

University of Toronto
St. George Campus

Accessibility Services (AS)
Programs & Services for Students With A Disability

Annual Report
2004 - 2005

Prepared by: Janice Martin, MSW

Manager, Accessibility Services

Accessibility Services
Programs & Services for Students with a Disability
130 St. George Street, 1st Floor
Toronto, ON M5S 3H1

Telephone: 416-978-8060
TDD: 416-978-1902
Fax: 416-978-8246

e-mail: disability.services@utoronto.ca

Websites:

St. George Accessibility Services: <http://disability.sa.utoronto.ca>

UofT ODA Accessibility Plan 2004-05 : <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca>

Executive Summary

May 04 to April 05

Accessibility Services (AS), St. George Campus, facilitates success for students with a disability in the University setting by providing advice, support and academic accommodations in partnership with the students, faculty and staff. AS also provides advice and information to applicants, makes referrals, and advises faculty and staff on issues pertaining to barrier-free access and disability-related issues.

Highlights from 2004-05:

Accessibility Services continued to strengthen partnerships with faculties, colleges and services across campus and in the community at large. New initiatives in the past year included:

- making a presentation on disability supports to PDAD&C;
- organizing a presentation on “Dispelling Myths about Depression and Anxiety”
- partnering with staff in the Fire Prevention Services to explore the use of a pager to alert students who are deaf of a fire alarm on campus;
- developing a barrier-free audit checklist specifically for student residences;
- organizing a workshop on disability awareness and barrier free audits for residence staff;
- providing language for the UofT Parking Office brochure for persons with disabilities;
- partnering with Campus Police to extend the walk-safer program for students with disabilities;
- engaging in discussions with the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies regarding barriers faced by graduate students with disabilities; and
- presenting a workshop at the conference for UofT librarians.

As well, the service continued to offer workshops and presentations about disability specific information (e.g. Understanding LD and ADHD; Understanding Mental Health Illnesses; Tips for Teaching Students with Disabilities; and Barrier Free Accessibility) in partnership with the Staff Development Centre, the Office for Teaching Advancement, the Career Centre, Registrar and Housing staff, etc. As well, Accessibility Services played a key role in the ODA planning committee.

Further, the Manager of Accessibility Services was elected Chair of the Inter-University Disability Issues Association (I.D.I.A.) which is the professional association of disability service providers in Ontario universities. In this role, the Manager worked with the I.D.I.A. Executive over the past year, representing the I.D.I.A. on the newly organized Minister’s Postsecondary Advisory Committee on Disability Issues and coordinating the writing of government briefs and submissions which included:

- a response to the MTCU Accessibility Fund Review;
- a position paper submitted to the Rae Review;
- a presentation and written submission to the Standing Committee on Bill 118;
- a response to the OHRC Disability Education Review;

- a joint presentation to the Ontario Council of University Vice Presidents;
- partnering with Community College provincial association executive members to recommend changes to the government funding manual;
- meeting with MTCU representatives to give advice on behalf of the I.D.I.A. on changes to the annual reporting format guidelines and funding model.

Challenges:

Accessibility Services has continued to experience unprecedented growth in the past few years. In '04-'05 our Disability Advisors met with 1433 students, of which 1333 registered with our Service. This represents a 16% increase in registrations over the previous year.

Writing tests and exams with our service remains our most complex and costly accommodation. Each student has individualized requirements such as private or semi-private rooms, computers, specialized software, extra time and breaks, ergonomic furniture, scribes, sign language interpreters, and tests/exams in Braille or large print. Last year, requests for test/exam accommodations increased by 21%, bringing the number of tests and exams to 6,105 for 796 students. The labour-intensive procedures of contacting professors and sending couriers to and from individual professors' offices across campus continue to be challenging.

We are grateful for our fully-integrated database that automates test and exam scheduling, matching a student's individual set of accommodations to a specific room equipped with the necessary accommodations in one of four locations across campus. Further, the listserv continues to be an excellent way to communicate with students regarding policies and announcements.

