

Psychiatric Impairment Evaluation Packet

**Disability Resource Center (DRC)
University of Florida**

This packet contains the following documents:

- **Psychiatric Impairment Evaluation Process - Overview**
- **Local Psychiatric Evaluator List**
- **Psychiatric Impairment Documentation Guidelines**

Psychiatric Impairment Evaluation Process - Overview

Disability Resource Center

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The decision and process for seeking an evaluation for Psychiatric Impairment may be complex. The term “psychiatric impairment” refers to a broad array of impairments characterized by emotional, cognitive, and/or behavioral dysfunction. Impairments can range from mild depression to chronic disorders such as Bipolar Disorder or Schizophrenia. The following information is provided to assist you in seeking an evaluation.

Step 1. **Select an evaluator.** A list of potential evaluators is included (**see Local Psychiatric Evaluator List**) in this packet. You may want to consider the following information as you search for the evaluator that will best meet your needs:

- a. Explain that you are a student who needs to be evaluated for a possible Psychiatric Impairment.
- b. Verify that he/she is credentialed to conduct psychiatric evaluations. Ensure he/she is trained in differential diagnosis within the complete span of psychological impairments. The following clinicians are typically qualified to diagnose psychiatric impairments: psychologists, psychiatrists, other relevantly trained medical doctors, clinical social workers, licensed mental health counselors, and psychiatric nurse practitioners. You may want to familiarize yourself with the DRC’s documentation guidelines (**see Psychiatric Impairment Documentation Guidelines**). It is recommended that you provide your evaluator with a copy of the documentation guidelines to assist him/her in completing an appropriate and relevant evaluation.
- c. Inquire if they accept insurance.
- d. Inquire about the cost of an evaluation and what the cost includes.
- e. Inquire if they offer a sliding fee scale, a payment plan, or have other possible funding sources.
- f. Inquire about the length of time it will take to get an appointment.
- g. Inquire about the length of time involved to complete the entire evaluation process.
- h. Inquire if the evaluator will review the results (report) with you in person.
- i. Inquire if they offer any follow-up or ongoing support or additional consultation, if appropriate, and what the cost is.

Step 2. **Schedule and attend your appointment(s).**

Step 3. **Schedule and attend your evaluation (report) review appointment, if scheduled.**

Step 4. **Bring your evaluation results (report) to the DRC for consideration of academic accommodations.**

Local Psychiatric Evaluator List

The following list is not intended to be an exhaustive list of evaluators in the local area. The Disability Resource Center at the University of Florida does not endorse any of the agencies or individuals listed below, nor does the DRC guarantee that the agencies or individuals listed below will conduct an evaluation and provide documentation that meets the DRC's or another agency's (e.g. ETS, AAMC, GMAC) documentation guidelines. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the evaluator is aware of the respective documentation guidelines and secures documentation meeting these guidelines. It is the student's responsibility to pay for any costs. The DRC and other agencies reserve the right to ask for additional documentation to support a student's request for accommodations/services.

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Gainesville, FL
352-331-8010

Florida Psychiatric Group

3951 NW 48th Terrace, Suite 121
Gainesville, FL
352-336-4000

Gainesville Psychiatry and Forensic Services

Lawrence Adu, MD
Psychiatrist
1026 2nd Ave.
Gainesville, FL
352-378-9116

Gary Kanter, MD

Lawrence Reccoppa, MD

Psychiatrists
100 SW 75th Street, Suite 204
Gainesville, FL
352-332-1300

UF Psychiatry Clinic

Shands Medical Plaza, 4th floor
2000 SW Archer Road
Gainesville, FL
352-265-7041

Randall Williams, MD

Psychiatrist
5618 NW 43rd Street
Gainesville, FL
352-377-8770

Psychiatric Impairment Documentation Guidelines

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The following information is provided to help the individual and the evaluator understand documentation guidelines for a psychiatric disorder diagnosis.

Practitioners Who Can Provide a Diagnosis:

Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Other Relevantly Trained Medical Doctors, Clinical Social Workers, Licensed Mental Health Counselors, and Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners

Recency of Documentation:

Psychiatric disorders are complicated due to their changing nature. Severity of symptoms may vary with time and with the impact of an individual's life stressors. Typically documentation less than six months old is considered current.

