

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2000-2001  
ACCESSABILITY SERVICES**

**PREPARED FOR:  
THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

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**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO AT SCARBOROUGH**

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## Executive Summary

The Ministry of Education and Training through an Accessibility Fund primarily finances *AccessAbility Services*. As a result, this report is required to notify the Ministry of Education and Training on the activities of the office. However, it is a useful tool to review the direction the service is taking to ensure a best practices approach to accommodation and full integration of students with a disability into all aspects of university life.

## Service Profile

The service continues to provide a broad range of services to a clientele with diverse and complex needs. The services include accommodation, consultation with the broader community and education. *AccessAbility Services* also continues to work in partnership, with various services throughout UTSC. These linkages and partnerships are essential to the development of support services for students with a disability.

The service is guided by the Human Rights Commission view that access to all services, academic or social, for persons with a disability is a shared responsibility with all departments and services throughout the university including administrative staff, faculty, and administration. The long-term vision of the office is to ensure that all areas at UTSC incorporate the idea of universal access in everything that is developed, so that it becomes a matter of course, rather than piecemeal or the sole responsibility of *AccessAbility Services*. For example, when designing web pages departments will ensure the site is accessible to all users, instructors will make enlarged readings available and more frequently accommodate students with extra time, and that the Computer Centre would have the space to provide a range of Assistive technology.

There is an ongoing awareness that *AccessAbility Services* does not solely arrange notes, tests and exams. Disability issues are multi-faceted and transcend every area of UTSC academic, administrative and extra-curricular activities. So while a large portion of the service activities are related to successful academic accommodations and supports a significant portion of the service is involved in consultation on issues related to financial aid, recreation and health, mental health, universal design, etc. As can be seen throughout this report, the Coordinator worked with a large number of departments at UTSC to ensure that the accommodation needs of persons with a disability in all areas were met.

## Emerging Issues

While the number of students registering with the service has grown significantly in the past five years, the Service experienced an unprecedented growth in 2000-2001. During this year, the Services caseload rose from 111 in 1999-2000 to 158. The number of tests and exams written with the office has increased 64% since 1997. The growth has caused strain on an already understaffed service. However, despite the growth the Service made significant strides in a number of areas in 2000-2001.

It should be noted that the number of students with a disability registered with the service is not representative of all the students with disabilities at UTSC. Not all students with a disability register with the service. It should also be noted that the growth in participation rates of students with disabilities in Postsecondary education is expected to increase especially as the UTSC student population grows over the next few years.

## Proposed Initiatives

In order to ensure the growth and improvement of the service goals must be set to ensure best practices are implemented. Growth of this support service not only contributes to guiding the decisions of potential students choosing which post-secondary institution to attend but more importantly it plays a significant role in the retention of students with a disability.

### WORKFORCE GOAL

In order to meet significant anticipated enrollment increases, planning needs to take place in the area of human resources. The issue of the need for additional staff continues to be a major concern for the office. The growth in caseload of students registered with the service has inundated the staff. The top priority is to explore funding to hire a permanent staff at .9 fte (100% August to May; 40% June and July) to assist the Coordinator and Examination Officer in meeting the demands of the office.

In addition to this:

- Casual staff will be hired to assist in the summer when the staff complement is reduced and on vacation. Casual staff will assist with note taking services, clerical duties and with special projects for the Coordinator in preparation for 2001 Winter Session.
- Work-study students will be recruited to assist the Coordinator on Outreach Projects and the Examination Officer with clerical duties. A work-study manual will be completed by September to be used as a training tool.

### TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOAL

The staff of the service must review their competencies in the field to ensure their skills are up to date. Without ongoing development, the service will not be able to provide the type of service the students require and have become accustomed to.

- The Coordinator will:
  - Attend the following conference:
  - CACUSS (attend sessions including Test/Exam Anxiety; Group Psychotherapy; LD Tutoring Program)
  - Attend Web developers meetings
- The Examination Officer will attend:
  - Computer Courses offered by the University of Toronto Human Resource Department (Excel, Access, Word) to upgrade current skills
  - Attend Training session on Adaptive Technology for students with a Disability at ATRC

- The Registered Psychologist will:
  - Attend Training session on Adaptive Technology for students with a Disability at ATRC
- Invigilators will be offered the opportunity to be trained by the University Police in:
  - Crisis Prevention and Intervention

## MEMBERSHIPS

- The Coordinator will continue to play an active role on relevant committee's at UTSC and the wider university community.
- The service will maintain membership with IDIA, CACUSS/CADSPPE, National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS), Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)

## SERVICE PROVISION GOAL

### Service Delivery

There is a continuing need to explore employee means of meeting high volume client load and student needs, as efficiently as possible. As the volume is expected to increase significantly, this is an area which demands close scrutiny. Of particular concern is the peak period at the beginning of each Winter session and during the mid-term and final exam periods.

