

## **FRAMEWORK FOR DOCUMENTING A DISABILITY**

Students requesting academic adjustments, accommodations, or auxiliary aids are required to submit documentation of their disability to verify eligibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504). Students should initiate a request for services and/or reasonable accommodations by following these steps:

1. Schedule a meeting with the Pathways Academic Success Associate. The student must schedule an intake appointment with the Associate for Testing and Disability Services or other designated staff member to discuss available support services and the process for requesting accommodations and/or classroom adjustments.
2. Submit documentation. In order to fully evaluate requests for accommodations, the Pathways Academic Success Associate will need documentation of the disability that consists of an evaluation by an appropriate professional that describes the current impact of the disability as it relates to the accommodation request.

## **AS APPROPRIATE TO THE DISABILITY, DOCUMENTATION SHOULD INCLUDE:**

1. **A diagnostic statement** identifying the disability, date of the current diagnostic evaluation, and the date of the original diagnosis. The diagnostic systems used by the Department of Education, The Area Education Agencies, The State Department of Rehabilitative Services or other State agencies and/or the current editions of either the Diagnostic Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association (DSM-IV-TR) or the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems of the World Health Organization (ICD) are the recommended diagnostic taxonomies.
2. **The diagnostic criteria and or diagnostic tests** used. This description should include the specific results of diagnostic procedures, diagnostic tests utilized, and when the tests were administered. Diagnostic methods used should be congruent with the disability and current professional practices within the field. Informal or non-standardized evaluations should be described in enough detail that a professional colleague could understand the significance of the information.
3. **A description of the current functional impact of the disability.** The current functional impact on physical, perceptual, cognitive, and behavioral abilities should be described either explicitly or through the provision of specific results from the diagnostic procedures. Currency will be evaluated based on the typical progression of the disability, its interaction with development across the life span, the presence or absence of significant events (since the date of the evaluation) that would impact functioning, and the applicability of the information to the current context of the request for accommodations.
4. **A description of current treatments, medications, assistive devices/services:** A history of treatments, medications, assistive devices, accommodations and/or assistive services

and statements about their effectiveness in minimizing the impact of the disability should be included. Significant and potential side effects that may impact physical, perceptual, behavioral or cognitive performance should also be noted.

5. **A description of the expected progression or stability of the disability over time.** This description should provide an estimate of the change in the functional limitations of the disability over time and/or recommendations concerning the anticipated need for reevaluation.
6. **Recommendations for accommodations.** Depending on the impact of the condition on the individual, suggestions or recommendations for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and/or collateral support services that can help in the review and determination process. As appropriate, recommendations for collateral medical, psychological, and/or educational support services or training that would be beneficial may also be included. Recommendations from professionals with a history of working with the individual provide valuable information for the review process. They will be considered in the evaluation of requests for accommodation and/or auxiliary aids. Where such recommendations are appropriate for the college/university setting and are congruent with the programs, services, and benefits offered by the (College/University) they will be given deference. When recommendations go beyond services and benefits that can be provided by the College, referrals to area service providers may be necessary.
7. **The credentials of the diagnosing professional(s).** Information describing the certification, licensure, and/or the professional training of individuals conducting the evaluation should be provided.

**The review process** includes an examination of the presented documentation to determine the functional limitation resulting from the disability and how that limitation impacts the goals and standards of the program or course. Temporary accommodations can be offered in the interim, but a final determination of accommodations will not be made until documentation is complete.