The University of Toronto
Ontarians with Disabilities Act
Accessibility Plan 2003-2004

September, 2003

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Marilyn Van Norman, Director of Student Services and Career Centre

Acknowledgements

The University of Toronto has a commitment to achieving the goals of excellence, equity and outreach. This commitment includes continuing to work toward creating an environment that is accessible and welcoming to all.

Although numerous individuals have addressed accessibility issues at the University of Toronto for a number of years, the ODA Planning process has allowed us to discuss barriers and identify initiatives to remove those barriers in a consistent and collaborative way. This Plan represents the first step in developing a coherent and cohesive strategy, and I look forward to engaging in a   broadly consultative process as we work towards the development of future accessibility plans.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of the many people who participated in the development of this Plan. Their expertise and commitment is reflected throughout this report. The Co-Chairs of the working groups gave freely of their time, as did those members of the community who engaged in consultation with us. Members of the Accessibility Planning Committee, who attended several lengthy meetings, provided critical advice. In particular, I would like to thank Connie Guberman for assuming responsibility for coordinating the development of the Plan and integrating the sub-committee reports into a coherent whole; and Lisa Carmody and Rosalyn Figov for managing the logistics and assisting in producing the final report.

Angela Hildyard
Vice-President, Human Resources
Chair, Accessibility Planning Committee

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 2003-2004 Accessibility Plan by September 30, 2003.

The President assigned the responsibility for the development of the University of Toronto Accessibility Plan to the Vice-President Human Resources, who subsequently established a broadly representative ODA Accessibility Planning Committee. Members of the Committee included faculty, staff and students representing a range of stakeholders and constituencies. The Committee included a number of persons with disabilities – some visible and some not. Several members of the Committee were selected because of their professional expertise in relevant areas (for example, information technology, architecture and design); others for their professional knowledge of disability and accommodation issues.

The Accessibility Planning Committee created nine working sub-committees, each facilitated by two co-chairs. The working committees focused on specific areas of barrier-types as identified in the ODA (Attitudes, Policy and Procedure, Information and Communication, Physical Facilities, Information Technology, Instructional Design –Student Accessibility, Instructional Design –Faculty Accessibility, Student Life, Human Resources) and engaged in consultation with the University community.

The working sub-committees outlined what the University had done to date to address accessibility issues, identified barriers to be addressed in the coming year, and suggested initiatives to remove and prevent barriers in the first year of the Plan. Over thirty initiatives will take place in the first year of the Plan.

The Accessibility Plan will be made public through a range of means including posting on the University website.

The following tables list the identified initiatives to be implemented in the first year of the Plan and the barrier corresponding to each initiative:

1. Attitudes

	Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004	Barriers to be Addressed
1.4.1	Collect examples of awareness campaigns	Range of societal attitudinal barriers
1.4.2	Developing awareness: training	Range of societal attitudinal barriers
1.4.3	Developing awareness: conference	Range of societal attitudinal barriers

2. Policy and Procedure

	Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004	Barriers to be Addressed
2.4.1	Policy Review	Policies require review
2.4.2	Develop systematic process to review new policies	Limited policy assessment with respect to disability issues

3. Information and Communication

	Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004	Barriers to be Addressed
3.4.1	Develop guidelines	Inconsistent understanding and application of standards
3.4.2	Education and outreach campaign	Limited awareness about range of disabilities and their effect
3.4.3	Provide residence information	Inconsistent information about accessible residences
3.4.4	Increase sign language training	Limited sign language availability

4. Physical Facilities: Architecture and Design

	Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004	Barriers to be Addressed
4.4.1	Review Design Standards for inclusion	Design standards focus on physical access
4.4.2	Universal design consultant	Inconsistent awareness of universal design principles
4.4.3	Install elevator, lift and automatic door openers	Inaccessible spaces
4.4.4	Identify more accessible use of elevators	Inconsistent access to retrofitted elevators and lifts
4.4.5	Develop a list of accessible rooms	No current list of accessible rooms

5. Information Technology

	Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004	Barriers to be Addressed
5.4.1	Establish purchasing guidelines	Inaccessible Information Technology
5.4.2	Workstation accessibility	Public workstations are not accessible
5.4.3	Study alternative formats	Alternative formats for course materials
5.4.4	Begin accessibility audit of Information Technology	Identification of access problems

6. Instructional Design: Student Accessibility

	Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004	Barriers to be Addressed
6.4.1	Increase awareness of Universal Instructional Design (UID)	Inconsistent awareness of Universal Instructional Design (UID)
6.4.2	Increase awareness of sensory disabilities	Inconsistent awareness of sensory disabilities among faculty
6.4.3	Develop skills-based assessment tools	Limited online diagnostic tools
6.4.4	Develop criterion-based assessment and the alignment of curricula	Criterion-based assessment and alignment of curricula
6.4.5	Develop alternate course delivery styles	Inconsistent awareness of alternate course delivery styles

7. Instructional Design: Faculty Accessibility

	Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004	Barriers to be Addressed
7.4.1	Increase awareness of faculty	Inconsistent levels of familiarity
7.4.2	Increase faculty awareness of alternative pedagogies	Limited awareness of alternative pedagogical approaches

8. Student Life

	Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004	Barriers to be Addressed
8.4.1	Review full-time requirements	Full course-load limits participation
8.4.2	Examine funding for accommodations	Limited funding for non-academic accommodations
8.4.3	Explore van access at night	Van access at night
8.4.4	Explore inter-campus accessible transportation	Inter-campus accessible transportation
8.4.5	Increase awareness about how to organize accessible events	Inconsistent awareness about how to plan accessible events

9. Human Resources

	Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004	**Barriers to be Addressed**
9.4.1	Establish a process of communication	Inconsistent coordination of disability-related issues for staff and faculty
9.4.2	Begin staff and faculty survey development	Staff and faculty disability concerns
9.4.3	Process of review of faculty appointments	Part-time faculty appointments

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The University of Toronto Ontarians with Disabilities Act Accessibility Plan 2003-2004

I. INTRODUCTION

The University of Toronto has prepared this report, "The University of Toronto Ontarians with Disabilities Act Accessibility Plan 2003-2004" in compliance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act 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.

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 People with disabilities. The Framework provides a variety of practical measures to remove the barriers that prevent full independence and opportunity for Ontarians with disabilities." (A Guide to Annual Accessibility Planning, Ministry of Citizenship, www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/accessibility/index.html)
The full text of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001, is available at:
www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/accessibility/english/act/2001.htm
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." (ODA Guidelines for the University Sector, Council of Ontario Universities, www.cou.on.ca)

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. 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 (revised 1999), and Services to Disabled Persons Policy (1987).

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.

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 its 2004-2005 Accessibility Plan, and so on from year to year.

Description of the University
The University of Toronto is an academic institution of great breadth, with twenty faculties across three campus locations. It is a complex organization that includes interrelationships with many institutions, such as hospitals, which are not part of the University.

The University of Toronto is an institution that has deep historical roots in Ontario. This past is illustrated in many of the graceful historic buildings, some built as early as the mid 1880s. While adding much to the charm of the campus, and embodying important moments in Ontario's architectural history, these buildings present challenges to accessibility and retrofitting.

The University currently spans three campuses. The St. George campus comprises 67.9 hectares and has 111 buildings situated in the heart of Toronto. The University of Toronto at Scarborough (UTSC) is located in the eastern section of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and comprises 121.5 hectares of green space and has 30 buildings. The University of Toronto at Mississauga (UTM) is situated west of Toronto and comprises 90.2 hectares and has 44 buildings.

There are also off-campus buildings including the David Dunlop Observatory and the Chestnut Street Residence. These off-campus buildings and their surrounding space comprise

over 400 hectares. The total space occupied by University of Toronto buildings and their surrounding space is over 700 hectares.

University Population
Students
A total of 58,059 students attended the University of Toronto during the 2001-2002 academic year. 46,718 were undergraduate students, and 11, 341 were graduate students.

