



Student Counseling and Wellness Resource Center

Documentation Requirements for a Learning Disability

Grambling State University is committed to ensuring that qualified students with documented disabilities receive reasonable and appropriate accommodations. Academic accommodations and support services are provided to ensure equal access to educational opportunities to students with disabilities. The mandate to provide reasonable academic accommodations does not extend to adjustments that would "fundamentally alter" the nature of the course, course components or course requirements.

In order to fully evaluate a student's request for academic accommodations or auxiliary aids and to determine eligibility for services, documentation of the student's disability is required. Eligibility for accommodations under Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Amendment Act (ADAA) are based on the existence of a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity affecting one's ability to fully participate in academic and/or campus life. The documentation must include evidence of both a disorder and indicate relevant functional limitations to a major life activity such as reading, writing; walking, seeing, and caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, eating, speaking, breathing, hearing, learning, concentrating, thinking, and communicating. Accommodations are provided in response to the functional limitations of a disability as they clearly intersect with academic demands and designed to provide equal access. Documentation is needed to determine appropriate and reasonable accommodations.

Students with learning disabilities requesting accommodations must provide current and comprehensive documentation from a licensed clinical professional who has relevant experience in differential diagnosis (i.e., licensed clinical psychologist, neuropsychologist, or licensed clinical counselor). This type of documentation not only validates the presence of a disability, but is useful in providing information to support educational planning and anticipate future accommodation needs. The provided documentation must be on official letterhead and signed and dated by the certifying professional. A description of preferred documentation is listed below.

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- A comprehensive psycho-educational test battery, which means intelligence/ability testing and educational/achievement testing are recommended. A full diagnostic report, including all standard test scores as well as subtest scores and the evaluator's narrative, is recommended. If you are providing information from a public school, include the most recent Comprehensive Evaluation (i.e. Multi-factored Evaluation) and Individual Educational Program (IEP) and the original eligibility evaluation as well as any other MFE's that include the results of a psycho-educational test battery. These documents alone may or may not provide adequate information to document the learning disability.
- A diagnosis made by (a) qualified professional(s) i.e., licensed school psychologist, licensed psychologist, learning disabilities/educational specialist is suggested. The learning disability diagnosis must be clearly stated. References to academic weaknesses and learning differences alone may not substantiate a learning disability diagnosis.
- Assessments normed for adults are preferred. What this means is that your assessments should not be assessments for children, but rather tests that are designed for adults, i.e. WAIS-III rather than WISC-III.
- A diagnosis of a learning disability and type(s) of learning disability(ies), which should be supported by test data and a description of current functional limitations are important. Psycho-educational testing completed within the last three years provides a better assessment of current functional limitations.
- Suggestions for appropriate accommodations are helpful. It important that these suggestions are based upon functional limitations. If it is not evident why an accommodation is suggested by assessing test scores and resulting functional limitations, then a rationale for the accommodations is necessary.
- Along with the above information, transfer students are encouraged to provide written verification from the previously attended school, which includes the dates served and the accommodations used.

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