Guidelines for Documentation of Psychiatric Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability is eligible for reasonable and appropriate accommodations. Students must first declare the disability to the Academic Development Center and provide adequate documentation. The documentation enables the Learning Specialist to determine reasonable academic adjustments that are appropriate for the student’s needs. Disability documentation must confirm the nature and extent of the disability, and it must support the necessity of all accommodation requests. Testing or diagnosis performed by a family member is unacceptable. If the submitted documentation is incomplete, the college can require additional documentation; the cost of this additional documentation will be the responsibility of the student. If the submitted documentation is complete but the college requests a second professional opinion, the cost will be incurred by the college.

The Academic Development Center works in collaboration with the Baird Health and Counseling Center in evaluating documentation and accommodation requests for psychiatric and medical/systemic disabilities.

The following guidelines will assist us in ensuring that documentation appropriately supports requests for reasonable accommodations. The Learning Specialist is available to consult with diagnosticians regarding any of these guidelines.

Format/Qualification Requirements

A diagnosis and the corresponding documentation must be provided by a licensed professional (e.g. psychologists, neuropsychologists, psychiatrists, and other relevantly trained medical doctors). The documentation must also include the following components:

- Official letterhead of the professional service provider
- Clinician’s name, signature, title, professional credentials (including information about licensing or certification), phone number, and address

Documentation for psychiatric disabilities must include the following components:

- A clear statement of the student’s condition(s)/illness(es), including the DSM-IV diagnosis, summary of the present symptoms, and a prognosis. (Must be coded on Axis I or II.)
- A current description of how the student’s psychiatric condition interferes with, or impacts, the ability to participate in the educational process. (The designation of “current” for documentation is dependent upon the psychiatric condition, the current status of the student, and the student’s request for accommodations.)
- Medical information regarding the impact of medication and/or treatment on the student’s ability to participate in all aspects of the academic environment.
- Suggestions of academic accommodations with disability-related rationale.
**Academic Accommodations**

Academic accommodations provided are designed to meet a student’s disability-related needs without fundamentally altering the nature of the instructional program or altering any directly related licensing program. They are not intended to provide remediation (instruction in basic skills not acquired earlier in the educational process, such as basic grammar or basic math).

*To ensure that your assessment is comprehensive,*  
*please share this document with your clinician before testing.*

Questions? Please call us at the Center (603) 526-3711 or email learning@colby-sawyer.edu.