Documentation of Disabilities

Students who are seeking accommodations and services on the basis of a disability are required to submit documentation of their disability to the Office of Disability Services (ODS). ODS is responsible for determining the acceptability of documentation, and reserves the right to require additional information. ODS maintains the right to reject documentation that does not verify a student’s disability or justify the need for reasonable accommodations. Generally, documentation costs are borne by the student, as are costs of obtaining additional documentation requested by ODS.

Documentation accepted by ODS is valid as long as a student is continuously enrolled at the college. However, if there is a break in the student’s enrollment, s/he may need to present updated documentation to receive services through ODS.

All documentation of disabilities is received and held by the Office of Disability Services. Documentation is treated as confidential. Generally, no documentation information is released to anyone outside of ODS without the student’s informed and written consent. Documentation is destroyed five years after the last semester the student is enrolled. ODS can assist individuals and professionals if there are questions regarding documentation requirements.

General Requirements

To register for disability services with the ODS, students must complete an Application for Services and are required to provide diagnostic documentation from a licensed clinical professional familiar with the history and functional implications of their respective disabilities. It is not acceptable for such documentation to include a diagnosis or testing performed by a member of the student’s family. It is the student’s responsibility to provide appropriate documentation of disability to ODS and to formally request a letter of accommodation from the ODS personnel.

Disability documentation must adequately verify the nature and extent of the disability in accordance with current professional standards and techniques, and it must clearly substantiate the need for all of the student’s specific accommodation requests. Each disability type has its own documentation requirements. All documentation must be submitted on the official letterhead of the professional diagnosing the disability. The report should be in narrative form, typed, dated and signed and include the name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about licensure and certification.

If the original documentation is incomplete or inadequate to determine the extent of the disability or reasonable accommodation, the college has the discretion to require additional documentation. Any cost incurred in obtaining additional documentation when the original records are
inadequate is borne by the student. If the documentation is complete but the college desires a second professional opinion, the college bears the latter cost.

Students requesting accommodations for the manifestations of multiple disabilities must provide documentation of all such conditions.

A High School IEP or 504 Plan is not sufficient documentation of a disability.

A history of accommodations does not in itself warrant the provision of similar accommodations at SSCC. Also, medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis. The final determination of eligibility for services rests with Shelton State Community College.

Please forward all documentation to:
Office of Disability Services
Shelton State Community College
Box 280
Tuscaloosa, AL 35405
Office – 205.391.2983
Fax – 205.391.3958
Attention Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADD/HD) must provide documentation by a professional who has undergone comprehensive training and has relevant experience in differential diagnosis of a full range of psychiatric disorders (licensed clinical psychologist, neuropsychologist, psychiatrist or another relevantly trained medical doctor), and who has expertise in evaluating the impact of ADD/HD on an individual’s educational performance. Experience working with an adult population is essential. Documentation must be current: within the past 3 years for a high school student and within the past 5 years for an adult. A school plan such as an IEP or 504 Accommodation Plan is insufficient documentation. All testing instruments must be standardized for use on adults. Documentation must include, but is not limited to, the following elements:

1. Evidence of early impairment

The condition must have been exhibited in childhood in more than one setting.

2. Evidence of current impairment

In addition to the individual’s history, documentation of current difficulties must include the student’s presenting attentional symptoms and evidence of current impulsive/hyperactive or inattentive behaviors that significantly impair functioning in two or more settings.

3. Diagnostic interview

The interview must contain self-report and third-party (i.e., other than the student) information pertaining to developmental history, family history of ADHD or other learning or psychological difficulties, relevant medical and medication history, a thorough academic history, and a review of prior psycho-educational test reports to determine whether a pattern of strengths or weaknesses is supportive of attention or learning problems.

4. Evidence of alternative diagnoses or explanations being ruled out

The possibility of dual diagnoses and alternative or coexisting mood, behavioral, neurological and/or personality disorders that may confound or be the primary cause of attention difficulties must be addressed and ruled out.

