



ONTARIO COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN  
2004–2005  
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Prepared by the OCAD Accessibility Planning Committee

Approved by the Board of Governors, December 13, 2004

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## Executive Summary

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

With the implementation of the ODA, all universities are required to prepare annual accessibility plans; consult with persons with disabilities in the preparation of the plans; and make these plans available to the public.

### Planning & Consultation Process

To meet the above requirements, an Accessibility Planning Committee was established at OCAD with broad representation from Admissions & Recruitment; Centre for Advising, First Year & Campus Life; Centre for Students with Disabilities; Communications, Faculty of Art, Faculty of Design, Faculty of Liberal Studies, Health & Safety, Library Services; OCADSU (Student Rep); OPSEU (Staff Rep); Plant Services (Building Projects), Registrarial & Student Services; and the Studios.

To facilitate the 2004-2005 Plan, seven Focus Groups were established each led by a Committee member to focus on key areas as suggested by the Council of Ontario Universities' Working Group on the ODA. The Groups and their leaders were:

1. Publications & Information Resources (Director, Library Services);
2. Equipment & Adaptive Technology (Director, IT Services);
3. Physical Facilities (Assistant Dean, First Year, Faculty of Design);
4. Human Resources Issues for Faculty & Staff with Disabilities (Director, Human Resources)
5. Awareness Programs for Faculty & Staff (Director, Human Resources);
6. Academic Services & Policies for Students with Disabilities (Coordinator, Centre for Students with Disabilities); and
7. Non-Academic Student Support Services (Manager, Centre for Advising, First-Year & Campus Life).

The College community was surveyed and the views of respondents were considered by the Focus Groups. The valuable input from the survey is reflected in this year's plan, and will be considered in the development of future accessibility plans.

The 2004-2005 Plan presents steps that OCAD will take during the current school year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities, including students, staff, faculty and other members of the community. The Plan also includes a status report on the previous 2003-2004 Plan which was posted on the College's website last year.

The 2004-2005 planning process identified 26 initiatives, some ongoing from 2003-2004. Unfortunately, we are able to address only fifteen of the 26 initiatives this year due to budgetary constraints. This year, as in the previous year, the provincial government provided no new funding for the implementation of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA). The College provided \$5,000 to address accessibility planning initiatives in 2004-2005.

## **Summary of Recommendations**

Due to the limited funds available for this year, only one of the 15 initiatives proposed for 2004-2005 will require monetary resources. The others can all be achieved utilizing existing staff and resources.

The Committee recommends that the full \$5,000 budget be allocated to the Centre for Students with Disabilities (CSD) to hire a part-time disability counsellor to provide learning support and case management for non-learning-disabled students (such as students with psychiatric disabilities, ADHD, and Traumatic Brain Injuries), effective January 2005.

In making the above recommendation, the Committee acknowledges the increased demand placed on the CSD to provide accommodations for these students. Currently, the staffing and funding of the Centre for Students with Disabilities is stretched beyond its limits. The intention is that the engagement of a part-time disability counsellor will assist the CSD in its ability to provide quality, timely, and individualized support to all students registered with the service. It should be noted that while the Committee fully supports the above recommendation, it hopes that this ongoing need will be addressed in budget considerations for the Centre in 2005-2006. The Accessibility Planning Committee will need to increase its budget and allocate funds to the many other barriers discussed in this report in 2005-2006.

### Centre for Students with Disabilities

*The primary mandate of the CSD is to ensure the provision of accommodations to students with diagnosed disabilities in accordance with the College's obligations under the Human Rights Code. The CSD provides specialized services to any student with a disability, including medical conditions, learning disabilities and mobility impairments. Currently there are over 200 students registered with the CSD, a large percentage of which have learning disabilities, mental health disabilities and Attention Deficit Disorders. A national survey of undergraduate university students<sup>1</sup> has identified OCAD as having a higher than average percentage of self identified students with disabilities, with the national average (in the small university group category) at 7% and OCAD at 11%. Over the past 4 years there have been an increased number of students registering with the CSD.*

