

Blue Mountain Community College

Protocol for Recommending and Using Memory Aids as a Testing Accommodation Information for Faculty

Memory aids provide help to students with documented deficits in rote memory, sequencing memory, working memory, and /or long-term memory to recall information that would otherwise be inaccessible to them in a testing situation.

The **Memory Aid** allows the student to demonstrate his or her knowledge of course material without taxing already compromised memory function. A proper **Memory Aid** will not be useful to the student unless the student knows and understands how to use the information it refers to. If the student doesn't understand the course material, a proper **Memory Aid** will not help.

Faculty are to approve a student's **Memory Aid** and send the original along with the test* to the Testing Center. This faculty-approved version that arrives with the test will be what the student is allowed to use.

The **Memory Aid** allows the student to demonstrate knowledge of course material by helping to trigger the student's memory. Disabilities that may affect memory include:

- Traumatic Brain Injury/Acquired Brain Injury
- Psychiatric disability
- Specific learning disability
- ADD/ADHD
- Medical Conditions

What do memory aids look like?

Memory aids can contain acronyms, short phrases, pictures, schematic diagrams, or mind maps, names, definitions, tables, charts or key terms and certain formulae. Styles of **Memory Aids** may vary. Generally they can be written or typed, 10 or 12 font, on a large index card, **or** up to one side of an 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of paper.

Memory Aids are not:

- Full course notes
- Answer sheets
- Substitutes for studying
- Open textbooks

If the purpose of a test is to determine whether or not the student knows specific definitions, having those words or definitions on a **Memory Aid** would make it an answer sheet and therefore, not acceptable. If the definitions were written but not connected to the terms to be defined in any way, this may be allowable, since it will trigger the student's memory of the correct term. The ideal **Memory Aid** would make no sense to anyone but that specific student. If it is useful only to one student, it is most likely not an answer sheet for another student.

(*It is important to send the **original** copy of the memory aid as a student sometimes uses color to help with memory.)

Procedure for Implementing a Memory Aid Accommodation:

- a. The Disabilities Services Coordinator (DSC) identifies those students who may benefit from using a **Memory Aid** as a testing accommodation where documentation of a compromised memory supports their use.
- b. The DSC may use the following criteria when recommending use of **Memory Aids**:
- Evidence that memory is posing a challenge with current academic performance.
 - Documentation of the disability that was developed by a specialist in the area of disability. For example, a medical disability diagnosed by the student's specialist or their physician, a student with a mental health disability who has been assessed by a psychiatrist, a student with Learning Disability or Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder who has been assessed by a psychologist, a student with an Acquired Brain Injury who has been assessed by a neuro-psychologist.
 - Documentation may provide specific recommendations for the use of a **Memory Aid**.
 - Documentation may include data that indicates the function in memory will be a significant barrier.
- c. The DSC will develop and/or revise the Letter of Accommodation to faculty, to reflect use of a **Memory Aid** as a testing accommodation and include this document as an attachment or give a referral link to the Disabilities Services Website.
- d. The DSC will support the student in understanding the use of a **Memory Aid**. Support includes, but is not limited to, reviewing the "**Memory Aids – Student Information**" document and referring the student to consult with their instructor regarding **Memory Aid** content.
- e. The student must consult with his or her instructor to determine the content of the **Memory Aid**.
- f. The student's instructor will provide feedback on **Memory Aid** content offering guidance on revisions and additions as appropriate. The instructor has final approval of the information included on the **Memory Aid**.
- g. Students who require use of a **Memory Aid** as a testing accommodation will indicate the **Memory Aid** accommodation when scheduling tests with the Testing Center.

Please call the Student Health & Wellness Resource Center for Disability Services (541-278-5965) if you have any questions about the use of **Memory Aids** as a testing accommodation.



Student Health & Wellness Resource Coordinator, 541-278-5965, disabilityservices@bluecc.edu

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