Employees
The University has 10,301 staff-appointed employees. 3,084 are full- and part-time faculty; 7,217 are full- and part-time staff.

Visitors
The University of Toronto also attracts members of the public to educational, arts and sporting events. The University has numerous theatre spaces, concert halls, art exhibition spaces, art galleries and sports facilities and is a vital part of the intellectual, cultural and social life of the City of Toronto.

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." (A Guide to Annual Accessibility Planning, Ministry of Citizenship, www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/accessibility/index.html)

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 followed the definitions as identified in the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/accessibility/english/act2001.htm).

These are as follows:

The ODA adopts the broad definition for disability that is set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code. "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 communications barrier, an
attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

An example of each of the different kinds of barriers is shown
below:

Barrier Type	Example
Physical	A door knob that cannot be operated by a person with limited upper-body mobility and strength
Architectural	A hallway or door that is too narrow for a wheelchair or scooter
Informational	Typefaces that are too small to be read by a person with low-vision
Attitudinal	A receptionist who ignores a customer in a wheelchair
Communicational	A professor who talks loudly when addressing a deaf student
Technological	A paper tray on a laser printer that requires two strong hands to open
Policy/Practice	A practice of announcing important messages over an intercom that people with hearing impairments cannot hear clearly

These can be found at:
www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/accessibility/english/act2001.htm

II. ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING PROCESS 2002-2003

University of Toronto President Robert Birgeneau appointed Professor Angela Hildyard, Vice-President, Human Resources to chair the accessibility planning process. She established a broad-based ODA Accessibility Planning Committee in order to ensure a collaborative and representative process. Members of the Accessibility Planning Committee include students, staff and faculty. A range of stakeholders and constituencies from across the University are represented on the Accessibility Planning Committee, including facilities and services, information technology, policy, human resources, unions, student government, equity issues, legal, those with expertise in teaching and learning, staff with personal or professional knowledge of disability and accommodation issues, and people with disabilities. A Coordinating Committee of five people was appointed to ensure that the process and the Plan reflect the goals of the ODA and the University of Toronto.

The Accessibility Planning Committee divided into nine working sub-committees; two co-chairs facilitated each sub-committee. The co-chairs invited other members of the University community to participate on the committee, and then conducted outreach and consultation to a range of other people from the University of Toronto and elsewhere.
 (A list of the Accessibility Planning Committee members is included at the front of this report. A list of committee members and of those who participated in the committee consultation is included at the end of each sub-committee report)

Members of the Accessibility Planning Committee participated in the review of initiatives, identification of barriers, development of initiatives to be undertaken in the first year, outreach, and writing of the sub-committee report sections. In addition, the Accessibility Planning Committee worked toward building a continuing and sustainable process that will assist the University in attaining its goal of an equitable and accessible environment.

The ODA identifies five content requirements for all annual plans. 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.

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.

The University of Toronto's accessibility planning process was organized to meet these requirements.

Five committees were organized by barrier-type as identified in the previously cited definition. (Attitudes, Physical Facilities: Architecture and Design, Information and Communication, Information Technology, Policy and Procedure) These barriers affect all members of the University community. Four committees were established to address key areas where disability and accessibility specifically affect students, faculty or staff. (Student Life, Instructional Design: Students, Instructional Design: Faculty and Human Resources). Barriers and initiatives overlap.

Each subcommittee addressed the following areas in the process of the development 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 identified in the 2003-2004 Plan and to showcase accessibility achievements. Subcommittees have not provided a comprehensive inventory of initiatives already undertaken by the University of Toronto. They have provided examples representative of the scope of our commitment. Please see Appendix A for a list of URLs to access sites that more fully identify University of Toronto initiatives already undertaken.

Approach to barrier identification
Members of subcommittees identified a range of barriers to people with disabilities. Only those that will be addressed in the first year of the Accessibility Plan are identified in this report. Initiatives that committees identified that begin after the first year will be brought forward to the committee responsible for ongoing initiatives.

Initiatives planned for 2003-2004
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.

Each barrier identified by the committee for the Plan, has a corresponding initiative to address it in the first year. The Office responsible for taking the lead in each initiative has been identified.

III.   ACCESSIBILITY PLAN:
   BARRIERS AND INITIATIVES FOR 2003-2004

1. ATTITUDES

1.1 Focus
This section focuses on attitudinal barriers as they impact on people with disabilities and the community as a whole. Attitudes are a societal outgrowth; no one constituency can address attitudinal barriers alone. Although attitudinal barriers may play themselves out in individual interactions, the source of some attitudinal barriers may lie in issues of systemic discrimination against people with disabilities in our society as a whole and, historically, in the invisibility of disability issues. As described in the Annual Guide to Accessibility Planning (www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/accessibility/index.htm), "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 legitimate discrimination." Attitudinal barriers are a component of all other barriers and initiatives identified in this Accessibility Plan.

1.2 Review of Initiatives Undertaken to Date
Education about human rights and equity rights, including disability issues, has taken place over many years at the University of Toronto. Many of the past measures and initiatives undertaken to date have focused on education about equity policy and procedures. Specific initiatives include:

1. **Training and Education**

   a. Annual Disability and Access Awareness Days on all three campuses.
   b. Accessibility Services Advisory Committees have been established on all three campuses to ensure community input and participation.
   c. In-service training for academic administrators and the professional/managerial group is conducted throughout the University on disability and other equity issues.

d. The accessibility services on all three campuses provide on-going training to staff and faculty in order to ensure inclusion of students with disabilities and the increased use of inclusive practices at the University.

e. Accessibility services at all three campuses have created a service model that promotes inclusion of all students within the University setting.

f. The University-wide 'Equity Issues Advisory Group' (of which accessibility services are part) addresses equity issues, including disability, across the U`niversity. This group advises the President and senior administration on equity related issues.

g. The conference, "Excellence Through Equity," was held in March 2003. Disability issues were a component of the conference.

2. **Development and Distribution of Educational Materials**

a. Two videos have been produced by University of Toronto Accessibility Services. One focuses on educating University faculty and staff about the needs and rights of students with disabilities. The other focuses on educating students.

b. Several publications which address the needs and rights of students with disabilities have been produced and distributed. These are: "Speak for Yourself" and "Teaching Students with Disabilities and Special Needs" (University of Toronto Faculty Handbook). "Abilities" is a publication that Accessibility Services receives and distributes throughout the University.

c. Accessibility services websites provide information for staff, faculty and students about the needs, rights and resources related to disability and accessibility.

1.3 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 defined by his or her medical/physiological diagnosis rather than by his or her environment and support network as well.

1.4 Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004

Addressing attitudinal barriers is a long-term process that involves changing and removing barriers in society as a whole. The University of Toronto expects to continue working toward

identifying and removing barriers in the first year of the Plan and in subsequent years as well. It is not feasible to remove all attitudinal barriers in the first year. It is a long- term goal and an ongoing educational process. Each of the following initiatives addressses a range of barriers as identified in 1.3 above.

1. **Collect Examples of Awareness Campaigns**
   Compile and collate examples of successful initiatives and public awareness campaigns aimed at influencing attitudes with respect to disability. The results will assist in designing appropriate training and awareness initiatives to challenge conventional attitudes towards people with disabilities or ableism.
   Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
   Responsibility: Accessibility Services, Health and Well-being Programs and Services.

