

Intellectual Disabilities

Cedar Crest College provides reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities. In order to provide the most appropriate accommodations, documentation of the student's condition/disability is necessary.

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of an *Intellectual Disability* (formerly known as mental retardation) should provide documentation from a professional who has comprehensive training and relevant experience in the assessment of Intellectual Disabilities in adolescents and/or adults (e.g., clinical or educational psychologists, school psychologists, neuropsychologists, special education teachers). **Documentation in the form of a narrative report (typed on letterhead, dated and signed by the qualified professional, including license number when applicable) should include, but not be limited to including, the following:**

- An interview including a description of the presenting problem(s); any significant developmental, medical, psychosocial and employment histories; family history (including primary language of the home and the student's current level of English fluency); and a discussion of dual diagnosis where indicated.
- A complete assessment of intellectual functioning/aptitude as measured by the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-III (WAIS-III) with standard and scaled scores, including subtest scores. The Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-Revised: Tests of Cognitive Ability or the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale: Fourth Edition are also acceptable. Tests such as the Leiter International Performance Scale and the Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children may also be utilized. The Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (KBIT) and the Slosson Intelligence Test - Revised are NOT comprehensive measures and therefore are not suitable for use in the initial diagnosis of a learning disability).
- A comprehensive academic achievement battery that measures current levels of functioning in reading (decoding and comprehension), mathematics and oral and written language (e.g., Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery - Revised: Tests of Achievement, Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT), Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK), Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA), or specific achievement tests - Test of Written Language-3 (TOWL-3), Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests-Revised, Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test). All standard scores, standard deviations and percentiles must be reported for those subtests administered. The Wide Range Achievement Test-3 (WRAT-3) is NOT a comprehensive measure of achievement and is therefore not suitable.
- Measures of functional performance across all domains, (e.g. English Language Arts, Mathematics, Behavioral/Social/Emotional, Communication, Vocational/Transition, Health and Development including Vision and Hearing, Fine and Gross Motor, and Activities of Daily Living) may be helpful in presenting a holistic view of the student. A comprehensive SOP (Summary of Performance) and a student portfolio may contain critical information pertaining to the student's:
- Strengths, needs, preferences and interests

- Need for accommodations and the use of assistive technology
- Ability to function in the college environment, considering both the social expectations, and residential life (as appropriate)
- Learning style, specifically in the areas of reading, mathematics and written and oral expression
- A specific diagnosis of intellectual disability. There is currently considerable variability in the definition of intellectual disability between definitions advocated by the American Association on Intellectual Disability (AAID), other professional associations, and state departments supporting people with intellectual disability. According to the AAID 2002 definition, "Mental retardation is a disability characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills. This disability originates before the age of 18. A complete and accurate understanding of mental retardation involves realizing that mental retardation refers to a particular state of functioning that begins in childhood, has many dimensions, and is affected positively by individualized supports. As a model of functioning, it includes the contexts and environment within which the person functions and interacts and requires a multidimensional and ecological approach that reflects the interaction of the individual with the environment, and the outcomes of that interaction with regards to independence, relationships, societal contributions, participation in school and community, and personal well-being." Given the variability in definitional clarity on intellectual disability, disability support services personnel are encouraged to give considerable weight to the clinical judgment of the evaluating professional.
- Terms such as "individual learning styles," "learning differences," "academic problems," and "slow learner" and "test difficulty or anxiety," in and of themselves, do not constitute an adequate diagnosis of intellectual disability. It is important for the evaluator to demonstrate that alternative explanations for academic problems as a result of poor education, poor motivation and/or study skills, emotional problems, attention problems and cultural/language issues that may be interfering with learning, but that do not constitute intellectual disability, have been ruled out.)
- An indication of how patterns in the student's cognitive ability, achievement and information processing reflect the presence of intellectual disability.
- An integrated summary which:
 - indicates the substantial limitations to major life activities posed by the intellectual disability,
 - describes the extent to which these limitations impact the academic context for which accommodations are being requested,
 - suggests how the specific effects of the intellectual disability may be accommodated, and states how the effects of the intellectual disability are mediated by the recommended accommodations)