As well improved equipment and technology are areas which will allow our service to meet the increasing demands placed on it. This will include maintaining the new website, which will be addressed later in this report.

With this in mind, the following actions will be taken to ensure a best practices approach to service delivery:

- Intake Process:
  - Orientation packages for new students will be prepared and handed out to all students registering with the service throughout the year. The package will include a copy of the "Guide for Students Registered with the Service," support services information (Health and Wellness Centre, Academic Advising and Learning Skills, Writing Centre), and Student Health Plan Information.
- Group Orientation Sessions for Returning Students will be held to discuss What's New in the office and on the website; review of responsibilities, etc. Note: discussing these issues in groups will help alleviate the Coordinator's time in the Fall as she meets with each student registered to review their accommodations and discuss whether or not new support services are required.
- Promotion of the AccessAbility Club at UTSC will take place:
  - the Club brochure will be included in all orientation packages
  - during the orientation session for returning students

Note: The club is a peer support group whose objectives are to enrich the university life, academic and extra curricular of all students with disabilities.

- Note taking
  - Examination Officer will encourage note takers to email their notes to students with a disability. This will only be possible if the note taker is choosing to type their handwritten notes, as is sometimes the case. Email will increase the speed at which students receive their notes and will reduce staff workload.
  - A review of the process to facilitate communication between the student and note taker will be undertaken.
  - To promote independence, students who are efficient typists will be encouraged to use a typing tool, Alpha smart, for note taking. The use of this tool may improve the quality of notes students are currently taking and, in some cases, will eliminate the need for a note taker.
  - The Note taking Recruitment Packages provided to Instructors will be revised to encourage them to post their notes on the web and will provide them with a resource to assist them achieve this. Some students have informed this office that a note taker would not be required when the Instructors post their notes on the web.
  
- Communication with Instructors:
  - The current “Letter of Introduction” provided to Instructors will be revised to ensure the Instructors have a better understanding of issues related to accommodation.
  
- Program Evaluation: The service will conduct a Student Satisfaction Survey to determine students’ satisfaction with the service.

### **Support Services – Collaborations and Partnerships**

- Continue evolving partnership with the Health and Wellness Centre to review supports available to students with Generalized Anxiety and Panic disorders. The feasibility of offering a Group Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy program is presently being explored.
  
- In partnership with the Career Centre, arrange to provide a seminar on “Career and Disability: From University to Work” annually.
  
- In partnership with the Adaptive Technology Resource Centre- Clinical Specialist will offer seminar entitled “Adaptive Technology at UTSC” annually.
  
- In partnership with the Writing Centre, provide awareness and training to staff within the Centre on disability issues as it relates to learning, writing and strategies.
  
- The Coordinators of *AccessAbility* Services at UTSC, *AccessAbility* Resource Centre at UTM and *DisAbility* Services at St. George, will continue monthly tri-campus meetings to ensure a coordinated approach to equitable services across the campuses. Issues to be addressed include enhanced communication between the offices, policy development (i.e., Confidentiality policy) and sharing of information about existing databases for records management and test/exam scheduling.

## **Education and Communication**

In keeping with the Ontario Human Rights Commission's belief that "an informed public is the best guarantee of equality" (p. 50, Annual Report ,1998-1999) a number of activities will take place to educate the University and outside community about the type of services available, why it is important to accommodate students, and strategies for accommodation. There must continue to be an evolution in mindset from providing services based on legal obligation to one of intent on fostering a supportive environment for students with a disability.

### **Publications**

A work-study student position has been created to assist with expanding the efforts to provide material in all relevant institutional publications promoting the service. This effort will also include revisions to existing brochures, bulletin boards and the web.

### **Web Based Activities**

The web must be continually reviewed and modified to ensure the site is up to date and accessible.

- The following sections of the website will be enhanced:
  - Adaptive Technology at UTSC
  - Alternate Format Materials
  - Career and Disability: From University to Work
  - Emergency Evacuation Procedures
  - Faculty Handbook will be online by the fall and the Guide for Registered Students Manual will be revised and provided in PDF format.
  
- The site will continue to be linked to appropriate services within and outside the university in order to ensure that students with disabilities become aware of the services available.

### **Disability Awareness**

Education Initiatives will include issues related to disabilities and the impact on education, responsibilities of those who accommodate, strategies for accommodation and disability sensitive language.

