Fairleigh Dickinson University
College at Florham
Disability Support Services

General Philosophy

Fairleigh Dickinson University – College at Florham, in accord with the policies underlying Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 works to ensure that reasonable accommodations are implemented for enrolled students with documented disabilities to function in the academic environment. All admitted students are judged by the appropriate admissions officer to have the ability to succeed academically, and all students are required to meet the same academic standards. At the same time, FDU recognizes that documented disabilities and potential learning differences may require accommodations. We are committed to helping all students develop fully and complete successfully their degree requirements.

What Are "Appropriate Academic Accommodations"?

How Are They Implemented?

When a student registers with the Office of Disability Support Services (ODSS), accommodations and academic adjustments are determined by the Director of ODSS. All requested accommodations and/or academic adjustments must be determined to be appropriate to the student's documented needs. Approved accommodations are recorded on an "Approved Accommodations Summary" form kept in the student's file, which is not automatically sent to faculty but is available to faculty upon request.

After modifications have been granted, or as early in the semester as possible, ODSS recommends that the student and faculty member privately discuss how the limiting effects of the student's disability may impact on the completion of course requirements, and what accommodations and/or academic adjustments may need to be implemented to provide equal access.

A student must give a faculty or staff member adequate time to honor his/her request for accommodations. Depending on the level of complexity of the request, a minimum of two weeks’ advanced notice is suggested.

Appropriate academic accommodations may fall into one of several categories and may include:

- Services – e.g. reader services, changes to the classroom environment, note-taking (depending on availability of a note-taker otherwise most appropriate alternative will be provided)
- Alternative media – e.g. large print, recorded textbooks, braille materials
- Adaptive technology – e.g. adaptive computer keyboards, assistive listening devices, computer voice input and output, magnifying microscopes
- Accommodations to Policies, Procedures, Practices – e.g. alternative testing procedures, alternate test formats, course substitutions
- Other adaptations that enable a student to enjoy equal access to the benefits and privileges of the college’s programs, services and activities
Self-Identification

Fairleigh Dickinson University, College at Florham acknowledges that the decision to self-identify is a personal matter and makes no pre-admission inquiry about candidate's disability.

If a candidate wishes to inquire about the disability support services offered by FDU, a confidential meeting with the Director/ coordinator of Disability Support Services may be arranged by contacting the office at 973-443-8079.

Upon acceptance to FDU and a minimum of 30 days prior to the start of classes, admitted students are encouraged to discuss the nature of their disability with and to submit documentation of their disability to the Office of Disability Support Services. Accommodations can then be determined, thereby allowing students the appropriate resources to assist them in achieving their academic potential at the start of their program of study. Admitted students requesting accommodations are required to complete and submit a Self-identification form (along with appropriate documentation) to the Office of Disability Support Services.

Confidentiality

Information is disclosed to FDU staff and/or faculty strictly in accordance with the Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations.

Please note: Any documentation voluntarily submitted to an admissions officer is not forwarded to the Office of Disability Support Services. No action on documentation is taken until the student requesting accommodations meets with the Office of Disability Support Services.

Procedures for Documenting a Disability

Each student requesting accommodations and support services through the Office of Disability Support Services is required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and ODSS policies. As defined by Section 504 and the ADA, an individual with a disability is a person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major life activity, including learning. Academic accommodations are implemented to provide equal access to college programs and services.

Documentation for a Physical or Sensory Disability

Documentation must include the following information:

1. Diagnosis - A current medical diagnosis including appropriate medical reports, relevant medical history, and a clinical summary.
2. Current treatment - Identification of treatment, medications, assistive devices, or other services currently prescribed or in use.
3. Evaluation of impact - Identification of the substantial limitation on a major life activity presented by the disability, and a description of the current functional impact of the disability in a college setting. The assessment should validate the need for services based on the impact of the student's disability and level of functioning in an educational setting.
4. **Specific recommendations** - Suggested accommodations and/or academic adjustments, with an explanation supporting the need for each accommodation to achieve equal access.

In order to establish eligibility as an individual with a disability, the student must submit documentation that is comprehensive and appropriate to a postsecondary setting, and that clearly specifies the presence of a disability. **Documentation must be current (within the past 2 years); if the documentation is not current, students may be required to submit updated information and/or documentation.**

Any specific recommendations for accommodations must be based on significant functional limitations and must be supported by the diagnostic assessment. Accommodations and academic adjustments cannot be implemented until the student's documentation meets these criteria. Prior history of having received an accommodation does not, in and of itself, warrant or guarantee its continued provision. **An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan is not always sufficient documentation of a disability.**

Documentation of a physical or sensory disability must be provided by a doctor or other medical professional with training and expertise related to the particular medical condition identified. The diagnostic report must be submitted on official letterhead with name(s), title(s), professional credentials, address, and telephone/number of the person providing the documentation. All reports must be signed and dated.