## **Summary List of Barriers to be Addressed in 2004-2005**

### **Publications & Information Resources**

1. Develop a plan to convert all web documents to accessible formats (Communications, IT Services, CSD)
2. Identify and consider design guidelines relating to creation of signage and wayfinding devices for people with disabilities. (Communications)
3. Include specific provisions in the Library's Collection Development Policy for acquiring materials in alternate formats; Designate a portion of the Library's Acquisitions budget to replace videos with close-captioned DVDs; Establish protocols for acquisition of books on tape; Investigate possibility of video/audiotaping lectures (Library, CSD)

### **Equipment & Adaptive Technology**

4. Review guidelines for international accessibility standards for application to student/faculty email and online curriculum support (IT Services)

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<sup>1</sup> Survey of First-Year University Students: 2004, Canadian Undergraduate Survey Consortium

### **Physical Facilities**

5. Write to management at 113 McCaul, asking them to consider adding an automatic door at McCaul Street entrance (Vice-President, Administration)
6. Engage in preliminary design and costing exercise to make the 285 Dundas St. West (OCAD Student Gallery) wheelchair accessible (Manager, Building Projects)
7. Examine online survey results to identify physical facilities that present barriers to access; Develop OCAD Building Guidelines & Standards (Manager, Building Projects)

### **Human Resources Issues for Faculty & Staff with Disabilities**

8. Complete recruitment and hiring of Harassment Officer (HR, Vice-Presidents)
9. Conduct research on process by which employees request accommodation of a disability (HR)

### **Awareness Issues for Faculty & Staff**

10. Research and develop more in-depth training for faculty in dealing with people with mental health disability issues. Offer disability training workshops. (Director, HR for administrative staff, VP Academic for faculty)

### **Academic Services & Policies for Students with Disabilities**

11. Identify steps to be taken for review and consultation of code of student conduct, harassment policy, modified admissions policy (HR, Registrarial & Student Services; CSD)
12. Develop policy to provide mandatory disability orientation workshop for new faculty and staff, including Florence off-campus coordinators; Develop Faculty handbook; Review feasibility of providing faculty training in principles of Universal Instructional Design (CSD, HR)
13. Designate a certain number of computers in every computer lab to have Assistive Technology available for student use; Provide lab staff opportunity for training in the use and maintenance of AT (IT, CSD)

### **Non-Academic Student Support Services**

14. Hire a Disability Counsellor to provide learning support and case management for non-LD students (Psychiatric disabilities, TBI, etc.) (HR, CDS, R&SS)
15. Determine what alternative formats are available so that exhibitions are accessible to members of the community with disabilities. (Centre for Advising, First-Year & Campus Life)

## **Background**

### **Introduction**

The *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA) received Royal Assent on December 14, 2001. The purpose of the ODA 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 full text of the ODA is available at:  
[www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/accessibility/english/act2001.tm](http://www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/accessibility/english/act2001.tm).

## **University Obligations**

With the implementation of the ODA, all universities are required to:

- prepare annual accessibility plans;
- consult with persons with disabilities in the preparation of the plans; and
- make these plans available to the public.

## **OCAD Commitment to Accessibility**

The Ontario College of Art & Design is committed to the following:

- the continual improvement of access to school premises, facilities, and services for students, staff and faculty with disabilities;
- the participation of people with disabilities in the development and review of its annual access plans; and
- the provision of quality services to all students, staff, and members of the community with disabilities.

## **Ontario College of Art & Design**

Ontario College of Art & Design is Canada's oldest and largest university for art and design. Its mission is to challenge each student to find a unique voice within a vibrant and creative environment, prepare graduates to excel as cultural contributors in Canada and beyond, and champion the vital role of art and design in society.

OCAD's Main campus is currently comprised of five buildings:

- 74 McCaul Street (Aboveground Art Supplies),
- 100 McCaul Street, 113 McCaul Street,
- 115 McCaul Street (Rosalie Sharp Pavillion), and
- 285 Dundas St. West (OCAD Student Gallery).
- The new Sharp Centre for Design is the sixth building on campus, and is an innovative "table top" structure, suspended above the existing 100 McCaul Street building on 10-storey high "stilts".

