Student Disability Accommodations

(Notice: Updated on 4-14-2022)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. The purpose of these laws is to remove barriers that prevent qualified individuals with disabilities from enjoying the same opportunities available to persons without disabilities.

A student requesting an accommodation based on a disability must have a disability covered by law and be qualified with or without reasonable accommodation. At the postsecondary level, students are required to self-identify and affirmatively make a request for an accommodation. The University is only obligated to provide reasonable accommodations, and it is not required to fundamentally alter its programs to accommodate a student. Thus, not all accommodation requests will necessarily be granted.

The University encourages the timely request of accommodations because the documentation and determination process may take some time. However, accommodation requests can be made and will be accepted and considered at any time. Do note, though, that granted accommodations are not effective retroactively so that students will not be able to re-do assignments or re-take exams with accommodations that they originally took before they asked for and received accommodations.

At MNU, all disability documentation will be reviewed on an individualized, case-by case basis. Determination of accommodations is an interactive process which includes diagnostic information, the student's self-report, and the professional judgment of the MNU Academic Success Center. Determinations as to whether accommodation requests would fall short of fundamental academic standards will be based upon the professional judgment of faculty and academic administrators. An interview will be conducted with each student and is extremely valuable in substantiating the existence of a disability, understanding its impacts, and identifying appropriate accommodations.

Reasonable accommodations are individually determined and should be based on the functional impact of the condition and its likely interaction with the environment (course assignments, program requirements, physical design, etc.) As such, accommodation recommendations may vary from individual to individual and from environment to environment for students with the same disability diagnosis. Documentation of a specific disability does not translate directly into specific accommodations.

WHAT SHOULD YOUR DISABILITY DOCUMENTATION INCLUDE?

The MNU Academic Success Center is often asked what disability documentation is needed in order to determine eligibility for accommodations. Documentation that is submitted by students or obtained by the university will need to be prepared and evaluated by professionals with appropriate credentials. Each student's situation and documentation is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Complete and thorough information is necessary, though the extent of documentation required may vary depending on the circumstances. Please note that documentation should be

dated within three (3) years of the request to be considered current unless the documented disability is one that does not substantially change over time. Guidelines regarding what we look for in appropriate documentation for specific disabilities is as follows:

Learning Disability

- Current diagnosis by a qualified professional in that area (e.g., licensed psychologist or licensed educational diagnostician)
- Information regarding tests and assessments used to make the diagnosis, including any test scores used
- Specific diagnosis
- Clinical summary indicating substantial limitations to learning or other major life activities
- Current IEP/records of prior accommodations used and rationale for using them.
- Suggestions for educational accommodations (should be supported by the diagnosis).

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

- Current diagnosis by a qualified professional in that area (i.e. licensed psychologist or psychiatrist)
- Information regarding tests and assessments used to make the diagnosis, including any test scores used
- Current medication and/or treatment plan, if any
- Suggestions for educational accommodations (should be supported by the diagnosis).

Brain Injury

- A current statement of residual symptoms/limitations caused by the brain injury
- A current neuropsychological report or summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis
- Medical information to be considered in a college environment, including medication needs
- Suggestions for reasonable accommodations (should be supported by the diagnosis).

Blind and Low Vision Students

- A current diagnosis of visual impairment including acuity, prognosis, and prescription of corrective and/or low vision aids
- A summary of present functioning (include prognosis if vision loss is progressive)
- Suggestions for reasonable accommodations (should be supported by the diagnosis)

Deaf and/or reduced hearing students

- A current audiologist report

- A summary of present functioning
- Suggestions for reasonable accommodations (should be supported by the diagnosis).

Physical/Orthopedic/Health Disabilities

- Doctor's verification and diagnosis
- Relevant medical history stating functional limitation(s)
- Current medications, including side effects which may affect educational performance
- A description of present symptoms, fluctuating conditions/symptoms, and prognosis
- Suggestions for reasonable accommodations (should be supported by the diagnosis)
- A description of personal care concerns, if applicable.

