



DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Guidelines for Documenting Developmental Disorders

Students seeking support services from Disability Support Services (DSS) on the basis of a previously diagnosed Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) must submit documentation that verifies their eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act. The documentation must describe a disabling condition, which is defined by the presence of *substantial* 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,” “poor communications,” and/or “test difficulty/anxiety” in and of themselves do not constitute a disability. The guidelines below are intended to allow DSS to determine eligibility for services and appropriate accommodations.

- 1) **DSM-5 or ICD Diagnosis (text and code)**, given based on a formal assessment of current psychological and health status, and a formal diagnosis of a disabling condition provided by a licensed treatment provider (e.g., psychiatrist, licensed clinical psychologist, licensed social worker, etc.) Include evaluator’s name, title, professional credentials, license and/or certification number. Must be presented on the professional’s letterhead, typed, dated, signed, and legible. Licensed treatment provider should not be related to the individual being assessed.

In order to establish a history of the condition and recency of evaluation.

- a) **Date of diagnosis**
- b) **Date of last contact.** *The assessment must be current.* Accommodations are based on an assessment of the current nature and impact of your disability. Evaluations must have been completed within the last **three (3) years 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.

2) **Comprehensive Evaluation**

- a) **A diagnostic interview and other tools used to determine** relevant background in support of that diagnosis.
- b) **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). Information of medication side effects is useful any be considered in accommodation decisions.

c) Onset, history, and prognosis of diagnosis and symptoms.

- 3) **Functional Limitations:** *Should be determined WITHOUT consideration of mitigating measures (i.e., medication, etc.). If condition is episodic in nature, level of functioning should be assessed based on active phase of symptoms.*
 - a) Major life activities that are **functionally limited** by the individual's symptoms.
 - b) Behavioral manifestations of the diagnosis that **functionally limits** the individual in the academic setting. Information to consider includes the severity pervasiveness, and frequency of symptoms.
 - c) Any special considerations that should be made (i.e. side effects of medication, etc.)

- 4) **Accommodations:** A description of accommodations and services used in the past and recommended accommodations for the future. It is important to note that Disability Support Services makes the determination regarding what accommodations are appropriate in the University environment.