

Guidelines for Documentation of a Psychological Disability

Last updated March 11, 2015

Students seeking support services from Whitman College on the basis of a psychological/psychiatric disability are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility. Documentation of a psychological/psychiatric disability consists of a written report which includes a diagnosis and addresses specific academic needs of the student. The cost and responsibility for providing this professional evaluation shall be borne by the student.

The following guidelines are provided in the interest of assuring that the evaluation and report are appropriate for documenting eligibility. All requests for accommodations will be considered, but the College will make the final determination on whether the requested accommodations are reasonable under state and federal guidelines for private colleges. Documentation presented to the Academic Resource Center will remain in a private confidential file in the Academic Resource Center and/or Counseling Center. Staff is available to consult with diagnosticians regarding these guidelines:

1. The report must be prepared by a professional (e.g. licensed psychologist or psychiatrist) qualified to diagnose a psychiatric or psychological disorder.
2. The report must be comprehensive. The documentation should include a diagnosis which is consistent with the diagnostic criteria found in the American Psychiatric Association: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5) and how the disorder impacts the student's functioning and education. Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if co-existing learning disabilities are indicated.
3. The report should be on professional letterhead, signed by the individual making the diagnosis, and include the following information:
 - a. How long the diagnostician has treated the student and the last date of contact;
 - b. Instruments and/or procedures used to diagnose;



- c. Current symptoms which satisfy the DSM-5 criteria and approximate date of onset;
 - d. DSM-5 diagnosis;
 - e. Treatment being used (e.g. medication, counseling, etc.);
 - f. How this disorder impacts the student in the post secondary environment; and
 - g. Diagnostician's name, title, license number, address, and phone number.
4. The report must be current. In most cases, this means within the past year. Due to the nature of some psychological and psychiatric disorders, updated reports may be requested. Since assessment constitutes the basis for determining reasonable accommodations, it is in a student's best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation to serve as the basis for decision-making about a student's need for accommodations in an academically competitive environment.
 5. The report must present clear and specific evidence, which identifies the nature of the individual's present level of functioning and how the student's education may be impacted.
 6. The report must provide sufficient data to support the particular academic adjustment(s) requested. The documentation should demonstrate that the individual has a disability in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

All students with disabilities who would like to request accommodations must make an appointment to see the Assistant Director of the Academic Resource Center at the beginning of each semester. Students are encouraged to contact staff in the Academic Resource Center by phone at (509) 527-5213 or via e-mail at arc@whitman.edu for more information about accommodations for students with psychological disabilities.