- The NEADS report (1999) on Accommodations and Policies for Post-Secondary Students with Disabilities: Ensuring Access to Higher Education and Career Training noted that "because the majority of students with disabilities come in contact with their instructors more often than they do with other staff on campus, it is necessary that everything be done to break down attitudinal barriers, and to facilitate the best atmosphere possible for both parties." (pp. 221-222). With this in mind, the following activities will take place:



- In partnership with Teaching and Learning Services develop and implement a seminar series to address teaching and learning in a diverse environment. Students with disabilities will be encouraged to be involved in this project. As well, as was mentioned under web initiatives, the Faculty Guide will be online.
  - Three work-study positions will be submitted to the Career Centre to assist with the seminar series.
  - In partnership with Teaching and Learning Services the Service will be involved in the orientation program for new faculty.
- Admissions: Outreach
    - Admissions – an email message will be sent out to new students who have accepted the offer to UTSC, informing them about the service and the need for early registration.
    - Arrangements will be made for Training the Admissions staff about service, particularly the Recruitment Officers.

### **EQUIPMENT/TECHNOLOGY SERVICES GOAL**

It is essential that UTSC have updated technology available for students to access. The technology should keep up to date with what students have at home and be updated to provide an increased opportunity for independence and success.

- Arrange for Clinical Specialist from ATRC to review current systems and recommend upgrades and new software programs. In particular, upgrading the voice recognition program.
- Upgrade existing Alpha smart (typing tool) and if the budget allows, purchase second unit.
- Review access to computers throughout the campus (i.e., Computer Centre, Library, etc.)
- Coordinate a meeting with ATRC, the Coordinators at UTM and St. George to view a demonstration of the Liberated Learning Project. The project is developing speech recognition technology to assist students with a disability in the classroom.

### **ACCESSIBILITY GOAL**

An anticipated increase in student enrolment has, and will continue to, prompt new construction (i.e., new residence, Academic Resource Centre, Student Centre). *AccessAbility* Services will need to be involved in early planning in order to meet student needs and avoid costly retrofits.

- Identify projects needing improvements over the next five years and prioritize with student consultation
- Auto-openers will be installed at:
  - Meeting Place out to the H-Wing Patio (funded by SAC-WAC): this exit is essential for safe evacuation in an emergency.

- 5<sup>th</sup> floor Physical Sciences Computer
- Lecture Hall:
  - accessibility will be reviewed to better integrate current seating arrangements to persons with disabilities (note: height adjustable tables are available in six lecture theatres)
  - A temporary structure housing a lecture hall will be erected for the fall. As a result, access to this structure will be reviewed (i.e., auto-openers, seating, etc.)
- Improvements to Emergency Evacuation Plans
  - In Library
- Monitor issues related to parking for persons with a disability:
  - Accessible parking bay to be created at the front main entrance in drop-off/pick-up zone; an accessible path to the metered parking machine to be completed
  - With the construction of the Phase IV Residence building the parking area will be modified
- Improvements to the staircase at pick-up/drop-off zone (handrail and contrasting nosing will be installed)
- Recreation Centre
 

Physical activity for students with a disability is often a requirement for rehabilitation from an injury (i.e., injury to back, leg, Acquired Brain Injury, etc.) or maintenance of mobility. With this in mind, access to this area will continue to be enhanced.

  - Auto-openers will be installed on change rooms and into the Key (funded by Council on Student Services and Recreation Centre),
  - Access to showers will be improved (funded by Recreation Centre)
- Housing and Residence Life
  - A review of the communication process between students with a disability and Housing office will take place (i.e., medical certificates requesting special accommodations, registration information to assist with the preparation of incoming student needing accommodations, etc)
  - Continue involvement in Design Guidelines for Phase IV Residence
- UTSC new Bookstore designs to be reviewed.

## Achievements

### WORKFORCE

In order to keep up with increased enrollment with the service the following achievements occurred within the area of human resources.

- The Examination Officer returned from an Educational Leave of absence in July. The Acting Examination Officer and Examination Officer were able to crossover schedules to ensure a smoother transition by providing training on new procedures and technology and to update the Examination Officer on the previous year.
- Increased Examination Officer from 80% (4 days) to 100% (5 days a week) August to May continued to prove successful, especially this year as the population of students registering with the service dramatically increased.
- Increased Coordinator and Examination officer from 25% to 40% (2 days) for June and July which improved access to the office for students.
- Casual staff was hired to help assist with note taking, clerical duties and special projects during the summer.
- Examination Officer hours changed to cover one evening which has improved access to the office, especially for students who are part-time.
- A Web Developer was hired to implement the major revisions of the site – this has been a lengthy process but has proven to be very successful. Feedback has proven that this was a positive and necessary hiring.

### TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Coordinator has attended various meetings and conferences which have provided opportunities for networking with other disability services personnel. This invaluable contact allows the service to stay current with what is happening in the field of disability provision and to ensure a best practices approach for service delivery. These activities included:

- CACUSS
- Association on Higher Education and Disability – Conference Theme: Universal Design
- Dalhousie Conference: Teaching and Learning for Diversity
- IDIA – PD Meeting on Access to Post-Secondary Education for Persons who are Deaf

Other related activities included:

- Students at Risk: Responding to Suicidal and Self-harming behaviour
- 2<sup>ND</sup> Annual Conference on Mental Illness: The Effects of Manic Depression

- Web Development – keeping web site functional, effective, and efficient
- The Jobs market for Persons with disabilities
- Unlimited by Design – hands on exhibits of universally designed products – products designed to enhance routine activities for the greatest number of people, embracing a wide spectrum of abilities and age groups – Design Exchange
- Adaptive Technology at UTSC presented by the Clinical Specialist from the Adaptive Technology Resource Centre

The Examination Officer attended:

- 2<sup>ND</sup> Annual Conference on Mental Illness: The Effects of Manic Depression
- Adaptive Technology at UTSC presented by staff from the Adaptive Technology Resource Centre
- Career and Disability: From University to Work presented by the Coordinator

Invigilators

- Disabilities overview presented by the Coordinator

## **MEMBERSHIPS**

### **Committees/Association Memberships**

The Coordinator:

- Continues to provide representation on a number of relevant committees:
  - Advisory Committee on Accessibility for Persons with a disability
  - Equity Issues Advisory Group (EIAG)
  - Fire Safety
  - Grant Committee – high needs grants
  - Safety and Security
  - Site Planning
- Joined NEADS and AHEAD
- Maintained memberships on IDIA and CACUSS/CADSPPE

The Examination Officer:

- Represented the service on the Prudential Award Committee

### **Student Involvement**

- The increased number of students with a disability participating on the Accessibility Committee and other areas have supported the efforts of *AccessAbility Services*. Increased student involvement also demonstrates an evolving commitment to improved services by students.

## SERVICE PROVISION

### Service Delivery

- Students continue to be encouraged to play an active role in the accommodation process.
- Web-Based: The Web has proved to be an effective way of communication with students with disabilities and the wider community. Consequently, extensive revisions were undertaken to ensure that all information required by the university and wider community is online. As well, all forms were put online for easier access and has proven to assist with a more efficient and effective way students can communicate with the office.
- Developed seminar on Career and Disability: From University to Work. The seminar was held for the students but staff and faculty were invited to attend. The seminar was very well attended.
- Collected faculty feedback from two divisions to measure satisfaction with the service; requested a statement put on course syllabi regarding accommodations for students with disabilities and the service.
- Mail slot installed in the office: assisted the office with test/exam security; drop off location for note taking and forms. The mail slot resulted in an improved access to the office and the secondary impact was it created less disruption for the staff working in the office, who would need to stop working to accept items that could be slipped in the slot.
- Record management was reviewed to ensure that there were clear records maintained regarding the request of accommodations and if the accommodation was not provided, why.

### Tests/Exams

- In anticipation of the increase in workload during the April exam period, especially with the increased student population the Examination Officer reviewed the needs for April and recruited the assistance of the Work-study student to prepare for exams in February. This made a significant difference to workload in April.
- In anticipation of the need for an overflow room for the exam period, a new location was identified which housed computers to write exams in. The use of the room made a significant difference for planning, scheduling and had implications on the budget as fewer Invigilators were required with a larger exam room which housed four students writing exams on the computer at the same time.
- An increased effort was made to request Instructors visit students during tests and exams should any questions arise. Feedback from the Invigilators indicated that Instructors were visiting frequently.

## Note taking

- As a result of a Note taking Audit carried out, forms and procedures were revised to streamline services.
- Volunteerism has increased with the number of new students using our service and is anticipated to continue to be a strong component to service delivery. It is beneficial not only in that it assists with accommodation of students with disabilities, it also creates disability education opportunities for the volunteer. The volunteers and the community benefits when there is a better understanding of the need to assist those in the community and increases understanding of disability issues when the student and volunteer have contact and discuss the challenges of having a disability within the class.

## Support Services – Collaborations and Partnerships

- The Coordinator continued to work with representatives of the UTM and St. George offices for students with a disability to ensure that the services worked within the frameworks of common objectives.
- Enhanced link with Writing Centre – Coordinator gave a talk about the service and supports for students with a disability. Coordinator arranged for Psychologist to speak to Writing Centre staff about supporting students whose disability impacts written language (i.e., learning disability, acquired brain injury)
- In a cooperative effort between Teaching and Learning Services, Academic Advising and Learning Skills and *AccessAbility* Services developed and implemented a “Learning Fair.” The theme was Learning Styles and was very well attended.
- The reporting relationship directly to the Associate Principal- Student Affairs has proven very useful to ensure the Coordinator is aware of access issues in a wide range of areas (Athletics, Health and Wellness Centre, Housing and Residence Life). As well, it has helped build collegial relationships which have facilitated partnerships.

