The University of Toronto
Ontarians with Disabilities Act Accessibility Plan
2005-2006

34789

Executive Summary

The *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, (ODA) 2001, received Royal Assent in December 2001. The purpose of the Act is to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that preclude their full participation in society. The Act requires institutions within the broad public sector to review their policies, programs and services as they impact upon persons with disabilities, and to develop accessibility plans that are intended to address existing barriers and prevent new barriers from being established.

Each Ontario University is required to develop annual accessibility plans as part of the annual planning process, and to file the 2005-2006 Accessibility Plan by September 30, 2005. (The Accessibility of *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, AODA, received Royal Assent in June, 2005, however the planning requirements of the ODA, 2001, are still applicable until they have been replaced by standards in the new act).

A highly inclusive ODA Accessibility Planning Committee, first established in 2002 to develop the 2003-2004 Accessibility Plan, has continued to guide the Planning process in successive years. Chaired by Angela Hildyard, Vice-President, Human Resources and Equity, the Committee is designed to ensure the accessibility planning process is both collaborative and broadly representative of the University community.

Members of the Accessibility Planning Committee include students, staff, faculty and alumni and represent a range of stakeholders and constituencies from across the University, including facilities and services, information technology, policy, human resources (faculty and staff), unions, student government, equity issues, legal affairs, those with expertise in teaching and learning, and staff with personal or professional knowledge of disability and

accommodation issues. Many of the members of the Committee identify as having a visible or invisible disability.

A Coordinating Committee of five people was established to ensure that the process of the Plan reflects the goals of the ODA and the University of Toronto and to highlight key issues for the larger Planning Committee.

The Accessibility Planning Committee included eight subcommittees with the following areas of focus: Attitudes, Policy, Physical Facilities, Technology, Instructional Design, Student Life, Human Resources and Mental Health. Some barriers and initiatives overlap and relate to more than one subcommittee's area of focus. The number of participants on the subcommittees 1n 2005-2006 grew by a third from the previous year, to a total of sixty.

The 2005 – 2006 Accessibility Plan presents a status report on each of the 43 individual initiatives that were specified in the 2004 – 2005 Plan to be conducted between September 1, 2004 – August 31, 2005. Progress in every area is apparent. This year, 13 new initiatives were created and 35 initiatives, entitled "Next Steps: 2005 – 2006 Initiatives", continue the work of the 2004 – 2005 Plan. An additional eight initiatives were designated "retired" to indicate either their completion (four initiatives completed) or their incorporation into other initiatives to avoid repetition (four initiatives incorporated).

As per last year, although no new funding has been provided by the provincial government, the University has continued to fund the initiatives as part of ongoing operations. In this regard, it is important to acknowledge the commitment of all divisions of the University, as well as the student groups, to the University of Toronto Accessibility Plan.

List of 2004-2005 Initiatives and New Initiatives 2005-2006

1. Attitudes

Initiative		Barrier
1.1	Develop Awareness: Learning Disabilities	A range of societal attitudinal barriers.
1.2	Develop Awareness: Conference	A range of societal attitudinal barriers.
1.3	Education and Outreach Campaign	Perception that certain academic programs may be unsuited to students with disabilities.
1.4	Enrolment Study	General lack of awareness of disability issues among the general student population.
1.5	Disability Issues and Orientation Training	General lack of awareness of disability and other equity issues among the general student population.
1.6	Awareness of Training Resources *(New)*	Inconsistent awareness of disability-related resources.
1.7	Develop Awareness: Graduate Students with Disabilities *(New)*	Lack of awareness of barriers facing graduate students with disabilities.

2. Policy

Initiative		Barrier
2.1	Review Policies	Policies require review.
2.2	Develop Systemic Process to Review New Policies	Limited policy assessment with respect to disability issues.

3. Physical Facilities

Initiative		Barrier
3.1	Update Design Standards for Inclusion	Design Standards currently focus on physical disabilities.
3.2	Universal Design Consultant	Universal Design Principles knowledge shortfall.
3.3	Audit Elevators for Accessibility	Inconsistent access to retro-fitted elevators and lifts.
3.4	List of Accessible Rooms	List is often out of date.
3.5	Consistent Application of Barrier-Free Design Standards (2-part initiative)	Inconsistent application of University of Toronto Design Standards.
3.6	Best Practices for Chemical Sensitivities	Lack of knowledge of chemical sensitivities best practices.
3.7	Raise Awareness: Chemical Sensitivities *(Retired)*	Lack of awareness of chemical sensitivities as a disability.
3.8	Accessible Parking	Lack of clarity and consistent application of parking policies regarding disability.
3.9	Identify Barriers	Faculty and staff are often inexperienced at identifying barriers in physical environments.
3.10	Consistent Accessible Signage and Wayfinding	Lack of consistent signage on the exterior of buildings.
3.11	Accessible Instructional Space (6-part initiative) *(New)*	Some large classrooms may not be accessible.

4. Technology

Initiative		Barrier
4.1	Guidelines for Accessible Websites (4-part initiative) *Formerly Guidelines for Communication*	Lack of requirements and templates for ensuring accessible webspace.
4.2	Establish Purchasing Guidelines	Inaccessible vs. accessible technologies.
4.3	Accessible Workstations	Not enough accessible workstations on St. George campus to meet the needs.
4.4	Alternative Formats for Course Materials (2-part initiative)	Alternative formats often not available until too late.
4.5	Access to Wireless Technology	Students faced with compatibility issues.

5. Instructional Design

Initiative		Barrier
5.1	Raise Awareness of Instructional Design (2-part initiative)	Inconsistent awareness among faculty.
5.2	Awareness of Sensory Disabilities *(Retired; incorporated into 5.1)*	Inconsistent awareness among faculty.

5. **Instructional Design** *(continued)*

5.3	Awareness of Alternative Pedagogies *(Retired; incorporated into 5.1)*	Faculty not fully aware of alternate approaches.
5.4	Raising Awareness About Instructional Design *(Retired; incorporated into 5.1)*	Inconsistent awareness of instructional design principles.
5.5	Accommodations for Faculty (*Completed; retired)*	Inconsistent awareness of programs available to faculty.
5.6	Materials on Instructional Design *(Retired; incorporated into 5.1)*	There is currently limited access to materials.

6. **Student Life**

Initiative		Barrier
6.1	Full-Time Requirements for Students	Structure of student governance precludes part-timers from participating
6.2	Funding for Non-Academic Accommodations	Limited funding is available.
6.3	Accessible Evening Transportation *(Retired)*	Accessibility Services van not available in the evening.
6.4	Accessible Inter-Campus Transportation	No accessible transportation between campuses.
6.5	Student-run Access Centre	Students with disabilities may face isolation.
6.6	Accessibility Education for Student Leaders	Students with disabilities continue to encounter negative attitudes.

7. Human Resources

Initiative		Barrier
7.1	Coordinating Communication of Disability-Related Issues	Inconsistent coordination of disability-related issues for staff and faculty.
7.2	Staff and Faculty Survey	Staff and faculty concerns unknown.
7.3	Part-Time Faculty Appointments	Part-time faculty are not eligible for tenure.
7.4	Identify Barriers in Physical Environments *(New)*	Lack of experience in identifying barriers

8. Mental Health

Initiative		Barrier
8.1	Inventory of Mental Health Resources *(New)*	Lack of awareness of mental health resources offered at U of T
8.2	Identify Barriers for Students (3-part initiative) *(New)*	Inconsistent awareness of barriers for students with mental health difficulties.

Acknowledgements

2005-2006 marks the third year of the University's Accessibility Planning Committee and I am proud to say that we continue to make excellent progress creating and maintaining an environment that is accessible and welcoming to all.

The 2005-2006 planning process moved forward within the framework of the newly revised *Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities* (2004) which outlines a broad vision for the University; one that we believe will benefit all members of our community.

From its creation in 2003, the work of the ODA Accessibility Planning Committee has been a highly inclusive process that brings together a broad range of stakeholders including faculty, students, staff and alumni. Almost 50 people participated in the work of the Committee and many more were consulted across all three campuses to assist in identifying barriers and to suggest possible solutions. This year, more people with visible and invisible disabilities participated in the entire process.

In addition to outlining the status of last year's 43 initiatives and the University's progress to date, the Plan identifies 13 new initiatives or 'next steps'. The Accessibility Plan remains vibrant through the creation of new initiatives and the completion of others. Progress in every area is apparent. Some of the highlights of the past 12 months include a superb awareness campaign, "The Faces of a Great Community"; the opening of a student-run Access Centre; a review of the University Design Standards to include all disabilities; and updates to the parking policies and procedures to more thoroughly address the needs of persons with disabilities.

I would like to thank all members of the Accessibility Planning Committee for their hard work in developing the Plan and, in many cases, implementing the initiatives. Their expertise and commitment is reflected throughout this report. In particular I

would like to thank members of the Coordinating Committee – Myra Lefkowitz, Janice Martin, Mahadeo Sukhai, and Kate Lawton, the Employment Equity and ODA Officer, who did so much of the groundwork to bring all aspects of the Plan together.

I particularly want to thank Connie Guberman for her guidance in the execution of the Plan and for acting as my representative in this process. Connie's knowledge of the institution, and the needs of its community with respect to accessibility, has contributed greatly to furthering the University's commitment to this process.

Angela Hildyard
Vice-President, Human Resources and Equity

**Members of The University of Toronto
Accessibility Planning Committee**

Chair
Angela Hildyard, Vice-President, Human Resources and Equity

Coordinating Committee
- Connie Guberman, Status of Women Officer; Special Advisor on Equity Issues
- Kate Lawton, Employment Equity and *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (ODA) Officer
- Myra Lefkowitz, Manager, Health and Well-being Programs and Services
- Janice Martin, Manager, Accessibility Services, St. George Campus
- Mahadeo Sukhai, Graduate Student; Governor, Graduate Constituency II (Life and Physical Sciences)

Subcommittees:

Each member of a subcommittee is considered a member of the Accessibility Planning Committee

Attitudes
- Kate Lawton, Employment Equity and *Ontarians with Disabilities* Officer (Co-chair)
- Myra Lefkowitz, Manager, Health and Well-being Programs and Services (Co-chair)
- Nouman Ashraf, Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Officer
- Laurie Clune, Graduate Students' Union (GSU), Doctoral Candidate, Faculty of Nursing
- Judith Friedland, Faculty Emeritus, Department of Occupational Therapy, Faculty of Medicine
- Shaila Kibria, Student, Vice-President Equity, Students' Administrative Council (SAC)

Attitudes *(continued)*
- Karen Lewis, Assistant Dean, Administrative Services and Equity, Faculty of Physical and Health Education
- Janice Martin, Manager, Accessibility Services, St. George campus
- Julia Munk, Coordinator, Access Centre/Students For Barrier Free Access (SFBA)
- Jeff Peters, Student, Vice-President Internal, Association for Part-time Undergraduate Students (APUS)
- Colleen Reid, Disability Advisor, Access*Ability* Services, UTSC
- Mahadeo Sukhai, Graduate Student; member, Governing Council
- William Wong, Student, Director, University Affairs, Students for Barrier Free Access (SFBA)

Policy
- Louis Charpentier, Secretary of the Governing Council (Chair)
- Jim Delaney, Assistant Director, Office of Student Affairs
- Steve Moate, Senior Employment Relations, Legal Counsel
- Julie McAlpine Jeffries, Employment Relations Legal Counsel
- Mahadeo Sukhai, Graduate Student; member, Governing Council

Physical Facilities
- Elizabeth Sisam, Assistant Vice-President, Space and Facilities Planning (Chair)
- Steven Bailey, Director, Office of Space Management
- Laurie Clune, GSU, Doctoral Candidate, Faculty of Nursing
- Margaret Fung, Manager, Occupational Hygiene and Safety, Office of Environmental Health and Safety

Physical Facilities (continued)

- Henton Hung, Manager, Design Engineering, Capital Projects Department
- Shaila Kibria, Student, Vice-President Equity, SAC
- Elizabeth Martin, Manager, Access*Ability* Resource Centre, UTM
- Janice Martin, Manager, Accessibility Services, St. George campus
- Colleen Reid, Disability Advisor, Access*Ability* Services, UTSC
- Leo Rivera, Project Manager, Facilities Services, UTM
- Shirley Roll, Architect/Facilities Planner, Space and Facilities Planning
- Maureen Somerville, Alumna; Member, Governing Council
- Janet Xavier, Manager, Building Operations, UTSC

Technology

- Jim Delaney, Assistant Director, Office of Student Affairs (Co-chair)
- Marden Paul, Director Strategic Planning, Office of the Vice-President & Provost (Co-chair)
- James Lawson, Technology Specialist and LAN Administrator, Information Commons
- Janice Martin, Manager, Accessibility Services, St. George campus
- Laurie McArthur, Services Coordinator, Adaptive Technology Resource Centre; Faculty of Information Studies
- Wendy Porch, Assistant Project Coordinator, Adaptive Technology Resource Centre
- Phil Poulous, Faculty, Engineering Computing Facilities, Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering
- Terry Rubenstein, Director of Financial Services and Information Technology, Faculty of Physical Education and Health
- Anne Shipley, Business Officer, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts and Science.

