations are due to the diagnosed disability(ies). All documentation should indicate how these limitations might affect the individual in the university setting.

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- The diagnostic report, which must include the names and titles, and license number of the evaluator. A verification form is attached to these guidelines to assist in this process.

All documentation submitted to the Office of Student Services is considered confidential. Documentation should be sent to the following address:

Office of Student Services
1435 N. Glenstone Ave
Springfield, MO 65802

Documentation may be faxed to (417) 268-1001