SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY

Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) determines reasonable academic accommodations for students with diagnosed disabilities. The documentation provided regarding the disability diagnosis must demonstrate a disability covered under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. The ADA defines a disability as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. In addition, in order for a student to receive academic accommodations, the documentation needs to show functional limitations that will impact an individual in an academic setting.

The SSWD Office requires current comprehensive documentation in order to determine appropriate services and accommodations based on functional limitations that may impact the student in the academic setting. The information listed below has been developed to assist the student in working with the treating/diagnosing professional(s) in obtaining the specific and necessary information to evaluate requests for academic assistance based on the diagnosis.

All information requested must be completed as thoroughly as possible. Inadequate information and/or incomplete forms will delay the eligibility review process. All answers to the questions on the form must be legible. Illegible handwriting will also delay the eligibility review process since the provider will be contacted for clarification.

The information provided will not become part of the student’s educational records and will be kept in the student’s confidential file at the SSWD Office.

Important: After documentation is reviewed, SSWD will send an email notification to the student’s UW-Platteville email account, (e.g. username@uwplatt.edu), acknowledging receipt of documentation and the eligibility status. Prospective students that do not yet have a UW-Platteville email account will be notified via paper letter sent to their home address.
This form is available on the UW-Platteville Disabilities website at: http://www.uwplatt.edu/disability/

DIAGNOSTIC INFORMATION

The following documentation requirements are provided in the interest of assuring the documentation for a Specific Learning Disability is appropriate to verify eligibility and to support requests for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids. Documentation of a specific learning disability must identify significant discrepancy not attributable to other disabling conditions or to environmental deprivations. Requirements for documentation consist of four important components: (1) qualifications of the evaluator; (2) current evaluation information; (3) comprehensive assessment and use of appropriate clinical/diagnostic instruments; and (4) evidence to establish a rationale supporting the need for accommodations.

It is essential that documentation include all four components listed. Examples of documentation include neuropsychological, psycho educational and learning disabilities specialist’s reports. These reports should be submitted to the Services for Students with Disabilities Office.

1. A qualified professional must conduct the evaluation. Diagnostic reports must include the names, signatures, titles and license numbers of the evaluators as well as the date(s) of testing. Practitioners who can provide a diagnosis: Psychologist, Licensed Clinical Psychologist, School Psychologist, Neurophysiologists, and other relevantly trained professionals.

2. Documentation of the disability and the need for accommodation must be current. Although a learning disability is typically viewed as life-long, the severity of the condition may change over time and current evaluation information is essential in determining appropriate accommodations. In most cases, testing should have been conducted within the past three years. Individuals who submit documentation that is not current, and/or inadequate scope and content or that does not address the current candidate’s current level of functioning or the need for accommodation(s) will be required to update the evaluation report.

3. Assessment must be comprehensive and must include a specific diagnosis. Nonspecific diagnosis, such as individual “learning styles,” “learning differences,” “academic problems,” “slow reader” etc. in and of themselves do not constitute a learning disability. More than one assessment device should be administered for the purpose of diagnosis and actual test scores from standardized test instruments must be provided.

Testing must address, at a minimum, the following three domains:

- **APTITUDE/COGNITIVE ABILITY**
  A complete intellectual assessment with all subtest and standard scores should be included. (Assessment instruments may include but are not limited to: Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – III, Stanford-Binet Tests of Intelligence – IV, Woodcock-Johnson Test of Cognitive Ability – III, Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test.)
- **ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**
  Comprehensive assessment of current levels of academic functioning in reading, mathematics and written language are required. Subtests, standard scores, percentiles and grade equivalent scores should be included. (Assessment instruments may include but are not limited to: Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement – III, Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults, Stanford Test of Academic Skills)

  The Wide Range Achievement Test -3 (WRAT-3) is not a comprehensive measure of achievement and therefore is not useful as the sole measure of achievement.

- **INFORMATION PROCESSING**
  Specific areas of information processing (e.g., short and long term memory, sequential memory, auditory and visual perception/processing, processing speed, executive functioning, motor ability) should be assessed. (Assessment instruments may include, but are not limited to Detroit Test of Learning Aptitude – 3rd Edition or Adult, and specific subtest of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – III or Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Ability – III would be appropriate.)

4. **Each accommodation recommended by the evaluator MUST INCLUDE a rationale.**

  The diagnostic report must include specific recommendations for appropriate accommodation(s) as well as a detailed explanation of why each accommodation is recommended. A prior history of accommodation, without demonstration of current need does not necessarily warrant the provision of that accommodation. The recommended accommodations must be supported by specific test results or clinical observations.

  In the event that a student requests an academic adjustment or accommodation that is not supported by the data in the assessment or if the initial verification is incomplete or inadequate to determine the extent of the disability, then it is incumbent on the student to obtain supplemental testing or assessment at the student's expense.

  Accommodations and academically-related services for students with learning disabilities are designed to accommodate a perceptual disorder, which impairs the student’s ability to acquire, process, or communicate information. They are not designed to provide remediation. Accommodations and services are determined by the nature of the learning disability and are provided in collaboration with the student, faculty, and Services for Students with Disabilities. Each academic accommodation is determined on an individual basis and made available to the extent that it does not compromise the academic integrity of the student's program.

  Questions regarding documentation may be addressed to the Services for Students with Disabilities Office.
These guidelines are not meant to be used exclusively or as a replacement for direct communication with UW-Platteville Services for Students with Disabilities regarding the individual nature of a disability. While submitted documentation meeting the above guidelines may be acceptable to the University of Wisconsin-Platteville it is important to be mindful that they may/may not meet the documentation guidelines required in other academic or testing organizations.