Technology (continued)
- Mahadeo Sukhai, Graduate Student; member; Governing Council

Instructional Design
- Teresa Dawson, Director, Teaching and Learning Services, UTSC (Chair)
- Cleo Boyd, Director, Academic Skills Centre, UTM
- Nancy Dawe, Vice-President, Internal, GSU
- Tina Doyle, Manager, Access*Ability* Services, UTSC
- Pam Gravestock, Assistant Director, Office of Teaching Advancement
- Sean Kearns, Co-chair, Health and Safety, United Steelworkers of America, (USWA) Local 1998; Multimedia Specialist, Office of Space Management
- Shaila Kibria, Student, Vice-President, Equity, SAC
- Susan Lee, Coordinator, Accessibility, Equity and Diversity Programs, Faculty of Physical Education and Health
- Jeff Peters, Student, Vice-President, Internal, APUS
- Colleen Reid, Disability Advisor, Access*Ability* Services, UTSC
- Helen Slade, Coordinator, Student Crisis Response Programs, Office of Student Affairs
- Mahadeo Sukhai, Graduate Student; member, Governing Council
- William Wong, Student, Director, Students for Barrier Free Access (SFBA), University Affairs

Student Life
- Margaret Hancock, Warden, Hart House (Co-chair)
- Mahadeo Sukhai, Graduate Student; Governing Council member (Co-chair)
- Nancy Dawe, Graduate Student, Vice President Internal, GSU
- Shaila Kibria, Student, Vice President, Equity, SAC

Student Life (continued)

- Susan Lee, Coordinator, Accessibility, Equity and Diversity Programs, Faculty of Physical Education and Health
- Janice Martin, Manager, Accessibility Services, St. George campus
- Julia Munk, Coordinator, Access Center/ SFBA
- Jeff Peters, Student, Vice President Internal, APUS
- Sam Rahimi, Chair, Students for Barrier Free Access
- Colleen Reid, Disability Advisor, Access*Ability* Services, UTSC
- Marilyn Van Norman, Director, Student Services

Human Resources

- Rosie Parnass, Director, Staff Development Centre (Chair)
- David Keeling, Bursar, Victoria College
- Mehdi Kouhestaninejad, President, Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Local 3261
- Robert MacKay, Faculty, Sociology, University College
- Paul McCann, Director, Human Resources, Faculty of Arts & Science
- Judith Poë, Faculty, UTM Chemistry; Vice-President, Grievances, University of Toronto Faculty Association (UTFA)
- James Retallack, Faculty, Department of History, Faculty of Arts & Science; Joint Initiative in German and European Studies, Munk Centre for International Studies

Mental Health Subcommittee

- Connie Guberman, Status of Women Officer; Special Advisor on Equity Issues (Co-chair)
- Caroline Rabbat, Manager, Community Safety Office (Co-chair)
- Rona Abramovitch, Director, Transitional Year Programme
- Louis Charpentier, Secretary of the Governing Council

Mental Health Subcommittee (continued)

- Teresa Dawson, Director, Teaching and Learning Services, UTSC
- Judith Friedland, Faculty Emeritus, Department of Occupational Therapy, Faculty of Medicine
- James Lawson, Technology Specialist and LAN Administrator, Information Commons
- Susan Lee, Coordinator, Accessibility, Equity and Diversity Programs, Faculty of Physical Education and Health
- Myra Lefkowitz, Manager, Health and Well-being Programs and Services
- Robert Mackay, Faculty, Department of Sociology/UC
- Janice Martin, Manager, Accessibility Services, St. George campus
- Julie McAlpine Jeffries, Employment Relations Legal Counsel
- Julia Munk, Coordinator, Access Centre, SBFA
- Joanne Murray-Ormandy, Student, University of Toronto
- Judith Poe, Faculty, UTM Chemistry; Vice-President, Grievances, UTFA
- Wendy Porch, Assistant Project Coordinator, Adaptive Technology Resource Centre
- Ruth Perkins, Executive Assistant, GSU
- Colleen Reid, Disability Advisor, Access*Ability* Services, UTSC
- Maureen Somerville, Alumna, Member, Governing Council
- Mahadeo Sukhai, Graduate Student, member, Governing Council
- Marilyn Van Norman, Director, Student Services
- Jill Willard, Personnel Officer, Trinity College

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**The University of Toronto
Ontarians with Disabilities Act
Accessibility Plan 2005-2006**

I.   INTRODUCTION

The University of Toronto has prepared this report, "The University of Toronto *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* Accessibility Plan 2005-2006" in compliance with the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2001 and in accordance with the University's own ongoing commitment to "equal opportunity, equity, and justice" as stated in its *Statement of Institutional Purpose*, 1992 and in its "goal to create a community that is inclusive of all persons and treats all members of the community in an equitable manner" as stated in the *Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities*, 2004.

The *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*

The *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2001 (ODA) received Royal Assent on December 14, 2001.

The purpose of the Act is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in the life of the province. The new Act is a key component of the provincial government's Framework for Change for Persons with Disabilities. The Framework provides a variety of practical measures to remove the barriers that prevent full independence and opportunity for Ontarians with disabilities.[1]

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[1] *A Guide to Annual Accessibility Planning*, **Accessibility Ontario Directorate,** http://www.mcss.gov.on.ca/accessibility/english/colleges.htm . Please note on September 1, 2005 the Government of Ontario transferred responsibility for the Accessibility Ontario Directorate from the Ministry of Citizenship to the Ministry of Community and Social Services. The full text

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005

On June 14, 2005 the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* received Royal Assent. The government has made provisions that the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2001 will continue to apply to the university and college sector. The planning requirements of the ODA, 2001, are applicable until they have been replaced by standards in the new Act. Therefore, this is the University's continuing ODA Plan.[2]

A key premise of the ODA is that improving accessibility is a shared responsibility among the provincial government, municipal governments, and key institutions in the broader public sector, including universities. It requires that universities and other institutions review their policies, programs and services, as they impact on persons with disabilities, through the development of annual accessibility plans.

> Accessibility plans are intended to address existing barriers to people with disabilities and to prevent new barriers from being established. All universities are required to prepare annual accessibility plans as part of their regular planning process.[3]

Universities are not expected to identify or remove all barriers at the same time. They have the flexibility to identify their own priorities within their existing budgets.

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of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2001, is available at http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/DBLaws/Statutes/English/01o32_e.htm

[2] Information about the implementation of the new act is available through the Accessibility Ontario Directorate website, http://www.mcss.gov.on.ca/accessibility/english/colleges.htm

[3] (*ODA Guidelines for the University Sector*, Council of Ontario Universities, www.cou.on.ca)

As with previous years, no new funding has been provided by the provincial government for the implementation of the ODA.

The University of Toronto's Mission and Commitment

The University of Toronto's *Statement of Institutional Purpose* (1992) articulates the University's ongoing commitment to "equal opportunity, equity and justice." This commitment to equitable principles and actions is also affirmed in a number of policies and guidelines, including the *Statement on Human Rights* (1992), *Statement on Accommodation in Employment for Persons with Disabilities* (1995) and *Guidelines for Accommodation* (1999, currently being revised), and the *Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities* (2004).[4]

The University of Toronto is a member of the Federal Contractors Program (FCP), which requires an annual report on the recruitment, retention, and integration of four designated groups within the University's workforce. Persons with disabilities comprise one of these four groups. In addition, the University of Toronto documents the progress that it is making toward becoming a more accessible and equitable place of work and study in its annual Employment Equity Report.

In accordance with the ODA, the University of Toronto's Accessibility Plan identifies various barriers and outlines a process for their eventual removal. It is important to note that in identifying the barriers the University has not attempted to provide explanations for the historical existence of the barriers, or to identify legal considerations that may apply. That is not the purpose of the Accessibility Plan.

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[4] The *Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities* is provided in Appendix A.

Instead, the University of Toronto has concentrated on a good faith effort to engage in a critical self-assessment of things that might limit persons with disabilities from full participation in university life. Some of the barriers will require a significant time to remove, and some may require significant funds, and the involvement of many members of the University community, but the University will make all reasonable efforts to fulfill any goals identified. The success in reaching the annual goals for these initiatives will be a component of the review contained in each successive plan from year to year.

Definitions of Disability and Barrier

The ODA requires that universities and other public sector institutions prepare annual accessibility plans to describe the measures the organization will take during the coming year, to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.[5]

Although the Accessibility Planning Committee is aware of other definitions of "disability" and "barrier", for the purposes of this report, the ODA Accessibility Planning Committee complied with the definitions as identified in the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The ODA definitions of "disability" and "barrier" are contained in Appendix B.

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[5] *A Guide to Annual Accessibility Planning, Accessibility Directorate*
http://www.mcss.gov.on.ca/accessibility/english/colleges.htm

II.   ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING PROCESS 2005 – 2006

A broad-based ODA Accessibility Planning Committee, first established in 2002 to develop the 2003-2004 Accessibility Plan, has continued to guide the Planning process in successive years. Chaired by Angela Hildyard, Vice-President, Human Resources and Equity, the Committee is designed to ensure the accessibility planning process is both collaborative and broadly representative of the University community.

Members of the Accessibility Planning Committee include students, staff, faculty and alumni and represent a range of stakeholders and constituencies from across the University, including facilities and services, information technology, policy, human resources (academic and administrative), unions, student government, equity issues, legal affairs, those with expertise in teaching and learning, and staff with personal or professional knowledge of disability and accommodation issues. Many of the members of the Committee identify as having a visible or invisible disability.

A Coordinating Committee of five people was established to ensure that the process of the Plan reflect the goals of the ODA and the University of Toronto and to highlight key issues for the larger Planning Committee.

In 2004 – 2005 there were eight subcommittees addressing key areas of focus: Attitudes, Policy, Physical Facilities, Technology, Instructional Design, Student Life, Human Resources (faculty and staff) and Mental Health. Some barriers and initiatives overlap and relate to more than one subcommittee's area of focus. The number of participants on the subcommittees grew from the previous year, to almost 50 participants in the 2005 – 2006 accessibility planning process.

The 2004 – 2005 Accessibility Plan recommendations encouraged the Planning process to "explore the complex issues related to mental health".[6] In response, mental health was identified as a theme of the Planning process in 2005 – 2006 and the topic was addressed in a committed and concerted way. A subcommittee specifically addressing mental health difficulties was added in order to more fully address the range of barriers that persons with disabilities face, as defined in the ODA, 2001.

The relationship of mental health and accessibility was comprehensively addressed to include many perspectives and to avoid stigma and prejudice. The other seven subcommittees were asked to include mental health in their discussions.

The *Ontarians with Disability Act* identifies five content requirements for annual plans. The University of Toronto's accessibility planning process was organized to meet these requirements. They are:

1. Report on the measures the organization has taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.

2. Describe the measures in place to ensure that the organization assesses its Acts/by-laws, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services to determine their effect on accessibility for people with disabilities.

3. List the policies, programs, practices and services that the organization will review in the coming year to identify barriers to people with disabilities.

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[6] *University of Toronto ODA Accessibility Plan 2004 – 2005*, p. 95

4. Describe the measures the organization intends to take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.

5. Make the accessibility plan available to the public.

Each subcommittee addressed the following areas in the process of the Plan:

Identification of measures already taken

Each plan is obligated by the legislation to review initiatives already undertaken to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities. Defining what has occurred in the past is intended to provide a context for the new initiatives. In last year's Plan, each subcommittee listed initiatives that had been undertaken to date; that is, those initiatives related to disability and accessibility conducted by the University of Toronto prior to the September 30, 2004, submission of the second annual Accessibility Plan. (The University of Toronto's *2004 – 2005 Accessibility Plan* is available at http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca)

This year's Plan presents a status report on each of the 43 individual initiatives that were specified in the 2004 –2005 Plan to be conducted between September 1, 2004 – August 31, 2005. These 43 initiatives do not, however, constitute an exhaustive list of accessibility-related activities undertaken at the University of Toronto in the past year.

Many other activities, in many parts of the University, improved accessibility and reduced or eliminated barriers. There is a brief summary at the end of each section of some of the numerous other, 'additional' initiatives that were undertaken during the past year that were not specified in last year's Plan. The breadth of these initiatives highlights the scope of accessibility activity and commitment across the University.

Approach to barrier identification

A consultative process was conducted through the subcommittee structure to ensure broad based participation in the planning process by students, staff, faculty and alumni to identify barriers to accessibility at the University and to suggest initiatives to address them. Particular attention was made to encourage people with disabilities to participate in this consultation process; student groups and student governments, unions and staff with professional knowledge of disability and accommodation issues, faculty representatives and alumni representatives were invited to participate. Only those barriers that can be addressed in the third year of the Plan (September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006) and in ongoing initiatives are included in this report.

Next Steps for 2005-2006:

The core intent of the Accessibility Plan is to provide for the elimination of present barriers and the review, revision, and, if necessary, creation of policies and procedures to prevent future barriers.

Subcommittee members reviewed the barriers and initiatives outlined in the 2004 – 2005 Plan to determine progress to date and next steps for 2005 – 2006 initiatives. Additional barriers were also identified and new initiatives were outlined as a result of discussions among subcommittee members. The Office responsible for taking the lead in each initiative has been identified, along with others, who will provide support. Whether through participation on a specific subcommittee, or through separate consultation, each of the University Offices designated with responsibility for an initiative in the 2005 – 2006 plan, has agreed to follow up.