To address some of these challenges in the coming year, we have begun discussions to request a disability liaison person from each faculty and department who will work in cooperation with our test/exam administrative office. Further, university architects from the Office of Campus and Facilities Planning have started discussions with Accessibility Services to design a fully accessible test/exam site that will accommodate our students in one centralized location.

With the unprecedented growth in the number of students registering with the Service over the past few years, Accessibility Services remains committed to improving academic accommodations in partnership with students and the university community. Further, we continue to offer advice and act as a resource for campus-wide barrier-free access. We believe that the demands for academic accommodations will continue to grow in the coming years. Our vision is to create a service for students with disabilities that will serve as a role model for post-secondary institutions across Canada and to develop partnerships in the broader community that will have a positive impact on the lives of people with disabilities.

**University of Toronto St. George Campus
Accessibility Services (AS)**

Annual Report

2004-2005 Highlights

Service Delivery and Statistics:

- **1333 students (16% increase) registered with the service**
- **numbers almost doubled from 716 students registered in 1999-2000**
- **average of 10 new students per week in winter/spring term**
- **statistics capture additional disability-specific categories**

Of the 1433 students who made an appointment to see a Disability Advisor, 1333 students registered with the Service for accommodations. This reflects a 16% increase in the number of students who registered for the service from the previous year. (Many of the 100 students not reflected in these statistics met with Disability Advisor/Counsellors because they required letters of support and documentation for applications to graduate school, were referred to other services, or were inquiries from prospective students and parents who were considering attending the University of Toronto.)

Compared to the number of students registered in 1999-2000, the service has experienced enormous growth. Undergraduates from the Faculty of Arts and Science constituted about 1000 of the 1333 students, with the remaining students attending professional faculties or graduate studies programmes.

The 2004-05 statistics provide a further breakdown of disability-specific categories, namely, psychiatric illnesses, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and acquired brain injuries. Further, the statistics capture the multiple disability category from the total (e.g. of the 1333 students identified with a primary disability, 280 or 20% had additional disabilities. See chart on disability statistics on page 11.

The Department is categorized into the following areas:

The Administration Unit

The Health Unit (advises students with mobility/functional, chronic health, mental health, hearing impairment, vision impairment, communication impairment, head injuries and temporary disabilities)

The Learning Disability Unit (advises students with LD and ADHD)

The Test/Exam Centre Office

The Volunteer Note Taking Program

AS employs approximately 12 appointed staff and 40+ contract/casual staff who work full and part-time. The appointed staff include:

3.40 FTE staff in the Administration Unit (Manager, Receptionist, Financial Administrator)
3 FTE Advisors/Counsellors in the Health Unit (mobility/functional, chronic health, mental health, sensory, temporary, head injuries)
1.5 FTE Advisor/Counsellors in the Learning Disability Unit (LD and ADHD)
2 FTE LD Strategist and Adaptive Technologists
2 FTE staff in the Test/Exam Service
1 FTE Mobility Van Driver (sessional September to May)

In addition, the Service hires the services of a host of 40+ part-time contract/casual staff:

- 1) Psychometrists to assess students with Learning Disabilities/ADHD
- 2) Occupational Therapist to assess Adaptive Equipment/Technology requirements
- 3) Scribes to write tests/exams for students
- 4) Invigilators to oversee test/exams
- 5) Couriers to pick up and return tests from faculty across the campus
- 6) Sign language interpreters for students who are deaf
- 7) Computerized note takers for students who are hard of hearing
- 8) Student assistants: test/exam registration office; note taking service; reception desk

Funding programmes and sources of support for students with disabilities are complex, with differing eligibility requirements in each case. Advisors/Counsellors help students to understand the requirements for many programmes such as the Bursary for Students with a Disability (BSWD), the UofT Alternate Bursary, College funding, for services such as:

- 1) Orientation and mobility assistants and readers for students who are low vision
- 2) Assistant care givers for students who have chronic pain
- 3) Tutors for students
- 4) Adaptive technology and assistive devices
- 5) Assessments and coaching from health care professionals
- 6) Books on tape

