



## Documentation Guidelines For A Disability



Weatherford, Oklahoma 73096  
Sayre, Oklahoma 73662

## **I. ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES**

Students who would like to request disability-related services or accommodations are required to schedule an appointment for an initial intake procedure with the Dean of Students, Stafford Room 214. As part of the intake procedure, the Dean of Students will require appropriate documentation of disability. Eligibility will be determined on the basis of the presence of a disability and a need for services and accommodations to support an equal educational opportunity. Information from the disability documentation, the student's stated experience with services that have been effective in past academic settings, and the Dean's professional judgment will be drawn upon in making the eligibility determination.

The first prong of the federal definition of disability includes two elements: 1) a physical or mental impairment which 2) substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of the person in question. According to the Americans with Disabilities Act, major life activities include but are not limited to walking, breathing, seeing, hearing, performing manual tasks, learning and working. Therefore, the disability has both medical and functional elements, and both of these elements must be explicitly documented. Students are required to provide documentation of disability prior to the provision of services. Accommodations cannot be retroactive and begin only after documentation is received and a reasonable time for accommodation development has been allowed.

## **II. DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES**

A few disabilities can be verified simply by observation in the Dean of Students' office. An example of this is the obvious use of a wheelchair as a result of mobility impairment. Other types of disabilities require more formal written documentation, which must be sent or faxed to the Dean of Students office by the doctor's office. This documentation can only be prepared by a person who is not a family member of the student and who is qualified by professional training and practice to diagnose and treat the impairment leading to the disability.

Documentation must be typed and printed on the letterhead of either the practitioner or the agency hosting the practice. Handwritten notes on prescription pads or handwritten treatment records will not be accepted. In general, documentation of disability should include:

### **III. LEARNING DISABILITIES**

Students applying for services and accommodations on the basis of a learning disability must submit a comprehensive report of a psychoeducational assessment performed by a licensed/certified professional in the field. The assessment should be in the junior or senior year of high school or as an adult. In accordance with the guidelines developed by the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), the psychoeducational assessment should contain:

- Aptitude – A complete intellectual assessment with all subtests and standard scores reported.
- Academic Achievement – A comprehensive academic achievement battery with all subtests and standard scores reported for those subtests administered. The battery should include current levels of academic functioning in relevant areas such as reading (decoding and comprehension), mathematics, and oral and written language.
- Information Processing – Specific areas of information processing (e.g., short and long-term memory, sequential memory, auditory and visual processing, processing speed, executive functioning, and motor ability).
- Conclusions – The report should conclude with a clinical summary which brings the supported judgment of the person conducting the assessment to bear in stating a diagnosis and suggesting accommodations which would be appropriate to the relative learning deficits and strengths of the student.

## **IV. ATTENTION DEFICIT/ HYPERACTIVITY DISORDERS**

Students applying for services and accommodations on the basis of ADD/ADHD must submit a comprehensive report of a psychoeducational assessment completed by a psychiatrist, licensed psychologist, or licensed medical doctor who has experience diagnosing and treating this condition and must address the following criteria:

- DSM-IV diagnosis and a description of supporting past and present symptoms.
- Narrative Summary of assessment procedures, including all scores used to make the diagnosis.
- Description of present symptoms, fluctuating conditions, and prognosis.
- Medication Needs and side effects of how the medication will affect the student's academic performance.
- Recommendations for reasonable accommodation.

## **V. PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES**

Students applying for services and accommodations on the basis of psychiatric disabilities must submit documentation completed by a psychiatrist or licensed psychologist who has experience diagnosing and treating this condition and must address the following criteria:

- DSM-IV Diagnosis.
- Psychological Test used to make the diagnosis and all scores to support the diagnosis.
- Medications Current medications, side effects, and compliance with medication plan.
- Therapeutic Interventions and compliance with such to ensure that accommodations do not jeopardize successful therapeutic interventions.

## **VI. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS**

It is important to recognize that accommodation needs can change over time and are not always identified through the initial diagnostic process. Conversely, a prior history of accommodation does not, in and of itself, warrant the provision of a similar accommodation.

The diagnostic report should include specific recommendations for accommodations as well as an explanation as to why each accommodation is recommended. The evaluators should describe the impact the diagnosed learning disability has on a specific major life activity as well as the degree of significance of this impact on the individual. The evaluator should support recommendations with specific test results or clinical observations.

## **VII. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Southwestern Oklahoma State University has a responsibility to maintain confidentiality of the evaluation and may not release any part of the documentation without the student's informed and written consent.

## **VIII. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students enrolled in postsecondary education are required to self-identify if they would like to request services on the basis of disability. Southwestern Oklahoma State University attempts to provide every opportunity for a student with a disability to self-identify. A statement on the university admissions application refers students to the Dean of Students to request information or services. Subsequently, faculty members are encouraged to provide students the opportunity to self-identify by including a statement regarding accommodations for students with disabilities on their syllabus. Students are always encouraged to contact the Dean of Students' office directly, as soon as possible, to request services or accommodations. It is the responsibility of the student to provide complete documentation as outlined in this document and in compliance with the AHEAD guidelines.

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Southwestern Oklahoma State University in compliance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 402 of the Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and other Federal laws and regulations does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, disability, or status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices, or procedures. This includes but is not limited to admissions, employment, financial aid, and educational services.

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