As in previous years, the Plan complies with the requirements of the ODA by including only those

initiatives that can be addressed in the 12-month period of the 2005-2006 Plan.

III. CHANGES TO THE 2005 -2006 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN FORMAT

There are several significant changes to the Plan this year including a substantial change to the format to improve readability.

Each initiative specifies a barrier for persons with disabilities and the initiative created to address it, as outlined in the report of the previous year (2004 – 2005 Accessibility Plan). Following this is a section entitled "Status" that reports the progress made by the responsible Office to implement the initiative during the year, from 1 September 2004 – 31 August 2005.

A new section, entitled "Next Steps: 2005 – 2006 Initiative" outlines the action to be taken in the next 12 months, from 1 September 2005 – 31 August 2006, to continue to address the stated barrier. Unlike the previous year, this new format allows each initiative to be listed once because the progress of 2004 – 2005 initiatives are updated ("Status") alongside future plans (under "Next Steps: 2005 – 2006 Initiatives"). This format also reflects the iterative nature of the Accessibility Planning process.

During the Planning process, the focus on follow up was continued from last year as part of the review of initiatives. The process of review identified, in some sections, the need to reword a specific barrier or initiative to ensure accuracy and clarity. These changes and their rationale are described in the "Status" section of the affected initiative.

In other instances, it became evident that some of the initiatives were repetitive and could be incorporated into another initiative for clarity. (e.g. Instructional Design). In the Technology section it was determined to be necessary to redesign both barriers and initiatives to

focus their scope and to more clearly delineate their probable outcomes. Again, explanations are provided in the Status section of each initiative.

This document was formatted differently from the 2004 – 2005 Accessibility Plan and the "status boxes" used to indicate whether an initiative was " 'completed', 'completed and continuing' or 'ongoing' " were omitted. The "status boxes" were insufficient to explain either the revisions to barriers and or initiatives or the incorporation of some initiatives into other for clarity.

During the accessibility planning process, it was agreed that the creation of an index of initiatives would be helpful for reference purposes. To create this index, it was necessary to make slight changes to the numbering system of the initiatives. Consequently, some initiatives that were completed in this Plan are categorized as "retired" under the "Next Steps: 2005 – 2006 Initiatives" section.

As per last year's Plan no new funding has been provided by the provincial government to implement initiatives. Costs to implement initiatives have been previously allocated, have been designated within the budget of specific units, and/or include the reallocation of employee's time.

IV. HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

The format of this year's Plan has changed; a detailed explanation of those changes and the rationale are included in the Introduction.

Each initiative identifies:

- the barrier to accessibility to be addressed;
- the 2004 - 2005 Plan initiative to overcome the barrier;
- the University official or office responsible for completing the work;
- a status report on the progress made in the last 12 months;
- Next Step Initiatives outlining the action to be taken in 2005 -2006;
- the University official or office responsible for completing the work; and
- the 2005 – 2006 timeline for completion.

1.1   [NAME OF BARRIER]

Barrier: *Description of barrier*

2004-2005 Initiative: *Plans to overcome the barrier.*

Responsibility: *Name of University employee responsible for ensuring the work is accomplished*

Status: *Progress report on work of the previous 12 months; description of any changes made to initiative and/or barrier and reasons for the changes.*

NEXT STEPS: 2005 - 2006 Initiative

(Detailed under headings **Initiative**, **Responsibility** and **Timeline**)

V. REPORT ON STATUS OF 2004 –2005 INITIATIVES AND NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 INITIATIVES

1. ATTITUDES

As described in the provincial *Guide to Annual Accessibility Planning*: "Many people with disabilities identify attitude as the major barrier they encounter. People with disabilities experience attitudinal barriers as stigma and prejudice. Attitudinal barriers, when unchallenged, serve to legitimize discrimination."[7] Examples of attitudinal barriers are provided in Appendix C.

This section focuses on initiatives to address attitudinal barriers as they impact on people with disabilities and the community as a whole, including training and education initiatives; awareness-raising campaigns, events and conferences; development and distribution of educational materials; and initiatives related to communication such as campus communications and information dissemination.

1.1 DEVELOP AWARENESS ABOUT LEARNING DISABILITIES

Barrier: Awareness of issues facing students with learning disabilities is inconsistent among staff.

2004-05 Initiative: Conduct an awareness session for staff on learning disabilities.

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[7] "Guide to Annual Accessibility Planning", Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/accessibility/english/accessibleplanningguide.htm

Accessibility Services, St George, and the Staff Development Centre will again offer a series of sessions to staff called "Enhancing the Student Experience." Topics in 2004-2005 will include "Understanding Learning Disability and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder." These sessions are presented for staff that have front-line contact with students.
(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan 1.4.2 b)

Responsibility: Accessibility Services, St George; Staff Development Centre

Status: Accessibility Services (St. George) developed two workshops *Understanding Learning Disabilities and ADHD and Issues of Diversity.* These workshops were presented in partnership with the Staff Development Centre.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 - 2006 Initiative

1.1   Develop Awareness about Learning Disabilities

The workshops, *Understanding Learning Disabilities and Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder* and *Issues of Diversity,* will be offered to staff in 2005 - 2006.

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

Responsibility: Accessibility Services, St George; Staff Development Centre

1.2   DEVELOP AWARENESS: CONFERENCE

Barrier: Students face a range of societal attitudinal barriers including stereotyping and prejudice.

2004-2005 Initiative: *Breaking Down Barriers* Conference 2004

Breaking Down Barriers 2004 will be held on 2-3 October in Toronto. The goal of the conference is to provide a forum where students with disabilities, staff, faculty, members of the disability community and allies can discuss issues relevant to students with disabilities in post-secondary education.

Responsibility: Students for Barrier Free Access

Status: *Breaking Down Barriers* 2004 was held at the Toronto Marriott Eaton Centre on October 2 and 3, 2004. Approximately 115 delegates from across Canada attended the conference. Improvements over the 2003 conference included keynote speakers, a panel discussion on accommodation, and a series of thematically-linked workshops. The conference received major support from the Office of the Vice-President and Provost.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 - 2006 Initiative

1.2   Develop Awareness Conference

The third *Breaking Down Barriers Conference* 2005 will be held on November 4th and 5th at the Hilton Hotel in downtown Toronto. The goal of the conference is to provide a forum where students with disabilities, staff, faculty, members of the disability community and allies can discuss issues relevant to students with disabilities in post-secondary education.

This year's conference theme is *Student Leadership and Building a Voice*, focusing on stronger self-advocacy of post-secondary students with disabilities. The conference will be promoted on all 3 campuses on relevant list-servs and websites.

Responsibility: Students for Barrier Free Access

Timeline: 1 September 2005 – November 5, 2005

1.3   EDUCATION AND OUTREACH CAMPAIGN

Barrier: Students with disabilities face a range of societal attitudinal barriers.

2004-2005 Initiative: An awareness campaign designed over the summer of 2004 will be launched in Fall 2004. It is based on a series of posters featuring students with disabilities from all three campuses of the University. *(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan 3.4.2)*

Responsibility: Director, Student Affairs

Status: The poster campaign, titled "Faces of a Great Community", was successfully launched in November 2004. Posters were displayed throughout the three campuses and made available on the www.accessibility.utoronto.ca website.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 - 2006 Initiative

1.3   Education and Outreach Campaign

The campaign will be consolidated and broadened this year by posting video interviews with several of the student participants, conducted during the photo shoot for the 2004 – 2005 poster campaign.   Discussions will be held with other relevant offices at the University to expand the awareness campaign.

Responsibility: Director, Student Affairs

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

1.4   ENROLMENT STUDY

Barrier: Some academic programs are perceived to be unavailable or unsuited to students with disabilities.

2004-2005 Initiative: A study will be initiatied to identify those programs in which self-identified students with disabilities are registered at UTSC. The findings will be analysed to determine if students are not applying to or staying in programs because of their perceived accessibility/inaccessibility.

Responsibility: Access*Ability* Services, UTSC

Status: A study was conducted to identify those programs in which self-identified students with disabilities are registered at UTSC. Data collection was completed in August 2005.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 - 2006 Initiative

Barrier: "Some students with disabilities may perceive academic programs to be inaccessible."

1.4   Enrolment Study

Initiative: The data will be analyzed and the results will be assessed to determine if there is a significant difference between enrolment levels in particular programs among students with disabilities and among students without disabilities.

Responsibility: Access*Ability* Services, UTSC

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

1.5 DISABILITY ISSUES AND ORIENTATION TRAINING

Barrier: A general lack of awareness of disability and other equity issues among the general student population reflects the reality of the larger community, where people with disabilities continue to encounter stereotypes and prejudice, stemming in part from a lack of understanding.

2004-2005 Initiative: Incorporate awareness of disability issues into orientation training.

By ensuring that orientation leaders are introduced to issues of accessibility and inclusiveness, the University raises awareness among one group of students who can in turn influence a larger portion of the student body.

Responsibility: Access*Ability* Services, UTSC; Student Affairs, St George

Status: Access*Ability* Services, UTSC conducted a training session with UTSC orientation leaders in August 2004.

Student Affairs staff and the President of the Graduate Students Union provided a workshop on accessibility issues for orientation leaders on St. George campus in late August 2004.

In July 2005, an information session was presented by the Manager of Accessibility Services (St. George) and the Coordinator of the Access Centre on accessibility awareness training sessions that are available for student orientation leaders. This presentation was part of a series coordinated by Student Affairs for staff representatives of the St. George campus Colleges. The actual training will be provided to student leaders at the request of the Colleges' representatives.

On August 20 and 21st, 2005 Access*Ability* Services (UTSC) and Access*Ability* Resource Centre (UTM) provided an accessibility awareness and education training session to student orientation leaders at the joint UTM and UTSC orientation training.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

1.5 Disability Issues and Orientation Training

Accessibility awareness training will be provided to student orientation leaders on all 3 campuses in the summer of 2006.

Responsibility: Student Affairs; Access*Ability* Resource Centre (UTM); Access*Ability* Services (UTSC);

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

1.6   AWARENESS OF TRAINING RESOURCES (New)

Barrier: While there are a range of educational and awareness sessions available on the barriers affecting students with disabilities, there is an inconsistent awareness of these resources.

2005-2006 Initiative: Compile a list of educational and awareness sessions for students, staff and faculty on disabilities affecting students. This list will be made available on www.accessibility.utoronto.ca.

Responsibility: Accessibility Services (St. George), Access*Ability* Resource Centre (UTM) and Access*Ability* Services (UTSC) in partnership with the Access Centre, Office of Health & Well-being Programs and the Staff Development Centre.

Timing: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

1.7   DEVELOP AWARENESS OF BARRIERS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (New)

Barrier: There is a lack of awareness and a lack of solutions for minimizing the barriers faced by applicants and admitted students with disabilities pursuing graduate studies.

2005-2006 Initiative: A working group will be established to explore the barriers faced by applicants and admitted students with disabilities pursuing graduate studies. Special attention will be given to the application process and to the research and scholarship environments.

The working group will include the Vice Dean, School of Graduate Studies (SGS) and the Director of Student Services, SGS; the University Registrar; the Manager of Accessibility Services (St. George); representatives of the Graduate Students Union; graduate students with disabilities and other members at the discretion of the working group.

Responsibility: Vice-Dean, School of Graduate Studies

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

Additional Initiatives

Presentation to PDAD&C: In the fall of 2004 the Manager of Accessibility Services, St George campus made a 30 minute presentation to the University's

Principles, Deans, Academic Directors and Chairs (PDAD&C) entitled "UofT Supports for Students with Disabilities".

Accessible Orientation Programming: In July 2005, Access*Ability* Services UTSC worked with student leaders to develop accessible orientation programming for first year students. The service is offered each year to student leaders.

Workshop on Violence Against Women With Disabilities: In December 2004, the Access Centre participated in a workshop to raise awareness of violence against women with disabilities, sponsored by the Status of Women Office. The workshop was part of the annual December 6th memorial activities honouring the 14 female engineering students who were murdered at École Polytechnique in Montreal on Dec 6, 1989. The workshop offered resources, strategies and a safe space for female students with disabilities to share their experiences. Other community participants included members from the *Disabled and Deaf Women's Project* sponsored by Education Wife Assault.

Poster Campaign Presented at Conference: The poster campaign, *Faces of a Great Community,* developed by Student Affairs with support from Public Affairs, was presented at the annual conference of the Canadian Association of College and University Student Services held in June 2005 in Kingston, Ontario.

2. POLICY

This section identifies University policies and administrative procedures that are relevant to accessibility and disability. It focuses on the institutional implications of policy, specifically those policies and administrative procedures requiring the approval of the University's governance structure.

When discussing policy, there is a necessary distinction between policies requiring Governing Council approvals, as described above, and those mechanisms informing policy implementation, such as guidelines, protocols and expectations.

This section also identifies a process of policy review within the University's governance structure. This process is conducted through the framework of all relevant policies.

2.1 REVIEW POLICIES

Barrier: Some University policies require review to ensure that they address the requirements of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and that they respond to changes in the University, in the larger community or in technology that affect persons with disabilities.

2004-2005 Initiative: Review existing policies.

