

SAINT JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Saint Joseph's College of Maine is committed to providing equal education opportunity and full participation for persons with disabilities. It is the College's policy that no qualified person be excluded from participating in any College program or activity, be denied the benefits of any College program or activity, or otherwise be subject to discrimination with regard to any college program or activity. Toward this end, and in conjunction with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504, the College both accepts, and provides reasonable accommodations for, qualified students with various types of disabilities.

While the College is ready to provide reasonable accommodations, the students must make an effort to advocate for and avail himself/herself of all services and agreed upon modifications.

PROCEDURES FOR ACCESSING ACCOMMODATIONS:

Students with disabilities who need accommodations and services must follow these procedures:

- The student contacts the Accommodations Officer upon admission to Saint Joseph's College to receive the guidelines for documentation of a disability. The Accommodations Officer explains to the student the College's policies and procedures regarding accommodations.
- The student provides current documentation according to the written guidelines regarding the disability. Documentation should indicate that the impairment is a disability that substantially limits a major life activity. School plans such as an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a 504 Plan are useful but do not provide sufficient documentation to establish the rationale for accommodations. All files and information are confidential. These should be forwarded to the Accommodations Officer in a timely manner to allow review prior to the start of school.
- Based on the nature of the disability, according to the documentation, reasonable accommodations are determined by the Accommodations Officer. Determination of accommodations is provided to the student in writing.
- The student has the responsibility to inform and provide his/her faculty of any agreed upon accommodation(s) in writing.

Guidelines for Documentation of Psychiatric Disabilities

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of a psychiatric disability must provide documentation from a professional who has undergone comprehensive training and has relevant experience in differential diagnosis and the full range of psychiatric disorders. Documentation for students requesting accommodations on the basis of a psychiatric disability must include:

1. An interview including a description of the presenting problem(s) including any significant developmental, medical, psychosocial, employment and family history including a discussion of dual diagnosis when indicated.
2. A specific, current psychiatric diagnosis as per the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual-N (DSM-IV) of the American Psychiatric Association which indicates the nature, frequency, and severity of the symptoms upon which the diagnosis was predicated. A diagnosis without an explicit listing of current symptoms is not sufficient. Serious emotional disturbance (SED) is not an acceptable diagnosis at the postsecondary level.
3. Primary and secondary Axis I and Axis II diagnoses. A measure of functioning using the Global Assessment of Functioning (GAF) Scale in the DSM-IV is highly recommended. Using the GAF, indicate the student's general, highest, and lowest GAF score and describe behaviorally the student's performance at each GAF level using as much detail as is known.
4. Prescribed medications, dosages, schedules, and any possible side effects which may influence the accommodations provided.
5. An indication of whether or not the student was evaluated while on medication, and whether or not the prescribed treatment produced a positive response.
6. An integrated summary which:
 - Indicates the substantial limitations to major life activities posed by the psychiatric disability;
 - Describes the extent to which these limitations would impact the academic context for which accommodations are being requested;
 - **Recommendations which include the student's strengths and weaknesses in order to determine appropriate strategies to assist the student to become a more efficient learner and to be successful in personal career endeavors.** In recommending support services, modifications, or accommodations, it is critical for a diagnostician to identify the areas that are affected by a student's learning disability and to substantiate those conclusions with hard diagnostic data. Diagnosticians also must provide suggestions for specific techniques that would allow the student to be successful in a postsecondary setting.

- States how the effect of the psychiatric disability is mediated by the recommended accommodations.

All documentation is confidential and should be submitted to:

Jeri Keane Ph.D.
Associate Director, The Academic Center
Accommodations Officer

Saint Joseph's College of Maine
326 Alford Hall
278 Whites Bridge Road
Standish, ME 04084-5263

Tel. (207) 893-7561
Fax (207) 893-7866

Documentation that is submitted must originate with the evaluator(s), and will not be accepted from any other individual, including the student on whom the evaluation was conducted.

These guidelines have been adapted from Brinckerhoff, Shaw & McGuire's text *Promoting Postsecondary Education for Students with Learning Disabilities* (PRO-Ed publishers, Austin, TX 1993), *Consortium on ADHD Documentation* and from a copy of "University of Southern Maine Guidelines for Documentation of a Specific Learning disability".