The Health Unit:

- **3 Advisors registered 710 students; 18% increase**
- **358 new students; 352 returning students**
- **students with multiple disabilities**

The three Advisors/Counsellors in the Health Unit experienced an 18% increase over the past year in students with mobility/functional, sensory, environmental, chronic health, mental health, head injury and temporary disabilities. A total of 710 students registered with the Unit compared to 585 the previous year. The Disability Specialist, who meets

primarily with students with mental health disabilities, had a caseload of 336 students of which 157 registered with the service for the first time. Further, the number of students with multiple disabilities continues to increase.

The Learning Disability (LD) Unit:

- **1.5FTE LD Advisors registered 623 students; 11% increase**
- **1.5 Learning Strategists and 1 Adaptive Technologist assisted 189 students**
- **Psychometrists completed 120 learning disability assessments**
- **50 students with LD registered for “Get Ready, Set, Go” – a one week ‘transition to university’ workshop**

The LD Unit provided a full service delivery model for 623 students with: 1) LD intake appointments with LD Specialists; 2) LD psycho educational assessments for students who suspect they have a learning disability or require an updated LD report; 3) referrals to the Learning Strategists to work on deficit areas while utilizing areas of strength; 4) referrals to the Adaptive Technology Resource Centre for an AT assessment and recommendations; 5) referral to the Adaptive Technologist for LD technology and software training; and 6) on-going advice and follow-up with LD Specialists. This full circle in-house delivery model provides students with an integrated and seamless service.

Four part-time Psychometrists, supervised by our Registered Psychologist, provided 120 assessments. The assessments are conducted over a 7 to 9 hour testing time period resulting in a written report with findings and accommodation recommendations applicable to post- secondary education.

Three part-time Advisor/Counsellors (equivalent to 1.5 FTE) provided advice, accommodations, funding support, etc. for 623 students. The Advisor/Counsellors worked closely with the Learning Strategist, the Adaptive Technologist and the Psychometrists to ensure that students were receiving the necessary support they require for success at university. Further, the Learning Strategists and Adaptive Technologist met with 189 students to provide enhanced services; a one-week orientation/transition workshop was held in the August to assist students with learning strategies and study skills.

Test and Exam Centre:

- **6,105 tests/exams administered for 796 students – an increase of 21% (numbers have almost doubled from 3157 tests/exams in 2000-2001)**
- **partnership with OISE/UT provides library space to write tests/exams**
- **automated test and exam scheduling assists with highly complex accommodations for students**

We continue to experience a marked increase in test/exam service in regards to the number of tests/exams and students. We are grateful for the partnership with OISE/UT which provides us with a location with 50 spaces for student overflow during test and exam time which occurs in peak periods, including mid-term tests in October, February and March; the last week of classes in December and April; and formal exam periods in December, April-May, June and August. Tests and exams are administered Monday to Friday between the hours of 9am and 11pm.

Volunteer Note-taking Services:

The volunteer note-taking service continues to be a challenge. There are two summer sessions as well as fall and winter sessions, all of which have a variety of half year and full year courses. When students register, they are given a copy of policies and procedures that state the service is dependent on volunteers. If volunteers are not forthcoming and notes do not materialize, students are asked to book an appointment with their Advisor/Counsellor to discuss options.

We are pleased that more professors and instructors have begun to respond to the request to provide notes and information on web sites or e-mail notes to the Service. Given that we receive relatively few complaints about the service, we believe that some students recruit their own volunteer note-takers in class; some lecturers hand out information to students in class.

Statistics: Fall/Winter Term:

- 426 students requested note taking in 483 courses
- 336 of the 483 courses had note takers

Statistics: Summer Term:

- 56 students requested note taking for 69 courses
- 52 of the 69 courses had note takers

Van Service:

- **2025 van rides for 27 students**

The busiest year to date, our wheelchair accessible van on St. George Campus provided 2025 rides for 27 students with mobility or chronic health conditions from September to May. Taxi service was provided for students in the summer.

