Baylor College of Medicine's goal is to ensure that all community members are given every opportunity to fully participate in the academic environment and do their best work. Therefore, Baylor College of Medicine is committed to providing access to needed services for individuals with disabilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. To gain access to services and accommodation, individuals covered under these laws must provide documentation verifying the diagnosed disability by a qualified medical professional.

Because the provision of services and accommodation is based upon assessment of the current impact of the diagnosed disability on academic performance and access to educational activities, it is in a student’s best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation as soon as possible. Below are guidelines for the documentation required for student’s seeking services and accommodation related to psychological disorders.

1. **Qualifications of the Evaluator**

   Professionals conducting assessments and rendering diagnoses of psychological disorders must have comprehensive training and relevant experience with conducting psycho-educational assessments. The following professionals would generally be considered qualified to evaluate and diagnose psychological disorders: clinical or educational psychologists, school psychologists, neuropsychologists, psychological disorders specialists and other medical professionals trained in psychology/psychiatry.

   Professionals conducting assessments and rendering diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) must have the appropriate credentials, comprehensive training and at least five (5) years of experience diagnosing ASD in adolescents or young adults. Use of diagnostic terminology indicating a learning disability by someone without training and experience in these fields is not acceptable. Additionally, diagnosis by a family member even when the family member is qualified by virtue of training, licensure and/or certification will not be accepted.

2. **Current Documentation and Comprehensive & Diagnostic Evaluation**

   In general, documentation submitted regarding psychological disorders should be no more than three (3) years old. A comprehensive neuropsychological or psychological evaluation, interview, clinical narrative discussion and summary with a coded diagnosis per the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual IV-TR (DSM-IV-TR) or the DSM-V is required. If documentation is inadequate in scope or content, or does not address the student’s current level of functioning and need for accommodation(s), additional information may be requested.

   The comprehensive evaluation/report must include:
3. **Rationale for Recommended Accommodation(s)**

The diagnostic report should include specific recommendations for accommodations that are reasonable, with the understanding that Baylor College of Medicine has the sole authority for determining what is reasonable. Therefore, a detailed explanation should be provided as to why each accommodation is recommended and should be correlated with specific functional limitations determined through interview, observation, and/or testing. Please be aware that the provision of a past accommodation in another setting does not ensure that the requested accommodation will be implemented at this time or at Baylor College of Medicine. However, providing information regarding a previous accommodation is useful and will be considered when evaluating current accommodation requests.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) governs the use and dispersal of student educational records containing personally identifiable information, including students with disabilities. The U.S. Department of Education has ruled that evaluative information pertaining to a student, including medical and psychological reports authored by third parties, constitute “educational records” governed by FERPA. *University of North Alabama*, 104 LRP 58746 (FPCO 2004). In general, information contained in such records may not be released absent the written consent of the student. Please be aware that there are a number of important exceptions that permit disclosure without such consent, including when a health and safety emergency exists or when disclosure to a “school official” is justified for educational reasons. See 34 C.F.R. §§99.31(a)(1) and (10).

Documentation and questions should be directed to the attention of the Student Disability Coordinator in the Office of Student Services.