A number of University policies and the administrative procedures and/or guidelines arising out of those policies will be examined, over the long term, to determine the degree to which they are consistent with the University's goals and the requirements of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*. In 2004-05, the *Policy on Student Housing* (1989) will be reviewed in this context. Deliberations to review and revise the *Statement of Institutional Purpose* will continue in 2004-2005. *(2003-*

2004 Accessibility Plan 2.4.1)

The following policies will be subject to review over the longer term:

- *Employment Equity Policy* (1991)
- *Policies and Principles for Admission to the University of Toronto* (1991)
- *Policy on Capital Planning and Capital Projects* (2001)
- *Policy on Child Care Programs* (*Policy on Daycare* 1987, revised 2003)
- *Policy on Student Awards Established in the University of Toronto* (1998)
- *Policy Statement on the International Student Centre* (1982)
- *Purchasing Policy* (1995)
- *Sexual Harassment: Policy and Procedures* (1997)
- *Statement on Accommodation in Employment for Persons with Disabilities* (1995)
- *Guidelines for Accommodation* (revised 1999)
- *Statement on Human Rights* (1992)
- *Statement on Prohibited Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment* (1994)
- *Student Financial Support Policy* (1998)

Responsibility: President; Vice-Presidents; Secretary of the Governing Council

Status: The Policy on Student Housing (1989) was revised in 2004 – 2005 and resulted in the inclusion of a number of barrier-free recommendations.

The timing and review of the *Statement of Institutional Purpose* will be considered in 2005 – 2006 when the President Designate has taken office.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

2.1   Review Policies

The revised Policy on Student Housing will be brought forward for Governing Council approval during the 2005 – 2006 academic year.

Responsibility: Deputy Provost and Vice-Provost, Students; Secretary of the Governing Council

Timeline: 1 September 2005 – 31 August 2006

2.2   DEVELOP SYSTEMATIC PROCESS TO REVIEW NEW POLICIES

Barrier: New policies require review to ensure that accessibility is addressed, as is now the case with proposals for capital projects.

2004-2005 Initiative: Develop a systematic process to review new policies.

The process initiated in 2003-2004 to review new policies as they are proposed will be further developed in 2004-2005. The newly developed policy, *Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities*, will form an important framework for assessing policies and other proposals (in relation to the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*) as they are developed by the administration and considered by governance for approval. *(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan 2.4.2)*

Responsibility: President; Vice Presidents; Secretary of the Governing Council

Status: The *Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities* was used as a framework to

begin to consider the experience of students with disabilities pursuing graduate programs. Consequently, the new initiative, *1.7 Develop Awareness of Graduate Students with Disabilities*, was created. The Statement was also used as a framework for the revision of the Policy on Student Housing.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

2.2   Develop Systematic Process To Review New Policies

As part of its ongoing commitment and as stated in *The Equity Infrastructure Review* (2005) the University will develop an Equity Statement which will be an important part of the framework for assessing policies. *The Equity Infrastructure Review* is available at http://www.utoronto.ca/hrhome/vphr/vpreport.htm .

Responsibility: Vice President, Human Resources and Equity; Secretary of the Governing Council

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

3. PHYSICAL FACILITIES

This section explores ways that the University can work to overcome barriers in its physical environment. This section includes not only access to buildings and spaces, but initiatives to overcome other physical barriers, such as accessible wayfinding and signage on campus, and consideration of chemical sensitivities.

3.1   UPDATE DESIGN STANDARDS FOR INCLUSION

Barrier: The University's Design Standards focus predominantly on physical disabilities. The Standards need to be reviewed to address all disabilities, such as those relating to mental health and chronic health issues.

2004-2005 Initiative: Establish a process to update the University of Toronto Design Standards to address all disabilities.

The current Design Standards address issues relating to mobility, vision, and hearing. A working group coordinated by the Manager, Design and Engineering, will establish a process whereby consideration of other disabilities will be incorporated into the Design Standards.

Responsibility: Manager, Design and Engineering

Status: A working group was established to review the University's Design Standards to ensure inclusion of all disabilities, including those related to mental health and chronic health issues in the updated Design Standards.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

3.1 Update Design Standards For Inclusion

Examine the feasibility of creating criteria to address mental health and chronic health disabilities for inclusion in the review of the University's Design Standards. Consistent levels of lighting and the availability of quiet spaces are examples of possible criteria.

Responsibility: Assistant Vice-President, Space and Facilities Planning, in conjunction with Accessibility Service Managers from all 3 campuses

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

3.2 UNIVERSAL DESIGN CONSULTANT

Barrier: Critical knowledge about Universal Design Principles, which addresses all disabilities, may not be fully incorporated into new design initiatives.

"Universal Design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design."[8] More information is available at http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/univ_design/princ_overview.htm

2004-2005 Initiative: Employ the services of a Universal Design consultant.

A universal design consultant will be hired, at the discretion of the Capital Projects Department, to work

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[8] From The Center for Universal Design, an initiative of the College of Design, North Carolina State University. © Copyright 1997 Compiled by advocates of universal design, listed in alphabetical order: Betty Rose Connell, Mike Jones, Ron Mace, Jim Mueller, Abir Mullick, Elaine Ostroff, Jon Sanford, Ed Steinfeld, Molly Story, & Gregg Vanderheiden.

with architects, planners, and designers to advise on how to incorporate universal design principles on new projects. *(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan 4.4.2)*

Responsibility: Chief Capital Projects Officer

Status: The Chief Capital Projects Officer hired a universal design consultant at his discretion to work with architects, planners and designers to advise on the incorporation of universal design principles for new projects, including the Communication Cultural and Information Technology Building, UTM

NEXT STEPS: 2005-2006 Initiative

3.2 Universal Design Consultant

A universal design consultant will be hired on a retainer basis to advise on the incorporation of universal design principles for new projects.

Responsibility: Chief Capital Projects Officer

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

3.3 AUDIT ELEVATORS FOR ACCESSIBILITY

Barrier: Inconsistent access to retrofitted elevators and lifts. Retrofitted elevators and lifts often require a range of methods of access (i.e. keys, codes, and a second person to operate). These contribute to lengthy waiting times and dependence on the availability of assistance.

2004-2005 Initiative: Audit the elevators and lifts for methods of access and use.

A process to audit the elevators and lifts for methods of access and use was designed in August 2004. Auditing of elevators and lifts will begin in Fall 2004. *(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan 4.4.4)*

Responsibility: Manager, Design and Engineering

Status: This year information on the legislated requirements for access to elevators and lifts was identified. This information will help us to address the issue of wait times in 2005 - 2006. The range of methods required to access lifts is mandated by the provincial *Elevating Devices Regulations* (please see Appendix D).

As a first step to reducing lengthy waiting times, the audit of elevators and lifts for accessibility was integrated into the St. George campus Property Managers' regular duties.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

3.3   Audit Elevators for Accessibility

In 2005 – 2006 the focus will be on reducing wait times for access to elevating devices for persons with disabilities by beginning to:

- Post standard signs with contact information of staff who are responsible for keys/codes and who provide assistance to users;
- Find ways to loan keys/codes to regular users of lifts;
- Create a process to notify staff of elevator and lift breakdowns to inform visitors with disabilities in advance of alternative routes.

Responsibility: Manager, Design and Engineering

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

3.4 LIST OF ACCESSIBLE ROOMS

Barrier: Lists of accessible rooms for meetings and gatherings are compiled every few years and, if not consistently updated, go quickly out of date.

2004-2005 Initiative: Maintain a list of accessible meeting rooms**.**

A list of accessible rooms compiled in Summer 2004 will be maintained and updated, to provide current information on accessible rooms and spaces for gatherings. *(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan 4.4.5)*

Responsibility: Office of Space Management

Status: The 2004 list of accessible rooms was maintained by the Office of Space Management on their website at www.osm.utoronto.ca .

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

3.4 List of Accessible Rooms

In 2005 – 2006 the list of accessible meeting rooms will be updated to ensure current information on accessible rooms and spaces for gatherings is available and the list will continue to be maintained on the Office of Space Management websites, www.osm.utoronto.ca .

Responsibility: Director, Office of Space Management, Space and Facilities Planning

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

3.5 CONSISTENT APPLICATION OF BARRIER-FREE DESIGN STANDARDS

Barrier: Inconsistent application of the University's Design Standards can result in some new projects not reflecting the University's standards with regard to accessibility.

2004-2005 Initiative: Revise the Barrier Free Accessibility section in the University's Design Standards to clarify and reinforce requirements**.**

(i) Revise the Barrier Free Accessibility section in the University's Design Standards to specify all University requirements over the Ontario Building Code, and to distinguish requirements from recommendations.

(ii) Append the revised document detailing the University's design standards with respect to barrier free accessibility to each Project Committee Report for capital projects requiring governance approval. The first project to include the barrier free design requirements is expected to be the Varsity project.

Responsibility: Office of the Director of Campus and Facilities Planning

Status: The update of Design Standards is continuing through the Office of Space and Facilities Planning. An outside consultant reviewed the Barrier Free Accessibility Section of the University's Design Standards. It was agreed that, where the language of the Design Standards indicates Barrier Free Accessibility is an "optional" requirement, the wording will be updated to ensure barrier-free design principles "are required" in all capital projects. The responsibility for this initiative has been changed to reflect the senior responsible officer.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

3.5   Consistent Application Of Barrier-Free Design Standards

(i)   A working group will continue the review the Barrier Free Accessibility section of the University's Design Standards to clarify and reinforce requirements.

(ii)   To ensure that the revised document detailing the University Barrier Free Accessibility section of the Design Standards will be appended to each Project Committee Report for capital projects requiring governance approvals, the chairs of current Capital Project committees will be notified of this requirement.

Responsibility: Assistant Vice-President, Space and Facilities Planning

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

3.6   BEST PRACTICES FOR CHEMICAL SENSITIVITIES

Barrier: Best practices for improving accessibility for those with chemical sensitivities are not well known. The range of sources, from cleaning products used in university buildings to perfume and other products worn by people in the university environment, presents a number of challenges in making the university more accessible in to those affected by chemical sensitivity.

2004-2005 Initiative: Research best practices on chemical sensitivities.

Research best practices of other institutions on improving the environment for persons with chemical sensitivities. The findings will serve as a foundation, over the longer term, for new initiatives with respect to these issues.

Responsibility: Office of Environmental Health and Safety

Status: A survey of fourteen Ontario institutions including universities, hospitals, Toronto Transit Commission and the City of Toronto was conducted to research best practices for improving accessibility for those with chemical sensitivities. The survey focused on information of practices related to scented products with a review/reduction of chemicals used in public areas.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

3.6   Best Practices For Chemical Sensitivities

Based on the findings of the survey reviewing best practices in fourteen Ontario public sector institutions, the Office of Environmental Health and Safety will work with the Manager of Caretaking services to review chemicals used or to be purchased to ensure use of greener, less toxic products.

Responsibility: Office of Environmental Health and Safety

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

3.7   RAISE AWARENESS OF CHEMICAL SENSITIVITIES AS A DISABILITY

Barrier: Many students are unaware of the impact of scented products on those with chemical sensitivities, and

as a result use perfume and other products that can make classrooms and other environments inaccessible to others.

2004-2005 Initiative: Distribute information on the impact of scented products to students.

A brochure on the impact of scented products on people with chemical sensitivities, previously distributed to University staff, will be distributed to student groups.

Responsibility: Office of Environmental Health and Safety

Status: The information brochure "Guidelines for Perfumes and Scented Products" and information posters were revised for a student audience. The brochure and poster links were widely distributed to Accessibility Services (St. George), Access*Ability* Services (UTSC) Access*Ability* Resource Centre, (UTM), Student Services and to student governments for dissemination to students. The information was also posted in the online Environmental Health and Safety manual at http://www.utoronto.ca/safety/ScentsGuidelines.htm

This initiative was completed.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

3.7   Raise Awareness Of Chemical Sensitivities As A Disability

This initiative has been retired.

3.8   ACCESSIBLE PARKING

Barrier: Lack of clarity and consistent application of parking policies and procedures with regard to accessibility.

2004-2005 Initiative: Review parking policies and procedures.

A working group on parking will be established on each campus to explore issues of clarity and consistent application of parking policies and procedures as they relate to accessibility.

Responsibility: Director, Ancillary Services

Status: Under the auspices of the Director, Ancillary Services, a tri-campus parking group was established to share information, best practices, and to ensure clarity and consistency in relation to parking for each campus.

Some of the issues reviewed by the tri-campus working group included: the number and location of accessible parking spaces; issues related to accessible parking permits; signage for visitors; and access to pathways to buildings from accessible parking spots. Information on how to obtain permits for accessible spaces is now included in regular Parking Services publications. A full report is available from the Director, Ancillary Services.

The campus map was updated to include information on accessible parking.

For more information on accessible campus parking, please see http://www.fs.utoronto.ca/English/page-10-7934-1.html#11007

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

3.8   Accessible Parking

The tri-campus parking group agreed to meet on an annual basis to identify critical issues and share best practices. The outcome of the annual meetings will be reported in the annual parking reports presented to the Services Ancillary Review Group (SARG).

Responsibility: Director, Ancillary Services

Timeline: September 1, 2005– August 31, 2006

3.9   IDENTIFY BARRIERS

Barrier: Faculty and staff are often inexperienced at identifying barriers in physical environments. If able to identify such barriers, they may be able to respond more quickly to issues and concerns raised by students, or by other faculty and staff.