UofT Library's Adaptive Technology Resource Centre (ATRC):

- **110 new students assessed for adaptive technology**
- **50 students returned from previous years for follow-up**

Accessibility Services contracts services from the Occupational Therapist and the Adaptive Technologist in the ATRC to provide assessments, training, and trouble shooting for adaptive technology. In the past year, 110 new students were assessed to determine what technology would best suit their needs. An additional 50 students returned with questions regarding advances in technologies that could assist with their studies, or for further training on technology acquired in previous years. Students make inquiries and try out adaptive technologies during daily drop-in hours.

Over 40 workshops were offered to students to train on adaptive technology to assist with their studies. These included Basic Ergonomics, Voice Recognition, Organizational, Screen Reading and Screen Magnification software programs. As well, the Centre offered consultations to Colleges and Faculties regarding installation of adaptive technology in computer labs.

Via the MTCU Transcription Service, the Robart's Library Access and Information Services Department provides texts in an alternate format such as Braille, large print, disk, and books on audio tape. Students continue to have problems with receiving most information in a timely fashion due to the demand on the provincial transcription service. Our office continues to partner with the library to improve services for students. There are plans to purchase a high-speed scanner to provide e-test to students in-house by the fall.

Outreach to Students:

The listserv to our students continues to be a major source of information. As well as informing students about new policies, we are able to announce various workshops and conferences which may be of interest. For example, we announced the Faculty of Physical Education and Health's free fitness and lifestyle consultations for students registered with Accessibility Services. Over 50 students signed up for the consultation which provided professional fitness advice on choosing the physical activity options best suited to their needs, interests and foals as well as tips on carrying out an action plan.

As well, the website provided information which included: required documentation; a menu of accommodations by disability; test and exam policy and procedures; barrier-free educational initiatives and map of the campus; resources for students and staff, financial aid, related services and resources throughout the campus and community

Outreach to the University Community:

Accessibility Services continued to strengthen partnerships with faculties, colleges and services across campus and in the community at large. New initiatives in the past year included:

- making a presentation on disability supports to PDAD&C;
- organizing a presentation on “Dispelling Myths about Depression and Anxiety”
- partnering with staff in the Fire Prevention Services to explore the use of a pager to alert students who are deaf of a fire alarm on campus;
- developing a barrier-free audit checklist specifically for student residences;
- organizing a workshop on disability awareness and barrier free audits for residence staff;
- providing language for the UofT Parking Office brochure for persons with disabilities;
- partnering with Campus Police to extend the walk-safer program for students with disabilities;
- engaging in discussions with the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies regarding barriers faced by graduate students with disabilities; and
- presenting a workshop at the conference for UofT librarians.

As well, the service continued to offer workshops and presentations about disability specific information (e.g. Understanding LD and ADHD; Understanding Mental Health Illnesses; Tips for Teaching Students with Disabilities; and Barrier Free Accessibility) in partnership with the Staff Development Centre, the Office for Teaching Advancement, the Career Centre, Registrar and Housing staff, etc. As well, Accessibility Services played a key role in the ODA planning committee.

Outreach Beyond the University Community

Accessibility Services Manager:

- elected Provincial Chair of the Inter-university Disability Issues Association
- Member, MTCU Minister Post-secondary Advisory Committee on Disability Issues (PACDI)
- Member of the City of Toronto Council Disability Advisory Committee
- Board member of the Terry Fox Hall of Fame
- Board member of the CFPDP Wheelchair Road Race
- Board member, V.P. Finance & Administration, Ontario Sports for the Disabled
- Professional Association Memberships: CACUSS, AHEAD, IDIA

Staff Professional Development:

- Professional staff attended various disability-related conferences (e.g. CACUSS; Traumatic Brain Injury, Students at Risk, International Dyslexia, ADHD) and Professional Development Seminars (e.g. Confidentiality and Coaching Students, Panic Disorder and OCD).

