

Protocol for Recommending and Using Memory Aids as a Testing Accommodation

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.

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:

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

What Do They 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 on a large index card and up to one side of a double sided letter-size page (8 ½ x 11"). Typically the Memory Aid should be written or typed in a standard font size (i.e. 10 or 12 point font).

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, the more likely it is not an answer sheet for another student.