2. **Developing Awareness: Training**
   Several training sessions focusing on disability awareness will be delivered:

   a. The Graduate Students' Union, in partnership with Accessibility Services (St. George) will offer awareness training to faculty and staff at the School of Graduate Studies.
      Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
      Responsibility: Graduate Students' Union, Accessibility Services (St. George)

   b. The Staff Development Centre will offer 'Enhancing the Student Experience Program' to University staff who have front-line contact with students. The session named 'Diversity Issues: Dealing with Issues of Ability and Class,' is specifically designed to broaden awareness of diversity issues for both staff and faculty, especially in recognizing issues of ability/disability and class.
      Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004

Responsibility: Accessibility Services, Health and Well-being Programs and Services

c. A training seminar for Human Resource Generalists on 'Disability and Illness' will be delivered.
Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
Responsibility: Health and Well-being Programs and Services

3. **Developing Awareness: Conference**
Students for Barrier Free Access will hold a conference, "Breaking Down Barriers," on accessibility issues. The conference has the following goals:
- To educate the attendees on general issues affecting students with disabilities;
- To provide a survival guide to post-secondary education for students with disabilities;
- To broaden and influence the debate on barriers to education by engaging the student perspective.

Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
Responsibility: Students for Barrier Free Access

1.5 Outreach

1. **Sub-Committee Members:**
Co-Chair Liz Martin, Manager, Access*Ability* Resource Centre, UTM
Co-Chair Myra Lefkowitz, Manager, Health and Well-being Programs and Services

- Julia Munk, Vice-President Equity, Students' Administrative Council
- Mahadeo Sukhai, Vice-President Internal, Graduate Students' Union
- Viktoria Prokhorova, Students for Barrier Free Access
- Sara Scharfe, Graduate Accessibility Committee
- Kirston Harwood, Disability Generalist, Accessibility Services, St. George

- Kathryn Morgan, Professor, Philosophy/Women's Studies, Gender Studies
- Elaine Preston, Coordinator Leadership and Development, Staff Development

2. **Consultation**
   The following members of the University community were involved in discussions concerning attitudinal barriers and related initiatives:
   - Fran Odette, Consultant, Disability Issues
   - Joanne Bacon, Program Manager, Women with Disabilities and Deaf Women's Program
   - June Larkin, Senior Lecturer, Women and Gender Studies

2. POLICY AND PROCEDURE

2.1 Focus
This section identifies University policies and administrative procedures that are relevant to accessibility and disability. This section also identifies a process of policy review within the University's governance structure.

2.2 Review of Initiatives Undertaken to Date
1. The University of Toronto currently has in place a number of policies and administrative guidelines related to accessibility which clarify the University's commitment to particular principles and actions. These include the following:

   Statement of Institutional Purpose (1992)
   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 on Student Housing (1989)
   Policy Statement on the International Student Centre (1982)
   Purchasing Policy (1995)
   Services to Disabled Persons Policy (1987)
   Sexual Harassment: Policy and Procedures (1997)
   Statement on Accommodation in Employment for Persons with Disabilities (1995) and Guidelines for Accommodation (revised 1999)
   Statement on Human Rights (1992)
   Statement on Prohibited Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment (1994)
   Student Financial Support Policy (1998)

The full text of the above policies and guidelines is available:
http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/alphapol.htm
or http://www.utoronto.ca/safety/accomod.htm

2.3 Policy and Procedure Barriers

1. **Policies Require Review**
   Some University policies require review to ensure they address the requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

   Policies and administrative guidelines require regular or periodic reports to the Governing Council of the University of Toronto. For example, the Council, through its Academic and Business Boards, receives annual reports on employment equity. As well, annual reports are made to the Council on student financial support. The *Policy on Capital Planning and Capital Projects* and the terms of reference of various boards and committees of the Council require that each capital project above a defined cost threshold is reviewed for approval and considered in the context of a range of criteria. In addition, the Council receives an annual report on barrier free access initiatives related to capital projects below the defined cost threshold.

   Although the purpose of these statements and policies was to make the University a more equitable and accessible place of work and study for a number of minority populations, including persons with disabilities, all policies, including these, require periodic reviews. The purpose of these reviews is to respond to changes within the University, the larger society, and in terms of persons with disabilities, changes in the knowledge base and in technological aids that improve the ease with which these persons can participate in the full range of university activities.

2. **Limited Policy Assessment with Respect to Disability Issues**
A process to assess proposals for their effect on persons with disabilities is currently in place for capital projects proposals and is addressed in the University's *Policy on Capital Planning and Capital Projects* (2001).
Assessment of other proposals occurs on an *ad hoc* basis.

2.4 Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004

1. **Policy Review**

   a. The University policies identified above, and the administrative procedures and/or guidelines arising out of those policies will be examined to determine the degree to which they address (a) the University's goals and (b) the requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

   b. The first two policies to be reviewed will be the *Statement of Institutional Purpose* (1992) and *Services to Disabled Persons Policy* (1987). These policies may be found at: http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/alphapol.htm

   c. Mechanisms for consultation with a range of individuals or groups in order to clarify the need for and impact of policies in particular areas will be considered. In order to accomplish the University's objectives and to build on or coordinate with various portfolios' current and planned work, priorities will be determined in consultation with relevant administrative offices.

   Timeline: Beginning September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
   Responsibility: Secretary of the Governing Council

2. **Develop Systematic Process to Review New Policies**
   The University of Toronto will initiate a process to

establish more systematic procedures to assess policy and by-law proposals. This could include the development of a template or guidelines for submissions to governance, which will be modified as necessary. In the interim, as new policies and by-laws are being developed, those responsible will be asked to consider the requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
Timeline: Beginning September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
Responsibility: Secretary of the Governing Council

2.5 Outreach

1. **Sub-Committee Members:**
   Co-Chair Tina Doyle, Manager, AccessAbility Services, UTSC
   Co-Chair Louis Charpentier, Secretary of the Governing Council

2. **Consultation**
   This committee consulted informally with members of the Accessibility Planning Committee.

3. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

3.1 Focus

This section focuses on the University of Toronto's methods of communication and format of information materials as they impact on people with disabilities.

Information and communication affect all areas of the University and therefore are addressed in other sections of the University's Plan. Knowledge and incorporation of disability issues into communication and information materials may vary between individuals, departments or divisions within the University. Some departments already work toward the development of inclusive practices while others are developing an awareness or understanding of issues facing individuals with disabilities.

3.2 Review of Initiatives Undertaken to Date

1. Accessibility Services on all three campuses work to facilitate meeting the needs of students with disabilities and chronic health conditions with respect to their communication needs. This includes providing information for faculty and others who are in contact with students, on the respective rights, roles and responsibilities of students and teaching staff in the accommodation of disabilities.

2. Many University services have consulted with the Adaptive Technology Resource Centre (ATRC) to identify barriers in their computer-assisted communications, and have changed their web-presence so that information can be read using screen reader technology.

3. Students with disabilities are encouraged during the application and admission process to make their needs known as early as possible. Students applying for residence are also encouraged to identify needs to their college or residence office, and to consult with the

Accessiblity Service about the most appropriate residence environment.

4. The University of Toronto has the fourth largest digital library in the world. Students and faculty can also arrange to have material turned into audio format, and occasionally into larger print format. Software enhancements such as ZOOM-text are available for material that is available on line.

5. All campus papers, including the major student newspapers, are available on-line. Some of the student newspapers have worked in collaboration with CIUT-FM (the campus radio station on St. George campus) to ensure that important campus stories are also available in audio format.

6. Staff development has included information on accommodation of people with disabilities in courses on general equity awareness, and there will be further development of this course material in the fall, with new courses and enhancement of courses already offered.

3.3 Information and Communication Barriers

1. **Inconsistent Understanding and Application of Standards**
   There is 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.

   The significant level of de-centralization at the University presents the most serious challenge in this area, as relatively few standards exists and where they are in place, people are often unaware of them. While all the University's major publications are available on-line in both PDF and HTML format, there is no requirement for individual divisions to follow best practices either in production of materials or development of web-based information

2. **Limited Awareness about Range of Disabilities and their Effect**
   There is a lack of awareness among some people of the range of disabilities, especially where the disability is not visible, and the effect such conditions have on members of our community. For example, chronic medical conditions such as diabetes or colitis have a substantial impact on students' and staff members' abilities to participate fully in university life, yet the understanding of how to include people with such disabilities is very limited. The effect of perfume, scented body products and other chemicals on individuals with multiple chemical sensitivities and severe environmental allergies is also not well appreciated, and leads to difficult work and teaching conditions for people who are so affected.

