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OCAD ACCESSIBILITY INITIATIVES COMPLETED

Historical Barrier Removal Initiatives (1990-2002):

1. A Special Needs Committee comprised of students, faculty and administration was established to develop and recommend policy and procedures related to special needs issues.
2. Opening of Special Needs Office; hiring of a Special Needs Coordinator and development of essential support services. Student survey issued to establish the perceived barriers that may have existed at that time.
3. Orientation for students with disabilities at the start of the academic year, to give students information about services they may require during the school year. Panel formed by cross-section of staff including reps from Health Services, Financial Aid, and Employment Equity were on hand to answer questions.
4. A "Guide to Student Related Information and Policies" published by Student Services. This included a section called, "Special Needs Office Policy", which specifically addressed services available for students with disabilities. Booklet distributed to all new students.
5. Document entitled, "Guidelines – Test/Exam Accommodations for Students with Disabilities" issued by Educational Access Office to faculty. In addition, faculty information sessions were offered addressing this subject.
6. Quarterly publication entitled, "Disability Issues published by the Educational Access Department as a resource for students, staff and faculty. Included articles such as: "College Sees Growth in Number of Students with Disabilities" and "The Role of Faculty In Accommodating Disabled Students".
7. Noon hour training and education sessions made available to all staff and faculty, covering a wide variety of related topics, such as the Ontario Human Rights Code, learning, physical and mental disabilities, and key trends and implications, to name a few.
8. Computerized note takers hired on contract to assist learning disabled and deaf students.
9. Sign Language Interpreters hired on contract to assist deaf students.

Barrier Removal Initiatives (2002 to Summer 2003):

1. Students with visual impairments or learning disabilities may enlarge text on PDF documents using Adobe Acrobat Reader and other software, or e-mail the documents to their home computers from the Library. Full versions of Adobe Acrobat Reader made available on over 50 computers. Operating system upgrades on all Apple computers provide assistive technologies.

2. New intuitive and user-friendly interface (iPAC) for the Library Catalogue providing students with disabilities easier access to Library resources.
3. More computer workstations in the Library made available to students with disabilities. An Information Commons installed in the Library in collaboration with IT Services and Computer Resource Centre.
4. The Health & Wellness Centre increased hours and personnel to provide improved service to students with psychological disabilities.
5. A work program was established by Human Resources to reintegrate employees who have suffered an illness or injury resulting in a disability, into the workplace.
6. The Learning Strategist and Assistive Technologist worked additional hours in order to provide additional services to students with disabilities. They also provided a Best Practices information sheet to some tutorial assistants and other interested teaching staff, as well as self-published handouts regarding enhanced services.
7. The Writing & Learning Centre section of the website was expanded to include links to writing websites and a series of PDF-files functioning as writing and academic skills tip-sheets.
8. The Writing & Learning Centre purchased a computer, which tutors can use with students for writing and academic skills instruction.
9. The Writing & Learning Centre distributed information to increase awareness among students and staff re services and resources available.
10. The front entrance of 100 McCaul was reconfigured to allow wheelchairs full access.
11. An automatic door-opener was installed at 115 McCaul Street.
12. A new elevator was installed at 115 McCaul Street, allowing easier access to administrative offices for people with physical disabilities.
13. Plant Services Staff actively considered accessibility issues in all design modification.
14. Chairs at computer monitors in the Academic Computer Centre were made adjustable.
15. Student and faculty email system implemented in summer 2003 to improve communication and access to information.

Barrier Removal Initiatives (Sept. 2003 to Aug. 2004):

1. A proposal was submitted for a dedicated teaching/exam facility with assistive technology equipment for use by students with disabilities in the new Centre for Students with Disabilities.
2. The Library licensed six new databases that OCAD students can access either from within the Library, or from a remote site to provide curricular materials in accessible formats.
3. The Library added a Library Services Information section at the bottom of the Library's main webpage.
4. AV & Imaging Services installed 29 smart classrooms in the summer (CSD). There are now two computers with Assistive Technology located outside the Centre for Students with Disabilities; one in the library; and one in the 317 computer lab.
5. AV & Imaging Services added information and direct links to manuals to assist students in using AV equipment, located on a new information website: www.ocad.ca/av_imaging_services/index.htm.