OCAD employs over 130 full time staff and over 200 faculty. As of fall 2004, there are 2,458 full-time students and 1,053 part-time students.

## **Accessibility Planning Committee**

### **Membership**

The Accessibility Planning Committee was established in January 2003, chaired by Josephine Polera, Director, Registrarial & Student Services. The Committee is comprised of broad representation as follows:

- **Doreen Balabanoff**, Assistant Dean, First Year, Faculty of Design
- **Greg Damery**, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Art
- **Nicky Davis**, Director, Human Resources
- **Jennifer Hamilton**, Manager, Centre for Advising, First Year & Campus Life
- **Mark Jeffery**, Manager, Studios
- **Alastair MacLeod**, Director, IT Services

- **Laura Matthews**, Director, Communications
- **David McIntosh**, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Liberal Studies
- **Nanette Mills**, OPSEU, Staff Rep
- **Bob Noseworthy**, Purchasing Agent
- **OCADSU**, Student Rep
- **Jill Patrick**, Director, Library Services
- **Rob Pyke**, Manager, Building Projects
- **Ted Rickard**, Manager, Health & Safety
- **Jan Sage**, Director, Admissions & Recruitment
- **Susanne Seiner**, Coordinator, Centre for Students with Disabilities

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

- Conduct inquiries regarding potential and actual barriers to people with disabilities in all facilities, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services offered by OCAD.
- Identify facilities, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services that cause, or may cause, barriers to people with disabilities.
- Prioritize, and specify barriers that will be removed or otherwise modified in the coming year, within the limits of the financial and human resources available.
- Describe how these barriers will be removed, modified or prevented.
- Prepare an annual report on these activities, and, subject to approval by the Board of Governors, make an Annual Accessibility Plan available to the public.

### **Barrier Identification Methodologies**

The Accessibility Planning Committee used the following barrier identification methodologies:

- Use of materials from the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario as resource information to raise awareness of disability issues.
- Regular, ongoing meetings of the Accessibility Planning Committee and Focus Groups: over the fall, the full Committee met three times while the six Focus Groups held ongoing consultation with interested participants from the Committee and OCAD members at large.
- Input from on-line Accessibility Survey sent to OCAD students, staff and faculty. There were a total of 204 text responses from 84 survey submissions.
- An invitation to students with disabilities to participate in accessibility planning through the Centre for Students with Disabilities.
- A letter sent to all new students informing them of the services available through OCAD's Centre for Students with Disabilities.

### **Definitions**

The ODA adopts the broad definition for disability that is set out in the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

[www.ohrc.on.ca](http://www.ohrc.on.ca)

**“Disability” is defined as:**

- Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement 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;
- A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- A mental disorder, or

- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act., 1997*; ('handicap')

**“Barrier” is defined as:**

Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of that 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 strength
Architectural	A hallway or door that is too narrow for a wheelchair or scooter
Informational	Typeface that are too small to be read by a person with low-vision
Communications	A professor who talks loudly when addressing a deaf person
Attitudinal	A receptionist who ignores a customer in a wheelchair
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

**Barriers to be Addressed in 2004-2005: (Sep. 2004 – Aug. 2005)**

**1. PUBLICATIONS AND INFORMATION RESOURCES**

Access to information involves matters relating to format and availability of content, including the means of access and technologies associated with it.

- a) OCAD website does not meet accessibility standards.  
 Action by May 2005: Develop a plan to convert all web documents to accessible formats.  
 Resources needed: Staff time. Responsibility: Communications, IT Services, CSD
  
- b) The current text-based signage may present an obstacle for persons with disabilities.  
 Action by May 2005: Identify and consider design guidelines relating to creation of signage and wayfinding devices for people with disabilities.  
 Resources needed: Staff time. Responsibility: Communications
  
- c) Lack of policy/procedures to acquire materials in alternate formats for persons with disabilities.  
 Action by August 2005:
  - Revise Library’s Collection Development Policy with input of faculty and students.
  - Include specific provisions for acquiring materials in alternate formats.
  - Designate a portion of the Library’s Acquisitions budget to replace videos with close-captioned DVDs.
  - Library & CSD to establish protocols for acquisition of books on tape.
  - Investigate possibility of video/audiotaping lectures.
 Resources: Staff time. Responsibility: Library, Centre for Students with Disabilities (CSD)

## **2. EQUIPMENT AND ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGY**

Adaptive technology can assist people with disabilities in numerous ways.