## Education and Communication

### Publications

- Insert provided or reviewed for University of Toronto publications about the service.

### Web Based

- Reviewed link to web site from various offices at U of T and in the community, requested a link where needed i.e., the service, accessibility committee, and awards for students with a disability are now represented on disability-related websites, specifically the National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS).

## Disability Awareness

- In addition to the following broader outreach activities, the office acts as a resource for faculty on particular students on specific disability issues and programming tips for all subject areas.
- Met with Chairs of some divisions and gave brief presentation about the service at divisional meetings.
- The Coordinator gave a talk at UTM on Career and Disability: Living and working with a disability.
- Residence: Don Training took place to inform Don's in Housing and Residence Life about the service, challenges students may encounter in residence and the referral process.
- Involvement in key activities continued (i.e., Student Services Fairs, Principal's Welcome, March Break Open House, "Jump Start" for newly admitted students).

## PROVISION OF EQUIPMENT/TECHNOLOGY

- Arranged for the Clinical Specialist from the Adaptive Technology to offer seminar "Adaptive Technology at UTSC." Current programs and equipment were demonstrated and access features were discussed. Students became more aware of how their needs can be met through the use of technology resulting in the increased use of existing technology at UTSC.
- Developed stronger link with the Computer Centre:
  - Assisted with technical problems experienced throughout the year
  - upgraded anti-virus software
- Security within *AccessAbility* Resource Lab was improved
- Loaned equipment to students to assist them determining if the technology would meet their needs.
- The following purchases were made this year:
  - Document feeder scanner
  - Upgrade to RAM on all computers
  - Computer to replace stolen one (as indicated in 1999-2000 Annual Report)
  - Fax machine
  - Electric Height Adjustable tables (custom order to fit the needs of the *AccessAbility* Resource Lab) [this expenditure was ordered before year-end last year but did not get delivered and paid for until this fiscal year].

- JAWS (this expenditure was ordered before year-end last year but did not get delivered and paid for until this fiscal year).

### **Equipment in Library**

- The Coordinator met with the Technology Support staff in the Library to review all the systems available. The website was updated to address access in this area.
- The Library was provided with equipment that *AccessAbility Services* did not have room to house and to improve access to the Library.
  - Electric height adjustable table was placed in main area
  - Monitor risers were provided

### **Equipment in Computer Centre**

The Computer Centre was provided with equipment that *AccessAbility Services* did not have room to house and to improve access to the Library.

- Electric height adjustable table was placed in computer lab

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

- The Advisory Committee on Accessibility for Persons with a Disability continued to meet every three months to review the progress of projects and identify new issues.
- Facilities Management – Building implemented a checklist for new and renovated space. The checklist includes a sign off from the Coordinator who will now have the opportunity to express concerns about access in advance.
- The web site was enhanced to provide:
  - detailed information about access in the Library
  - notice when construction would impact access (i.e., elevator down for upgrade, Wheeltrans drop-off zone out of service during construction, etc).
  - detailed emergency evacuation procedures and disability awareness in evacuation (i.e., first aid for seizures; how to guide a person who is blind, etc.)
- Planning and Hosting Accessible Meeting and Conferences information was forwarded to Conference Services.
- The accomplishments with accessibility at Scarborough was promoted on the *AccessAbility Services* website and relevant web sites such as NEADS.

### **Emergency Evacuation**

- Contributed to Crisis Response Manual – on evacuation in emergency.
- Improvements to sound and visual indicators of evacuation alarm in *AccessAbility Resource Lab* were carried out.



- Online forms created on the website for the Emergency Contact Service. Students can fill out the form, which identifies their specific evacuation needs, and submit it directly to the University Police.
- Personal safety radios were purchased, in partnership with the Lone Worker Program. Persons with disabilities, who know they will be working in an isolated area of the school, can sign the radio out. Each radio has the ability to put the user in direct contact with the University Police should a personal safety emergency arise, enabling the Police to respond immediately to situations as they develop.

