



## **Application Process and Documentation Guidelines**

Gwynedd Mercy University intends for all students accepted into an academic program to have equal access and opportunity to effectively reach their academic and personal goals. Within the bounds of its resources, Gwynedd Mercy University will provide reasonable accommodations to meet the challenges and needs of students with a qualified disability. Student Accessibility Services (SAS) works to coordinate with faculty, staff and administration to meet the needs of students that have a qualified disability. In addition, Gwynedd Mercy University regularly convenes a college-wide Disability Awareness Committee dedicated to identifying barriers of accessibility that prohibit persons with disabilities from experiencing equal access to educational opportunities at Gwynedd Mercy University.

At the time of a student's acceptance to Gwynedd Mercy University, or anytime thereafter, a request can be made for accommodations pertaining to learning, psychological, and/or physical disabilities. This request must be made by the student directly to the Accessibility Coordinator (AC). Request must be made by the student to the AC in person, by email, or by receipt of the Student Accessibility Services Accommodation Application. Other forms of contact such as phone calls or disclosure to other University staff or faculty are not recognized as requests for accommodations. SAS is closed between June 1 and July 31. Any accommodation requests made within those months are recommended to be done via email to the AC. Since the offices are closed, an accommodation request needed within June and/or July may take more time to process. A student who self-identifies as having a disability and requests accommodations is responsible for submitting appropriate documentation and following the procedures as listed on the [Student Accessibility Services web page](#). No accommodation can be made by Gwynedd Mercy University without completing this process.

All information provided to the AC confidential is in accordance with FERPA. It is important to allow sufficient time for administrative processing of the application. In addition, accommodation requests are assessed on a case-by-case basis and the accommodations are based on each student's individual and unique needs. For additional information, visit the University's [Student Accessibility Services web page](#).

### **Application Procedures for all accommodation requests**

1. Student will fully complete and submit to the Accessibility Coordinator:
  - Student Accessibility Services Accommodation Application
  - Supporting Documentation for identified disability
  - Course schedule for current semester (if available)
2. Student will meet with the Accessibility Coordinator (in 1-2 meetings or interviews) for the following:
  - Review application, supporting documentation and accommodation request(s)
  - Review relevant Policies and procedures, the Grievance Policy, and student responsibilities
  - Review Letters of Accommodation
  - Receive information regarding campus resources

- Receive information regarding off-campus resources, if needed
- 3. Student will meet with the Accessibility Coordinator every subsequent enrolled semester:
  - Provide course schedule for enrolled semester
  - Review accommodation needs

For further information and to download the application, please visit the [Student Accessibility Services web page](#).

### **Documentation Requirements**

All documentation in support of a disability should be reflective of the current, functional impact of the condition or impairment. Current testing and evaluations should have been completed within three years. Additionally, updated documentation may be requested, in some circumstances, where documentation is outdated or when ongoing treatment is being provided. Interviews with the student and other involved persons are viewed as an important part of the process and can provide valuable information to augment the documentation.

Documentation for Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Physical, Neurological or Psychological disabilities require:

- Health Care Professional Form in the Disability Application OR an original letter from the evaluating professional that includes the following areas: a clearly stated, specific diagnosis; a description of the symptoms; a description of the current functional limitations of the condition; an explanation of the impact of the condition on the academic and/or housing environment; and recommendations of appropriate accommodations.
- A written evaluation by a psychiatrist, neurologist, licensed psychologist, or other qualified professional.

Documentation for Learning Disability:

- Comprehensive Psycho-educational Evaluation Report by a school district, neurologist, licensed psychologist, or other qualified professional; the report should include results of psycho-educational testing.
- An IEP, Summary of Performance, or 504 plan will be accepted as supplemental information only and not the primary supporting document.

The AHEAD Best Practices: Disability Documentation in Higher Education was used in developing these guidelines.

### **Disability-Related Housing Accommodation Policy and Procedure**

Please note: This policy and procedure is NOT a housing application but a request for disability-related housing accommodations only. Applicants must also comply with Resident Life housing applications, guidelines, forms, and deadlines to apply for on-campus housing.

Gwynedd Mercy University is committed to providing accessibility to all residence Halls for students with registered disabilities. To register as a student with a disability, a student must complete the Student Accessibility Services Accommodation Application which includes the Health Care Professional Form. Students are encouraged to submit this application as soon as an acceptance letter from the Admissions Office is received. The documentation guidelines can be found on the Student

Accessibility Services [web page](#). In addition, further information and recommendations from a professional are welcome and will be considered during the review process.

All documentation is kept confidential in accordance with guidelines set forth by FERPA. Requests for disability-related housing accommodations are reviewed by the Accessibility Coordinator (AC) and the Director of the Health and Wellness Center. Each request is reviewed and determined on a case by case basis. Determinations are based on the documentation and information received. Complete applications should be submitted by the identified deadline date. An application that is incomplete or received after the deadline may result in a housing assignment that does not meet the applicant's need.

**Factors given consideration for special housing requests:**

1. Is the impact of the condition life threatening if the request is not met?
2. Is the request an integral component of a treatment plan prescribed by a medical professional for the condition in question?
3. Is space available to meet the student's need?
4. Can space be adapted without creating a safety hazard?
5. Are there other effective means that would achieve similar benefits as the requested accommodation?
6. How does meeting the documented need impact housing commitments for other students?
7. Is the cost of meeting the need prohibitive?
8. Was the request made by the deadline?

Please note: Private room accommodations are rare. We make every attempt to find reasonable accommodations for those conditions that are covered under the ADA. Once a determination is made, written notification will be sent to the applicant. Students approved for housing accommodations must meet with the AC annually to renew their request. All questions regarding this application process or accommodations should be directed to the AC.

Complete applications should be mailed to the AC before **May 1**.

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A complete application includes:

1. Student section of SAS Application
2. Release of Information
3. Gwynedd Mercy University Health Care Professional Form
  - completed by your physician or other qualified professional

Forms and documentation guidelines can be found on the Student Accessibility Services [web page](#). All questions regarding this application process or disability-related accommodations should be directed to the Accessibility Coordinator, Dan Jordan, at 215.646.7300 x21427 or jordan.d@gmercyu.edu.