

Guidelines for Documentation of a Psychiatric/Psychological Disorder

Students who are seeking services from Northwest Florida State College/Disability Support Services on the basis of a diagnosed psychiatric/psychological disorder are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Protection under these civil rights statutes is based upon documentation of a psychiatric/psychological disorder that **currently substantially limits** some major life activity including learning.

The following guidelines are provided in the interest of assuring that documentation is appropriate to verify eligibility and support requests for reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids on the basis of a psychiatric/psychological disorder that substantially limits one or more major life activities. The Counselor - Disability Support Services is available to consult with diagnosticians regarding any of these guidelines.

- The report must be typed and written in English on letterhead, signed, and dated.
- The professional providing psychological diagnoses and treatments must be qualified to do so. Experience in working with the adult population is essential.
- Diagnostic reports must include the names, titles, and professional credential (e.g., Licensed Psychologist) of the professional providing the diagnostic report.
- A written summary of /or background information about the student's educational, medical, and family histories that relate to the disability must be included.
- **Not Acceptable:** A doctor's or psychiatrist's prescription pad note or a high school plan such as Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or 504 plan. An IEP or 504 plan *may be included* and used as part of a more comprehensive evaluative report.
- A DSM-IV Multiaxial Diagnosis: a thorough explanation of diagnoses including symptoms and plan for treatment must be included. There must be a clear and specific evidence of the disorder(s) in question. A listing of the functional limitations imposed by the disorder and how they might impair the student's ability to perform to his/her potential in an academic setting must also be included.
- Date of diagnosis must also be included. Diagnoses must be current. Diagnoses made prior to six months before the present date are not acceptable unless the disorder is considered to be relatively stable and long-standing.
- A complete list of psychoactive medications that the student is taking including dosage levels and any likely side-effects. Any other medications taken by the student should be included.

All documentation is confidential and should be submitted to:

Elizabeth Smith
Counselor of Students with Special Needs
Northwest Florida State College
100 College Boulevard
Building E Room 148
Niceville FL 32578

Telephone 850-729-6079 Fax: 850-729-5300

After documentation is reviewed, student needs to make an intake appointment with the Coordinator.