2004-2005 Initiative: A specialist in principles of universal design will present a seminar on how to evaluate a facility for accessibility, to faculty members, residence and other staff, and project managers.

Responsibility: Accessibility Services, St George

Status: Several workshops were held to train staff and students on how to conduct an accessibility audit. For example, twenty-five participants from three campuses, including residence dons and students attended a training workshop in February 2005.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

Accessibility audit training was identified as a priority for technical staff whose jobs deal with space and structures.

A separate initiative to train other staff and faculty has been created under the section on Human Resources.

3.9   Identify Barriers

Project Managers and Property Managers from the three campuses are scheduled for training in September, 2005. Property Managers will receive training to conduct barrier-free audits on washrooms (including quantity and number). Regular audit of washrooms will be integrated into the Property Managers' regular review of their buildings.

Responsibility: Assistant Vice-President, Space and Facilities Planning

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

3.10   CONSISTENT, ACCESSIBLE SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

Barrier: Lack of consistent and accessible signage on the exterior of buildings and in wayfinding can result in difficulty in finding and accessing buildings.

2004-2005 Initiative: Begin a process of discussion to review building signage and wayfinding at the University for consistency and accessibility.

Responsibility: Vice-President, Business Affairs and Chief Financial Officer

Status: A working group was convened to discuss methods of reviewing building signage and wayfinding at the University.

On the recommendation of the working group, a special consultant was hired from the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) to conduct an independent assessment of building signage on campus. The special consultant concluded that the "family" of signs advertising campus buildings and used for building identification was suitable for accommodating persons with low vision.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

3.10   Consistent, Accessible Signage and Wayfinding

The working group will focus on identifying a method to review wayfinding at the University for consistency and accessibility.

Responsibility: Assistant Vice-President, Facilities and Services.

Timeline: September 1, 2005– August 31, 2006

3.11   ACCESSIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL SPACE
   (New)

Barrier: The accessibility of some large classrooms and exam spaces is uncertain.

2005-2006 Initiative:

(i) Evaluate large classrooms on St. George campus for accessibility. Develop a list of requirements to improve accessibility of large classrooms based on the evaluation.

(ii) Begin an evaluation of centrally maintained exam spaces for accessibility on St. George campus.

Responsibility: Office of Space Management and Accessibility Services (St. George)

Timeline: September 1, 2005– August 31, 2006

(iii) Begin an evaluation of large classrooms on UTM campus for accessibility.

(iv) Begin an evaluation of centrally maintained exam spaces for accessibility at UTM.

Responsibility: Access*Ability* Services Resource Centre (UTM) with the Project Manager, UTM Facility Resources

Timeline: September 1, 2005– August 31, 2006

(v) Incorporate the new classroom accessibility checklist used at St. George into the ongoing UTSC classroom audits, the results of which are currently posted at: http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~ability/accommodations/accessibility/classroom.html

(vi) Begin an evaluation of centrally maintained exam spaces for accessibility at UTSC.

Responsibility: Access*Ability* Services (UTSC) with Manager, Building Operations, UTSC and AV Services (UTSC).

Timeline: September 1, 2005– August 31, 2006

Additional Initiatives

Hart House Accessibility Plan: In November, 2004 Hart House produced a much lauded "Accessibility Plan 2004 – 2007". The Plan was based on an inclusive consultation process led by the Hart House Warden and the Manager, Engineering and Design, Capital Projects, with the participation of staff and students including persons with disabilities and those with expertise in accessibility. The Plan identified 25 barriers and 35 initiatives to be accomplished by 2007 based on the University's Accessibility Plan model. The Hart House Accessibility Plan is available at http://www.harthouse.utoronto.ca/English/page-3-12517-1.html

Accessibility Audits: In 2005 the student-run Access Centre offered accessibility audits by two fully qualified young auditors. The service is unique on campus because the auditors are persons with disabilities whose experience informs the accessibility audit.

Accessible Equipment Installed: In 2005, the Faculty of Physical Health and Education installed a Schwinn Windjammer hand cycle ergometer in the ACC Field House with support from the Academic Initiatives Fund (AIF) and the Students' Administrative Council Wheelchair Accessible Fund (SAC-WAC). http://www.steppingup.utoronto.ca/bin/001514.asp.

Accessible Student Housing Information:
Information on accessible student housing on the St. George campus was updated in a special online chart and map, available in at http://www.housing.utoronto.ca/AccessResChart.pdf

More information on accessible student housing for St. George campus is available at http://www.housing.utoronto.ca/AccessRes.html

Information on accessible housing at UTSC campus is available at UTSC Student Housing and Residence Life - follow the links to "Room Information" http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~residences

Information on accessible housing on UTM campus is through the "Accessible Housing" links at http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/residence/flash/index.html

Online Campus Maps Include Accessibility: In 2005 the online campus map was updated to include information about accessibility to buildings on St George campus. Please refer to http://www.utoronto.ca/maps.html

Trinity College ODA Plan, 2005 – 2006: Trinity College, a federated college at the University of Toronto, participated in the Accessibility Planning process and submitted its 2005 – 2006 ODA Plan to the UofT Accessibility Planning Committee for information. Highlights for next year include: continued improvements to physical access at the College; plans to formally adopt the University's *Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities*; and consideration of mental health issues by the Provost's Advisory Committee for Trinity. The complete Trinity College ODA Plan is available at: http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca

4.   TECHNOLOGY

This section examines barriers to accessibility of technology, including information technology (information management systems, software, and hardware systems), technological aspects of campus information and communication, and other technologies at the University ofToronto.

During the consultation process for the *2005 – 2006 Accessibility Plan,* it was determined to be necessary to redesign most of the barriers and initiatives in this section in order to focus their scope and to more clearly delineate their probable outcomes.

4.1   GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNICATION

Barriers: There is an inconsistent understanding of disability issues and the impact that disability has on communication. Standards for best practices in communications are not well known and application of those standards across the university is uneven.

For example, accessibility of on-line and computer-mediated processes is not widely known.

2004-2005 Initiative: Develop guidelines for the effective consideration of accessibility issues in campus communication.

Guidelines for the effective consideration of accessibility issues in campus communication will be incorporated into the University's Institutional Information Technology Planning Framework.

Responsibility: Director, Strategic Computing

Status: Before creating guidelines, a framework for coordinating institutional wide web related activities is required and this initiative is underway. Web space was identified as a specific area of focus in campus communication, a structure for providing ongoing guidance on accessibility issues was established and a process for developing guidelines was outlined.

(i) Area of focus: Web space was one of four areas of information and communication technologies (ICT) targeted for improvements in the Institutional IT Planning Framework. In 2004 – 2005 Web space was identified as the first area of focus for the development of guidelines for the effective consideration of accessibility issues.

(ii) Structure: In 2005 the Web Space Steering Committee was struck to coordinate institutional web-related activities. Accessibility was identified as a priority (*PDAD&C #96 June 6, 2005*). The Director of Strategic Computing identified the ODA Technology subcommittee as a place to provide guidance to the Web Space Steering Committee on accessibility issues.

(iii) Process to develop guidelines: A phased-in approach for ensuring accessibility guidelines for new Web content and agreed-upon accessibility standards is outlined in *2005 – 2006 Accessibility Plan 4.1 Guidelines for Communication*.

The barrier has been rewritten to focus its scope by identifying the specific technological barrier to be overcome. The initiative was rewritten to provide a clear explanation of the anticipated outcome. This redesign process also reflects the integration of the technology aspect of the University's Accessibility Planning process with the work of those offices involved in the Institutional Information Technology (IT) Planning Framework.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

4.1 Guidelines for Accessible Websites

Barrier: Web sites and web pages at the University of Toronto have no requirements or templates for ensuring accessibility.

Initiative:

(i)   Develop templates and style sheets to ease implementation of accessibility standards;

(ii)   Initiate agreed upon standards for creating accessible Websites into the UofT Web page style guide

(iii)   Create a checklist of accessible criteria to be performed against web pages prior to publication

(iv)   Begin creating an authoritative page containing information about all web-technology related services and resources available for persons with disabilities on campus

Responsibility: Director, Strategic Computing and Web Space Steering Committee

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

4.2   ESTABLISH PURCHASING GUIDELINES

Barrier: Inaccessible technology is purchased even though an accessible choice is available.

2004-2005 Initiative: The development of guidelines for establishing accessible information technology across all units and departments is underway. The process of

establishing guidelines has been incorporated into the University's Information Technology review. Purchasing and deployment guidelines for accessible information technology will appear in the "Institutional IT Planning Framework" now being prepared by the Director, Strategic Computing. *(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan, Section 5.4.1.)*

Responsibility: Director, Strategic Computing

Status: Before guidelines for purchasing and deployment of accessible information technology could be established, it was necessary to consider how to identify appropriate accessible information technologies in a growing market. Consultation on this question in 2004 – 2005 resulted in two actions:

(i) currently available resources on campus were identified that inform purchasers of technology about accessible choices.

Inquiries from units wishing to purchase accessible technology may be directed to the Adaptive Technology Resource Centre (ATRC). Buyers can consult the Centre's list of accessible technology resources at http://www.utoronto.ca/atrc/sitemap.html. ATRC offers a number of tutorials to aid in the installation and use of various common adaptive software packages.

(ii) In March 2005, the University's computer equipment volume purchase RFP included requests for vendors to provide accessible Web sites for the display and purchase of their equipment.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

4.2   Establishing Purchasing Guidelines

Initiative: The vendors' provision of accessible websites to the display and purchase of their equipment will be evaluated for use and effectiveness.

Responsibility: Director, Strategic Computing

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

4.3   ACCESSIBLE WORKSTATIONS

Barrier: There are no accessible workstations on the St. George Campus. When alternative access systems are available on multi-user workstations, setup and technical support to configure the systems to accommodate a user's individual requirements is unavailable or prohibitive.

2004-2005 Initiative: Develop Web4All technology. An investigation will be undertaken to explore the possibility of piloting Web 4 All on a publicly available workstation on the St George campus. *(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan 5.4.2 b)*

Responsibility: Adaptive Technology Resource Centre

Status: An investigation into the possibility of piloting Web4All technology on a publicly available workstation on the St. George campus was completed in 2004 - 2005. A Web4All workstation is available for trial and demonstration in the ATRC workshop area, located on the 4th Floor of Robarts Library. UTM does not have Web4All technology.

The possibility of piloting Web4All technology was determined to not be feasible at this time. This is because Web4All must undergo further development to allow use of any open Card format and allow storage of user preferences on a server to make it compatible with T-Card technology and with UTORAut. This technology currently uses a Hitachi card reader and Hitachi Smart Card.

This initiative was renamed to assess the potential for providing accessible workstations that include a greater choice of adaptive technology software than Web4All technology.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

4.3   Feasibility Study: Accessible computer lab

Barrier: There are not enough publicly accessible workstations or computer labs with adaptive technology software to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Initiative: Conduct a feasibility study to determine requirements for establishing and sustaining a fully accessible computer lab with 7 – 10 computers configured with adaptive technology.

The list of software and hardware is to be determined based on requirements of students with disabilities collected by Accessibility Services, St George.

Responsibility: Managers: Accessibility Services, St. George, Directors: Information Commons, Adaptive Technology Resource Centre, Strategic Computing

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

4.4   ALTERNATIVE FORMATS FOR COURSE MATERIALS

Barrier: Alternative formats for course materials are often not available until late in the course. In many cases materials are not available until well past the date required. This is a systematic problem that can only be solved by a collaborative effort on the part of many sectors.

2004-2005 Initiative: Continue with the TextEvolution Project

The TextEvolution Project is the work of a consortium led by ATRC and the University of Toronto, bringing together university administrators, bookstores, publishers, and others to advance the capacity for students to get instant access to electronic versions of texts that can be transformed to meet their individual access requirements. Development of this capacity is a multi-year process. In 2004-2005, the consortium will continue discussions with publishers of course materials and others to identify optimal points in the publication and supply chain at which alternative technologies could be introduced. *(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan 5.4.3)*

Responsibility: Director, Adaptive Technology Resource Centre

Status: The University of Toronto's TextEvolution Project became an interprovincial initiative through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) and E-Learning Standards Advisory Council of Canada. The University continues to work with CMEC and other interprovincial partners to implement TextEvolution as a strategy to resolve problems with the delivery of alternate formats. Discussions also are continuing with Canadian Publishing Council and repositories of digital resources.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

4.4   Alternative Formats for Course Materials

(i) Investigate sources of funding to purchase a high-speed book scanner to create alternative formats of texts in a timely manner for students.

(ii) Explore the possibility of training and staffing high-speed scanners with work-study students.

Responsibility: Manager, Accessibility Services, St. George campus

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

4.5   ACCESS TO WIRELES TECHNOLOGY

Barrier: Some students with disabilities who have wireless laptops that are equipped with accessible technology do not need accessible workstations. However, students thus equipped are unable to print directly from their laptops without the use of removable technology such as a floppy disc, USB drive, or zip disc, and stations are not available for printing. At present, the technology to enable direct printing is not available, as this interface does not exist.

2004-2005 Initiative: Begin an investigation of the feasibility of printing from the wireless network to printers managed by the Information Commons. Development of this capability, if feasible, will be a multiyear project.