6. Changed name of Services for Students with Disabilities office to Centre for Students with Disabilities (CSD) and relocated office to 113 McCaul St. 5th floor to create a unified and easily identifiable centre.
7. CSD conducted faculty orientation workshop to promote awareness of rights, services and accommodations available for students and employees with diagnosed disabilities.
8. In response to the identified barrier of lack of awareness regarding flexibility of admission requirements for students with documented disabilities, CSD sent out letter sent to all newly admitted students for 2004/05 academic year providing guidance regarding procedure if student does not meet admission requirements.
9. Library increased hours from 61 to 72 hours per week and hired additional personnel to provide improved and extended service for students.
10. Binder of job postings created in the Centre for Advising, First-Year & Campus Life so that all students have access to the postings, including students with physical disabilities who cannot access the job postings high on the office wall.
11. Financial barrier with regards to accessing current psycho-educational assessments for students not eligible for OSAP and the resulting Bursary for Students with Disabilities (BSWD) funding. CSD funded a number of psycho-educational assessments in 2003/04.

Barrier Removal Initiatives (Sept. 2004 to Aug. 2005):

1. In order for the OCAD website to meet accessibility standards, Web Master, completed an on-line course, *Designing Universally Accessible Web Resources*. A fully accessible course calendar was added to the OCAD website and the full website will be migrated to an accessible format.
2. Two sets of doors from McCaul Street into the Food Court are heavy, awkward, poorly fitting and difficult to use for persons with disabilities. Vice-President, Administration wrote to the Food Court Management asking them to consider adding an automatic door at the McCaul Street entrance.
3. Manager, Building Projects, produced layout drawings and preliminary costing for options to make the OCAD Student Gallery (285 Dundas St. West) wheelchair accessible. Other solutions will be explored and considered in 2005-06.
4. Manager, Health & Safety, organized push/pull labels for the classroom doors at 100 McCaul St. which had been noted as problematic and posing the possibility of injury. They were installed on most (non-storage) doors in 100 McCaul. He also submitted a list of 'to do' items for Plant Services. The idea of an audit of all spaces in the college was generated, and it was agreed to work towards this, possibly using students in Environment Design to do the work after some training. Funds need to be found to provide Work Study wages to make this a possibility.
5. In response to lack of centralized person/office for harassment complaints (including those related to disability), a decision by Employment & Educational Equity Task Force was made to hire consultants for the next year to assist them in developing a strategic direction and a context to make a permanent hire in future.
6. A training session for faculty and staff on mental health issues and to aid them to be sensitive to attitudinal and/or pedagogical barriers was held on August 31, 2005 as part of faculty orientation, with Dr. Michael Condra of Queen's University. This was well attended and got very positive feedback.
7. Committee decided to keep disability orientation workshops voluntary for new faculty and staff.
8. Computer lab staff training of Assistive Technology (AT) and maintenance of AT provided.

9. Funds used to hire a temporary, part-time Disability Advisor in the CSD to provide academic support and disability counseling to non-LD (Learning Disabilities) students with disabilities such as psychiatric disabilities, traumatic brain injury, etc.

Barrier Removal Initiatives (Sept. 2005 to Aug. 2006):

1. A printed brochure for Centre for Students with Disabilities was created and distributed at Summer Orientation to describe services for students with disabilities.
2. The OCAD website was converted to an accessible format. Very little is now not accessible. The new design meets WC3 standards.
3. To increase awareness of registration options for students with disabilities standardized communication lines and procedures for dealing with overrides.
4. To increase access to assistive technology, computing and network services:
CSD site completed in August 2006 and set up to launch on all systems with a desktop icon.
All computer studios have wheelchair access to at least one computer and printer.
More assertive software and operating systems with accessibility features installed on all workstations and 3 CSD laptops and 3 desktops have a full suite of assistive software.
Campus wireless access increased.
Adjustable chairs purchased for all computers.
5. Library provided access to a private, but multipurpose room for proper use of assistive technology
6. 285 Dundas St. W. (OCAD Student Gallery) made wheelchair accessible.
7. Received 2 desktop computers and 3 laptops for exam purposes and purchased 2 digital recorders to increase on-campus access to assistive technology for study and exam purposes.

Barrier Removal Initiatives (Sept. 2006 to Aug. 2007):

1. Planned and budgeted to establish a Reception Desk (with networked computer) at the entrance to the University, staffed with University employees trained in public service, knowledgeable of the day-to-day activities of the University, and cognizant of the special needs of those with disabilities.
2. Advised third-party vendors, such as VTape, that some media materials are inaccessible to those with disabilities. Encouraged vendors to seek solutions.
3. Identified faculty to participate in a pilot project to video/audiotape lectures and classroom presentations so that they can be made available to those with disabilities. Drafted policy and procedures to establish a program that would diminish this barrier for those with disabilities.
4. Challenges for note taking identified as an accessibility issue. Thus investigated and launched pilot project for recording and posting lectures online for download (pod casting).
5. Some preliminary review occurred between Studio Manager, Assistive Technologist, CSD and Manager, CSD in order to make Fabrication Studios accessible. Student with mobility issues consulted regarding Studio Facilities. Recommended general training through HR or CSD for all academic studio support staff re accessibility issues.
6. Lack of centralized person/office for harassment complaints, including those related to a disability. Thus the position of Director, Diversity & Equity was established, reporting to the President, and filled in early 2007. More recently, the incumbent tendered her resignation, and the activities of the Employment & Educational Equity Task Force are being supported by the work of an external consultant.

