

Psychiatric Disabilities Documentation Guidelines

The following guidelines describe the necessary components of acceptable documentation for students requesting accommodations on the basis of psychiatric disability. Students are encouraged to provide their clinicians with a copy of these guidelines.

Documentation must include all of the following elements:

1. An evaluation performed by a **qualified, licensed professional** (e.g. psychologist, psychiatrist, psychiatric nurse practitioner, or clinical social worker.) An assessment from a general physician typically does not suffice.
2. An evaluation dated **within six (6) months** of the date of CDR registration or when relevant changes in behavior or medication occur, whichever is more recent. Older evaluations will be considered if submitted with more recent supplemental documentation. In addition, documentation will need to be updated at the beginning of each academic year in order to assess up-to-date accommodation needs. *Because the provision of all reasonable accommodations and services is based upon assessment of the current impact of the student's disabilities on his/her academic performance, it is important to provide recent documentation.*
3. **Current treatment**, including counseling, specific therapies, prescribed medications and any resulting side effects that could compromise academic functioning.
4. A **specific diagnosis** (not merely a reference to symptoms) which corresponds with a diagnosis listed in the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual – IV (DSM-IV)*. Please note that a diagnosis in and of itself does not automatically warrant approval of requested accommodations.
5. A narrative **clinical summary** which includes:
 - A history of presenting symptoms, the current severity and expected duration of symptoms, a description of functional limitations, and the impact of the disability on the student's current participation in courses, programs, services, or any other university activities and a basis for the opinion.
 - Recommendations for academic accommodations, including a rationale.

Please see specific guidelines for [ADD/ADHD documentation](#).