#### Renovation/New construction Projects:

- H- Wing elevator panel and hall call buttons were modified to improve access
- Improvements to the washrooms beside the *AccessAbility* Resource Lab
- Dome mirrors were installed at key intersections
- The locking mechanism on the R-Wing unisex accessible washroom was changed to improve accessibility to this space
- An auto-matic door opener was installed on the University Police Services Entrance with funding provided by the Student Administrative Council - Wheelchair Access Committee (SAC-WAC) (note: the University Police submitted the funding proposal to SAC-WAC)
- Auto-openers were installed on the large lecture theatres
- Installation of the new adjustable lecture hall tables was completed and proved successful
- Scooter Room relocated due to construction of the Bookstore (this room allows students to park their scooters if they need to leave the scooter overnight because of problems with travel (Wheeltrans problems) or to leave their chair if they want to walk to a room)
- Exterior Signage was improved – it was not improved specifically for persons with a disability however, there is a universal design aspect to improved way finding, especially for persons who have difficulty with mobility or persons who are blind.
- Members of the Accessibility Committee visited sites to review best practices for access. This included:
  - Variety Village: the visit assisted in determining a more cost effective means of improving access in the showers of the Key (Physical Education and Athletics)
  - Bloorview-MacMillan Centre: the visit assisted in the resolution of an ongoing problem with the electrical locking mechanism in the unisex accessible washroom
- Residence:
  - Liaised with Housing and Residence life on access in residence, worked on individual student issues
  - Provided input into the Phase IV residence plans
- Cafeterias
  - Display of drink products (i.e., Coke) were reviewed. Beverages were displayed in a way that a person with a disability could reach the drinks at various reach ranges. This was arranged with the cooperation of the Manager of Food and Beverage Services.

- Library
  - Research Appointment form was modified to request accommodation needs during the appointment for students with a disability (i.e., materials in alternate format, obus chair for computer work, enlarged font on computer, etc.).
  
- Lockers
  - Arranged for SCSC to purchase locker shelves where students using a wheelchair or scooter can place items. However, there were some difficulties with the shelf sitting properly because some of the lockers are warped. Other possibilities are being explored.

Report Submissions:

- University Affairs Board to update access at UTSC
- Academic Resource Centre User Committee on access needs
- Phase IV Residence User Committee on access needs
- Universal Design Guidelines for the Master Plan

## Challenges

### WORKFORCE

The challenges the office faces is primarily the lack of staff to provide the support services needed to fully reach the mission of the office:

- Budget: funding for the office is not adequate. As a result, plans to improve service delivery cannot always be carried out due to lack of staff to prepare or follow through. The staff complement currently does not meet the needs of the office and a two-person office has inherent difficulties – vacation coverage, etc. . Currently piecemeal remedies are arranged to address ongoing issues (i.e., when possible hire casual staff to assist with vacation coverage). While hiring work-study student has been very helpful the position cannot be filled until the beginning of September. At this point, by the time applications are received, interviews take place and a student is hired, the office is well in the middle of the highest peak period and it is also difficult to train at this time because of the demands on staff time.
- Increased service costs in the area of Invigilation, combined with shortage of space continue to be a concern. The lack of space to invigilate a large number of students at one time (20) with the equipment needed is currently not available.  
Note: The Invigilators are members of CUPE 3902 (T.A. Union) and are remunerated at the same rate as Teaching Assistants.

### SERVICE DELIVERY

- Timely delivery of tests/exams to *AccessAbility Services* is an area that continues to need improvement. The revised Instructor Letter will stress the importance of getting the material in advance rather than delivery on the day of the test/exam.
- The Bursary for Students with Disabilities is linked to OSAP, which provides restrictions on supports (tutoring, assessments) for students with a disability. As well, it provides an increased strain on the budget, as when the student is not OSAP eligible the service is needing to cover costs associated with supports for the student, whereas the BSWD would cover the costs if the student is OSAP eligible.
- Alternate Format Materials are not available in a timely manner, as is the case at Post-Secondary Institutions across Ontario. Improved information about the service on the website and current online materials (e.g., the complete works of Shakespeare) may help. As well, an increased awareness of the need for Instructors to order reading material early so the readings can be transcribed may assist.
- Greater understanding of the invisible disabilities is required throughout the University community as a majority of the students registered with the office have invisible disabilities.
- The note taking paper (NCR) is expensive and, with the assistance of the Purchasing office at UTSC, a cheaper vendor has not been found.

## PROVISION OF EQUIPMENT/TECHNOLOGY

Students Equipment/Technology needs:

- The Bursary for Students with Disabilities (BSWD) is linked to OSAP. When the student is not eligible, the student may not be able to purchase the equipment that would enhance their ability to succeed within the institution.

Space:

- While the goal is to have the most up-to-date equipment on site, the lack of space limits what we have available and access to the equipment for assignments is reduced during peak test/exam periods as the equipment is being used for tests/exam accommodation.