7. Lack of clarity regarding how employees request accommodation of a medical issue or disability. Thus research was conducted on workplace accommodation and return to work policies at other institutions, and the results compiled into a rough draft policy for OCAD.
8. The Manager, Centre for Students with Disabilities is an ex officio member of the Employment & Educational Equity Task Force.
9. Increased access to information regarding accommodations for students with disabilities on the CSD website. The Manager of the CSD participated in the Faculty Orientation event in August 2007, in order to increase awareness of the services. CSD facilitated a workshop on Inclusive Teaching Practices with Faculty and guest speaker Katherine Frazee.
10. Lack of understanding of issues of mental health among OCAD faculty and staff affects their ability to respond appropriately to such needs. Thus, Director, Student Services attended Senior Academic Administrators Orientation in August 2007, providing information on resources available through the Health & Wellness Centre.
11. To increase college wide awareness around the experience of disability and the need for inclusive practice: CSD collaborated with OCAD Faculty and Accessibility Committee to showcase the film "Shameless" in March 2007 and presented the members of the OCAD Board of Governors with a third year OCAD student project called "Thinking Beyond Disability" which outlines barriers, from a student perspective within the post secondary environment, February 2007. The Writing and Learning Centre held a workshop on tutor teaching practices and approaches as they apply to students with invisible disabilities.

Barrier Removal Initiatives (Sept. 2007 to Aug. 2008):

1. The "Campus Wayfinding Maps" were updated and distributed throughout the campus by Marketing & Communications, including at the main reception desk at 100 McCaul Street. In addition, a full-time Receptionist (part of Campus Services & Security) now provides front-line service (including wayfinding assistance) to visitors, staff, students and faculty.
2. All bookable rooms have the same standard features and are considered to be accessible. TPHI and the Event room booking system are accessible to academic and administrative areas in real-time; the system was substantially improved so the needs of those with disabilities can be addressed.
3. **Course Management System/MyCourses** was made fully functional and accessible; 546 faculty added content; 223 faculty allowed students to upload files (4182 files have been uploaded); 434 faculty used My Courses to send an email; 144 Virtual studios were created, with 2556 users being a member of at least one studio. 2,370 faculty and students accessed digital images through MyCourses in 2007-09; 9,328 images were downloaded. Worked in consort with Faculty offices to encourage widespread adoption of MyCourses by faculty.
4. IT Services is arranging site licensing for online software tutorials which will be available through a web browser on and off campus. This should improve accessibility to software instruction. Students would have access to all tutorials in the Lynda.com library including tutorials on web accessibility. Many of the tutorials in the Lynda.com library are close captioned.
5. The new fleet of copiers leased from Xerox include, two copiers with improved accessibility configurations—these are located in the Library and outside the OCAD Service Bureau.
6. IT Services, worked with Liberal Studies faculty, to successfully pilot podcasting for three courses. IT Services, through DFI funding, is hoping to expand use of podcasting to more faculty as well as student support areas such as the CSD, Campus Life & Advising, Health & Wellness, etc.