3. **Inconsistent Information about Accessible Residences**
   Information about the accessibility of residences for students applying to the University of Toronto is often inconsistent or lacking.

4. **Limited Sign Language Availability**
   Most faculty, staff and student are unable to use sign language to communicate with those members of our community who use sign language.

3.4 Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004

1. **Develop Guidelines**
   Begin a process to develop guidelines for the effective consideration of accessibility issues in campus communication and information dissemination.
   Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
   Responsibility: Director, RCAT

2. **Education and Outreach Campaign**
   An education and outreach campaign to the University community to increase awareness about disabilities will be initiated. The goal of this campaign is to create a greater understanding of disability and inclusivity. A variety of communication modalities will be used including: newspapers, campus radio, University websites and ZOOM advertising frames.
   Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
   Responsibility: Director, Student Affairs

3. **Provide Residence Information**
   All students applying to live in residence will receive information early in the process about the particular features of each residence community, including physical or barrier free accessibility, ability to accommodate special diets (such as nut-free), and other service supports. Students can then make their selections for residence based on the appropriateness of the residence environment.

Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
Responsibility: Vice-Provost, Students

4. **Increase Sign Language Training**
   Sign language classes will be made available on the St. George campus to staff and students. This will enable greater communication with people who communicate using sign language.
   Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
   Responsibility: Staff Development, Student Affairs

3.5 Outreach

1. **Sub-Committee Members**
   Co-Chair Jan Nolan, Director, Faculty Renewal
   Co-Chair Susan Addario, Director, Student Affairs

   - Susan Bloch-Nevitte, Director, Public Affairs
   - Lari Langford, Head, Access and Information Services, Robarts Library
   - Elaine Preston, Coordinator Leadership and Development, Staff Development
   - Rachael Bokhout, The Independent

2. **Consultation**

   - Student Editors of campus newspapers
   - Station Manager, CIUT-FM (campus-community radio)
   - Accessibility Services
   - University central computing services and technical support for web-based services
   - Student Government representatives
   - Sarah Pearce, Consultant, Business Affairs and Capital Projects
   - Mahadeo Sukhai, Vice-President Internal, Graduate Students' Union

4. PHYSICAL FACILITIES: ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

4.1 Focus

This section explores ways that the University can prevent barriers from occuring in its open spaces and buildings and can address current barriers which may limit universal access.

4.2 Review of Initiatives Undertaken to Date

1. The University of Toronto Design Standards were established in 1991, and they include a section that addresses barrier free design. These were most recently updated in 2001 (http://www.facilities.utoronto.ca/PMDC/DESIGN/desistan/accessibility.pdf). All capital projects, major or minor, designed since the Design Standards were established are expected to be in compliance with these standards.

2. An Accessibility Working Group was formed by the Office of Student Affairs in 2000 with a mandate to assess the application of the University's Design Standards in recent and new construction and renovation projects in order to determine if the standards had been applied and if any modifications should be made to the standards. The Working Group audited four major projects: The Munk Centre, The Faculty of Physical Education and Health, The Graduate House Residence and Robarts Library.

3. Several audits for physical access to classrooms and buildings have been conducted.
   - The Office of Space Management, St. George campus, conducted an audit for physical access to the buildings and classrooms on the St. George Campus in 1995. This information is used in scheduling classes for students with disabilities.
   - Since 1995 the Access*Ability* Services at the University of Toronto at Scarborough (UTSC) has

conducted audits to identify barriers and provide recommendations in over six locations.

- A barrier free access consultant completed an audit of the Faculty of Physical Education and Health building complex in 2003.

4. A new facility was created for students with disabilities in order for them to write their tests/examinations in a supportive environment. The Centre, located on the first floor of the Robarts Library, is conveniently situated close to the office of Accessibility Services and the Adaptive Technology Resource Centre.

5. A Standing Committee on Barrier Free Accessibility was established in 2002 as a part of the Accommodations and Facilities Directorate (AFD) "to address the accessibility initiatives of the University of Toronto" with the mandate to:

- Review and prioritize divisional requests to support accessibility projects received in the annual competition for Facilities Renewal Planning and SuperBuild funds, and submit its report to the AFD;
- Review and prioritize any other projects not identified through divisional requests (such as projects to make accessible student activity space or space used by co-curricular programs) and submit those projects for consideration to the AFD;
- Conduct an annual audit of recently constructed buildings to identify accessibility issues and problems, and submit a report of the audit to the Director, Project Planning and Construction and to the Manager, Property Management Group for response;
- Report annually to Governing Council through the AFD on all infrastructure and maintenance projects proposed and supported through the University's planning and allocation process.

6. In 1990 the Students' Administrative Council (SAC) instituted a student levy specifically dedicated to wheelchair accessibility projects on the three campuses. Over 3 million dollars was raised. A Wheelchair Access Committee (SAC WAC) was formed to oversee the allocation of funds. The types of projects subsidized by SAC WAC fall into four categories:
   - automatic door openers
   - wheelchair ramps and sloped sidewalks
   - wheelchair accessible washrooms
   - elevators and wheelchair lifts

   A list of some of the projects funded by SAC WAC is provided:
   http://www.sac.utoronto.ca/money/money_sacwac_02.html. The mandate of SAC WAC was broadened to be inclusive of all disabilities in 2001.

7. A number of accessible elevators and lifts have been installed or replaced across the St. George campus over the last few years. Among the buildings which have newly accessible elevators and lifts are:

   - Robarts Library (elevator replacement)
   - Faculty of Social Work (elevator replacement)
   - North Borden Building (elevator installation)
   - Institute of Child Study (wheelchair lift installation)
   - Koffler Centre, 3rd Floor (wheelchair lift installation)

4.3 Physical Facilities Barriers

1. **Design Standards Focus on Physical Access**
   The University of Toronto Design Standards primarily address physical disabilities. The Standards need to be reviewed to address all disabilities, such as loss of hearing, loss of vision, mental and chronic health impairments.

2. **Inconsistent Awareness of Universal Design Principles**
Critical knowledge about universal design principles, which address all disabilities, may not be fully incorporated into new design initiatives.

3. **Inaccessible Spaces**
There are spaces, primarily on the St. George campus, that are physically inaccessible. Three barriers to be addressed in the first year of the Accessibility Plan were identified:

   a. No elevator in Hart House
   b. No access to the University College Junior Common Room
   c. Lack of automatic door openers in some buildings

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

5. **No Current List of Accessible Rooms**
There is no updated list of accessible rooms and spaces to hold small to large gatherings and events at the University of Toronto.

4.4 Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004

1. **Review Design Standards for Inclusion**
Review and update the University of Toronto Design Standards to address all disabilities by incorporating universal design principles.
Timeline: Begin September 1, 2003 – ongoing
Responsibility: Manager, Design and Construction; Chief, Capital Projects

2. **Universal Design Consultant**
A universal design consultant will be hired, at the discretion of the Capital Works group, to work with

architects, planners and designers to advise on how to incorporate universal design principles on projects.
Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
Responsibility: Manager, Design and Construction; Chief, Capital Projects

3. **Install Elevator, Lift and Automatic Door Openers**
   Several projects are planned to address the physically inaccessible spaces identified:

   a. Install an elevator in Hart House.
      Timeline: Anticipated completion July, 2004
      Responsibility: Manager, Design and Construction; Chief, Capital Projects

   b. Install a lift for access to the University College Junior Common Room
      Timeline: Anticipated completion September, 2004
      Responsibility: Manager, Design and Construction; Chief, Capital Projects

   c. Install automatic door openers in approximately 12 on-campus buildings including existing residences at Innis College and University College
      Timeline: Anticipated completion July, 2004
      Responsibility: Manager, Design and Construction; Chief, Capital Projects

4. **Identify More Accessible Use of Elevators**
   Design a process to audit the elevators and lifts for methods of access and use.
   Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
   Responsibility: Manager, Design and Construction; Chief, Capital Projects

5. **Develop a List of Accessible Rooms**
   Develop a list of accessible rooms and spaces for small and large gatherings.
   Timeline: September 1, 2003 – ongoing

Responsibility: Manager, Office of Space Management in conjunction with Accessibility Services and others.