## ACCESSIBILITY

- Unfortunately, one of the issues dealt with this year is the misuse and vandalism of the auto-matic openers. Either the openers were not working because people use them who do not need them, without recognizing that increased use often leads to the increased need for service or, on a few occasions, the openers were not working due to vandalism.
- With campus expansion close at hand it is important to address accessibility issues early in the planning stages. Past experience has proven that planning for accessibility saves money by reducing the need for retrofits. However, the Coordinator has felt a strain on availability to devote the amount of time required to addressing all the issues.

**Appendix A: Service Statistics**

**I. Students Registered between May 2000 – April 2001**

The files of those students who notify the office that they will be temporarily away from the University and will be returning for the next academic term are classified as inactive until they return. Only students who actually received supports between May 2000 and April 2001 are counted in the number of students registered with the service.

<b>MET Disability Code</b>	<b>UTSC 2000-2001</b>	<b>UTSC 1999-2000</b>	<b>UTSC 1998-1999</b>	<b>UTSC 1997-1998</b>	<b>UTSC 1996-1997</b>
<b>1- Chronic Medical/ Psychological/ Systemic</b>	65	39	37	36	22
<b>2 - Mobility</b>	9	11	15	9	13
<b>3 - Blind/Low Vision</b>	2	1	2	2	3
<b>4 - Deaf/ Deafened/ Hard of Hearing</b>	6	2	4	2	3
<b>5 – LD/ AD/HD/ Acquired Brain Injury which impacts learning</b>	48	30	26	26	27
<b>6 – Multiple (accommodated for more than one disability)</b>	28	28	11	10	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>75</b>

**Note:** In reference to Category Number 6- Multiple This category includes for example, students with a mobility disability and Learning Disability, Hard of Hearing and Chronic Medical, Low Vision and Learning disability, etc Therefore, while Category #3 indicates there are two students with Low Vision/Blind this does not include the six students with low vision who are counted in Category #6. Consequently, the actual total of students receiving supports for an impact on vision is actually 8. This is similar for all of the other categories.

It should also be noted that the number of students registering with a mental health disability (bi-polar disorder, schizophrenia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, panic disorder, etc) and Acquired Brain Injury in on the rise.

## II. Service Statistics - Note taking Services

### VOLUNTEER NOTE TAKERS

NOTE TAKERS	UTSC 2000-2001	UTSC 1999 – 2000	UTSC 1998-1999	UTSC 1997-1998
# OF STUDENTS	56	52	29	34
# OF NOTE TAKERS	102	89	51	43
# OF COURSES	141	97	59	61

N.B. # OF STUDENTS = # OF STUDENTS WHO REQUESTED NOTETAKING  
 # OF NOTE TAKERS - # OF VOLUNTEER NOTE TAKERS RECRUITED  
 # OF COURSES = # OF COURSES FOR WHICH NOTES WERE REQUESTED

