

## **Guidelines for Documentation of Psychiatric or Psychological Disorders**

Spartanburg Methodist College is committed to ensuring equal access for persons with disabilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students who wish to obtain accommodations for a disability must submit documentation of the disability to the Accessibility Resources office. It is the responsibility of the student with a disability to obtain and pay for this documentation.

The purpose of the documentation is twofold. First, it must establish that the student is a person with a disability. The documentation must also provide a rationale for authorizing reasonable accommodations. Accommodations allow equal access for the student with a disability.

Accommodations should be appropriate to a student's current level of functioning. In general, the evaluation should be conducted *within one year* of the date of request for services. Exceptions may be made in the case of a disability of a permanent and unchanging nature. If the disability is less stable, more frequent updates may be required.

Documentation for a psychiatric or psychological disability should consist of a written statement, evaluation report, or a detailed letter from a licensed mental health practitioner or physician who diagnosed the disorder and/or is responsible for treatment of the disorder. The written statement must comply with the guidelines described below. Please note that a 504 Plan or an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) does not generally provide enough information to meet these documentation guidelines. It will be accepted as supplemental information.

### **Criteria for Documentation of Psychiatric or Psychological Disorders**

#### **Documentation should:**

- reflect the student's current level of functioning and should generally be one year old or less.
- be provided by a licensed mental health professional or physician who is qualified to diagnose the type of condition for which accommodation is being requested. The practitioner should not be related to the person being evaluated.
- be typed on letterhead, dated, and signed by the evaluator. Documentation on prescription pads will not be accepted.
- include a clearly stated diagnosis of the disabling condition, the date of diagnosis, and the date of most recent contact with the individual.
- include a description of observed symptoms that meet the DSM-IV or V diagnostic criteria for the disorder.
- present the history of the individual relevant to the disorder, including any history of previous accommodations.
- include a clear description of the limitations in academic or social functioning resulting from the disabling condition, as well as a description of the impact of medications or other treatments prescribed.
- include recommendations concerning accommodations needed in an academic setting.

**All documentation should be sent to:**

Accessibility Resources  
Spartanburg Methodist College  
1000 Powell Mill Rd  
Spartanburg, SC 29301  
Phone: 864-587-4272  
Fax: 864-587-4359  
Email: [disabilityservices@smcsc.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@smcsc.edu)