4.5 Outreach

1. **Sub-Committee Members:**
   Co-Chair Janice Martin, Manager, Accessibility Services St. George Campus
   Co-Chair Ihor Kotowycz, Manager, Design and Construction, Capital Projects

2. **Consultation**
   Resources and information were gathered from the following groups which have worked on this issue.
   - Students Administrative Council Wheelchair Access Committee (SAC WAC)
   - Accessibility Working Group
   - Design Standards Committee
   - Standing Committee for Barrier Free Accessibility
   - Accessibility Services
   - Design and Construction (a division of Capital Projects)

5. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

5.1 Focus

This section examines the accessibility barriers of information technology at the University of Toronto. This includes information management systems, software and hardware systems.

5.2 Review of Initiatives Undertaken to Date

1. A wide range of services have been established at the University of Toronto to address the accessibility of information technology for students, staff and faculty.

    ATRC (Adaptive Technology Resource Centre)
    http://www.utoronto.ca/atrc/
    On an international scale the ATRC advances information technology that is accessible to all, through research, development, education, proactive design consultation and direct service. The ATRC provides consultation and individual assistance to University of Toronto students, faculty and staff regarding access to information technology and assistive technology.

    SNOW (Special Needs Opportunity Windows)
    http://www.snow.utoronto.ca/
    Provides online resources and professional development opportunities for educators and parents of students with special needs.

    RCAT (Resource Centre for Academic Technology)
    http://rcat.utoronto.ca/
    Supports the use of emerging technologies in teaching, learning, and research. The Resource Centre offers services to faculty, staff, and graduate students. Every staff member at RCAT is trained in and practices principles of inclusive instructional design. RCAT offers a number of workshops, seminars and special events about inclusive instructional design.

University of Toronto Technical Support Services
Provides digital and AV technologies that support accessibility in classroom teaching where possible (e.g, FM and infrared listening devices).

2. There continue to be ongoing improvements made to the accessibility of information technology. Many of these are highlighted below.

a. Members of the Adaptive Technology Resource Centre (ATRC) are co-authors, editors and chairs of the international Web Accessibility Initiative Guidelines working groups which are the basis of Web accessibility legislation and guidelines world-wide. Members of the ATRC also chair international interoperability specifications groups that establish the international standards for accessible e-learning (e.g., IMS Global Learning Consortium).
b. University of Toronto offers an award for excellence in Web design. One of the primary criteria is the accessibility of the Web site.
c. ATRC consultation and individual assistance is provided to students, faculty and staff regarding access to information technology and assistive technology.
d. ATRC conducts education, research and development to advance inclusive information technology. The ATRC takes a proactive approach by addressing emerging technologies.
e. An Assistive Technology Consultant through the Learning Opportunities Task Force (LOTF) has been hired to address technology needs of students with learning disabilities.
f. Accessible workstations are provided by specific units such as the Faculties of Law, and Applied Science and Engineering and Robarts Library (References Services).
g. A computer lab with assistive technology has been established on each of the three University of Toronto campuses. The labs are used by students who need accommodation during exams.

h. Library transcription services are available for students with disabilities.

5.3 Information Technology Barriers

1. **Inaccessible Information Technology**
   Inaccessible information technology is purchased even when an accessible choice is available.

2. **Public Workstations are not Accessible**
   a. Many public workstations are not accessible to those who require alternative access systems.
   b. 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.

3. **Alternative Formats for Course Materials**
   Alternative formats for course materials, readings and texts are often not available until late in the course. Students are frequently left without the necessary text books or readings. Collaboration by all sectors is required to create a more efficient system. This is a systemic problem that affects post-secondary institutions throughout North America.

4. **Identification of Access Problems**
   Accessibility of on-line and computer-mediated processes is not widely known. Also, units, including academic units, are not aware of the range of access problems that must be identified before they can be successfully addressed.

5.4 Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004

1. **Establish Purchasing Guidelines**
   Establish guidelines for purchasing accessible information technology across all University units and departments.
   Timeline: September 1, 2003 – ongoing

Responsibility: Director, Resource Centre for Academic Technology in collaboration with Procurement Services and Secretary of the Governing Council.

2. **Workstation Accessibility**
   A two-fold initiative is proposed:
   a. Install site-licensed alternative access software on public terminals by including it in the workstation image.
   b. Investigate the feasibility of purchasing and using "Web 4 All" technology. This technology employs the use of a "smartcard" that selects and makes immediately accessible the assistive technology preferred by individual users.
   Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
   Responsibility: Manager, Information Commons in conjunction with Director, Resource Centre for Academic Technology.

3. **Study Alternative Formats**
   The possibility of submitting a multi-sector, pan-Canadian proposal to address the problem will be investigated by the ATRC. Furthermore, means of addressing the issue of timely provision of alternative formats at provincial and national levels will also be investigated.
   Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
   Responsibility: Director, Adaptive Technology Resource Centre will put together a team of key stakeholders.

4. **Begin Accessibility Audit of Information Technology**
   Begin a review of the accessibility of the University of Toronto on-line and computer mediated processes.
   Timeline: September 1, 2003 – ongoing
   Responsibility: Director, Resource Centre for Academic Technology

5.5 Outreach

1. **Sub-Committee Members:**
   Co-Chair Mahadeo Sukhai, Vice-President Internal, Graduate Students' Union
   Co-Chair Jutta Treviranus, Director of Resource Centre for Academic Technology

   - Sean Kearns, Co-Chair Health and Safety Committee, USWA Local 1998
   - Marilyn Van Norman, Director of Student Services and Career Centre
   - Margaret Fung, Industrial Hygenist, Environmental Health and Safety

2. **Consultation**
   The following individuals, groups and services were consulted to assess the present status and identify desired changes:
   - Bruce Rolston, Public Affairs,
   - Lidio Presutti and Michael Edmunds, Information Commons
   - Lari Langford, Head, Access and Information Services, Robarts Library
   - Eugene Siciunas, University of Toronto Computer Commons (UTCC)
   - Academic Computing Advisory Committee
   - Network Services Meeting
   - Graduate Accessibility Committee
   - Academic Technology Research Centre (ATRC)
   - Resource Centre for Academic Technology (RCAT)

6. INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN: STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY

6.1 Focus
This section addresses barriers and initiatives to make learning more accessible to all students. This includes using technology, curriculum design, varied forms of evaluation and varied formats for instructional materials. It addresses what can be done to create a safe and comfortable classroom environment for the student conducive to the disclosure of disability. Some initiatives are available on all three campuses; some are campus specific. Many of the initiatives overlap with those cited in other sections of this Plan.

6.2 Review of Initiatives Undertaken to Date
In the last decade all three campuses have established services to make learning more accessible to students. The Academic Skills Centre at the University of Toronto at Mississauga (UTM) was established in 1996; Teaching and Learning Services at the University of Toronto at Scarborough (UTSC) was established in 1999; and mostly recently, the Office of Teaching Advancement at the St. George Campus was established in 2002. All three services work in partnership with the Accessibility Services on their campus. The following provides a sense of the extent and range of recent initiatives. It is not an exhaustive list.

