Documentation Guidelines for a Vision Issue

To receive accommodations for a vision issue in a university setting students should submit documentation that sufficiently explains the nature of their vision issue and why specific kinds of accommodation are important. The information should be presented in a way that can be understood by someone who isn’t a vision expert. It should also describe current circumstances. The author should be a licensed ophthalmologist, optometrist or an equivalent expert. The documentation should meet all the following guidelines:

1. The agency where the author works is identified, including mailing address and phone number.

2. The author’s name, credentials for evaluating the vision issue, and a dated signature are included.

3. There’s a summary of how the vision issue development, any significant changes over time, and how it was already accommodated for educational purposes (if so).

4. There are appropriate measurements of the student’s ability to see, and explanations regarding what the measurements mean (or a statement saying the student is legally blind, if that’s the case).

5. An appropriate vision related diagnoses is given.

6. If the student isn’t blind, there should be explanations regarding how the limited vision issue will probably impact important academic functioning (such as, taking tests, writing lecture notes, completing reading assignments, writing papers, etc.) and limit any other important aspects of college (such as live in a residential hall).

7. There are recommendations regarding the kinds of reasonable and appropriate accommodations that will be needed to create equal access and opportunity for college.

**Concise** statements may be sufficient if they adequately address the focus of each topic (above). Pages that are copied directly from a doctor’s file about the student may not meet all these guidelines. Thus, the best form of documentation may be the summary from a timely evaluation of the student’s vision, with a concise doctor’s letter explaining what the details mean and how they’ll impact the student at college.