### COMPUTERIZED NOTE TAKING

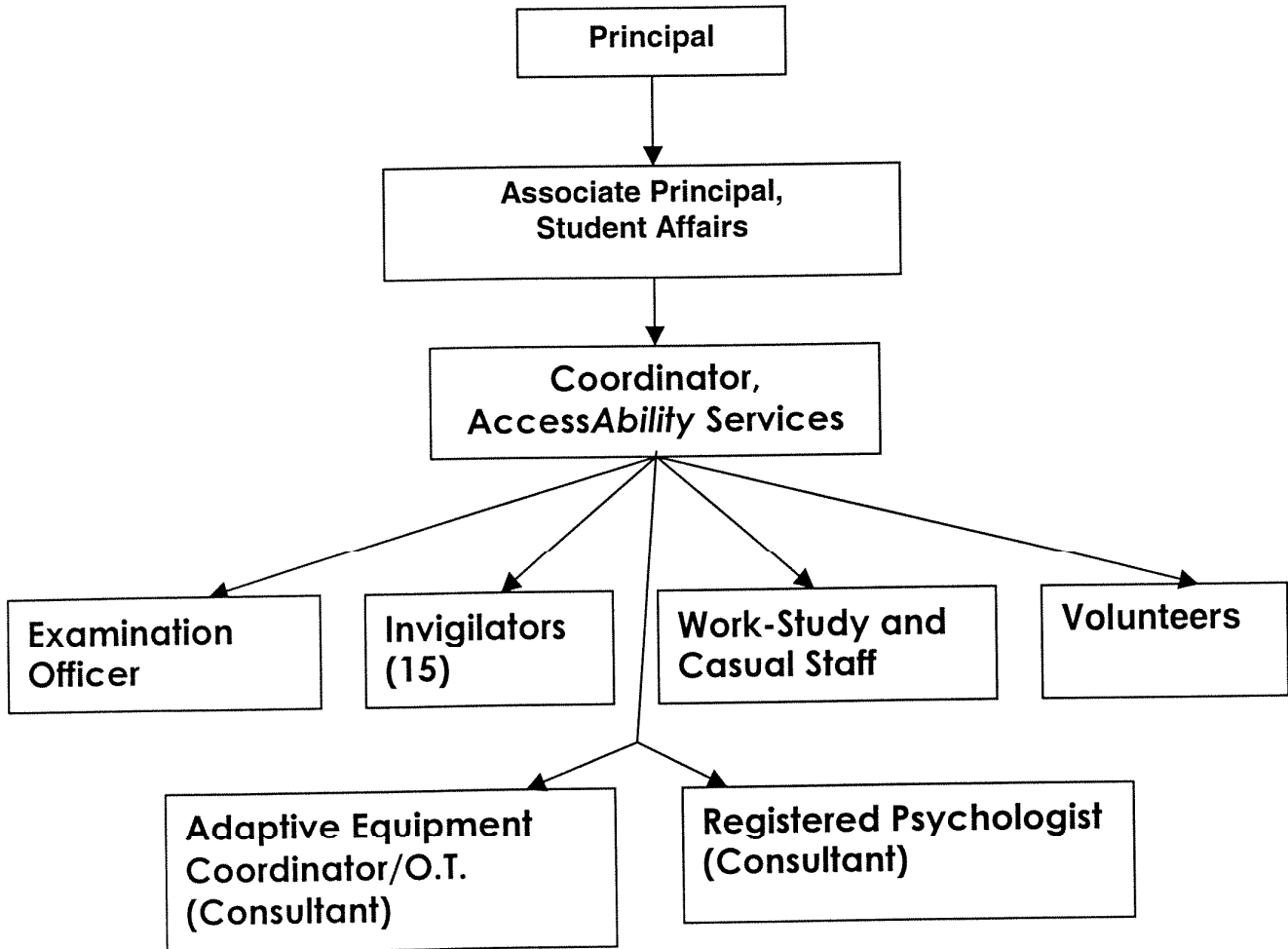
Computerized Note taking	UTSC 2000-2001
# of Students	1
# of Courses	7

### III. Service Statistics - Test/Exam Data

Note: Since 1997 the number of tests and exams written through the office has risen 64%

MONTH	Number of Tests and Exams written with Office					Number of Students who wrote Tests and Exams				
	UTSC 2000-2001	UTSC 1999-2000	UTSC 1998-1999	UTSC 1997-1998	UTSC 2000-2001	UTSC 1999 - 2000	UTSC 1998-1999	UTSC 1997-1998	UTSC 1998-1999	UTSC 1997-1998
May	23	26	25	44	21	22	22	26	22	26
June	36	22	23	19	23	12	13	11	13	11
July	24	9	8	6	18	8	8	5	8	5
August	41	23	14	14	22	18	14	11	14	11
September	2	2		1	2	2		1		1
October	102	82	55	60	49	38	29	26	29	26
November	76	65	58	22	48	40	35	15	35	15
December	158	120	91	94	73	52	43	44	43	44
January '00	16	23	9	19	15	22	7	15	7	15
February	116	109	71	64	66	45	36	32	36	32
March	53	41	34	41	32	27	24	23	24	23
April	196	161	147	131	77	64	54	63	54	63
May (until the end of the April Exam period)	42	18	26	22	33	16	22	22	22	22
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>'00 - '01 885</b>	<b>'99-'00 701</b>	<b>'98-'99 561</b>	<b>'97-'98 537</b>	<b>'00 - '01 479</b>	<b>'99-'00 366</b>	<b>'98-'99 307</b>	<b>'97-'98 294</b>	<b>'98-'99 307</b>	<b>'97-'98 294</b>

**B. Organizational Chart**







# AccessAbility Services

University of Toronto at Scarborough

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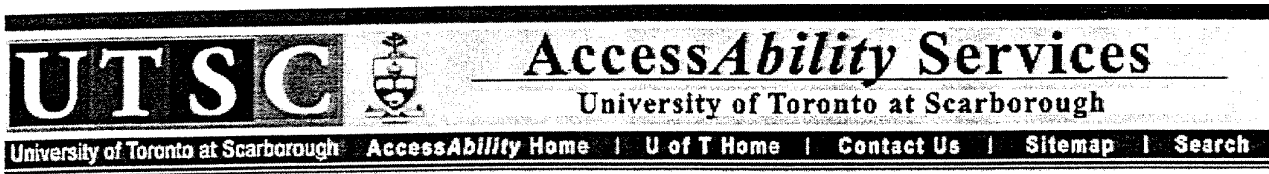
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