1. Teaching and Learning Services has been partnering with Access*Ability* Services and the Academic Advising and Career Centre at the University of Toronto at Scarborough (UTSC) on Universal Instructional Design (UID) related initiatives for some time. Sample specific points of intervention include:

    a. Teaching and Learning Services Annual New Faculty Orientation: The "tips on teaching" presentation includes ideas for syllabus design and approaches to accommodating differing learning styles in teaching. A panel of students (including students with disabilities) orient faculty to UTSC

students, their expectations and their backgrounds. The extensive orientation packet provides further resources.

   b. Faculty and graduate student consultation on teaching: UTSC employs teaching consultants who specialize in assisting faculty with a wide variety of teaching issues, including constructing Access*Ability*-friendly syllabi and assignments.

   c. Appointment of a Learning Strategist and Assistant Technologist in Access*Ability* Services: A specialized Learning Strategist and Assistant Technologist was hired in 2002 to help students with disabilities respond effectively to a range of teaching styles, and to help faculty and teaching assistants teach more effectively.

2. In 2002, UTSC hosted a conference, "Teaching and Learning *for* Diversity". A resource booklet of the same title is currently in press and will be distributed to all UTSC faculty for the fall term. The booklet provides teaching tips and curriculum design strategies that complement the principles of Universal Instructional Design. It also contains essays from faculty and students with disabilities speaking to the issues.

3. The Academic Skills Centre at the University of Toronto at Mississauga (UTM) has been engaged in fostering the principles of UID for the last seven years. The following are some of the initiatives that have been undertaken.

   a. Teaching and Learning for New Faculty: New Faculty Orientation – functions to introduce the new faculty to the teaching opportunities on campus. Teaching tips for accessible learning for all students is a part of the program.

   b. Teaching Assistant training and graduate student support: Teaching Assistant training includes

instruction by students with learning and physical disabilities. The Academic Skills Centre works with graduate students who have communication learning disabilities. Support is provided to Teaching Assistants to provide accessible teaching.

4. Preparation for University Study: The Head Start Program is open to all students entering UTM in September. All students registered with the Access*Ability* Resource Centre are invited to attend.

5. Residence Don Training: UTM Residence Dons receive specific training in awareness of the impact of different learning styles on student life. They also receive training on facilitating the integration of students with different physical and learning strengths and weaknesses into campus life.

6. Criterion-Based Assessment and the Alignment of Curricula: The Academic Skills Centre (UTM) supports the use of collaboratively determined criteria to assess student learning. This process shares the responsibility for learning in a way that creates an environment in which communication between students and faculty about learning is expected and necessary for success in both teaching and learning.

7. A research project to test the effectiveness of applying the principles of accessible learning to a university-level first-year course with an enrolment of approximately 100 students is underway at UTM.

8. UTM has developed Diagnostic Assessments to help instructors and students locate learning levels and needs. Structured Learning Groups and the Technology Tutor Program assist greater accessible learning.

9. A full-time Learning Strategist and Assistive Technologist was appointed to the staff of the Access*Ability* Resource Centre to serve the learning

needs of students with learning disabilities.

10. The Counselling and Learning Skills Service (CALSS), St. George campus, provides lectures and consultation on a range of academic skills. The service works with students to overcome debilitating anxiety that may impair or impede their academic performance.

11. The Resource Centre for Adaptive Technology (RCAT) at the St. George campus provides workshops on inclusive teaching and accessible web design. More detail can be found at: http://www.utoronto.ca/cat/whatson/presentation_notes.html.

12. The Resource Centre for Adaptive Technology Student Accommodation Service (http://www.utoronto.ca/atrc/service/sas.html) and the Vision Technology Service (http://www.utoronto.ca/atrc/service/vts.html) also provide services to students with disabilities.

13. Accessibility Services at the St. George campus provides information, support and workshops as requested
   - Appointment of Learning Strategists and an Assistant Technologist in Accessibility Services: Specialized Learning Strategists and an Assistant Technologist were hired in to help students with learning disabilities respond effectively to a range of teaching styles. For preparation for university studies, Accessibility Services offered a one week series of workshops for students with learning disabilities go give them a headstart to the fall term.

   - Teaching and Learning for New Faculty: Arts and Science New Faculty Orientation presentations to introduce new faculty to the role of Accessiblity Services. "An Instructor's Handbook: Teaching Students with Disabilities" is distributed to faculty.

- TA training and graduate student support: Accessibility Services provides TA training seminars.

- Residence Don Training: Accessibility Service staff attend Residence Don Training to create awareness of the Service and the impact of different learning styles on student life.

6.3 Instructional Design: Student Accessibility Barriers

1. **Inconsistent of Awareness of UID**
   There is inconsistent awareness of how to incorporate Universal Instructional Design (UID) principles into syllabus design by some faculty.

2. **Inconsistent Awareness of Sensory Disabilities among Some Faculty**
   There is inconsistent awareness by some faculty of sensory disabilities among students and how to address their learning needs in course design.

3. **Limited Online Diagnostic Tools**
   Current online diagnostic tools do not fully allow students easy and private access to skill-building opportunities.

4. **Criterion-Based Assessment and Alignment of Curricula**
   There can be a lack of consistency between what is taught by an instructor and course assesment measures. This can result in student confusion about assessment.

5. **Inconsistent Course Delivery Styles**
   Most courses rely on one style or mode of delivery i.e. they are text-based (visual) or lecture-based (auditory). These are not the most effective teaching styles for students with disabilities.

6.4 Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004

Most of the current initiatives identified on each of the three campuses will continue and in many cases, will be expanded.

1. **Increase Awareness of UID**

    a. To provide greater awareness of how to incorporate Universal Instructional Design principles into instruction, the Office of Teaching and Learning Services (UTSC) and the Academic Skills Centre (UTM) will continue to integrate elements of UID into its 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 UID-related principles into their teaching.
        Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
        Responsibility: Teaching and Learning Services, UTSC and Academic Skills Centre, UTM

    b. The UTSC "Access*Ability* Handbook" is being extensively revised and expanded. It will include an enhanced section on teaching and assessment strategies using universal instructional design, including sections on: defining and clarifying goals, organizing course content, preparing a syllabus, planning lectures and making the best use of class time.
        Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
        Responsibility: Access*Ability* Services, UTSC

    c. The Academic Advising and Career Centre will provide a workshop for students with challenges seeking employment. A wide range of issues will be covered from researching employers to dealing with interviews. All aspects of the process will be discussed including familiarity with employee rights, connecting academic goals to employment opportunities, and contributing to a work

environment in which all employees feel comfortable.
Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
Responsibility: Academic Advising and Career Centre, UTSC

d. The Office of Teaching Advancement will be developing and providing workshops for faculty and teaching assistants on Universal Instructional Design principles.
Timeline: September 1, 2003 – ongoing
Responsibility: Office of Teaching Advancement, St. George

2. **Increase Awareness of Sensory Disabilities**
To enhance faculty understanding of the learning needs of students with sensory disabilities, the Coordinator 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.
Timeline: September 1, 2003 – ongoing
Responsibility: Access*Ability* Resource Centre, UTM

3. **Develop Skills-based Assesment Tools**
Develop more skills-based assessment tools which allow students easy and private access to skills building opportunities.
Timeline: September 1, 2003 – ongoing
Responsibility: Office of Teaching and Learning Services, UTM

4. **Develop Criterion-Based Assessment and the Alignment of Curricula**
The Academic Skills Centre will collaboratively develop criteria to assess student learning. This process highlights that communication between students and faculty about learning is expected and necessary for success in both teaching and learning. It also

emphasizes the importance of connecting what is being taught with what is being assessed and how it is being assessed.

Timeline: September 1, 2003 – ongoing

Responsibility: Academic Skills Centre, UTM

5. **Develop Alternate Course Delivery Styles**

A research project entitled, "Where On Earth? Learning About Geography and the Environment Through Interactive Teaching", is in the process of being developed. It is an interactive computer-based courseware that will enhance the learning environment for students exploring geography. It makes the learning environment accessible to all students including those who have a learning disability because it employs auditory, visual and kinesthetic means of delivering instruction. This is a model which may be transferred to other courses.

