Disability Support Services (DSS)

Policy Regarding Documentation of a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
Or Closed Head Injury (CHI)

Students who are seeking support services from Pacific Lutheran University on the basis of a diagnosed traumatic brain injury are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility. Documentation of a traumatic brain injury consists of a professional evaluation, including psychological or neuropsychological testing results and a written report which reflects the individual’s present level of cognitive functioning. This professional evaluation is considered by PLU to be a Medical Treatment Record and will be maintained as such by PLU in a manner that complies with state and federal law. The cost and responsibility for providing this professional evaluation shall be borne by the student.

The following guidelines are provided in the interest of assuring that the evaluation and report are current and appropriate for documenting eligibility for services. Documentation presented to Disability Support Services will remain in a confidential file in the DSS office. The Director of Disability Support Services is available for consultation with appropriate professionals regarding any of these guidelines. Documentation must:

1. Be prepared by a professional qualified by education and experience to diagnose traumatic brain injury and cognitive residua, which would include but not be limited to: a licensed neuropsychologist or psychologist; educational psychologist; cognitive disability specialist such as a speech pathologist or other appropriate professional certified to administer standardized tests identified below. Experience in evaluation of adults with cognitive deficits is an essential requirement in this process. The report must include the name of the evaluator, credential(s) and dates of testing. Since assessment constitutes the basis for determining reasonable accommodations, it is in the student’s best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation to serve as the basis for decision-making about a student’s request for accommodations in an academically competitive environment.

2. Be comprehensive in that all tests administered must be age appropriate, nationally normed, and individually administered; and include:

   a. Intelligence measures: The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS, current edition) with subtest scores as the preferred measure.

   b. Cognitive/information processing abilities measures: Specific areas of cognitive functioning, e.g., short and long term memory, new learning, auditory and visual processing, processing speed) must be assessed. Use of the Wechsler Memory Scale, subtests from the WAIS, the California Verbal Learning Test, Rey Complex Figure (Copy and Recall), or neuropsychological test instruments with valid age-related norms are acceptable.

   c. Other pertinent measures such as academic achievement and aptitudes.
3. **Be current.** In most cases, because of the changing nature of this condition, this means within the past three months.

4. **Present clear and specific evidence.** Identify and state specific cognitive deficits.

5. **Include** in the report the exact instruments used, any exceptions to standardized procedures, test score data in percentiles and standard scores, a written interpretation of the results by the professional doing the evaluation.

6. **Provide a suggested list of possible academic accommodations**, with supporting data from the assessment, which is specific to the individual assessed. Requests which are not supported by proper and specified documentation will not be approved.

7. While the **professional evaluation** of a traumatic brain injury is considered by PLU to a Medical Treatment Record, records pertaining to the **academic accommodations** provided by PLU are considered to be Educational Records (and not Medical Treatment Records) as defined in the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974* ("FERPA"). Records regarding **academic accommodations** may be utilized in the same manner and under the same conditions as other Educational Records. (www.plu.edu/print/handbook/conduct/FERPA.html).