Submission of documentation is not the same as the request for services. The student must initiate the request for services and/or accommodations by following the University's Accommodations Procedures. The Office of Disability Support Services is ultimately responsible for determining appropriate accommodations, if any, based on the documentation provided.

**Documentation for a Specific Learning Disability**

Students with Learning Disabilities who are seeking support services from Fairleigh Dickinson University on the basis of a diagnosed specific learning disability are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Protection under civil rights statutes is based upon documentation of a disability that currently substantially limits some major life activity, which may include learning.

The following guidelines are provided in the interest of assuring that documentation is appropriate to verify eligibility and support requests for reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids at the postsecondary level.

The Directors of the New Jersey Special Needs Regional Centers for Students with Learning Disabilities are available to consult with diagnosticians regarding further explanation of any of these guidelines.

**DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES**

I. Qualifications of the Evaluator

Professionals conducting assessments, rendering diagnoses of specific learning disabilities, and making recommendations for appropriate accommodations must be qualified to do so. Trained and certified and/or licensed psychologists, learning disabilities specialists (LDT-Cs), and educational therapists are typically involved in the process of assessment. Experience in working with an adolescent or adult population is preferred. It is not considered appropriate for professionals to evaluate members of their families.
II. Documentation

A. Testing needs to be comprehensive. It is not acceptable to administer only one test for the purpose of diagnosis. Best practice suggests that the complete battery of every instrument be used. Minimally, domains to be addressed must include (but are not limited to):

- **Aptitude:** The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-III (WAIS-III) is the preferred instrument. The Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised: Tests of Cognitive Ability or the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale: Fourth Edition are also acceptable. Note: The Slosson Intelligence Test and the Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test are not appropriate.
- **Achievement:** Current levels of functioning in reading, mathematics, and written language are required. Acceptable instruments include the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised: Tests of Achievement or the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT) for age appropriate students. Note: The Wide Range Achievement Test is NOT a comprehensive measure of achievement.
- **Information Processing:** Specific areas of information processing (e.g., short- and long-term memory; sequential memory; auditory and visual perception/processing; processing speed) should be assessed. Information from subtests on the WAIS-III or the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Ability as well as other instruments relevant to the presenting learning problem(s) may be used to address these areas.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list or to restrict assessment in other pertinent and helpful areas, such as vocational interests and aptitudes.

B. Testing should be current. Because the provision of all reasonable accommodations and services is based upon assessment of the current impact of the student's disabilities on his/her academic performance at the postsecondary level, it is in a student's best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation. In some instances, documentation may be inadequate in scope or content. It may not address the student's current level of functioning or need for accommodations because observed changes may have occurred in the student's performance since the previous assessment was conducted. In such cases, an update will be necessary. Since the purpose of the update is to determine the student's current need for accommodations at the postsecondary level, the update, conducted by a qualified professional, should include a rationale for ongoing services and accommodations.

III. Substantiation of the Learning Disability

A. Documentation should validate the need for services based on the individual's current level of functioning in a postsecondary educational setting. A comprehensive assessment battery and the resulting diagnostic report should include background information; a diagnostic interview; assessment of aptitude, academic achievement, and information processing; and a diagnosis.

B. There must be clear and specific evidence and identification of a learning disability. Individual "learning styles" and "learning differences" in and of themselves do not constitute a learning disability. The diagnostician is expected to use direct language in the diagnosis and documentation of a learning disability, avoiding the use of terms such as "suggests" or "is indicative of." *(Please provide this information to your diagnostician.)*

If the data indicate that a learning disability is not present, the evaluator should state that conclusion in the report.

C. A well-written clinical diagnostic summary based on the comprehensive evaluation process as defined is a necessary component of the report **The Clinical Summary** should include:

A written summary of background information about the student's educational, medical, and family histories that relate to the learning disability;
Demonstration that the evaluator has ruled out alternative explanations for academic problems as a result of poor education, poor motivation and/or study skills, emotional problems, attentional problems, and cultural or language differences;

- Indication of how patterns in the student's cognitive ability, achievement, and information processing reflect the presence of a learning disability;
- Indication of the substantial limitation to learning or other major life activity presented by the learning disability and the degree to which it affects the individual at the postsecondary level in the learning context for which the accommodations are being requested;
- Indication as to why specific accommodations are needed and how the effects of the specific disability are accommodated; and
- An addendum of scores.