6.5 Outreach

1. **Sub-Committee Members:**

Co-Chair Rona Abramovitch, Director, Transitional Year Programme

Co-Chair Cleo Boyd, Director, Academic Skills Services UTM

Co-Chair Teresa Dawson, Director, Teaching and Learning Services, UTSC

- Helen Slade, Disability Accommodation Specialist, Accessibility Services, St. George Campus
- Sean Kearns, Co-Chair Health and Safety Committee, USWA Local 1998

2. **Consultation**

This report is based on input from members of the sub-committee. Sub-committee members engage in extensive consultations with a range of other offices on an ongoing basis. A list of the other offices involved in the consultation process over the past few years, follows:

UTSC
Access*Ability* Services
Academic Advising and Career Centre
Scarborough College Students' Union (SCSU)
Vice-Principal (Academic) and Dean
Vice-Dean
Associate Dean and Director Governance Serivces
Associate Princiapal—Student Affairs
Associate Principal—Academic Resources
The Writing Centre
Research Skills Instruction
Reference Desk
Presentation Skills Instruction
Library Services
Audio-Visual Services
Computing and Networking Services

UTM
Access*Ability* Resource Centre
Diversity Office
Professional Writing Program
Dean of Student Affairs
Director and Assistant Director, Residence
Residence Life Coordinator
Registrar's Office
Library Services
Council of First-Year Instructors
Math and Economic Help Centres
Curriculum Committees of the Academic Departments

St. George
Co-ordinator, University of Toronto Writing Support
Adaptive Technology Resource Centre (ATRC)
Special Needs Opportunity Windows (SNOW)
Accessability Services
University of Toronto Technical Support Services
Learning Opportunity Task Force (LOTF)
Office of Teaching Advancement
Office of Student Affairs

7. INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN: FACULTY ACCESSIBILTY

7.1 Focus
This section focuses on two main barriers that were identified which may have a negative impact on the pursuit of academic careers by people with disabilities or which may negatively affect faculty members who have disabilities in the performance of their instructional duties.

7.2 Review of Initiatives Undertaken to Date

1. The Office of Teaching Advancement (OTA) was established in 2002 to assist faculty from across the University in all matters relating to teaching. In addition to providing individual consultation to faculty members the OTA also offers a wide range of programming from small workshops to larger events aimed at a broader audience. Each of these events aims to integrate accessibility issues while others will address specific aspects relating to accessibility and teaching (such as "Integrating Needs in Course Design" to be held in the Spring Term).

7.3 Instructional Design: Faculty Accessibilty Barriers

1. **Inconsistent Levels of Familiarity**
   There is inconsistent levels of familiarity regarding the duty to accommodate and regarding disability issues generally, among faculty members and academic administrators.

2. **Limited Awareness of Alternative Pedagogical Approaches**
   The majority of faculty were themselves educated through the didactic pedagogy of the lecture method and prefer this teaching/learning method. However, a faculty member who has a disability may not be able to teach as effectively with this teaching method. Selection of teaching methods remains a matter for the professor in

consulatation with the Chair in accordance with normal departmental processes. Also, the effectiveness of the teaching/learning method for the students is a critical consideration. There may be insufficient familiarity with alternative approaches and some faculty may just be beginning to explore alternatives.

7.4 Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004

1. **Increase Awareness of Faculty**
   In the on-going sessions run by the Provost's Office annually for newly appointed academic administrators, the topic of wellness and disability will be addressed in the Managing People seminar. A separate session on Wellness and Disability will be held for all academic administrators as well. It will cover, among other things, the duty to accommodate up to the point of undue hardship, and will include a presentation from legal counsel.
   Timeline: Beginning September 1, 2003 – April 30, 2004
   Responsibility: Manager, Health and Well-being Programs and Services, Senior Employment Relations Legal Advisor, Director, Faculty Renewal

2. **Increase Faculty Awareness of Alternative Pedagogies**
   A concerted effort should be made to inform faculty members of alternate pedagogies including such approaches as case studies, problem-based learning, computer-assisted instruction, learning through writing, and other strategies that do not depend on the lecture format.
   Where a faculty member with a disability seeks an accommodation that might involve alternative teaching approaches, a resource team consisting of a member of the Office of Teaching Advancement, the faculty member and the Chair will work towards identifying a reasonable accommodation.
   Timeline: Beginning September 1, 2003 – August 31,

2004
Responsibility: Office of Teaching Advancement

7.5 Outreach

1. **Sub-Committee Members**
   Chair Judith Pöe, Senior Lecturer, Chemistry
   Vice-President, Grievances, University of Toronto
   Faculty Association (UTFA), representing UTFA

8. STUDENT LIFE

8.1 Focus
This section focuses on non-academic aspects of student life including access to social, recreational and cultural activities. Sub-committee members felt it was important to note that all students at the University of Toronto should be able to participate in all aspects of student life, both in the classroom and outside the classroom.

Most accessibility initiatives to date have focused on supporting students to succeed academically. These initiatives are identified throughout the other sections of this report. Graduate and undergraduate students with disabilities face some of the same issues when participating in life outside the classroom. Some issues are unique to graduate students. For example, graduate students may participate more in course union activities or in interdepartmental events than in Clubs or student groups.

8.2 Review of Initiatives Undertaken to Date
As with other sections of this report, there is no comprehensive inventory of the range of student life initiatives. The following is a preliminary list of student-organized student life initiatives.

1. Students for Barrier Free Access (SFBA) was established in 2002 and actively drives campus awareness and action for accessibility.
2. A group of students from the Faculty of Law established Ability Rights and the Law in 2002. This group brings in guests from the community to speak about disability rights issues.
3. University College Accessibility Committee was established in 2002 to address a range of accessibility issues for students at University College.
4. The Graduate Students' Union (GSU) established a Graduate Accessibility Committee in 2002 in order to address issues facing graduate students with disabilities. The GSU subsequently developed and passed an

Accessibility Policy based on the recommendations of this committee.
5. In 2003 Students' Administrative Council (SAC) passed an Accessibility Policy on how SAC can better meet the needs of students with disabilities.

8.3 Student Life Barriers

1. **Full Courseload Limits Participation**
   What is considered a full courseload for a student with a disability may be different than that for other students. This has not been taken into account by the undergraduate student government when considering club or governance participation.

2. **Limited Funding for Non-Academic Accommodations**
   There is limited funding to provide accommodation for non-academic student life activities for students with disabilities. For example, there is funding to provide sign language interpretation for academic related events, but not for non-academic events.

3. **Van Access at Night**
   Wheelchair accessible and safe travel is not available by van or bus in the evening on the St. George campus. Many campus life activities take place in the evening. Currently the Accessibility Services van is available for students with disabilities during the day, but it is not available in the evening.

4. **Inter-Campus Accessible Transportation**
   There is currently no accessible transportation service among the three campuses for students with disabilities.

5. **Inconsistent Awareness about How to Plan Accessible Events**
   Lack of awareness of disability issues among students in general has a negative impact on the participation level of students with disabilities. When student life activities are designed without taking accessibility into account, the

participation of students with disabilities is negatively affected.

8.4 Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004

1. **Review Full-Time Requirements**
   Begin to review the impact that full-time requirements have on students with disabilities.
   Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
   Responsibility: Students' Administrative Council in conjunction with Vice-Provost, Students

2. **Examine Funding for Accommodations**
   Begin to examine how to fund accommodations for student life activities. Sources of funding other than student levies should be explored.
   Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
   Responsibility: Vice-Provost, Students

3. **Explore Van Access at Night**
   Explore possible resources and services to provide vehicular transportation within campus at night for all students. This service would address a two-fold need: accessibility and safety at night. If this service were available it might enhance participation in student life activities for all students.
   Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
   Responsibility: Manager, Accessibility Services; Assistant Vice-President, Facilities and Services.

4. **Explore Inter-Campus Accessible Transportation**
   Explore the possibility of inter-campus accessible transportation.
   Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
   Responsibility: Offices responsible for Student Affairs on all three campuses.