- a) Student/Faculty email and online curriculum support does not meet accessibility standards.  
 Action by May 2005: Review guidelines for international accessibility standards.  
 Resources needed: Staff time. Responsibility: IT Services

## **3. PHYSICAL FACILITIES**

In striving to ensure access to physical facilities, the objective is to create a campus and facility environment that is free of barriers.

- a) Two sets of doors from McCaul Street into the Food Court are heavy, awkward, poorly fitting and difficult to use for persons with disabilities.  
 Action by December 2004: Write to management at 113 McCaul, asking them to consider adding an automatic door at McCaul Street entrance.  
 Resources: Staff time. Responsibility: Vice-President, Administration
- b) 285 Dundas St. West (OCAD Student Gallery) is not wheelchair accessible.  
 Action by May 2005: Engage in preliminary design and costing exercise.  
 Resources needed: Staff time. Responsibility: Manager, Building Projects
- c) Identified physical facilities do not meet accessibility standards.  
 Action by May 2005:
  - Examine online survey results for barrier identification.
  - Develop OCAD Building Guidelines and Standards
 Resources needed: Staff time. Responsibility: Manager, Building Projects

## **4. HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES FOR STAFF & FACULTY WITH DISABILITIES**

Review HR policies periodically for barriers, including recruitment and support services.

- a) Lack of centralized person/office for harassment complaints (including those related to disability). Action by August 2005:  
 Recruitment and hiring of Harassment Officer position and office.  
 Resources needed: 2004-05 budget. Staff time.  
 Responsibility: Human Resources, Vice-Presidents
- b) Employees are unsure of the process to be followed in requesting accommodation of a disability, and what is required. Action by August 2005: Conduct research.  
 Resources needed: Staff time Responsibility: Human Resources

## **5. AWARENESS PROGRAMS FOR FACULTY AND STAFF**

Consider expanding or establishing programs to aid faculty and staff to be sensitive to attitudinal and/or pedagogical barriers.

- a) Attitudes and a lack of information among staff and faculty persist as barriers for students with disabilities. Action by May 2005: Research and develop more in-depth training for faculty in dealing with people with mental health disability issues. Offer disability training workshops. Resources needed: Funds to provide training workshops and seminars for staff and faculty. Responsibility: Director, HR for administrative staff; Vice-President, Academic for Faculty.

## 6. **ACADEMIC SERVICES AND POLICIES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Review policies outlining both the student's and the institution's responsibilities with respect to accommodation for students with disabilities.

- a) Academic Services and Transcription Services are not inclusive regarding people with disabilities, e.g., code of student conduct, harassment, modified admissions policy.  
Action by May 2005: Identify steps to be taken for review and consultation.  
Resources needed: Staff time; Responsibility: Human Resources, Registrarial & Student Services, Centre for Students with Disabilities.
- b) Classroom Accommodation & Instruction: (1) Attitudinal barrier of some faculty. Lack of awareness of and/or misconceptions about disabilities and their impact on learning, particularly regarding invisible disabilities. This discourages some students from disclosing and accessing appropriate accommodations. (2) Methods of instruction and course evaluation at times are incompatible with learning styles of some students with disabilities. Academic Services and Transcription Services are not inclusive regarding people with disabilities, e.g., code of student conduct, harassment, modified admissions policy.  
Action by May 2005:
  - Develop policy to provide mandatory disability orientation workshop for new faculty and staff, including Florence off-campus coordinators.
  - Develop Faculty handbook.
  - Review feasibility of providing faculty training in principles of Universal Instructional Design.
Resources needed: Staff time  
Responsibility: Centre for Students with Disabilities, Human Resources
- c) Computer Labs: Extremely limited access to assistive technology on campus
  - Action by May 2005:
  - Designate a certain number of computers in every computer lab to have Assistive Technology available for student use.
  - Provide lab staff opportunity for training in the use and maintenance of AT.
Resources needed: Staff time  
Responsibility: IT Services, Centre for Students with Disabilities

## 7. **NON-ACADEMIC STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Like all students, students with disabilities have a range of non-academic needs. Some of these needs are met through services provided to all students and some are met through special accommodation.