Responsibility: Information Commons

Status: The initiative to start an investigation of the feasibility of printing from wireless network to printers managed by the Information Commons was completed and the Information Commons began an assessment of printing from the wireless network to some of its printers.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

4.5   Access to Wireless Technology

The Information Commons will continue the assessment of the feasibility of printing from the wireless network to some of its printers.

Responsibility: Director, Information Commons

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

Additional Initiatives

UTSC Online Map: The UTSC online map was updated to include the location of WheelTrans stops on campus and accessible buildings at http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~advancement/find/utsc_interior.html

5. INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

This section addresses barriers and presents initiatives on three fronts: making learning more accessible to all students; reducing the negative impact on faculty members with disabilities in the performance of their instructional duties; and building on good practices at University of Toronto and at other universities in the growing field of universal instructional design.

5.1 RAISE AWARENESS OF INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Barrier: Awareness is inconsistent among faculty of how to incorporate instructional design principles into syllabus design.[9]

2004-2005 Initiative: Increase awareness of instructional design principles.

(i) To provide greater awareness of how to incorporate instructional design principles into instruction, Teaching and Learning Services (UTSC) and the Academic Skills Centre (UTM) will continue to integrate these principles into their range of professional development offerings. For example, sessions on syllabus design and the creation of teaching portfolios will provide the opportunity to talk to present and future faculty regarding incorporation of instructional design principles into their teaching.

Teaching and Learning Services, UTSC, will present seminars in January and February 2005 on a range of topics relating to instructional design. The office will continue to work with instructors on their syllabi and teaching portfolios, ensuring that accessibility issues are integrated into the process. Accessibility Services, St

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[9] Page 8, *Universal Instructional Design: Creating an Accessible Curriculum*, UTSC

George, and the Office of Teaching Advancement will present a workshop for faculty on Tips for Teaching Students with Disabilities. *(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan 6.4.1 a)*

Responsibility: Teaching and Learning Services (UTSC) Academic Skills Centre (UTM) Accessibility Services (St. George), Access*Ability* Services, (UTSC)

Status: Teaching and Learning Services (UTSC) and the Academic Skills Centre (UTM) integrated the principles of instructional design into their professional development offerings throughout the year, including workshops, lunchtime lecture series, curriculum committees of the academic disciplines and individual consultations with faculty.

Universal Instructional Design (2004), a booklet written by Teaching and Learning Services (UTSC) and *AccessAbility* Services (UTSC), serves as a resource for integrating accessibility issues with instructional design principles. It is available online at http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/TLS/events/publications/images/uidbook.pdf

Accessibility Services (St. George) presented a workshop for faculty on *Tips for Teaching Students with Disabilities,* which was inclusive of instructional design principles with the Office of Teaching Advancement on November 18, 2004.

A range of workshops for faculty on instructional design and related topics was offered in collaboration with other offices through the Office of Teaching Advancement in January and February 2005. A full list of resources is available at www.utoronto.ca/ota/.

For teaching and learning resources at UTM and UTSC, please see Teaching and Learning Services (UTSC) http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~tlsweb/index.htm and the

Academic Skills Centre (UTM) at
http://www.erin.utoronto.ca/%7ew3asc/

(ii) The Academic Advising and Career Centre with
Access*Ability* Services, UTSC, will present a workshop
for students with challenges seeking employment. A
wide range of issues will be covered from researching
employers to dealing with interviews. *(2003-2004
Accessibility Plan 6.4.1 c)*

Responsibility: Academic Advising and Career Centre,
UTSC;
Access*Ability* Services, UTSC

Status: At UTSC the Academic Advising & Career
Centre holds an annual spring seminar on *Career and
Disability: From University To Work*. Details are
available at
http://www.scar.utoronto.ca/%7Ecareer/disability.htm

The Academic Advising & Career Centre offers a variety
of supports for students with disabilities seeking
employment, including information in the Career
Resource Library on Human Rights in the Workplace,
Sample Workplace Accommodations, job descriptions,
Agency Employment Support Programs for Persons with
a Disability and more.

The initiative was reworded for accuracy. Initiatives 5.2,
5.3, 5.4(i) and 5.6 were incorporated into 5.1 to avoid
repetition and retired.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

**5.1   Raise Awareness of Instructional Design
        Principles**

Initiative: Increase awareness of instructional design
principles.

(i) To provide greater awareness of how to incorporate instructional design principles into instruction, the Office of Teaching Advancement, Teaching and Learning Services (UTSC) and the Academic Skills Centre (UTM) will continue to integrate these principles into their range of professional development offerings. For example, sessions on syllabus design and the creation of teaching portfolios will provide the opportunity to talk to present and future faculty regarding incorporation of instructional design principles into their teaching.

Teaching and Learning Services together with Access*Ability* Services at UTSC will be presenting tailored workshops by request incorporating Universal Instructional Design (UID) principles and materials for faculty across UofT.

Accessibility Services, St George and the Office of Teaching Advancement will present a workshop for faculty entitled, *Tips for Teaching Students with Disabilities,* that incorporates the principles of instructional design.

Responsibility: Teaching and Learning Services (UTSC) Academic Skills Centre (UTM) Accessibility Services (St. George), Access*Ability* Services, (UTSC), Office of Teaching Advancement

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

(ii) The booklet, *Universal Instructional Design* (2004), produced by Teaching and Learning Services (UTSC) and *AccessAbility* Services (UTSC) will be made available to all members of the University's Principles, Dean, Academic Directors and Chairs (PDAD&C) in the Fall, 2005.

The booklet provides a resource for faculty on how to integrate accessibility issues and instructional design

principles and is available in pdf format at
http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/TLS/events/publications/ima
ges/uidbook.pdf

Responsibility: Deputy Provost and Vice-Provost
Students

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

(iii)   Teaching and Learning Services in collaboration
with Access*Ability* Services at UTSC will explore the
development of a UID booklet Part II (Case Studies) for
future consideration.

Responsibility: Teaching and Learning Services and
Access*Ability* Services at UTSC.

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

5.2   AWARENESS OF SENSORY DISABILITIES

Barrier: Inconsistent awareness of sensory disability
among faculty. Some faculty members are less aware of
the learning needs of students who are deaf, have low
vision, or are blind.

2004-2005 Initiative: The Manager of UTM's
Access*Ability* Resource Centre will continue working
individually with faculty to raise awareness about and
provide strategies for integrating the learning needs of
students with sensory disabilities into the classroom.
(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan 6.4.2)

Responsibility: Access*Ability* Resource Centre, UTM

Status: The Manager of the Access*Ability* Resource
Centre (UTM) continues to consult with individual
faculty in accommodating students with sensory

disabilities within the lecture room/laboratories and for tests/exams. This initiative was incorporated into 5.1 *Raise Awareness of Instructional Design.*

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

5.2   Awareness Of Sensory Disabilities

This initiative has been retired and incorporated into 5.1.

5.3   AWARENESS OF ALTERNATIVE PEDAGOGIES

Barrier: Faculty is not fully aware of alternative pedagogical approaches.

A faculty member with a disability may be unable or uncomfortable teaching with the traditional lecture method. Limited awareness and inconsistent support of alternative pedagogical approaches may present a barrier to some members of faculty with a disability. Also, the effectiveness of the teaching/learning method for the students is a critical consideration.

2004-2005 Initiative: Increase awareness of alternative pedagogies

The mechanism is in place to create a resource team for a faculty member seeking an accommodation that involves alternative teaching approaches.

Responsibility: Office of Teaching Advancement

Status: Alternative pedagogical approaches for both faculty with disabilities and for faculty accommodating students with disabilities are offered through the Office of Teaching Advancement (St. George), the Academic

Skills Centre (UTM) and Teaching and Learning Services (UTSC). These offices comprise the starting point of a resource team for faculty members seeking accommodation for alternative teaching approaches. Typically the resource team involves the faculty member approaching his or her department or program chair, who then contacts these offices.

New faculty orientation provides information on resources available for accommodation of both faculty and students, including alternative pedagogies. Training in alternative pedagogies for teaching assistants is integrated into the annual Teaching Assistants Training Program.

While this initiative was completed as identified in the *2004 – 2005 Accessibility Plan*, the work of these offices is ongoing. This initiative was incorporated into 5.1 *Raise Awareness of Instructional Design.*

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

5.3   Awareness Of Alternative Pedagogies

This initiative has been retired and incorporated into 5.1.

5.4   RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Barrier: Inconsistent awareness and understanding of instructional design principles for reference across the University. As is the case in the general population, there are widely varying degrees of familiarity among faculty with the issues and practices involved in making learning accessible.

2004-2005 Initiative: Increase awareness among current faculty and the next generation of faculty about principles of instructional design.

(i) Develop a set of instructional design principles for the University of Toronto. These principles will be distributed to faculty through workshops run by the Office of Teaching Advancement, Teaching and Learning Services (UTSC) and Academic Skills Centre (UTM).

Responsibility: Teaching and Learning Services, (UTSC); with support from: Office of Teaching Advancement, (St George); Academic Skills Centre, (UTM)

Status: *Universal Instructional Design* (2004), a booklet written by Teaching and Learning Services (UTSC) and *AccessAbility* Services (UTSC), serves as a resource for raising awareness of instructional design principles. It is available online at http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/TLS/events/publications/images/uidbook.pdf Part (i) of this initiative was incorporated into *5.1 Raise Awareness of Instructional Design.*

(ii) Investigate the feasibility of including a module on instructional design in both the Teaching in Higher Education (THE) 500 course and the Teaching Assistants' Training Program. By incorporating instructional design principles into the curricula of these programs, the University would raise awareness of the next generation of faculty with respect to instructional design.

Responsibility: Office of Teaching Advancement

Status: The Office of Teaching Advancement presented a workshop on *Creating an Accessible Learning Classroom* on Oct. 15, 2004 as part of the Teaching

Assistants Training Program. Instructional design principles are integrated in to the Teaching in Higher Education 500 course. The work of this initiative is continuing.   Part (ii) of this initiative is completed.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

5.4   Raising Awareness About Instructional Design

This initiative has been retired; part (i) was completed and part (ii) was incorporated into 5.1.

5.5   ACCOMMODATIONS FOR FACULTY

Barrier: There are inconsistent levels of awareness among faculty and referring agencies of services available to faculty with disabilities through the Office of Teaching Advancement.

Faculty unfamiliar with accommodations available through the OTA often approach another agency first. Those agencies may also be unfamiliar with the range of options available through the OTA.

2004-2005 Initiative: Provide information to referring units about services available from the Office of Teaching Advancement with respect to accommodations for faculty members with disabilities.

Responsibility: Office of Teaching Advancement

Status: The Office of Teaching Advancement informed referring agencies of the services it provides at the request of individual faculty with disabilities to assist them with alternative teaching methods.

This initiative was completed.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

5.5   Accommodations For Faculty

This initiative has been retired.

5.6   MATERIALS ON INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Barrier: Limited access to current materials on accessible instructional design at the Office of Teaching Advancement (OTA). As this field continues to grow in international importance, faculty need ready access to the most current resources, in order to keep abreast of recent developments.

2004-2005 Initiative: Acquire and make available current materials on instructional design.

As part of the expansion of its resource centre, the Office of Teaching Advancement will focus on the acquisition of new materials on instructional design. To improve access to these and other materials, the resource centre catalogue will be made available on the OTA website.

Responsibility: Office of Teaching Advancement

Status: Current materials on instructional design and a listing of relevant resources and workshops is now available on the OTA website at http://www.utoronto.ca/ota/ . In addition, the catalogue of resources has been updated and expanded this year. This work was integrated into *5.1 Raise Awareness of Instructional Design.*

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

5.6   Materials on Instructional Design

This initiative has been retired and incorporated into 5.1.

Additional Initiatives

Transition From High School: Accessibility Services St. George presented the "Ready, Set, Go" programme to help students with disabilities make the transition from high school to University. The workshops were held August 22 – 26, 2006 and attended by 50 first-year students. Topics included: time management, critical analytical skills, test and exam preparation, reading and writing in the disciplines, understanding assignments, study skills, making your memory work and research basics.

Resources for Transition: A *Transition Day for Students with Learning Disabilities* was offered by Access*Ability* Services, UTSC on August 23, 2005. Information was provided on resources for academic success, self-advocacy, assistive technology, time management and other supports on campus.

6. STUDENT LIFE

This section focuses on reducing barriers to participation in the full range of academic and non-academic activities at the University, including access to social, recreational and cultural activities.

6.1 FULL-TIME REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS

Barrier: The structure of student governance precludes part-time students from some levels of participation. This has a negative impact on the ability of those students whose disability requires that they carry a part-time academic load.

2004-2005 Initiative: Review Full-Time Requirements

Discussions among student government groups, begun in 2003-2004 to review the impact that full-time requirements have on students with disabilities, will continue in 2004-2005. The focus is on the eligibility to participate in student clubs or governance of those students with a disability whose academic load designates them as part-time.