7. In fall '07 IT Services led set-up of on-site high end video conferencing services that could provide assistance in addressing mobility issues for students, faculty and staff when communicating or meeting in off-site locations with similar video conferencing services.
8. IT Services launched a new ticketing system for help desk and AV services and support. It is hoped that the ticketing system will be broadly adopted by end users requesting support and other departments at OCAD for department specific support requests (i.e. room booking, security access, etc.). The ticketing system should improve access to IT and AV support for students, faculty and staff. The ticketing system needs to be reviewed for compatibility with assistive software and compliance with W3C standards.
9. FM&P has successfully lobbied for funds to be allocated to "wayfinding". Design and implementation deferred to coming year.
10. 7 pairs of doors were identified as candidates for hold open devices and a Building Permit was applied for and work was completed.
11. Snow and ice on entry stairs and entry ramp during winter month created a hazard and barrier to access. Thus an in ground heating system for the entry stairs and ramp was completed and the system is in operation.
12. The doors of elevator #5 in 100 McCaul were adjusted so that they would take a longer time to close and provide safe access. This is an older style of elevator and the adjustments are not as refined as in newer modern elevators.
13. The door for the Faculty of Design office (5th floor) was rebuilt and rewired for the installation of an automatic door opener in order to allow students with mobility issues to access the office without assistance. The opener will be installed in the summer of 2009.
14. Identified doors in halls and to main office areas at 100 McCaul as presenting significant barriers to persons with disabilities. For security and other reason these doors cannot be left in an open position. Thus funds have been allocated to have 3 automatic door openers installed in the summer of 2009.
15. Door and frame of the Health & Wellness Centre were reversed and wired for automatic door opener in order to allow students with mobility issues to access the office without assistance. Automatic opener to be installed in summer of 2009.
16. Director, Student Services identified key OCAD personnel to participate in Ryerson's Mental Health First Aid conference scheduled for December 2008.
17. CSD participated in the Faculty Orientation Day and continue to provide one-on-one support for faculty regarding disability related issues they are encountering with their students. Meetings with Faculty office staff to occur in 2008/09.
18. In November 2007 a new dedicated web page under Financial Matters was created for disability related funding opportunities, with content provided by the CSD staff.
19. Simplified processes were developed (preferred vendor arrangements and on-line ordering through the CSD and FAO) for helping students secure their academic accommodations in a timely fashion (implemented in Fall 2006). The FAO has adopted a case management approach to respond to students' unique needs, in order to increase individual staff understanding of these issues and strategies that might work. As of September 2007 all disbursement is done in a private one-on-one setting which is beneficial for students with disabilities – it provides a higher degree of confidentiality and comfort that was previously lacking in the disbursement process.
20. Student Life Coordinator attended a workshop at the University of Toronto for planning barrier-free events and collected materials (Spring 2008). New information will be included in the Student Group

Handbook in 2009 and we will work with the Student Union to have this session presented at their spring training.

21. A ten-page document was uploaded to the website with specific information for job seekers with disabilities (Summer 2008). New materials were acquired for Career Resource Library including "Job Search Handbook for Persons with Disabilities (November 2008). Career Services Advisor attended "Accommodations in the Workplace" training workshop presented by the JOIN (October 2008).
22. Library provided access to 45,528 e-books. 45% of the Library's monograph titles are now in an accessible format.
23. Library provided access to 22,584 e-serial titles, compared to 262 print serial titles. The vast majority of the Library's serial titles are now in an accessible format.
24. Library established a Program, in collaboration with the CSD, to scan print books in-house for students with disabilities. To facilitate this, the Information Commons monitors (OCAD students) are trained to do the work under the supervision of the Reference & Access Services Librarian.

Barrier Removal Initiatives (Sept. 2008 to Aug. 2009):

1. In order to augment accessibility of campus-wide programs, an electronic notice board in the main lobby of 100 McCaul was installed to capture and project notices of current events and other public information for the university community.
2. To inform the OCAD Community about AODA and its standards, an Accessibility Webpage was created. An AODA Coordinator was hired under the Equity & Diversity Office in Sept. 2009 to further develop a communication strategy to inform staff and faculty about AODA.
3. Library licensed a substantial number of E-Books through CRKN and OCUL. Kdrive was established to house scanned course material for future use. Computer hardware was purchased and installed. Student monitors were hired and trained to assist OCAD with building an alternative format library of course materials for students with disabilities who require textbooks and course reading material in digital format.
4. Information architecture and revisions to the Centre for Students with Disabilities (CSD) section of the OCAD website were completed in order to make the webpage more navigable.
5. Annual inspection and adjustment to door closers were completed in order to make them easier to open.
6. A campus-wide audit of signage and way-finding devices to identify deficiencies and areas that need improvement is in process.
7. Automatic door operators were installed in the Faculty of Liberal Studies Office, Faculty of Art Office, Faculty of Design Office and Health and Wellness Centre to increase access and ease of entry/exit.
8. Inner entrance doors to 51 McCaul were replaced with ceramic glass doors that are fire rated to increase visibility.
9. Windows were installed in limited number of doors in Financial Aid & Awards and Campus Life & Career Services at 51 McCaul.
10. Three Automatic door openers were installed at 115 McCaul.
11. Clockwork Database system was purchased for scheduling and data tracking of CSD registrants. Program has been installed on all staff machines, initial customization of system has been done and migration of student data is underway.

12. Special Event Accommodation Request form was developed and posted on the CSD webpage.
13. CSD Student Monitor led a weekly drop-in group during the winter term for CSD students feeling isolated and disconnected from other students with disabilities.
14. CSD, IT Services, Financial Aid & Distribution Services collaborated on developing a process that facilitated distribution of assistive technology equipment.
15. Student Services created a work study position and hired a Mobility/Exchange student to conduct research on services available for students with disabilities at Mobility/Exchange partner institutions.