- a) No access for non-LD (learning disabilities) students with disabilities (psychiatric disabilities, traumatic brain injury, etc.) to full academic support and disability counselling.  
Action by May 2005: Hire Disability Counsellor to provide learning support and case management for non-LD students  
Resources needed: use of \$5,000 from Accessibility Planning budget (2004-05); staff time to develop job description, recruitment and hiring. Responsibility: HR, CSD, R&SS
- b) (Orientation, Social Events, Student Governments & Clubs):  
Accessible transportation and trained guides are not available. Information about possible accommodation needs is not collected in advance of events.  
Action by May 2005: Determine what alternative formats are available so that exhibitions are accessible to members of the community with disabilities. Resources needed: Staff time: Responsibility: Centre for Advising, First-Year & Campus Life

## Status Report on Barriers Identified in 2003-2004

According to Section 15(2) of the *ODA*, each plan must state the steps a university has taken to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to people with disabilities in the previous year.

### 1. *PUBLICATIONS AND INFORMATION RESOURCES*

#### Communication

##### **Barrier Identified**

- The lack of clear, consistent communication between OCAD students, faculty and staff contributes to increased feelings of isolation for some persons with disabilities.

##### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barrier**

- Enhance the use of student and faculty e-mail systems.
- Increase access to curriculum resources through increased web services.
- Develop and distribute materials that identify primary contacts and resources available within the College.

##### **Status as of August 2004**

- Ongoing enhancements to e-mail systems.
- The Library has added a Library Services Information section at the bottom of the Library's main webpage, <http://www.snow.ocad.on.ca/library/index.html>.

#### Curricular Materials

##### **Barrier Identified**

- Curricular materials are not always available in accessible formats. Students with visual or cognitive impairments may have difficulty using print materials.

##### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Review and make recommendations for improvements to our library collections, including acquisition of curricular materials in alternate formats.

##### **Status as of August 2004**

- The Library has licensed six new databases: Access Science, American Humanities Index, Communication & Mass Media Complete, Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory, JSTOR, and Material Connexion. This brings to nineteen (19) the number of licensed databases that OCAD students can access either from within the Library, or from a remote site.  
<<http://www.snow.ocad.on.ca/library/indexes.html>>

#### Web Pages

##### **Barrier Identified**

- Information on the OCAD website can be difficult to read for persons with visual impairment.

##### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Launch a new OCAD website and feature better design for those with visual impairment. Improve access to Operating System on all Apple computers to provide increased access to accessibility features, including text magnification.

##### **Status as of August 2004**

- To be continued on an ongoing basis.

### 2. *EQUIPMENT AND ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGY*

#### Adaptive Technology

##### **Barrier Identified**

- There is a shortage of Assistive Technology equipment.

##### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Purchase new computer with assistive software.

- Plan for installation of assistive hardware on one computer in General Use/IT administered labs.
- Locate equipment outside Services for Students with Disabilities office to facilitate access for students both during and after office hours.
- Installation of 27 Smart classrooms will provide better presentation facilities and equipment in classrooms.
- Provide access to a wireless network, allowing students with laptops to access the OCAD network from a much wider range of locations at the College.
- Increase access to computing and assistive technology via information commons and computer clusters in key locations throughout the campus.
- Install assistive software and equipment at designated workstations in computer studios.

