Learning Disability (LD) Criteria

Welcome

Disability Support Resources (DSR) provides support services and accommodations that enhance the environment for persons with disabilities and helps educate the university community on disability issues. DSR strives to insure that students with learning disabilities have access to the appropriate resources and services to be successful at GVSU.

Learning disabilities (LDs) are diagnosed neurological conditions that substantially limit one or major life activities such as learning or performing essential job functions. Learning disabilities may impact psychological processes, academic achievement, and social/emotional development.

Common learning disabilities include:

- **Reading** – reading encompasses a vast array of reading challenges including dyslexia. Some of the most common reading disabilities are word analysis, fluency, and reading comprehension.
- **Mathematics** – specific problems for students with learning disabilities in mathematics may include difficulty understanding size, spatial relationships, place value, decimals, fractions, and time and difficulty remembering math facts.
- **Language Arts** – students with learning disabilities in language arts have problems with three major skill areas that often affect the entire subject. These include spelling, spoken language, and written language.

Documentation

Persons with a learning disability must have a current diagnostic test (within the last 5 years) including a case history prior to an initial meeting with DSR.

Documentation of a learning disability must appear on an official letterhead from a licensed medical or diagnostic professional* and include:

1. A specific statement of the diagnosis
2. The scope or degree of involvement
3. A summary of related functional limitations
4. Recommendations for accommodations
* The diagnostician should avoid the use of such terms as “suggests,” “is indicative of,” or “attention problems” based on DSM-IV diagnostic criteria.

For further details about documentation please refer to the Guidelines for Documenting a Learning Disability.

After documentation has been approved by a DSR advisor and accommodations have been determined, DSR will provide a memo that includes: (a) verification of a disability and status as a student registered with DSR and (b) an outline of reasonable accommodations.

Confidentiality

DSR and GVSU have a responsibility to maintain confidentiality of the evaluation and may not release any part of the documentation without the student’s informed and written consent.

Requesting Accommodations

DSR recognizes that accommodations may be necessary in order to assist students in maximizing the educational experience at GVSU. While GVSU is required to provide reasonably accommodations, it is not required to change academic requirements. Accommodation determinations are based on documentation and the DSR advisor’s determinations.

Students and employees with a learning disability may be eligible to receive the following accommodations facilitated by DSR:

- Access to alternate textbook formats
- Alternate testing
- Assistive technology
- Study skills consultation through the Learning Specialist Curriculum

To Register with DSR

For a Learning Disability, you must have a current diagnostic test (see guidelines for documentation of a learning disability) within the last 5 years and register with DSR.