Responsibility: Graduate Students' Union, Students' Administrative Council, Association of Part-time Undergraduate Students

Status: In 2004 – 2005 the Students' Administrative Council updated its internal policy to accommodate part-time students with disabilities on St. George and UTM campuses in participating in student clubs and governance. While the GSU and APUS were included in the initiative for consultation, the initiative does not apply to these organizations because the GSU does not have clubs and APUS serves only part-time students.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

6.1   Full-Time Requirements For Students

The Scarborough Campus Students' Union (SCSU) will be invited to join discussions with SAC and APUS to review the impact that full-time requirements have on students with disabilities at UTSC.

Responsibility: Students' Administrative Council, Association of Part-time Undergraduate Students, SCSU

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

6.2   FUNDING FOR NON-ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Barrier: Limited funding is available for non-academic accommodations.

Most funding available to students with a disability is for academic accommodations. Little is available in the way of support for activities outside the classroom.

2004-2005 Initiative: Examine Funding for Accommodations

Under the auspices of the Vice-Provost, Students, Student Affairs will continue discussions with the Office of Advancement and with the National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS), to seek sources of government and non-government funding for accommodations for student life activities. *(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan 8.4.2)*

Responsibility: Student Affairs

Status: Representatives of Student Affairs met with Development and University Advancement and with the National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS) to seek sources of government and non-government funding.

NEADS confirmed that government and NGO funding is not available for activities outside the classroom. The organization encourages student governments to make funding for non-academic accommodations a priority, outlined in their 2005 guide *"Making Extra-Curricular Activities Inclusive"* available at www.neads.ca.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative(s)

6.2   Funding for Non-Academic Accommodations

Initiative: Examine Funding for Accommodations

This initiative was rewritten to identify new ways of addressing the barrier. New sources of funding for non-academic accommodations will be explored.

Responsibility: Assistant Vice-President, Space and Facilities Planning; Warden, Hart House; Coordinator, Access Centre

Timeline: 1 September, 2005 – 31 August, 2006

6.3   ACCESSIBLE EVENING TRANSPORTATION

Barrier: Although the Accessibility Services van is available to transport students with disabilities across campus during the day, the van is not available in the evening. This means that many campus activities that are part of campus life are not accessible to students with

disabilities.

2004-2005 Initiative: Explore extension of the Walk Safer program to include vehicular transportation.

The Manager of Accessibility Services (St George) will continue to pursue with Campus Police the possibility of incorporating vehicular transportation within the St George campus at night for all students, through the University's Walk Safer program. *(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan 8.4.3)*

Responsibility: Accessibility Services, St George

Status: The Manager of Accessibility Services (St. George) made arrangements with Campus Police to provide vehicular transportation within the St. George campus at night for students with disabilities through the University' WalkSafe program. WalkSafe pamphlets have been updated to inform students of this service. The initiative was completed.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

6.3   Accessible Evening Transportation

This initiative has been retired.

6.4   ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION AMONG CAMPUSES

Barrier: No accessible transportation is provided for students traveling from one of the three campuses to another. Graduate students particularly need to travel between Erindale and St George campuses.

2004-2005 Initiative: Explore inter-campus accessible transportation for graduate students.

Student groups will discuss possibilities for this service with offices at UTM. *(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan 8.4.4)*

Responsibility: Graduate Students' Union; Students for Barrier Free Access

Status: The GSU spoke with UTM staff to determine how to make inter-campus transportation more accessible. Accessible transportation is now available to and from UTM through advance booking with the UTM Intercampus Shuttle Service at (905) 828-3933 or www.utm.utoronto.ca/shuttle.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

6.4   Accessible Transportation among Campuses

(i) Raise awareness of the booking process to request accessible transportation between UTM and St. George.

(ii) Determine the appropriate method to submit a suggestion that future purchases of buses for inter-campus transportation be accessible vehicles.

Responsibility: Graduate Students' Union; Students for Barrier Free Access; Accessibility Services (St. George); Access*Ability* Services (UTM)

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

6.5   STUDENT-RUN CENTRE

Barrier: Currently, there is no central coordination of social, recreational and other activities with respect to

nonacademic issues for students with disabilities.

2004-2005 Initiative: Establish a student-run Access Centre on the St George campus. Funding has been secured for the next five years, through an annual $2.00 levy from full-time undergraduate students.

The Access Centre will provide social support and resources for students with disabilities. In its first year of operation, the Centre would like to accomplish the following:

- Explore the feasibility of a mentoring program, researching best practices from other programs at University of Toronto and elsewhere.
- Establish a resource that identifies all those engaged in disability scholarship at UofT.
- Develop a safe online discussion space for students with disabilities.
- Compile and maintain a list of frequently asked questions about financial options available for students with disabilities, who do not qualify for the Ontario Student Assistance Program and are seeking funding for accommodations.
- Provide American sign language training for students

Responsibility: Students for Barrier Free Access with support from Hart House; Accessibility Services, ATRC; Student Affairs; Information Commons; and Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Status: The student-run Access Centre opened in September 2004 to provide nonacademic resources and support for students with disabilities as well as information and resources on disability issues for the entire University community. More information is available at http://www.sfba.ca/

- Research was conducted into the best practices for peer mentoring from other programs at the University of Toronto and elsewhere. In 2005 the Access Centre developed a plan for a peer-mentoring program for students with disabilities in conjunction with Accessibility Services (St. George).
- A resource that identifies all those engaged in disability scholarship at UofT already existed. The *Disability Studies Network* is a listserv that brings together scholars from the field of disability scholarship.
- The Access Centre listserv, launched in 2004 provides a safe on-line discussion space for students with disabilities. Used by roughly 45 students, the listserv is a source of lively commentary and opinion
- "Frequently Asked Questions" about financial options for those students who are ineligible for OSAP was researched and compiled in 2005. It will be included in the Access Centre's forthcoming Accessibility Guide.
- The Access Centre made available subsidies for students to receive ASL training from the Canadian Hearing Society.
- The Access Centre hosted a weekly drop-in programme for students with disabilities and booked accessible tutorial space on the St. George Campus.

The Access Centre assists with the organization and promotion of the annual *Breaking Down Barriers* conferences. A description of the 2005 conference is contained in *1.2 Develop Awareness Conference.*

This barrier and initiative has been revised to reflect the continued need to overcome the isolation of students with disabilities by providing a safe, student-run space, resources to develop and strengthen a social network and by offering cultural and recreational non-academic activities specifically for students with disabilities.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

6.5 Student-run Centre

Barrier: Students with disabilities may face isolation and lack access to non-academic activities and a strong social network.

Initiative: The Access Centre will continue to provide a safe, student-run space to develop and strengthen social networks among students with disabilities. Cultural and recreational non-academic activities for students with disabilities will continue to be offered. The following are specific initiatives for 2005 - 2006:

- Continue to develop a Peer Mentoring program for students with disabilities in conjunction with Accessibility Services (St. George);
- Continue development of the Accessibility Guide, a handbook of resources available for students with disabilities;
- Compile a list of the Centre's programs and services for use in a forthcoming pamphlet;
- Continue the drop-in centre program for students with disabilities in the New College location.

Responsibility: Students for Barrier Free Access with support from Hart House; Accessibility Services, St. George, Adaptive Technology Resource Centre; Student Affairs; New College

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

6.6 ACCESSIBILITY EDUCATION FOR STUDENT LEADERS

Barrier: Although many students are in the forefront of disability activism, people with disabilities continue to encounter negative attitudes within the student population as they do in the community at large.

2004-2005 Initiative: Develop an educational module for student leaders.

Develop an educational module to raise awareness on equity issues, including accessibility, to be used by student leaders with associations and clubs.

Responsibility: Hart House, with support from: Students for Barrier Free Access; Student Affairs; Faculty of Physical Education and Health; Accessibility Services; and Graduate Students' Union.

Status: Hart House, in conjunction with Student Affairs, Accessibility Services (St. George), Students for Barrier Free Access, the Faculty of Physical Education and Health and Graduate Students' Union, has started to design an educational module to raise awareness on equity issues, including accessibility.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

6.6 Accessibility Education for Student Leaders

The design of the educational module to raise awareness on equity issues, including accessibility, will be completed and an implementation plan will be developed.

The implementation plan will include workshops, on-line resources and written materials to disseminate the educational module designed to raise awareness on

equity issues, including accessibility, and to be used by student leaders with associations and clubs.

Responsibility: Warden, Hart House, with support from: Students for Barrier Free Access; Student Affairs; Faculty of Physical Education and Health; Accessibility Services; and Graduate Students' Union.

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

Additional Initiatives

Accessibility Awareness: The Students' Administrative Council provided a session on disability issues and accessibility awareness to its staff and Board Members as part of its Equity Education and Awareness training in 2005.

Career Centre Panel: The Student Services' Career Centre on St. George campus provided a special panel on job opportunities for students with disabilities in the spring, 2005, moderated by the Manager of Accessibility Services, St. George. Employer participants were predominantly from the banking and investment sector.

GSU Review of Policy: In March/April 2005, the Graduate Students' Union (GSU) completed a review of the existing policy for accessibility to reflect their participation in the ODA Planning process. Highlights of the new policy include promoting universal instructional design principles to the graduate student population and continued efforts to raise awareness of issues faced by graduate students with disabilities.

On-line Assistance: The UTM Career Centre provided online assistance and information to students with disabilities seeking employment in 2005. For more information, please refer to

http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/disabilities/home1.html

Reading Service Offered: The Access Centre offered a reading service for students with disabilities in 2005; the service is booked in advance and provided by volunteers.

Transition to University*: The Head Start Program* offered by the Academic Skills Centre, UTM ran from August 2 and 26, 2005, twice a week for two hours. This month-long series of interactive sessions was designed to help first-year students achieve academic success at UTM. Students with disabilities were integrated into the same training sessions as students without disabilities. All first year students were partnered with a first-year faculty member and their parents, to support their transition from high school to university. More information is available at: http://www.erin.utoronto.ca/3185.0.html

7.   HUMAN RESOURCES

This section focuses on barriers and initiatives related to staff and faculty employment and to their full participation in the University community.

7.1   COORDINATING COMMUNICATION OF DISABILITY-RELATED ISSUES

Barrier: Inconsistent coordination of disability-related issues for staff and faculty. While there are currently a range of services and initiatives available at the University of Toronto to address the needs of faculty and staff with disabilities, there is no consistent coordination for disability-related issues affecting staff and faculty.

2004-2005 Initiative: Establish a process of communication

A process of communication to enable ongoing information sharing and collaboration on disability issues as they affect staff and faculty will be established. The Manager of Health and Well-Being Programs and Services and the Quality of Work Life Advisor will continue to meet, jointly and separately, with faculty and staff groups to address these issues. *(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan 9.4.1)*

Responsibility: Office of the Vice-President, Human Resources and Equity

Status: As a first step in the process of communications to enable ongoing information sharing and collaboration on disability issues as they affect staff and faculty, the Office of Health and Well-being Programs established a working group that drafted revised Guidelines for Accommodation for faculty and staff with disabilities. The Guidelines will provide a

consistency of information regarding the accommodation for faculty and staff with disabilities.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

7.1   Coordinating Communication of Disability-Related Issues

The Office of Health and Well-being Programs will coordinate the wide distribution of the Guidelines for Accommodation for faculty and staff with disabilities.

Responsibility: Office of the Vice-President, Human Resources and Equity

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

7.2   STAFF AND FACULTY SURVEY

Barrier: No comprehensive body of information exists about staff and faculty disability concerns.

2004-2005 Initiative: Survey staff and faculty to identify accessibility needs.

A working group will explore the development of a survey that will identify the accessibility needs of staff and faculty. *(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan 9.4.2)*

Responsibility: Office of the Vice-President, Human Resources and Equity

Status: A working group was formed to examine the strategies and methods of conducting a survey that will identify accessibility needs among faculty and staff at the University.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

7.2   Staff And Faculty Survey

The working group will continue to meet to develop a survey to identify accessibility needs among faculty and staff at the University.

Responsibility: Office of the Vice-President, Human Resources and Equity

Timeline: 1 September 2005 – 31 August 2006

7.3   PART-TIME FACULTY APPOINTMENTS

Barrier: Limited part-time faculty appointments.

The existing policy on Part-Time Appointments, negotiated between the University and University of Toronto Faculty Association (UTFA), does not afford tenure to those who have part-time appointments unless the faculty member was a full-time tenured faculty member who converted to a part-time commitment. For all other part-time faculty, those in the lecturer stream, and those who entered the professorial stream on a part-time basis, three-year contracts, renewable upon review, are the maximum available. This structure could make it less attractive for some persons with disabilities to pursue an academic career, and, for those existing academics that have or develop ongoing disabilities that prevent them from working full time, it may place them at a disadvantage in terms of job security and career progression.

2004-2005 Initiative: Process of review of faculty appointments

The issue of the potential impact of the existing Policy on Part-Time Appointments to faculty members with disabilities who may be seeking tenure has been referred to the Joint Committee under the Memorandum of Agreement between the University of Toronto and the Faculty Association. *(2003-2004 Accessibility Plan 9.4.3)*

Responsibility: Office of the Vice-President, Human Resources and Equity; Office of the Vice-President and Provost.

Status: As part of the mediated settlement between the University and UTFA for 2003 – 2004 and 2004 – 2005, it was agreed that a working group would be established to make recommendations regarding working conditions and employment practices for part-time faculty and to identify issues for policy negotiations. The Part-Time Faculty working Group reported in February 2005.