The report should be printed on letterhead, signed, and dated; the signature of the evaluator should include his or her credentials.

IV. Recommendations for Accommodations

A. The diagnostic report should include specific recommendations for accommodations as well as an explanation as to why each accommodation is recommended.

B. A description of any accommodation and/or auxiliary aid that has been used at the secondary or postsecondary level should be discussed. Include information about the specific conditions under which the accommodation was used (e.g., standardized testing, final exams) and whether or not it benefited the student. If no accommodations have been previously provided, a detailed explanation as to why none has been used and the rationale for the student's currently needing accommodation(s) must be provided.

C. Accommodation needs can change over time, and are not always identified through the initial diagnostic process. Conversely, a prior history of accommodation does not in and of itself warrant the provision of a similar accommodation at the postsecondary level.

D. Before your third year of enrollment at FDU, you may be required to provide updated documentation to support accommodations.

Contact us:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mailing Address:</th>
<th>Contact Person:</th>
<th>Office Hours:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office of Disability Support Services</td>
<td>Mr. Darshan Shah</td>
<td>Monday to Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fairleigh Dickinson University</td>
<td>Director, Disability Support Services</td>
<td>9:30 AM to 5:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College at Florham</td>
<td>285, Madison Avenue, M-SCO-03</td>
<td>Weekend and Holidays:</td>
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<tr>
<td>285 Madison Avenue, M-SCO-03</td>
<td>Madison, New Jersey, 07940</td>
<td>Closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Madison, New Jersey, 07940</td>
<td>Tel: 973-443-8079</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fax: 973-443-8932</td>
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<td></td>
<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:dshah@fdu.edu">dshah@fdu.edu</a></td>
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How to receive academic accommodations?

Step 1: Collect Supporting Documentation: In order to receive accommodations at Fairleigh Dickinson University, the student, will need to send a copy of his/her most recent diagnostic evaluations to the Office of Disability Support Services. NOTE: While IEP and 504 Plans from high school are sometimes helpful, they alone are not always sufficient.

Step 2: Schedule a Meeting: Set up a meeting with the director/ coordinator of Disability Support Services. Make sure to bring all appropriate documentation related to your condition/disability if you haven’t already done so. If you are unsure what documentation to bring, or have yet to be tested, call and discuss the situation with our staff member prior to the meeting.

Step 3: Discuss Procedures and Determine Accommodations: Determination of accommodations will be based on documentation. During the meeting, you will learn about the process for receiving disability support services and learn what in-class accommodations you will receive for the current semester. Based upon the outcome of the meeting, the Office of Disability Support Services produces letters of accommodation for your professors.

Please note that, the Office of Disability Support Services will not mail out or forward your accommodation letters directly to the student’s home address or to the faculty members. The student must come to pick up his/her accommodation letters from the Office of Disability Support Services and give the accommodation letters to the respective faculty members.

Step 4: Give Accommodation Letters to Your Professors: Pick up letters from the Office of Disability Support Services and hand deliver them to your professors. The process of hand delivering accommodation letters to your professors will allow you to initiate dialogue regarding your situation and particular needs with your professor. The accommodation letters do not disclose details of your disability.

It is strongly recommended that you provide your professors with letters of accommodation within the first two weeks of the semester. Accommodations will not be provided until your professor receives your accommodation letters. Accommodations are not retroactive.

Step 5: Monitor Progress and Ask if you need further assistance: As the semester progresses, it is your responsibility to monitor the progress in your classes. If you require additional assistance in ensuring the satisfactory delivery of your accommodations, contact the Office of Disability Support Services immediately.

If you require academic assistance or additional support services, contact the office and you will be referred to the appropriate campus resource.

Step 6: Future Semesters: You are required to come and pick up your accommodation letters each semester from the Office of Disability Support Services. The letters will be ready to pick up during the 1st week of each semester. If, you are seeking changes to your accommodations, please feel free to contact our director.

You can reach us at 973-443-8079 or email: dshah@fdu.edu
Frequently Asked Questions:

1. If I register with Disability Support Services, will that show up on my academic record?

No. All disability documentation and information related to a student with a disability is maintained in a confidential file and will not reflect anywhere on your academic records.

2. Are there separate admission standards for students with disabilities?

No. Students with disabilities must meet the same admission standards as their non-disabled peers.

