

Memory Aid Clarification

What is a memory aid?

A memory aid or cue sheet is a non-mandated testing accommodation used to support students with documented cognitive issues related to a disability. It is a tool used to trigger information that a student has studied but may have difficulty recalling due to cognitive processing deficits in association with memory and recall.

The cue sheet allows the student to demonstrate knowledge of course material by helping prompt the students memory: *not by providing the answer*. Cue sheets should only provide memory clues for the student to recall the concepts they have studied, and would not be useful if the student hasn't learned the material.

If remembering specific information on the cue sheet is deemed to be an essential learning objective/outcome of the course, **memory aid should not be allowed**. For example, if the learning objective/outcome of the course is to know the formula, it should not be allowed on the cue sheet; however if the learning objective/outcome of the course is to demonstrate the ability to apply the formula, then the formula could be allowed on the cue sheet.

If there is a **difference of opinion between the student and Instructor** regarding the cue sheet, then both will with the DSS Advisor to discuss it, with a copy of the cue sheet *and* a copy of the classes syllabus. If Instructor has concerns or questions regarding the memory aid accommodation, they should meet with the DSS Advisor along with a full copy of their classes syllabus.

Cue sheets must be reviewed and approved by the Instructor of the course. The reason for this is because the Instructor determines the

learning objectives and essential requirements of the class. **Instructors must review the cue sheet.** Instructors may choose to remove memory clues that are deemed essential learning objectives/outcomes for the course. Note: It is understood that some courses may **not** lend themselves to the use of cue sheets.

Instructors *are not responsible* for devising/creating memory aids--it is the student's responsibility to prepare the aid and have it approved by the Instructor. The Disability Support Services office should be made aware of this agreement by the student.

There is a difference between Attention disorders and Memory disorders. For Clarification, attention disorders usually have different accommodations such as extended test times in the DSS testing room. Since attention disorders (such as ADHD) affect attention ability (**not** memory), other accommodations are given instead. Attention deficits are difficult, however, they can be made up with further studying of any material given in class and by doing the readings and assignments to keep up with whatever may have been missed due to attention span and difficulty focusing. Memory aids, therefore, are not the needed accommodation. Memory aids are only for those with longer term memory deficit disorders.

Memory deficits may require memory aids. *Attention* deficits do not.

Memory Aids **DO NOT**:

- Have steps listed for how to work problems
- Exceed **one half page** of 8 ½ x11" paper
- Exceed more than one 3x5 note-card, both sides
- Include specific examples how formulas are used

- Include copied pages from textbooks
- Include student's class notes, lectures notes, or slides
- Include complete terms and definitions
- Include access to homework in the testing environment
- Open textbooks
- Serve as a substitute for studying*

Memory aids are typically small, such as 3"x 5" in index card.

Accommodation for memory aid size can be adjusted for those with a visual disability who may need a larger amount of space to read.

At the discretion of the instructor, the memory aids may or may not include:

Acronyms; short phrases; pictures; schematic diagram; formulas; names; definitions; tables; sample questions; key terms/work charts

Procedures:

1. Student meets with DSS office to discuss request for memory aid.
2. The student provides the cue sheet to the instructor for editing and final approval, at least 4 days prior to the test/exam.
3. Instructor then:
 - a. Approves the cue sheet as is
 - b. Removes information that the Instructor has deemed inappropriate

- c. Disallow the cue sheet altogether because the memory triggers are deemed to be essential to the learning objectives/outcomes for the course
4. The mutually agreed upon cue sheet will be allowed during the test/exam at DSS. Students cannot bring other course materials into the DSS testing room unless previously approved by the Instructor.
5. If the student arrives at the DSS testing room with a cue sheet that has not been approved by the Instructor, the cue sheet is not allowed. DSS staff will not contact the Instructor on behalf of the student for approval of the cue sheet. This is the responsibility of the student.
6. Once a student completes the test/exam at the DSS testing room, the test/exam and cue sheet will be returned to the Instructor.