Contents of Documentation:

At a minimum, the documentation should address the following items:

1. A summary of the **clinical/diagnostic interview**.
2. A summary of **relevant testing** information. Reference should be made to scores and rating scales/testing instruments used to support the diagnosis. A copy of specific rating scale/testing instrument results can be included, as appropriate. A list of **selected rating scales and testing instruments** is included on the next page. Since the impact of a psychiatric disorder is being considered in relationship to academic achievement, neuropsychological and psychoeducational testing is recommended.
3. A statement of the psychiatric disorder as a **DSM-IV** diagnosis with a description of symptoms that support the DSM-IV criteria for the establishment of the disorder. The date of original diagnosis and the date of last contact with the individual should be included.
4. **Alternative diagnoses or explanations** should be ruled out, including potential diagnoses involving neurological and/or medical conditions or substance abuse, as well as educational, linguistic, sensorimotor, and cross-cultural factors that may result in symptoms mimicking the purported psychiatric disorder.
5. A statement of the **current functional impact** of the psychiatric disorder on learning or other major life activities and the degree to which the psychiatric disorder impacts the individual in the academic setting. Additionally, a description of learning abilities, (i.e. difficulty with concentration, slow processing speed, etc.) impacted by the disorder is helpful.
6. A description of any **referrals** for further testing/evaluation or for other treatment or therapy that are made. The DRC does not provide psychotherapy, but counseling and mental health support are available on campus.
7. A description of any prescribed **medication** and potential side effects.
8. A summary of **suggested accommodations** that would support the individual in the academic setting, although it is not expected that evaluators will be aware of available accommodations in the higher education setting. Appropriate accommodations will be collaboratively determined between the student and the DRC.
9. The evaluator's **credentials, license/certification number, and signature**.

(Continued – Psychiatric Impairment Documentation Guidelines)

Instruments Utilized for Assessing Adults with Psychological Disorders

Listed below are selected examples of tests and instruments that may be used to supplement the clinical interview and support the presence of functional limitations. All tests used should be current and have sufficient reliability, validity, and utility for the specific purposes for which they are being employed. All tests should also be normed on relevant populations and the results should be reported in standard scores and/or percentile ranks. Tests that have built-in validity scales or indicators are preferred over those that do not.

1. Rating scales: Self-rater or interviewer-rated scales for categorizing and quantifying the nature of the impairment may be useful in conjunction with other data, but **no single test or subtest should be used solely to substantiate a diagnosis.**

Acceptable instruments include, but are not limited to:

- *Beck Anxiety Inventory*
- *Beck Depression Inventory-II*
- *Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale (BPRS)*
- *Bums Anxiety Inventory*
- *Bums Depression Inventory*
- *Children's Depression Inventory*
- *Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale*
- *Hamilton Depression Rating Scale*
- *Inventory to Diagnose Depression*
- *March Anxiety Scale for Children*
- *Profile of Mood States (POMS)*
- *State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI)*
- *Symptom Checklist-90-Revised*
- *Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale*
- *Yale-Brown Obsessive-Compulsive Scale*

2. Neuropsychological and psychoeducational testing: Cognitive, achievement, and personality profiles may uncover attention or information-processing deficits, but **no single test or subtest should be used solely to substantiate a diagnosis.**

Acceptable instruments include, but are not limited to:

Aptitude/Cognitive Ability

- *Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test*
- *Stanford-Binet IV*
- *Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – III (WAIS-III)*
- *Woodcock-Johnson-III- Tests of Cognitive Abilities*

Academic Achievement

- *Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA)*
- *Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK)*
- *Wechsler Individual Achievement Test - II (WIAT)*
- *Woodcock-Johnson-III - Tests of Achievement*

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Specific achievement tests, such as:

- *Nelson-Denny Reading Test*
- *Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test*
- *Test of Written Language-3 (TOWL-3)*
- *Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests-Revised*

Information Processing

- *California Verbal Learning Test-II*
- *Category Test*
- *Continuous Performance Test*
- *Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude-Adult (DTLA-A)*
- *Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude-3 (DTLA-3)*
- *Halstead-Reitan Neuropsychological Test Battery*
- *Rey-Osterrieth Complex Figure Test*
- *Stroop Interference Test Trail Making Test*
- *Wechsler Memory Scales III*
- *Wisconsin Card Sorting Test*

Information from subtests on the *WAIS-III* or *Woodcock-Johnson-III-Tests of Cognitive Abilities*, as well as other relevant instruments, may be useful when interpreted within the context of other diagnostic information.

3. Personality Tests:

Acceptable instruments may include, but are not limited to:

- *Millon Adolescent Personality Inventory (MAPI)*
- *Millon Clinical Multiaxial Personality Inventory-III (MCMI-III)*
- *Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-Adolescent (MMPI-A)*
- *Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2)*
- *NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R)*
- *Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI)*
- *Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF)*
- *Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)*

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