5. Neuro-psychological or psycho-educational assessments

Such assessments are necessary to determine the current impact of the disorder on the individual’s ability to function in an academic setting. Data should include subtest and standard scores to support conclusions, and should at least include the most recent versions of a
comprehensive intelligence battery and a comprehensive achievement battery. (Note: Assessments such as checklists and rating scales are very important, but checklists, scales or subtest scores should not be used as the sole criterion for a diagnosis of ADHD.)

Acceptable Instruments – Aptitude / Cognitive Ability

• Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale III (or latest version). The WAIS is the preferred instrument.
• Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-educational Battery – Revised: Tests of Cognitive Ability
• Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale

Unacceptable Instruments – Aptitude / Cognitive Ability

• The Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (KBIT) is not a comprehensive measure and is therefore not suitable for documentation purposes at UA.
• Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) – this instrument is not standardized for use with adults.

Acceptable Instruments – Academic Achievement

• The Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-educational Battery – Revised: Tests of Achievement
• Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)
• Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK)
• Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA)
• Specific achievement tests such as the Test of Written Language – 3 (TOWL-3), Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests – Revised, or the Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test.

Unacceptable Instruments – Academic Achievement

• The Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT)
• Mini-Battery of Achievement (MBA)

(These are not comprehensive measures of achievement and are therefore not suitable for documentation purposes at UA.)

6. Diagnosis

A clear and specific statement that the student is diagnosed with ADHD and the accompanying DSM-IV-TR diagnostic code(s) are required.
7. Medication

Indicate whether or not the student was evaluated while on medication, and whether or not the prescribed treatment produced a positive response. Medication alone cannot be used to support a diagnosis.

8. Clinical summary

Must address:

(a) The substantial limitations to major life activities posed by the disability.

(b) The extent to which these limitations would impact the academic context for which accommodations are being requested.

(c) Suggestions as to how the specific effects of the disability may be accommodated.

(d) The rationale behind the suggested accommodations. Any recommendation for an accommodation should be based on objective evidence of a substantial limitation to learning, supported by specific test results and clinical observations. In establishing the rationale for recommended accommodations, test data should be used to document the need.

9. Additional Requirements

(a) Interpretation of test results is required. Test protocol sheets, handwritten summary sheets or scores alone are not sufficient.

(b) All reports must be in narrative form, typed, signed by the diagnosing clinician, and must include the names, titles and professional credentials of the evaluators as well as the date(s) of testing. Documentation must be submitted on the official letterhead of the professional diagnosing the disability.

A history of accommodations does not in itself warrant the provision of similar accommodations at SSCC. Also, medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis. The final determination of eligibility for services rests with Shelton State Community College.

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Shelton State Community College
Box 280
Tuscaloosa, AL 35405       Office – 205.391.2983      Fax – 205.391.3958
**Blindness or Low Vision**

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of low vision or blindness must provide documentation consisting of:

1. A current ocular assessment or evaluation from an ophthalmologist or optometrist dated within one year.

2. A low-vision evaluation of residual visual function signed by an ophthalmologist or optometrist dated within one year, when appropriate.

3. Recommendations or suggestions as to how the disabling condition(s) may be accommodated should be included in the report.

4. All reports must be in narrative form, typed, and signed by the physician. Chart or clinic notes are not acceptable as documentation.

A history of accommodations does not in itself warrant the provision of similar accommodations at SSCC. Also, medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis. The final determination of eligibility for services rests with Shelton State Community College.

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Shelton State Community College
Box 280
Tuscaloosa, AL 35405

Office – 205.391.2983
Fax – 205.391.3958
Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of deafness or hearing loss must provide documentation from the appropriate clinical professional consisting of:

1. A current audiological evaluation or report dated and signed (within one year).

2. A narrative interpretation of the functional implications of the diagnostic data and hearing aid evaluation dated within one year, when appropriate.

3. Suggested accommodations/modifications to assist in equalizing the student’s educational opportunities.

4. All reports must be in narrative form, typed, and signed by the appropriate clinical professional. Chart or clinic notes are not acceptable as documentation.