5. **Increase Awareness about How to Organize Accessible Events**
   Ensure that student representatives involved in the

planning and design of student resources (i.e. new student centre) are mindful of accessibility.

    a. Develop a pilot project for an educational workshop and educational materials that could be offered to student club leaders, leaders of recognized campus groups, dons and orientation leaders. The purpose of the workshop will be to train campus leaders about accessibility needs, issues and resources so that they can plan accessible events.

    b. Explore the feasibility of forming a tri-campus coalition with representation from student clubs and groups to work with SFBA to promote awareness and action on accessibility for student life.

    c. Following the lead of the GSU and SAC, which have passed their own Accessibility Policy, all student governments will be encouraged to draft an accessibility policy, or in the case where a draft exists, finalize it.

Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
Responsibility: Students' Administrative Council, Graduate Students' Union, Association of Part Time Undergraduate Students

8.5 Outreach

1. **Sub-Committee Members**
   Co-Chair Julia Munk, Vice-President Equity, Students' Administrative Council
   Co-Chair Margaret Hancock, Warden, Hart House

2. **Consultation**
   Individuals and/or groups consulted include:
   - Students for Barrier Free Access
   - Graduate Students' Union
   - Jeff Peters, Transitional Year Program student and member of Association of Part-Time Undergraduate Students

- Scott Tremblay, UTSC student, Students' Administrative Council Student Life Co-Ordinator
- Mahadeo Sukhai, Vice-President Internal, Graduate Students' Union

9. HUMAN RESOURCES

9.1 Focus
This section focuses on barriers and initiatives that specifically impact employees (staff and faculty) at the University of Toronto.

9.2 Review of Initiatives Undertaken to Date

1. A new unit, Health and Well-being Programs and Services, was created by the Vice-President, Human Resources in 2002. This unit co-ordinates services for employees who become injured or disabled and provides programs to promote the health and well-being of all University of Toronto employees.

2. A new position, the Quality of Work Life Advisor, was created by the Vice-President, Human Resources in 2002. This Advisor focuses on examining any issue that may impede the quality of an employee's work life, including disability.

3. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides confidential counselling services to all University of Toronto employees regarding a range of issues. This confidential service assists employees with disabilities on a range of issues, including assistance preparing for discussions about their disability and required accommodation with their employer.

4. The Family Care Office offers workshops, referrals to community agencies and individual consultation to staff, faculty and students on the St. George campus who care for dependents with disabilities.

5. The Early Learning Centre, an on campus daycare facility for children of staff, faculty and students, was opened in 2003. It was designed to ensure that children who have disabilities can be fully integrated into the daycare.

6. A Dependent Care Survey was conducted in 2003 to identify the dependent care commitments and determine the needs related to dependent care of University of Toronto staff and faculty. The survey included caring for a dependent with a disability.

7. The central Employment Accommodation Fund assists departments and divisions in providing reasonable accommodation by financing the purchase or modification of equipment, training to initiate an accommodation and minor renovations to the workplace.

8. Environmental Health and Safety office provides a broad range of health and safety services and injury prevention strategies to the University community including health and safety training and dissemination of health and safety information to the University community. The office also provides ergonomic assessments and education to University employees.

9.3 Human Resources Barriers

1. **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.

2. **Staff and Faculty Disability Concerns**
   Staff and faculty disability concerns and accessibility needs are unknown in a comprehensive manner.

3. **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 who 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.

9.4 Initiatives Planned for 2003-2004

1. **Establish a Process of Communication**
   Establish a process of communication to enable ongoing information sharing and collaboration.
   Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
   Responsibility: Vice-President, Human Resources; Vice-Provost, Faculty; Manager, Health and Well-being Programs and Services; Quality of Work Life Advisor

2. **Begin Staff and Faculty Survey Development**
   Begin the process of developing and distributing a comprehensive survey to identify the accessibility needs of staff and faculty.
   Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
   Responsibility: Office of the Vice-President, Human

Resources

3. **Process of Review of Faculty Appointments**
A process of review and collegial discussion will be
undertaken to look at ways of removing these potential
negative effects, and, once the appropriate level of
background analysis and collegial discussion has been
achieved, a report should be prepared, and the matter
should be placed on the list of policies to be negotiated
between the University and UTFA.
Timeline: September 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004
Responsibility: Office of the Vice-President, Human
Resources

9.5 Outreach

1. **Sub-Committee Members**
Chair Rosie Parnass, Quality of Work Life Advisor and
Special Assistant to the Vice-President, Human
Resources

   • Myra Lefkowitz, Manager, Health and Well-being
     Programs and Services
   • Steve Moate, Senior Employment Relations Legal
     Advisor

2. **Consultation**
Judith Pöe, Senior Lecturer, Chemistry
Vice-President, Grievances, University of Toronto
Faculty Association (UTFA)
This committee consulted with members of the
Accessibility Planning Committee.

IV.   IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2003-2004

Passage through Governance
The University of Toronto Plan, developed in response to the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 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. In turn, the Board will consider the Committee's advice and make its recommendation to the Governing Council, the final decision-making body.

Communicating the Plan
Upon passage through governance, "The University of Toronto ODA Accessibility Plan 2003-2004" will be circulated through a range of means including posting it on the University of Toronto homepage (www.utoronto.ca).

A comprehensive strategy for circulation will be developed in consultation with the University of Toronto Department of Public Affairs and the Adaptive Technology Resource Centre. This will ensure that the Plan is available in a range of formats.

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 2003-2004" is reviewed and monitored regularly. The University will establish a committee responsible for reviewing and monitoring ongoing initiatives related to disability and accessibility.

Offices which are responsible for taking the lead on specific initiatives in the 2003-04 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. Accordingly, at the conclusion of the second year Plan the University intends to review the effectiveness of existing dispute resolution mechanisms and to develop a proposal for new or additional mechanisms if the review suggests that such a change is advisable.

Next Steps
The University of Toronto's Ontarians with Disability Act Accessibility Plan identifies the range of measures already taken by the University to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities. It identifies the barriers and corresponding initiatives to be addressed in the first year. Over thirty specific initiatives will be launched during 2003-2004. These reflect the ongoing commitment of the University of Toronto to become a more accessible and equitable environment for all students, staff and faculty.

The planning process identified some issues and areas to be considered in future years. The feasibility of these will be addressed in consultation with the wider University community. These include:

- Conducting research on the impact of changes made to curriculum design on student learning, and the effectiveness of accessible learning principles
- Identifying best practices for wayfinding
- Developing the tools to collect comprehensive information about equity, including disability, across the University.
- Exploring the scope of environmental and chemical sensitivities
- Exploring the complex issues related to mental health and mental illness

The University of Toronto, as an educational institution, is committed to developing scholarship and research. To further enhance our understanding of disability and accessibility, the University will be hosting a conference in 2003-2004, on current research about disability.

As society in general learns more about the complexity of disability issues and about disabilities themselves, our collective understanding of how to prevent and remove barriers will become even clearer.

APPENDIX A

The following is a list of sites that more fully identify initiatives already undertaken:

Accessibility Services (St. George):
http://www.sa.utoronto.ca/area.php?waid=5

Access*Ability* Resource Centre (UTM):
http://www.erin.utoronto.ca/%7Ew3access/

Access*Ability* Services (UTSC): http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/%7Eability/

ATRC: http://www.utoronto.ca/atrc/

RCAT: http://rcat.utoronto.ca/

SNOW: http://www.snow.utoronto.ca/

Office of Teaching Advancement (St. George): http://www.utoronto.ca/ota/

Counselling and Learning Skills Service (St. George):
http://www.erin.utoronto.ca/~w3asc/

Teaching and Learning Services (UTSC): http://tls.utsc.utoronto.ca/

Academic Skills Centre (UTM): http://www.erin.utoronto.ca/~w3asc/