Psychiatric Disabilities

- A current diagnosis, including pertinent history, from a qualified professional in that area (i.e. psychiatrist/psychologist)
- A description of current symptoms, fluctuating conditions/symptoms, and prognosis
- A summary of assessment procedures used to make the diagnosis
- Current medications, including side effects which may affect educational performance
- Suggestions of reasonable accommodations (should be supported by the diagnosis).

Temporary Disabilities

- Doctor's verification and diagnosis
- A description of present symptoms, fluctuating conditions/symptoms, and prognosis
- Suggestions for reasonable accommodations (should be supported by the diagnosis). Should also state the length of time they will be needed.

ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTER ADA AND SECTION 504 PROCESS

Notification to Students
Students are notified by instructors, course syllabi, and the MNU website that requests for accommodations should be directed to the Coordinator of the Academic Success Center. The Academic Success Center is located on the first floor of the Mabee Library. Students may contact the center at 913-971-3387 or asc@mnu.edu. Again, it is the student's obligation to self-identify and make a request for accommodations.

Initial Appointment Scheduling
Students contact the Academic Success Center to arrange an appointment with the Coordinator. They are then advised that they should present signed documentation from a qualified professional bearing the official letterhead of the professional. It is recommended that the letter include a description of the professional's credentials, area of specialty and information about any special qualifications that the professional has in helping people with your specific type of disability. Documentation should include a description of your disability-related impairments as they relate

to your ability to learn and participate in your academic program. Documentation should include a description of any tests, assessments, facts, observations, records, other materials, and/or evaluations that the professional relied on in arriving at their specific diagnosis. The professional's letter should also provide a list of accommodations which they believe would allow you to fully and equally participate in your educational program. In provided this proposed list of accommodations, the professional should describe how they decided on these accommodations and how they expect the accommodations will help you. Please note, however, that specific accommodations being recommended does not guarantee that those accommodations will be granted and the University may provide alternative accommodation instead.

Initial Appointment
During the initial meeting, documentation is inspected by the director. MNU reserves the right to request further documentation if the initial document does not provide sufficient information. If documentation sufficiently describes the condition, the student is then asked to sign a release of information form. This allows the Coordinator to contact other parties who may need to facilitate/provide the requested accommodations.

Some of the typical accommodations offered:

Extended time on exams
Readers/taped exams
Reduced distraction rooms
Tape recorded lectures
Sign language interpreters
Specific classroom seating
Note takers

This is not an all-inclusive list.

Accommodations Implementation
Accommodations request forms are prepared for the instructor of each course listed the course schedule. These forms show the requested accommodations and what action should be taken to accomplish each. Students are instructed to take the forms to instructors and return signed copies to the Academic Success Center. Signed copies are placed in students' accommodations files which are stored securely within the center. If instructors have questions about the process or concerns about the requested accommodations affecting the integrity of the course, they should contact the Coordinator of the Academic Success Center.

Verification of Services Provided
During the semester a follow up form is sent to each student to confirm that the requested accommodations are indeed being facilitated/provided.

Modifications and Additional Accommodations
Students who have been granted accommodations may request additional accommodations and/or modifications to their already-granted accommodations at any time by contacting the Academic Success Center.

MNU ADA AND SECTION 504 STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Students who believe they have not been granted an accommodation that they are entitled to or who are faced with the situation where an accommodation is not being appropriately implemented may invoke the following procedures:

1. Attempt to resolve issue informally by contacting the Coordinator of the Academic Success Center.
2. If direct discussion is unsuccessful, an informal discussion with the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Chief Academic Officer is the next step. The VPAA/CAO can be reached at 913-971-3393 or cao@mnu.edu.
3. A meeting with the student and the involved personnel is arranged by the VPAA/CAO in an attempt to resolve the dispute.
4. If the dispute is unresolved at the informal level shown above in numbers 1-3, the Student Grievance Procedure is followed with the following modifications:
   - Committee of 4-5 persons is formed within 10 days.
   - Copy of the findings or recommendations are gathered within 15 working days of committee formation.
   - Appropriate action carried out within 5 working days based upon committee recommendation.
   - VPAA/CAO adheres to the decision of the committee and oversees the implementation of the recommendation.