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## **1. Reason for Appeal**

My freshman year of college, I was diagnosed with dyslexia through the psychology department at OSU. My younger brother had been referred to get a diagnosis causing my parents to be confronted by the signs that I had been exhibiting through my entire school career. Because my dyslexia was caught later in life than is typical, I have had less resources when it comes to learning how to manage it. Through trial and error in the past 9 semesters, I have slowly figured out what it takes for me to be successful in higher education.

Another struggle that I have faced in relation to learning how to effectively study is the global pandemic that began the same semester that I changed my degree. In Spring 2020, during my third year, I changed my degree from Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering to Computer Engineering. Having to take such fundamental, base-level classes for my degree online made my journey of trying to figure out how to learn incredibly difficult. Not only did my studying suffer, but my mental health collapsed.

In Spring 2020, I reached my lowest point mentally. I began reaching out to therapists in Stillwater and on campus attempting to find anyone who could get me in. Even though I was originally reluctant to try teletherapy, I decided that it was better to be in therapy in any way than to continue to let my schoolwork suffer due to my mental health, and I reached out to multiple therapists who only offered teletherapy. I received very few replies, and the therapists that I did hear back from had full waitlists. I looked into BetterHelp, but because they do not take insurance, I am not able to afford that option. I was recently able to do my intake form for OSU's counseling department, so that I could get added to their waitlist. 2020 was my breaking point, but I had wanted and needed to find a therapist before then. In the past few years, I have discovered things about myself and about my past. I have been looking for someone to help me understand these things and learn how to cope in a healthy way. I want to see a therapist so that I can have somebody to talk to help me navigate and understand the struggles I am having and how to face it and deal with it instead of just pushing it to the side and focusing on something else. I have noticed that as my mental health declines, and I hold my issues in, school falls through the cracks. A specific way that I see this happening is when I meet a difficulty in one of my classes, like a style of teaching I am not used to or a subject that I am not getting, I will end up focusing more on the other classes that I am taking instead of working through that problem. I have noticed this issue and realized where that comes from so I am able to address the issue in order to resolve it.

Changing my major to Computer Engineering truly reignited my passion for school. I had a new sense of excitement and drive, and I wanted to succeed at what I

was doing. When I met my advisor Kristal for the first time, she took me to a professor that was down the hall. He talked to me about what Computer Engineering entailed and showed me a few things he was working on. I was immediately excited about what my future could be. My biggest frustration with Covid and online learning is that I have been forced to be at the point where I am struggling to keep my head above the water. If even Spring of 2020 had been normal, I believe it would have given me the opportunity to prove that I could excel. Computer and Software Engineering excites me, and I just want to be able to prove that I can be amazing at it. This past semester, I was able to get involved in IEEE and become the vice president. Being a part of this club allows me to meet new people and surround myself with those in the same major as me. These connections allow me to be in classes with people that I know, so that I have people to study with, and I think that is a gift that truly could be the biggest blessing of my college career. Although I did not pass all of my classes last semester, it was still great in terms of me learning how to utilize my resources. I learned about what works for me and what does not. The reason that I struggled in Network Analysis, and ultimately failed, was because I was struggling to understand the material, and I did reach out for help from my peers and sought the answers, but it was too late in the semester to make a difference. In the spring, I will start the semester reaching out to people and asking questions to the professor and others instead of putting it off until my grade is too far gone, so that even if there are things that I struggle with, I will have answers before my knowledge is tested on an exam. With my peers in IEEE and my classes, the TA, and the professor, I have ample resources available to be able to get anything explained.

## **2. Resolution**

Through the experience that I have gained in the previous semesters, I feel confident in my ability and knowledge to tackle the obstacles that I face. I am currently on the OSU counseling's waitlist, and I am hoping that with the new wave of graduates that have left, I am able to meet with someone soon. I also reached out to another therapist in Stillwater this week that I have been told has openings. Therapy is going to be one of the most useful tools for the remainder of my college career. I am going to be able to continue identifying issues in a safe place, and I will learn how to face them in the moment and resolve them rather than shoving them down and ignoring them.

When it comes to how I will be handling my issues that I face when it comes to dyslexia, I have plans to have a weekly solo study session in the library where I will be able to focus uninterrupted, followed by a short session where we will be discussing what was learned during the week. This will give me the opportunity to not only review the material, but I will have to be able to explain it. I also plan on having multiple study sessions throughout the week with individuals that are in my classes that I have had the chance to meet through IEEE as well as attending office hours when my work schedule allows.