A history of accommodations does not in itself warrant the provision of similar accommodations at SSCC. Also, medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis. The final determination of eligibility for services rests with Shelton State Community College.

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Office – 205.391.2983
Fax – 205.391.3958
Learning Disability

A comprehensive evaluation report from a clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, neuropsychologist, school psychologist, learning disability specialist, or diagnostian, including:

1. Clear statement of presenting problem; diagnostic interview
2. Educational history documenting the impact of the learning disability
3. Alternative explanations and diagnoses are ruled out
4. Relevant test data with standard scores are provided to support conclusion, including at least:
   a. WAIS-R
   b. Woodcock –Johnson Psycho educational Battery-Revised including Written Language
   c. Woodcock-Johnson cognitive Processing Battery to substantiate any processing problems
   d. Stanford-Binet intelligence Scale
5. Clearly stated diagnosis of a learning disability based upon DSM-IV criteria (High School IEP, 504 Plan, and/or letter from physician or other professional will NOT be sufficient to document a learning disability)
6. Defined levels of functioning and any limitations, supported by evaluation data
7. Current report (within 3 years of enrollment date), dated and signed
8. The report must include specific recommendations for academic accommodations and the rationale for those recommendations.

A history of accommodations does not in itself warrant the provision of similar accommodations at SSCC. Also, medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis. The final determination of eligibility for services rests with Shelton State Community College.

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Shelton State Community College
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Tuscaloosa, AL 35405

Office – 205.391.2983
Fax – 205.391.3958
Physical Disability

Mobility, Systemic, or Chronic illness-related Disabilities –

(A Physical Disability includes but is not limited to Multiple Sclerosis, Cerebral Palsy, Neurological Impairments, Spinal Cord Injuries, Cancer, HIV/AIDS, Muscular Dystrophy, Spina Bifida)

Students requesting accommodations based upon mobility, systemic or disease-related disabilities must provide documentation from a physician familiar with their condition. Documentation must be current: within the past 3 years for a high school student and within the past 5 years for an adult. A school plan such as an IEP or 504 Accommodation Plan is insufficient documentation. Documentation must include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. a. Clinical diagnosis.
   b. Description of symptoms related to the diagnosis that the student experiences.
   c. Date of original diagnosis, if known, and last contact with the student.

2. Identification of the major life activity such as walking, learning, seeing, hearing, etc. affected by the student’s disability. Information on how the disability presents a substantial limitation to this major life activity in the postsecondary setting must be included (how the student is limited functionally by the disability).

3. Suggestions as to how the functionally limiting manifestations of the disabling condition(s) may be accommodated at the postsecondary level. Include the rationale for these accommodations.

4. Information about any medications the student may be taking for the disabling condition that may affect the student’s ability to participate in an academic environment. Medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis.

5. All reports must be in narrative form, typed, and signed by the physician. Chart or clinic notes are not acceptable as documentation.

A history of accommodations does not in itself warrant the provision of similar accommodations at SSCC. Also, medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis. The final determination of eligibility for services rests with Shelton State Community College.

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Shelton State Community College
Box 280 Tuscaloosa, AL 35405
Office – 205.391.2983  Fax – 205.391.3958
Psychological Disorders

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of a psychiatric disability must provide documentation from a licensed clinical psychologist (Ph.D.), psychiatrist (M.D.), licensed clinical social worker, or licensed professional counselor. Documentation must be current – because of the variable nature of psychiatric disabilities, students registering for the first time must submit documentation from an assessment conducted no more than six months prior to the date of registration with ODS. Frequent updates may need to be provided depending on the nature of the academic adjustments requested. A school report such as an IEP or 504 Accommodation Plan is insufficient documentation. Documentation must include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Diagnosis
The report must address a specific, current psychiatric diagnosis as per the DSM-IV-TR (including diagnostic codes) 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. Primary and secondary Axis I and Axis II diagnoses are required.

2. Medications
Prescribed medications, dosages, schedules and side effects which may influence the type of accommodations provided should be addressed. Medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis.