- Support staff attended UofT Human Resource workshops and seminars related to their roles in the Department (e.g. Sign Language Interpreting, Dealing with Difficult Behaviour, Making Referrals within the University, Business Administration, etc.).

Summary:

With the unprecedented growth in the number of students registering with the Service over the past few years, Accessibility Services is committed to improving academic accommodations in partnership with students and the University community. Further, we continue to offer advice and act as a resource for campus-wide barrier-free accessibility in regards to physical/architecture, attitudes, information and communication, policy and procedures and technology. In order to accomplish our goals, we require the identified resources in order to build our volunteer base to better help students. Our vision is to create a service for students with disabilities that will serve as a role model for post secondary institutions across Canada and to develop partnerships in the broader community that will have a positive impact on the lives of people with disabilities.

Disability Statistics

Disability	2002-2003		2003-2004		2004-2005	
	No. of Students	% of Students	No. of Students	% of Students	No. of Students	% of Students
Acquired Brain Injury					28	2%
Systemic/Chronic Medical	228	22%	193	17%	120	9%
Mobility/Functional	135	13%	126	11%	171	13%
Blind/Low Vision	29	3%	35	3%	37	3%
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	17	2%	24	2%	27	2%
Learning Disability	471	46%	556	49%	474	35%
ADHD					120	9%
Psychiatric					356	27%
Multiple	146	14%	207	18%		
Other	0		0			
TOTAL:	1026	100%	1123	100%	1333	100%
Number of Students with Multiple Disabilities					280	20%

2004-05 statistics:

16% increase in number of students registered with Accessibility Services compared to 2003-04

New disability specific categories:

- 1) attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- 2) students with acquired brain injury
- 3) students with psychiatric illnesses
- 4) multiple disability category reflects students from the total count (e.g. of the 1333 students identified with a primary disability, 280 or 20% had additional disabilities)

TEST AND EXAM STATISTICS

AS Test and Exam Statistics 2000 to 2005

May-05

MONTH	2000-2001		2001-2002		2002 - 2003		2003 - 2004		2004-2005	
	# Tests	# Exams	# Tests	# Exams	# Tests	# Exams	# Tests	# Exams	# Tests	# Exams
JUNE	103	41	127	41	134	91	135	112	286	43
JULY	69		73		88		151		170	
AUGUST	77	38	81	107	52	124	56	178	133	162
SEPTEMBER	7		6		14		38		29	
OCTOBER	298		410		390		492		583	
NOVEMBER	271		295		280		323		449	
DECEMBER	266	270	320	216	341	427	391	539	444	837
JANUARY	98		93		111		105		156	
FEBRUARY	335		312		442		563		616	
MARCH	318		211		264		336		404	
APRIL	210	337	61	524	293	480	431	685	528	873
MAY	8	411	2	440	3	401	122	156	28	364
TOTAL	2060	1097	1991	1328	2412	1523	3143	1670	3826	2279
TOTAL T/E	3157		TOTAL T/E 3849		TOTAL T/E 3935		TOTAL T/E 4813		TOTAL T/E 6105	
STUDENTS	321		STUDENTS 389		STUDENTS 523		STUDENTS 645		STUDENTS 796	

2004-2005: 1292 additional test/exams or 21% increase compared to 2003-2004

**ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES
Organizational Chart**

2004-2005

MANAGER

LD/ADHD UNIT

**SENSORY/MOBILITY/
CHRONIC/ MENTAL HEALTH UNIT**

INTAKE/ASSESSMENT/
FEEDBACK/
ACCOMMODATION ADVICE

INTAKE/ACCOMMODATION
ADVICE

**ADMINISTRATIVE
OFFICER**

**TEST AND EXAM
COORDINATOR**

INFORMATION
OFFICER

SIGN LANGUAGE
INTERPRETERS
&
COMPUTERIZED
NOTETAKING

COURIERS

INVIGILATORS

STUDENT
ASSISTANTS

MOBILITY VAN
DRIVER