



Muhlenberg College Office of Disability Services Documentation Guidelines

Autism Spectrum Disorders

 Muhlenberg College students with diagnosed disabilities are eligible for protections under the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) (revised in 2008) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended). The ADA Amendments Act 2008 retains the definition of a "disability" as (a) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual; (b) a record of such an impairment; or (c) being regarded as having such an impairment.

The ADA further defines mental impairment to include any mental or psychological disorders such as emotional or mental illness. The American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5) is frequently used as guidance for identifying psychiatric, behavioral, and mental health disorders. The DSM-5 combines into one category previously distinct but overlapping subtypes (Autistic Disorder, Asperger's Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder).

Students requesting accommodations, auxiliary aids, and/or services based on a diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder, are required to submit documentation to support the diagnosis. The documentation of an Autism Spectrum Disorder must include a comprehensive evaluation prepared by a licensed or otherwise properly credentialed professional who:

- is certified to evaluate the disability,
- is familiar with the challenges and functional requirements of a college environment and the impact of the condition on the post-secondary experience,
- is an impartial evaluator who is **not** a family member **nor** in a dual relationship with the student, and
- can verify that the condition rises to the level of a disability and confirms the need for reasonable accommodations based on the diagnosed condition.

The documentation must include the extent, duration, and current functional impact of the disability. Due to the impact this disorder may have on daily life functions, documentation should be provided from a multi-disciplinary assessment approach (neuropsychologist, psychologist, psychiatrist, developmental pediatricians, speech and language therapist, and/or occupational therapist). The Evaluation must provide a comprehensive, typed narrative report that includes the date of the evaluation, signature, title and professional credentials.



 **A Comprehensive neuropsychological examination that includes:**

- History of presenting symptoms and evidence of impairment in early childhood
- Approximate age of onset or date of earliest evaluation
- Relevant developmental, historical, familial, and psycho-social data
- Current Evaluation - completed within the past three years
- Observational data from clinical interview

- Summary of all evaluative procedures as well as diagnostic tests/evaluation results to include but limited to the following domains: Cognitive Assessment, Executive Functioning, Expressive and Receptive Language and Communication, Psychiatric and Behavioral Assessment, Sensory-Motor Integration, Attention/Memory/Learning, Visual-Perceptual Motor Skills, and Academic Achievement

- A clear statement of the diagnosis including co-existing/co-morbid conditions, if any

- Information on prior or current accommodations, interventions, and treatments with an explanation of outcomes (If no prior accommodations or treatments were employed, explain why)

- Evidence of significant impact on major life functions and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the pot secondary environment.

- Recommended accommodations which must be clearly linked to the evaluative information with discussion and rationale for each recommended accommodation.