3. When and where do I send my disability documentation?

We encourage applicants for admission to send a copy of their disability documentation to the Office of Disability Support Services after the admissions process is completed and the student has decided to attend FDU. Our professional staff member will review the documentation based on the appropriate guidelines to determine if the applicant qualifies for academic accommodations at FDU. The director/ coordinator of Disability Support Services will then notify the applicant of any approved accommodations or the need for any additional information.

4. If I am receiving accommodations elsewhere, will I automatically qualify for the same at FDU?

No. The Office of Disability Support Services reviews all disability documentation according to our guidelines. Therefore, you may or may not qualify for the same accommodations that you have received. For this reason, you are required to send a copy of your disability documentation to the Office of Disability Support Services.

5. I cannot write due to a broken arm, do you provide assistance for temporary disability?

Yes. We do provide academic accommodations for temporary disability. Accommodations may differ from person to person, depending on the student's disability. The Office of Disability Support Services can also provide a note-taker (depending on the availability) or an appropriate alternate accommodation for students who cannot take notes due to some temporary medical condition.
6. What is the difference between Disability Support Services and the Regional Center in terms of provision of academic accommodations?

The Office of Disability Support Services provides academic accommodations for students, who have a physical or mental disability, which substantially limits a major life activity, including learning. Whereas, the Regional Center specifically focuses on the needs of students with language based learning disabilities.

For both departments, students are required to get accepted through general admission process at FDU. Admission to the Regional Center program is through a separate application process. In the event a student is not accepted to the Regional Center, and the student is accepted at the university, the student can apply and get academic accommodations from Disability Support Services.

Many of the services provided by the Regional Center are also provided by the Disability Support Services for students with specific learning disabilities. On the other hand, however, the Regional Center provides greater individualized attention, tutorial support and academic advising for students with language based learning disabilities. For detailed information about both programs please contact the respective department.

Contact Information:

The Office of Disability Support Services- 973-443-8079 (Voice)  
The Regional Center - 973-443-8981 (Voice)
Office of Disability Support Services
Disability Disclosure Form

In accordance with provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act and ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA), Fairleigh Dickinson University, College at Florham provides reasonable accommodations needed to ensure equal access to the programs and activities of the University to those students with documented disabilities. In order to be eligible for disability-based accommodations under Section 504 or the ADA, the student must be shown to have an impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. Qualifying disabilities may be related to (but are not limited to) mobility impairments, vision impairments, hearing impairments, chronic conditions, and learning disabilities. A student who requests support services or academic accommodations on the basis of a disability is required to submit appropriate professional documentation supporting the legitimacy of the request.

The Office of Disability Support Services coordinates services for students with disabilities. Students requesting accommodations from FDU should: complete and return this form along with documentation for disability to:

Mr. Darshan Shah
Director, Disability Support Services
Fairleigh Dickinson University, College at Florham
285, Madison Avenue, M-SCO-03
Madison, New Jersey, 07940

All information about a student’s disability is considered to be confidential and will remain within the Office of Disability Support Services. All students requesting accommodations must provide current (within last 2 years) documentation from a qualified professional. Accommodations are class specific and it is the student’s responsibility to request accommodations. A meeting must be scheduled with FDU’s Disability Specialist to determine eligibility for such accommodations. Please note:

Completion of this form alone does not ensure access to services.

Name: ____________________________________________Student I.D. (if have one)______________________
Home Address: ______________________________________________________
Home Phone: ______________________________ Cell Phone: ______________________________
Date of Birth: ___________________ Email: ____________________________________________

☐ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder ☐ Psychiatric/Mental Health
Specify: __________________________________________ Specify: ________________________________
☐ Learning Disability ☐ Health Impairment/Chronic Medical Condition
Specify: __________________________________________ Specify: ________________________________
☐ Mobility Impairment ☐ Traumatic Brain Injury
Specify: __________________________________________ Specify: ________________________________
☐ Blind/Low Vision/Visual Impairment ☐ Other 1: ________________________________
Specify: __________________________________________
☐ Deaf/Hearing Impairment ☐ Other 2: ________________________________
Specify: __________________________________________

By signing this document, I confirm that I have received information and understood the ‘Handout of Disability Support Service and Documentation Policy for receiving accommodations at Fairleigh Dickinson University, College at Florham.

Student’s Signature: _________________________ Term applying for: Fall/ Spring/ Summer of _________(year)

For office use only:

Form received on: __________ Documents received on: __________ Received by: __________

(Form updated on 04/25/2013)