

## Accommodations

Otis College of Art and Design is committed to providing equality of education opportunity to all students. To assist in increasing the student's learning outcome, Students with Disabilities Services provides a variety of support to students with physical, mental, and learning disabilities. These services are in accord with the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Once a student is classified as disabled under Section 504, the student is entitled to reasonable accommodations to meet their special needs in the regular classroom setting, including honors courses if the student is otherwise qualified. The following guidelines are designed to provide students, faculty, staff, and other interested individuals with a general understanding of the components of documentation necessary to confirm the existence of a disability, its impact on the student's educational performance, and the need for reasonable accommodations. It is impossible to predict which accommodations will be provided for each student, as each disability and the circumstances surrounding the particular disability are unique. A few examples of services and accommodations, which might be available to certain qualified individuals, include:

- Notification of Reasonable Accommodation letters for faculty
- Note takers
- Extended time on exams
- American Sign language interpreters
- Real-Time Captioning
- Materials in Alternative Text
- Reduced distraction exam areas

Students with Disabilities Services, in conjunction with Student Counseling Services, can provide referrals to appropriate community agencies whose services can benefit persons with disabilities. Tutoring services are available through the Student Resources Center and are free to all Otis College of Art and Design students.

If you would like to know whether the college has in its possession any particular software, adaptive technology, or other piece of equipment, please make your inquiry as specific as possible and SDS will inform you whether such an item is currently available for use at the college.

**Please Note:** Students must meet with the Director of Learning Resources as early as possible before the beginning of any semester in order to ensure timely processing of accommodations.

## **Guidelines for Documentation**

Students are not eligible to receive accommodations from instructors until all proper documentation has been received and evaluated by Students with Disabilities Services. Indeed, no faculty member will provide accommodations until they have received a Notification of Reasonable Accommodations letter from SDS.

**The professional staff at the Otis College of Art and Design Student Resources Center determine on an individual basis, when sufficient documentation has been provided to establish the need for reasonable and appropriate accommodations.**

Prior history of a certain accommodation does not guarantee its continued provision. Neither an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), nor a 504 Plan is sufficient documentation of a disability; however, they can be included with the required evaluation. In order to receive accommodations and other support services from Students with Disabilities Services, students are required to submit certain documentation which will verify eligibility under the American with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The following information is provided to assist the student in ensuring that the documentation is complete and appropriate.

Documentation should be current, preferably within the last three years (the age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the condition, the current status of the student, and the student's specific request for accommodation). The professional who conducts the testing should be an impartial individual who is not related to the student. All documentation will be treated confidentially.

## Learning Disabilities

Student must have a formal and comprehensive psycho educational assessment documenting the existence of a learning disability. This evaluation must be performed by a professional diagnostician (i.e. licensed clinical psychologist, rehabilitation psychologist, learning disability diagnostician, educational therapists, neuropsychologists, etc.) trained in the assessment of learning disabilities. Diagnostic reports should include the names, titles, professional credentials, addresses, and phone numbers of the evaluators as well as the date(s) of testing.

The evaluations should be no older than three years. This span of time acknowledges that the need for accommodations changes over time and is not always identified through the initial diagnostic process.

The report must include a clear statement of the learning disability and the reasoning for this particular diagnosis as supported by current diagnostic battery. A student's individual "learning style," "learning deficit," "learning differences," and "learning disorders" do not, in and of themselves constitute a disability. Documentation must demonstrate that the learning disability *currently and substantially* limits a major life activity, including learning. Patterns of the individual's cognitive abilities, achievement, and information processing reflecting the presence of a learning disability must also be indicated. It is important to rule out alternative explanations such as emotional, attentional, or motivational problems that may be interfering with learning but do not constitute a learning disability.

A summary of the diagnostic interview is to be included in the report along with psycho-educational evaluation. Relevant information regarding the student's academic history and learning processes should be addressed. The summary should also include developmental, medical, psychosocial, and family history as it relates to the student's current level of functioning. The diagnostic process must be comprehensive and include a thorough clinical interview. An appropriate psycho-educational evaluation must include comprehensive measures in each of the following areas.

**Aptitude:** The evaluation must contain a complete intellectual assessment with all subtests and standard scores reported.

- Wechsler Adult intelligence Scale - Third edition (WAIS)
  - Must include full scale IQ, Verbal IQ, performance IQ, and all subset scores.
- Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale - Fourth edition
- Kaufman Adolescent & Adult Intelligence test

- Woodcock Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-Revised
  - Must include either tests 1-7 or 1-14

**Academic achievement:** The evaluation must contain a comprehensive achievement battery with all subtests, percentiles and standard scores reported. The battery must include current levels of functioning in the areas of reading (decoding, comprehension and fluency), mathematics (calculation and problem solving), as well as oral language and written expression (spelling, punctuation and capitalization, writing samples, and fluency).

- Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery III - Tests of Achievement
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)
- Nelson-Denny Reading Skills Test
- Stanford Test for Academic Skills
- Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests Revised
- Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA)
- Test of Mathematical Abilities (TOMA)
- Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test
- Test of Written Language

**Cognitive/information processing:** The evaluation must address all of the following areas with all subtests, percentiles and standard scores reported: Short and long term memory (storage and retrieval), auditory and visual perception/processing, and processing speed.

- Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery III - Tests of Cognitive Ability

The above list is not intended to limit assessment in other areas that may be pertinent to the individual's needs.

