

# DISABILITY SERVICES

## DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

### VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

#### INTRODUCTION

Disability Services at Goldfarb School of Nursing at Barnes-Jewish College is committed to providing accommodations and services to qualified students with disabilities in order to reduce or eliminate any disadvantages that may occur as a result of an individual's disability. In determining reasonable accommodations, the College is guided by the federal definition of "disability" which describes an individual with a disability as someone who has:

1. a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one of more major life activities of such individual;
2. a record of such impairment; or
3. is regarded as having such an impairment.

Any student with a disability may request accommodations from the College. In order to establish disability status and eligibility for specific accommodations, academic adjustments and or auxiliary aides/services, the College requires current and comprehensive documentation of the student's impairment(s). Disability documentation is reviewed by the Disability Services Coordinator and determinations of accommodations are made on a case-by-case basis based on the functional limitations of the disability. It is the student's responsibility to obtain and provide this information.

Disability documentation is credible evidence from a qualified practitioner that attests to the existence of a disability, the impact of the alleged disability on academic performance and related competencies and recommendations for equal access and/or compensatory measures, commonly referred to as accommodations. Information contained in disability documentation is used by postsecondary disability service providers to determine eligibility of disability status as well as individualized academic accommodations and services. The law does not require institutions to waive specific courses or academic requirements considered essential to a particular program or degree. Rather, they are mandated to modify existing requirements on a case-by-case basis in order to ensure that individuals are not discriminated against on the basis of their disability.

Almost everyone experiences some apprehension before taking an important examination. Careful diagnosis is required to address the issue of what point "normal" anxiety constitutes a disability protected under ADA.

"Test anxiety, anxiety or phobia" without precise diagnosis, may not constitute a disability within the meaning of ADA for the threshold reason that such terms are not recognized physiological or psychological impairments which substantially limits a major life activity.

English as a second language is not considered a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Cultural factors (such as an individual's language), environmental and economic conditions cannot form the basis of a claim of disability.



## CONFIDENTIALITY OF DISABILITY DOCUMENTATION

Disability Services is charged with the responsibility for collecting and maintaining the confidentiality of disability documentation. This information is kept in secure files in the office of the Disability Services Coordinator. Information will only be shared within the institutional community if there is a compelling reason, such as threat to an individual's safety and/or emergency situation. Consent of the student will be requested prior to releasing medical/psychological documentation to a third party. Confidentiality is not maintained in the case of child abuse, suicidal or homicidal intent.

## GUIDELINES FOR VISUAL IMPAIRMENT DOCUMENTATION

The following guidelines are provided for evaluators, physicians, medical professionals, students and family members to guide the process of submitting documentation to Disability Services. Our goal in providing these guidelines is to facilitate the College's review process for students with disabilities requesting accommodations.

- Documentation submitted must reflect evaluation conducted within the past 3 years.
- Evaluators, physicians, medical professionals, etc. are encouraged to submit any prior assessments and/or evaluative reports together with the current documentation.
- Documentation must be printed on official letterhead and signed by the credentialed professional.
- A Summary of Performance (SOP), Individualized Education Program (IEP) and/or a 504 Plan are not considered adequate documentation.
- Documentation must be submitted by a qualified practitioner who is not a family member of the student.
- Reasonable accommodations are determined based on the nature and resulting impairment(s) due to the disability.
- While the law requires that priority consideration be given to the specific methods requested by a student, it does not imply that a particular accommodation must be granted if it is deemed not reasonable or other suitable techniques are available.
- Prior receipt of accommodations (e.g., in high school) does not guarantee receipt of the same accommodations at Goldfarb School of Nursing.
- Missing disability documentation information may result in a delay in reviewing a student's request for accommodations.



## DOCUMENTATION MUST INCLUDE:

In order for the College to determine eligibility for specific accommodations, documentation must include the following information, as appropriate:

- Dates:
  - when student was first diagnosed
  - most recent evaluation.
- A history of the disability and any past accommodations granted the student by another higher education college/university.
- Identification of the specific standardized and professionally recognized tests/assessments given (e.g. Woodcock-Johnson, Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale).
- The scores resulting from the testing, with interpretation and evaluation of the test scores.
- Clinical diagnosis of the disability (where applicable, list DSM Code Number and Title).
- List of current medications.
- A description of the impact of the diagnosis on the student's academic performance.
- Specific recommendations for testing accommodations with a stated rationale as to why the requested accommodation is necessary and appropriate for the diagnosed disability.
- Qualified evaluator's name and title, license # with state, address, phone number, fax number, email address and signature of professional conducting assessment, rendering diagnosis and making recommendations.

## DOCUMENTATION MAY BE SUBMITTED TO DISABILITY SERVICES:

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