3. Clinical summary
This section of the report must address:
(a) The substantial limitations to major life activities posed by the psychiatric disability.
(b) The extent to which these limitations would impact the academic context for which accommodations are being requested.
(c) Suggestions as to how the specific effects of the psychiatric disability may be accommodated.
(d) The rationale behind the suggested accommodations. *

4. Additional Requirements
All reports must be in narrative form, typed, and signed by the appropriate clinician. Chart or clinic notes are not acceptable forms of documentation.

A history of accommodations does not in itself warrant the provision of similar accommodations at SSCC. Also, medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis. The final determination of eligibility for services rests with Shelton State Community College.

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Shelton State Community College
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Tuscaloosa, AL 35405
Office – 205.391.2983  Fax – 205.391.3958
Traumatic Brain Injury

(Trauma to the brain resulting from injury, cerebral vascular accidents, tumors, or other medical conditions)
Students requesting accommodations on the basis of a traumatic brain injury (TBI) or brain insult must provide documentation by a neuropsychologist.

Documentation must be current: within the past 3 years. A school plan such as an IEP or 504 Accommodation Plan is insufficient documentation. All testing instruments must be standardized for use on adults.

Documentation must include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. A thorough neuro-psychological evaluation
   The assessment must address the areas of attention, visual perception/visual reasoning, language, academic skills, memory/learning, executive function, sensory, motor and emotional status. Data should include standard scores and percentiles.

2. Evidence of current impairment- Documentation should discuss history of the individual’s presenting symptoms and evidence of behaviors that significantly impair functioning.

3. Diagnostic interview - Must contain self-report and third-party information pertaining to:
   (a) developmental history
   (b) family history
   (c) learning or psychological difficulties
   (d) relevant medical history
   (e) a thorough academic history

4. Evidence that alternative diagnoses or explanations were ruled out. The documentation must investigate and discuss the possibility of dual diagnoses and alternative or coexisting mood, learning, behavioral, and/or personality disorders that may confound the diagnosis. Records of academic progress prior to the onset of the TBI must be reviewed to substantiate that the current level of functioning is a direct cause of the brain injury (i.e., that function has changed as a result of the injury).

5. Diagnosis - Include a specific statement of diagnosis, as well as the corresponding DSM-IVTR code.
6. Clinical Summary Must address:
   (a) The substantial limitations to major life activities posed by the disability.
   (b) A description of the extent to which these limitations would impact the academic context for which accommodations are being requested.
   (c) Suggestions as to how the specific effects of disability may be accommodated.
   (d) The rationale behind the suggested accommodations. Any recommendation for an accommodation should be based on objective evidence of a substantial limitation to learning, supported by specific test results and clinical observations. In establishing the rationale for recommended accommodations, test data should be used to document the need.

7. Additional Requirements
   (a) Interpretation of test results is required. Test protocol sheets, handwritten summary sheets or scores alone are not sufficient.
   (b) All reports must be in narrative format, typed, signed by the diagnosing clinician, and must include the names, titles and professional credentials of the evaluators as well as the date(s) of testing. Documentation must be submitted on the official letterhead of the professional diagnosing the disability.

A history of accommodations does not in itself warrant the provision of similar accommodations at SSCC. Also, medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis. The final determination of eligibility for services rests with Shelton State Community College.

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Tuscaloosa, AL 35405

Office – 205.391.2983  Fax – 205.391.3958
Autism Spectrum Disorders (including Asperger’s)

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) must provide documentation by a professional who has undergone comprehensive training and has relevant experience in differential diagnosis of a full range of psychiatric disorders (Ph.D.-level licensed clinical psychologist, neuropsychologist, psychiatrist or another relevantly trained medical doctor), and who has expertise in evaluating the impact of an ASD on an individual’s educational performance. Experience working with individuals with ASD is essential. Documentation must be current: within the past 3 years for a high school student and within the past 5 years for an adult. A school plan such as an IEP or 504 Accommodation Plan is insufficient documentation. All testing instruments must be standardized for use on adults. Documentation must include, but is not limited to, the following elements:

