LORAS COLLEGE

Lynch Office of Disability Services

(563) 588-7134 / Fax: (563) 588-7071

Recommendations for Professional Reports Documenting Accommodation Needs of Students with Psychological Disorders

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008, authorize the Lynch Office of Disability Services (LODS) and Loras College to safeguard qualified students enrolled at Loras College from discrimination on the basis of disability and to assure provision of reasonable accommodations. To qualify for services, LODS suggests students submit documentation and or disability history that describes how the condition directly and substantially limits a major life function such as learning.

The following documentation suggestions and other supporting documentation are to help the process of the student's request for accommodations. Completion of a LODS Disability History Update Form available at the Loras College website (http://myweb.loras.edu/Loras/LODS/LODSDisabilityHistoryUpdate.pdf) is required to determine qualification for services.

Components that may be included in the professional report:

Reports should be typewritten and signed on professional letterhead and include the name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator, including license or certification, area of specialization, employment, affiliation, and the state or province of practice. Please note that IEP's, SARs and 504 plans may not be considered as an assessment of limitations of a major life function, but could be integrated by the professional final report to reflex suggestions of history of accommodations.

I. Qualifications of the Evaluator

Professionals conducting assessments and rendering diagnoses of Psychological Disorder and making recommendations for accommodations should have comprehensive training and relevant experience with a psychiatric population. Examples of such professionals are Licensed Clinical or Counseling Psychologists, Licensed Social Workers and Psychiatrists.

II. Comprehensive Information that Verifies the Existence of the Condition

A comprehensive evaluation should provide information about the history of the condition and verify the existence of a current condition. The evaluator's report can include the following:

1. **Developmental, Psychological, Educational, and Accommodation History:** The report should discuss the history of the disorder. The report should also include information substantiated in medical and educational records as well as any family history deemed relevant by the examiner. Accommodation history should be discussed.
2. **Evidence of current impairment:** The report should describe the student's present learning difficulties including evidence of ongoing impairment in functioning at the time he or she was referred for the current evaluation. Documentation should include a current DSM-IV of DSM-V diagnosis including the criteria by which the diagnosis was determined. A definitive diagnostic statement be made and stated directly. **This statement should not use terms such as "suggests," "appears to," "is**

consistent with," "is indicative of' or similar language. Relevant current medical information should be included.

3. **Alternate causes ruled out:** The report demonstrates that the evaluator(s) has investigated and ruled out alternative learning, medical, educational, and/or cultural explanations for the impairment.
4. **Objective testing provided to demonstrate academic impairment.** Clear objective evidence of a disability provided through standardized testing in one or more cognitive areas. In order to substantiate the need for recommended accommodations, measures of attention, memory, learning, fluid reasoning, language, academic achievement, visual information processing, auditory processing, executive functioning or perceptual reasoning can be used. Informal inventories, surveys, brief tests such as Beck Inventories or direct observation by a qualified professional may be used in tandem with formal testing to establish the presence of a condition that affects learning.

III. Each recommended accommodation discussed individually and specific evidence support each accommodation requested in the report.

Accommodations are provided for a condition only when the condition materially restricts an individual's academic functioning and when there is a substantial limitation as compared to the general population. Accommodations are not provided for relative weaknesses, areas needing improvement, or below expectancy performance that is not directly related to a disability.

Each accommodation correlates with specific functional limitations that have been documented in the assessment. All data logically reflect the substantial limitation(s) to learning for which the individual is requesting accommodations.

These guidelines have been closely adapted from The University of Iowa, Iowa City.