In addition, UTFA and UofT administration met in February 2005 to discuss the potential impact of the existing Policy on Part-Time Appointments for faculty members with disabilities who may be seeking tenure. Due to the complexity of the legal and policy context surrounding this issue and the implications of any change to frozen policies, discussions will continue.

NEXT STEPS: 2005 – 2006 Initiative

7.3   Part-time Faculty Appointments

Issues around part-time faculty will continue to be discussed in the Joint Committee. The University will continue to explore the implications of changes for the complex legal and policy context in dialogue with the Faculty Association.

Responsibility: Office of the Vice-President, Human Resources; Office of the Vice-President and Provost; UTFA

Timeline: 1 September 2005 – 31 August 2006

7.4   IDENTIFY BARRIERS IN PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS (New)

Barrier: Faculty and staff are often inexperienced at identifying barriers in physical environments. If able to identify such barriers, they could anticipate and/or respond more quickly to issues and concerns raised by students, or by other faculty and staff.

Initiative: A presentation will be made by a specialist in accessibility issues to faculty members and other staff on how to conduct an accessibility audit. Information on how to access the University's resources for staff and faculty with disabilities will be provided.

Responsibility: Office of Health and Well-being Programs and Staff Development Centre

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

Additional Initiatives

Training on Accommodation: The Office of Health & Well-being Programs and Services provides a six-hour training course to managers entitled "Healthy Workplace". The course offers resources and training on how to accommodate employees with disabilities and employees returning to work following illness or injury.

For more information refer to:

Health and Well-being Programs and Services at
http://www.utoronto.ca/hrhome/hwb/index.html

The Staff Development Centre at
http://www.utoronto.ca/hrhome/staffdev/index.html

Faculty and Staff Guide: The Access*Ability* Resource Centre at UTM provides an on-line "Faculty and Staff Guide to Accommodate Students with a Disability" Available at
http://www.erin.utoronto.ca/%7Ew3access/faculty_guide.html

8. MENTAL HEALTH (New)

This section focuses on initiatives to address barriers as they impact on people with *mental health difficulties*, which refer to the challenges and barriers that interfere with an individual's ability to function. Individuals affected can include students, staff and faculty.

The 2004 – 2005 Accessibility Plan encouraged the Unviversity to "explore the complex connections of mental health and mental illness". This year, mental health was a theme of the Planning process; other subcommittees were asked to address barriers to mental health in their discussions.

The definition of disability outlined in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and referenced in the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (2001) refers to 'mental disorders'. In this document, the term 'mental health difficulties' is used as a comprehensive approach..[10]

The term 'mental health difficulties' resulted from a recognition of the need to increase awareness and to overcome the stigma attached to mental health, while remaining mindful of the University's legal accommodation requirements.

This section of the Plan recognizes the need to be aware of the stigma and the silence informing the multiple barriers faced by persons with mental health difficulties.

8.1 INVENTORY OF MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Barrier: While there is currently a range of resources, services, and programs available at UofT to accommodate mental health difficulties, there is no

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[10] "Supporting Students with Mental Health Difficulties" – www.ouw.co.uk/products/ok04.shtm

central inventory of all that is offered. In order to identify the gaps in resources and supports to better address the needs of persons with mental health difficulties on campus, an inventory is an important first step.

Initiative: Conduct an audit to provide an inventory to identify the current services, resources, programs, and training available on the three campuses to accommodate persons with mental health difficulties.

Responsibility: Employment Equity and ODA Officer

Timeline: 1 September 2005 – 31 August 2006

8.2   IDENTIFY BARRIERS FOR STUDENTS

Barrier: There is a lack of awareness of the barriers that are created by stressors for students with mental health difficulties.

Initiative: Examine best practices and begin to develop strategies to respond to the barriers created by:

(i)   The stressors surrounding the disclosure of one's mental health difficulties for purposes of accommodation at University.

Responsibility: Manager, Accessibility Services

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

(ii)   The stressors created and compounded by the intersection of mental health difficulties and the special circumstances of applicants transitioning into university.

Responsibility: Provost's Advisor on Outreach and Access; Director, Transitional Year Program

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

(iii)   The stressors created and compounded by the intersection of mental health difficulties and the special circumstances of International Students (such as: isolation; absence of established support systems including friends & family)

Responsibility: Director, Student Services

Timeline: September 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006

Additional Initiatives

Anxiety and Depression Presentation: On January 27, 2005, Dr. Karen Lieberman of the Ontario Mood Disorders Clinic gave a two-hour talk on "Dispelling Myths About Anxiety and Depression" at Hart House. The presentation was organized by Accessibility Services, St. George, in partnership with Health and Well-Being Programs and Services and the Access Centre; more than 125 people, predominantly faculty and staff, attended.

Mental Health Resources: The Office of Health and Well-being Programs and Services' website links to a number of different resources on mental health and stress reduction:
http://www.utoronto.ca/hrhome/hwb/links.html

VI. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2005-2006

Passage through Governance

The 2005 – 2006 University of Toronto ODA Accessibility Plan will be considered at three levels in governance. The Planning and Budget Committee, the body with lead responsibility for planning matters, will consider the Plan in detail and make its recommendations to the Academic Board. The Board will then consider the Planning and Budget Committee's advice and make its recommendations to the Governing Council, the final decision-making body.

Communicating the Plan

Upon passage through governance, "The University of Toronto ODA Accessibility Plan 2005-2006" will be circulated a variety of methods including posting it on the University of Toronto homepage (http://www.utoronto.ca); posting it to the Human Resources website: (http://www.utoronto.ca/hrhome) and making it available on the Accessibility website at http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca

The Plan will be circulated and made available in a range of formats, with the assistance of the Department of Public Affairs and the Adaptive Technology Resource Centre. Student governments, unions, and the Faculty Association will be asked to assist in the circulation of the Plan as well.

Following circulation, University community members will be invited to participate in a process of consultation to provide input into the development of priorities for future Accessibility Plans.

Monitoring the Plan

The University of Toronto is committed to ensuring that *The University of Toronto ODA Accessibility Plan 2005-2006* is reviewed and monitored regularly. The Employment Equity and ODA Officer, the Accessibility Planning Committee, the Coordinating Committee and Subcommittees will continue to meet throughout the year to review and monitor ongoing initiatives related to disability and accessibility. Offices responsible for taking the lead on specific initiatives in the 2005-06 Plan will be asked to provide regular updates on their progress.

Dispute Resolution

The ODA does not require a Plan to contain a dispute resolution mechanism. Moreover, the University does not think that a formal dispute resolution process, with the possibility of adversarial positions being advanced, is the most effective way of dealing with problems around disability issues. Currently, disability issues tend to get resolved as they are discussed and moved up within the academic and administrative accountability structures, up to and including the Governing Council level for issues of general policy. A variety of more formal mechanisms exist to raise concerns (everything from grievances, to academic appeals, to ombudsperson complaints, to complaints before the Human Rights Commission). While these are rarely used, they also tend to produce resolution rather than protracted litigation. The University believes that the best approach is to continue to use the wide variety of practical and formal approaches that currently exist to resolve disability issues, but to assess their effectiveness once the University has developed sufficient experience under the Act. As noted in the 2004-2005 Accessibility Plan, the University intends to review the effectiveness of existing dispute resolution mechanisms related to disability issues

and to develop a proposal for new or additional mechanisms if the review suggests that such a change is advisable.

Next Steps and Future Considerations

The   University of Toronto's 2005 –2006 Accessibility Plan reported the progress of the 43 initiatives taken by the University between September 1, 2004 and August 31, 2005 to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities.

The 2005 – 2006 Accessibility Plan identified 35 initiatives to be continued from the previous Plan and created 13 new initiatives. This year the Plan process included the retirement of eight initiatives; of these, four were completed and four were incorporated into other initiatives to avoid repetition. The retired initiatives will be incorporated into an index of completed and retired initiatives from the University's earlier Accessibility Plans.

Two new directions outlined through the Accessibility process in the past two years are addressed in the 2005-2006 Accessibility Plan. These are:

- "Exploring the complex issues of mental health and mental illness", and
- "Conducting research on best practices to improve the environment for people with chemical sensitivities."

New directions arising from this year's planning process include:

- Exploring the intersectionality of disability issues with other equity issues to identify and address the complex barriers to accessibility.

- Planning a symposium to present mental health scholarship conducted at the University, including a range of perspectives.

These future considerations reflect an inclusive Accessibility Planning process. The University is continuing to deepen its analysis of disability to create a fully accessible and welcoming University community.

November 1, 2004

Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons With Disabilities

It is the University's goal to create a community that is inclusive of all persons and treats all members of the community in an equitable manner. In creating such a community, the University aims to foster a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of all persons.

In working toward this goal, the University will strive to provide support for, and facilitate the accommodation of individuals with disabilities so that all may share the same level of access to opportunities, participate in the full range of activities that the University offers, and achieve their full potential as members of the University community. The University will work to eliminate or minimize the adverse effects of barriers, including physical, environmental, attitudinal, communication and technological barriers, which may prevent the full participation of individuals with disabilities in the University community. The University will provide the members of its community with opportunities for education and access to information regarding disability and the University's policies on disability.

At the same time, the University will endeavour to protect the individuals' privacy, confidentiality and autonomy.

The University re-affirms that all individuals are expected to satisfy the essential requirements of their program of studies or employment, while recognizing that students and employees with disabilities may require reasonable accommodations to enable them to do so. The University is,

as always, committed to preserving academic freedom and its high level of academic standards.

The achievement of the University's goal depends on the participation of each and every member of the University community, including students, faculty, staff and alumni, as well as their respective representative organizations. Each of these parties has a role in creating an equitable and inclusive environment, as well as in the accommodation process and the identification, removal, and/or reduction of barriers. The consultative relationship among the members of the University community is based upon a shared desire for an open, supportive learning and working environment, and a shared respect for individual rights and dignity.

In working toward its goals under this Statement, the University is committed to acting conscientiously and in keeping with its own policies and existing legislation related to disability. These include:

- University of Toronto policy on *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy*
- University of Toronto policy on *Employment Equity*
- University of Toronto *Statement on Human Rights*
- University of Toronto *Statement of Institutional Purpose*
- University of Toronto *Statement on Prohibited Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment*
- University of Toronto procedural guidelines for the accommodation of students, staff and faculty with disabilities
- Ontario *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*
- Ontario *Human rights Code*

Definitions of Disability and Barrier:

The ODA adopts the broad definition for disability that is set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code.[11] **"Disability"** is:

(a)   any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,

(b)   a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,

(c)   a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,

(d)   a mental disorder, or

(e)   an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

A **"barrier"** is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an informational or

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[11] The full text of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2001, is available at http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/DBLaws/Statutes/English/01o32_e.htm

communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a
technological barrier, a policy or a practice.[12]

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[12] Examples of each of the different kind of barriers can be found at:
http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/DBLaws/Statutes/English/01o32_e.htm

Definitions of Attitudinal Barriers for Persons with Disabilities

The following information is excerpted from the *Accessibility Plan 2003 – 2004* 1.3 Attitudinal Barriers.

Attitudinal Barriers

Attitudinal barriers towards people with disabilities are manifested in our society in a range of ways. Similar barriers are potentially experienced within the University. These include:

a. General lack of awareness of disability issues and their multi-faceted impact on students, staff and faculty.
b. Believing that an individual with a disability is inferior and does not possess the same level of skills that another person who does not have a disability might have.
c. Defining a person by the equipment (e.g. wheelchair, white cane) that he or she uses.
d. Exhibiting pity and patronizing behaviour towards a person with a disability.
e. Regarding a person's abilities and accomplishments through the lens of his or her disability.
f. Assuming that a person with a disability is unable to perform a task without giving the person the opportunity to attempt it.
g. Assuming that a person's condition negatively affects the entire person (e.g. shouting at a person who is blind).
h. Stereotyping a person using either negative or positive generalizations (e.g. people with mental health disabilities are violent and dangerous).

i. Believing that people with disabilities are privileged and given unfair advantages (e.g. not expected to perform to the same standards as their co-workers).
j. Denying that "hidden" conditions are disabilities.
k. Avoiding contact with a person with a disability for fear of saying or doing something wrong.
l. Believing that a person with a psychiatric disability is not intelligent.
m. Assuming that a person's disability is only defined by his or her medical/physiological diagnosis rather than by his or her environment and support network as well.

(The above list was drawn from: *Students with Disabilities: How they believe others see them in the University Community*, Israelite N., Symanzik, A., Pullan, J., Karambatsos, S. Communique, Fall 2000, p.41; US Department of Labour: http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/ek99/barriers.htm ; WHO: http://www3.who.int/icf/beginners/bg.pdf   )

Information on Legislated Requirements For Access to Elevators and Lifts (from 3.3. Audit Elevators For Accessibility).

There are two modes of vertical transportation: passenger elevators and accessible lifts installed where the construction of a ramp or elevator is not practical. These are single passenger lifts (sufficient in size to accommodate a wheel chair) and will raise a few steps up to a maximum of one floor. The *Elevating Devices Regulations* mandate the use of keys or codes as a safety precaution and to provide supervision of the use of lifts. Safety considerations are greater with lifts because most are 'open' type structures and do not contain control devices, emergency or otherwise, found in elevators.

(from Manager, Design Engineering, Capital Projects Department, August 2005).