

Guidelines for Documentation of Psychiatric Disabilities

Students who are seeking support services on the basis of a psychiatric disability will be required to submit documentation to verify eligibility. Documentation of disability and related information will be kept in a separate file in the Disability Services Office. The cost and responsibility for providing this documentation shall be borne by the student.

For the purpose of this policy, a psychological/psychiatric disability is defined as an impairment of cognitive, educational, and/or social functioning caused by a disorder as described in the American Psychiatric Diagnostic Statistical Manual, 4th edition (DSM IV) or successive editions.

Documentation should show current impact of the disability. The following guidelines are provided in the interest of assuring that the evaluation and report are appropriate for documenting eligibility and identifying appropriate academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids. The report must be prepared by a qualified mental health professional.

The documentation should:

1. **Specify** the nature, severity, current impact of the disability, and anticipated duration;
2. **State the diagnosis** in the nomenclature used by the DSM IV or successive editions;
3. **Address the student's current ability to function** in the college environment (e.g. ability to focus, organize one's time, attend class, work in groups or alone);
4. **Include medication and the current side effects** that may impact the student in an educational setting.

Suggestions of academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids with supporting evidence may be included. The final determination for providing appropriate academic adjustments and auxiliary aids rests with the Disability Services Office. Questions or concerns regarding documentation requirements can be directed to Jessica Nelson, Assistant Director for Student Development at 360-546-9567 or nelsonje@vancouver.wsu.edu.