Reports must indicate recommended accommodations that are appropriate at the postsecondary level. Specific test results must support these recommendations.

## **Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**

Documentation should be no more than three years old. This span of time acknowledges that the need for accommodations changes over time and is not always identified through the initial diagnostic process.

This evaluation must be performed by a professional diagnostician (i.e. licensed clinical psychologist, neuropsychologist, psychiatrist, and other qualified medical professionals.) trained in differential diagnosis and having direct experience with adolescents and adults with ADHD.

There should be some evidence of early impairment. ADHD is first exhibited in childhood and manifests itself in more than one setting. Therefore, the evaluator must gather historical and academic information

The report should also contain evidence of current impairment. Assessment should consist of more than a self-report. It should include a history of attentional symptoms, including ongoing impulsive, hyperactive or inattentive behavior that has significantly impaired functioning over time.

The assessment should also examine the possibility of a co-existing diagnosis. It should explore possible alternative diagnoses including psychiatric and medical disorders as well as any educational or cultural factors which may impact the individual and result in behaviors similar to ADHD.

Individuals will need to undergo a diagnostic battery of tests. Neuropsychological or psychoeducational assessment is critical in determining the current impact of ADHD on the individual's ability to function in different settings. Assessment must include standardized measures for inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity as delineated in the DSM-IV.

The diagnostic report must be a comprehensive interpretive summary synthesizing the evaluator's judgment for the diagnosis of ADHD. The report must include:

- All quantitative information in standard scores and/or percentiles; all relevant developmental, medical, familial, medication, psychosocial, behavioral and academic information;
- A specific diagnosis of ADHD based on the DSM-IV diagnostic criteria. The report must also identify in clear, direct language, the substantial limitation of a major life function presented by ADHD.
- Specific recommendations for accommodations based on significant functional limitations must be supported by the assessment.

- Official letterhead with names, titles, professional credentials, addresses, and phone/fax number of the evaluator as well as the date(s) of testing.

## **Deaf or Hearing Impaired**

Services are available to all deaf and hearing impaired students at Otis College of Art and Design who have unaided bilateral hearing loss of at least 30 db.

Documentation must include:

- A clear statement of deafness or hearing impairment with an audiogram that has been completed within the last three years.
- A summary of assessment procedures used to make the evaluation and a narrative summary of results.
- Name, address, phone, title and/or credentials of the audiologist.

## **Head/Traumatic Brain Injuries**

Head Injury or Traumatic Brain Injury is considered medical or clinical diagnoses. Individuals qualified to render a diagnosis for these disorders are practitioners who have been trained in the assessment of Head Injury or Traumatic Brain Injury. Recommended practitioners may include physicians, neurologists licensed clinical psychologists, school psychologists, neuropsychologists and psychiatrists. Documentation must include:

- A clear statement of the head injury or traumatic brain injury and the probable site of lesion.
- A summary of cognitive and achievement measures used and evaluation results including standardized scores or percentiles used to make the diagnosis.
- A summary of present residual symptoms that meet the criteria for diagnosis.
- Medical information relating to student's needs to include the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment.
- Suggestions of reasonable accommodations that might be appropriate at the postsecondary level are encouraged. These recommendations should be supported by the diagnosis.

## **Physical Disabilities and/or Systematic Illnesses**

Physical disabilities and systemic illnesses include but are not limited to: Mobility Impairments, Multiple Sclerosis, Cerebral Palsy, Chemical Sensitivities, spinal cord injuries, Cancer, AIDS, Muscular Dystrophy, and Spinal Bifida. Any physical disability and/or systemic illnesses are considered to be in the medical domain and require the expertise of a physician, including a neurologist, psychiatrist or other medical specialist with experience and expertise in the area for which accommodations are being requested. Documentation must include:

- A clear statement of the medical diagnosis of the physical disability or systemic illness.
- Documentation for eligibility should be current, preferably within the last three years (the age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's request for accommodations).
- A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis, including evaluation results and standardized scores if applicable.
- A description of present symptoms that meet the criteria for diagnosis.
- Medical information relating to the student's needs to include the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment

Suggestions of reasonable accommodations that might be appropriate at the postsecondary level are encouraged. These recommendations should be supported by the diagnosis.

## **Psychiatric/Psychological Disabilities**

Psychiatric and psychological disabilities include but are not limited to: Depressive Disorders, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Bipolar Disorders, and Dissociative Disorders. A diagnosis by a licensed mental health professional (psychologist, psychiatrist, or a neurologist) is required and must include the diagnostician's license number. Documentation must include:

- A clear statement of the disability, including the DSM-IV diagnosis and a summary of present symptoms. This diagnosis should be based upon a comprehensive clinical interview including psychological testing (when such testing is clinically appropriate).
- A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis and a summary of evaluation results, including standardized or percentile scores.

- Medical information relating to the student's needs to include the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of postsecondary education.
- Suggestions of reasonable accommodations that might be appropriate at the postsecondary level. These recommendations must be supported by the diagnosis.

Students possessing the required documentation should contact Students with Disabilities Services, located in the Student Resources Center, before the semester begins. Upon student request, faculty will be contacted concerning accommodations. Reasonable accommodations will be provided for their disability with support from LAS and their studio department. If you have any questions, contact Carol D. Branch, Ph.D. Director, Learning Resources at 310-846-2554 or [ananse@otis.edu](mailto:ananse@otis.edu).