Seattle Pacific University Guidelines Regarding Documentation of a Psychological/Psychiatric Disability

Students who are seeking support services from Seattle Pacific University on the basis of a psychological/psychiatric disability are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility. Documentation of a psychological/psychiatric disability consists of a written report, which includes a diagnosis and addresses specific academic needs of the student. The cost and responsibility for providing this professional evaluation shall be borne by the student.

The following guidelines are provided in the interest of assuring that the report is appropriate for documenting eligibility. Documentation presented to Disability Support Services (DSS) will remain in a private confidential file in the DSS Office. The Director or Coordinator of DSS is available to consult with diagnosticians regarding these guidelines. The report should:

1. be prepared by a professional (e.g. licensed psychiatrist or psychologist) qualified to diagnose a psychiatric or psychological disorder.

2. be comprehensive. The documentation should include a diagnosis which is consistent with the diagnostic criteria found in the *American Psychological Association: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition* (DSM-IV) or the DSM-IV-TR (Text Revision) and how the disorder impacts the student’s functioning and education. Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if co-existing learning disabilities or other disabling conditions are indicated.

The report should be in professional letterhead, signed by the individual making the diagnosis, and include the following information:

- How long the diagnostician has treated the student and the date of last contact;
- Instruments and/or procedures used to diagnose;
- Current symptoms which satisfy the DSM-IV or DSM-IV-TR criteria and the approximate date of onset;
- DSM-IV or DSM-IV-TR diagnosis;
- Treatment being used (e.g. medication, counseling, etc.);
- How this disorder impacts the student in the postsecondary environment; and
- Diagnostician’s name, title, license number, address and phone number.

3. be current. In most cases, this means within the past year. Due to the nature of some psychological and psychiatric disorders, updated reports may be requested. Since assessment constitutes the basis for determining reasonable accommodations, it is in a student’s best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation to serve as the basis for decision-making about a student’s need for accommodations in an academically competitive environment.

4. present clear and specific evidence, which identifies the individual’s present level of functioning and how the student’s education may be impacted.

5. provide sufficient data to support the particular academic adjustment(s) requested. The documentation should demonstrate the individual has a disability in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Requests that are not supported by proper documentation will not be approved.

If there are questions regarding this policy, please contact the Coordinator for Disability Support Services at (206) 281-2272.

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