

GUIDELINES FOR DOCUMENTATION OF MEDICAL AND PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended by the American with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Individuals with medical and physical disabilities are guaranteed certain protections and rights to reasonable academic adjustments based upon documentation. The documentation must indicate the disability substantially limits some major life activity. The following guidelines were developed by the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), and are provided in the interest of assuring that documentation is appropriate to verify eligibility and to support request for accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids.

Evaluator's Qualifications

Professionals conducting assessments, rendering the diagnosis of medical and physical conditions, and making recommendations for appropriate academic adjustments, must be qualified to do so. These are physicians, including neurologists, psychiatrists and other medical specialists with experience and expertise in the area for which accommodation are being requested. All documentation must be presented on the professional's letterhead, typed, dated, signed, and legible. It is not considered appropriate for professionals to evaluate members of their families. Documentation from a family member will not be accepted.

Documentation

Any physical or medical disability may include but is not limited to:

- Sensory Impairments: Visual or Hearing
- Mobility Impairments: The need for a wheelchair, cane, or crutches, and impaired hand coordination
- Chronic Illness: Cancer, AIDS, Multiple Sclerosis, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, Chemical Sensitivities
- Acquired Brain injuries

Reasonable academic adjustments are approved based on the current impact of a disability. The age of acceptable documentation is dependent on the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's request for academic adjustments; however documentation that is older than one-year old will not be accepted.

Documentation should include, but is not limited to:

- A statement of the medical diagnosis of the medical condition or physical disability.
- Thorough medical history, including previous medications and treatments.
- Description of the current impairment.
- Any documentation of assistive devices or technology used, and the effectiveness of the device.
- Other medical information relating to the student that would have an impact on the student's ability to meet the demands at the post-secondary level.

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