1. MEASURES SPECIFIC TO AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS
   a. Parent/Caregiver diagnostic interview assessing the 3 areas of difficulty associated with ASD, including social and interaction skills, verbal and nonverbal conversation skills, and obsessive interests and/or repetitive behaviors. The Autism Diagnostic Interview-Revised (ADI-R) is the preferred interview but unstructured diagnostic interviews covering these areas would be accepted.
   b. Structured interaction and observation of the student’s social and interaction skills, verbal and nonverbal conversation skills, and obsessive interests and/or repetitive behaviors. The Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) is the preferred instrument but other structured observation of these skills would be accepted.
   c. An ASD-specific behavioral/skill checklist, such as the Social Responsiveness Scale, Social Communication Questionnaire, Gilliam Autism Rating Scale, or Gilliam Asperger’s Disorder Scale.

2. DIAGNOSTIC INTERVIEW
   The interview must relate a description of the presenting problem(s); developmental, medical, psychosocial and employment histories; family history (including primary language of the home and the student’s current level of English fluency); a discussion of comorbidity where indicated; and relevant information regarding the student’s academic history.

3. ASSESSMENT
   For the evaluation to illustrate a substantial limitation to learning, the comprehensive assessment battery must address the following domains:
   a. Aptitude / Cognitive Ability
      An assessment of global intellectual functioning is required, as measured by the latest version of one of the following acceptable instruments. Subtest and standard scores must be reported:
      • Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale. The WAIS is the preferred instrument.
      • Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-educational Battery –Tests of Cognitive Ability. If using the WJ-COG, the GIA must be reported.
      • Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales
Unacceptable Instruments
- The Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (KBIT) is not a comprehensive measure and is therefore not suitable.
- The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) is not standardized for use with adults.

b. Academic Achievement
A comprehensive achievement battery with subtest and standard scores, indicating current level of functioning in the academic areas of reading, math, oral and written language, must be included, as measured by the latest version of one of the following achievement batteries:

Acceptable Instruments
- The Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-educational Battery – Tests of Achievement
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)
- Specific achievement tests such as the Test of Written Language – 3 (TOWL-3), Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests – Revised, the Nelson-Denny Reading Tests or the Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test.

Unacceptable Instruments
- The Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT)
- Mini Battery of Achievement (MBA)
(These are not comprehensive measures of achievement and are therefore not suitable for documentation purposes at UA.)

c. Adaptive Behavior
Assessment of current level of adaptive/daily living skills.

d. Co-morbid Assessment
Assessment of symptoms of comorbid diagnoses, including symptoms of inattention, hyperactivity, anxiety, and depression.

4. DIAGNOSIS
The report must address a specific, current diagnosis as per the DSM-IV-TR (including diagnostic codes) 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.

5. MEDICATIONS
Prescribed medications, dosages, schedules and side effects which may influence the type of accommodations provided should be addressed. Medication alone cannot be used to imply a diagnosis.

6. CLINICAL SUMMARY
This portion of the evaluation must address:
a. The substantial limitations to major life activities posed by the ASD and the extent to which these limitations impact the academic context for which accommodations are being requested.
b. Suggestions as to how the specific effects of the ASD may be accommodated.
c. Rationale for such accommodations. Any recommendation for an accommodation should be based on objective evidence of a substantial limitation to learning, supported by specific test results and clinical observations. Reports should establish the rationale for any accommodation that is recommended, using test data to document the need.*
7. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
a. Interpretation of results is required. Test protocol sheets, handwritten summary sheets or scores alone are not sufficient.
b. All reports must be in narrative format, typed, signed by the diagnosing clinician, and must include the names, titles and professional credentials (e.g., licensed psychologist) of the evaluators as well as the date(s) of testing. Documentation must be submitted on the official letterhead of the professional diagnosing the disability. Chart or clinic notes are not acceptable forms of documentation.

A history of accommodations does not in itself warrant the provision of similar accommodations at SSCC. Also, medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis. The final determination of eligibility for services rests with Shelton State Community College.

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