



## Documentation Guidelines - Psychiatric Disorders

Each evaluation must be completed by a qualified professional, current (within the last six months), and include historical information, a specific diagnosis of disability, and a rationale for recommendations.

### Psychiatric Disorders

Students requesting accommodations based on a psychiatric disorder 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 (e.g., licensed clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, Psychiatric Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN), licensed clinical social workers, and other relevantly trained medical doctors). The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 expanded the definition of major life activities to include thinking, sleeping, concentrating, eating, stooping, bending, standing, and communicating, which will likely result in the identification of more students with these disorders. The Act does not cover conditions likely to resolve in six months or less. However, the Act includes cyclical conditions, and the disability determination should be made based on consideration of when the condition is active:

- A recent evaluation or updated assessment, preferably within the past six months, is needed due to the changing nature of psychiatric disorders.
- An interview includes a description of the presenting problem(s), including any significant developmental, medical, psychosocial, or employment issues, family history, and a discussion of dual diagnosis where indicated.
- As per the DSM-5, a specific, current psychiatric diagnosis 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. Emotional Disturbance (ED) is an educational label and does not alone constitute a disability at the postsecondary level.
- Prescribed medications, dosages, and schedules that may influence the learning environment and types of accommodations, including any possible side effects.
- An integrated summary that 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, suggests how the specific effects of the psychiatric disorder may be accommodated, and states how the recommended accommodations mediate the impact of the psychiatric disorder.