**Status as of August 2004**

- A computer with AT is located in the 317 computer lab (CSD). There are two computers with AT located outside the Centre for Students with Disabilities; one in the library; and one in the 317 computer lab.
- AV & Imaging Services installed 29 smart classrooms this summer (CSD). A wireless network will be installed in the Library in the near future.
- By December 2004, there will be 25 new computers in the Library for student use—an increase of 7.
- One computer with assistive software is located in the 317 computer lab (CSD).

**Equipment**

**Barriers Identified**

- Lack of education around prevention of injury when using assistive equipment.

**Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- There is a need for publication of material about specific learning strategies and equipment usage techniques.

**Status as of August 2004**

- AV & Imaging Services now has information and direct links to manuals to assist students in using AV equipment. These are located on a new information website:  
<[http://www.ocad.ca/av\\_imaging\\_services/index.htm](http://www.ocad.ca/av_imaging_services/index.htm).

**3. PHYSICAL FACILITIES**

**Signage**

**Barriers Identified**

- Signage is often not helpful to those with disabilities.

**Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Research guidelines around signage (placement, design and content) as preparation for the identification of facilities with inadequate signage.

**Status as of August 2004**

- To be continued on an ongoing basis.

**Exam Facilities**

**Barriers Identified**

- There is a lack of adequate testing and exam-writing facilities with assistive technology equipment for use by students with disabilities in the new Centre for Students with Disabilities.

**Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Plan and submit proposal for a dedicated teaching/exam facility with assistive technology equipment.

**Status as of August 2004**

- Completed.

#### 4. **HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES & AWARENESS ISSUES FOR FACULTY AND STAFF**

##### **Counselling**

###### **Barriers Identified**

- There is a lack of counselling for staff and faculty with disabilities.

###### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Investigate counselling programs in place at other institutions, and report on the feasibility of setting up a program at OCAD. Review and update the Harassment Policy as it pertains to students, staff and faculty.

###### **Status as of August 2004**

- Ongoing.

##### **Accommodations**

###### **Barrier Identified**

- Some OCAD students, faculty and staff are unaware of rights, services and accommodations available for students and employees with diagnosed disabilities.

###### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Human Resources to develop a disability awareness-training program in consultation with Services for Students with Disabilities staff, as part of new employee orientation.
- Services for Students with Disabilities office to provide seminars and workshops for existing students, staff and faculty, as well as printed materials, handouts and other supports, regarding all aspects of disabilities.
- Include articles about disability issues and services in *The Canvas*, OCAD's monthly newsletter.
- Relocation of Services for Students with Disabilities office to create a unified and easily identifiable centre. Change office name to Centre for Students with Disabilities.

###### **Status as of August 2004**

- Awareness training program ongoing.
- Faculty orientation workshop conducted this year. Development of handouts on going
- Focus article featured in September 2004. Updates to be continued on an ongoing basis.
- SSD relocated to 113 McCall St., 5<sup>th</sup> floor, under new title of Centre for Students with Disabilities

#### 5. **ACADEMIC SERVICES AND POLICIES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

##### **Modified Admission Policy**

###### **Barrier Identified**

- Lack of awareness regarding flexibility of admission requirements for students with documented disabilities.

###### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Services for Students with Disabilities office to communicate to applicable students the options available and process to be followed.

###### **Status as of August 2004**

- Letter sent out to all newly admitted students for 2004/05 academic year, providing guidance regarding procedure if student does not meet admission requirements

##### **Insufficient Access to Library Service Desks**

###### **Barrier Identified**

- Insufficient staff at Library Service Desks to provide effective service to all students.

###### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- The Library will increase hours from 61 to 72 hours per week and hire additional personnel to provide improved and extended service. Additional student monitors and temporary staff will be hired to assist in the Information Commons and at the Reference Desk.

**Status as of August 2004**

- The library is open 72 hours per week. <http://www.snow.ocad.on.ca/library/hours.html>
- We have received IWSP funding approval for 428 hours for the Information Commons Monitor. We have also received operating funds to cover the cost of two graduate students to work a total of 40 hours per week at the Reference Desk. These casual and temporary staff will enable our full-time librarians and library technicians to provide improved and extended service. We are about to hire another part-time library technician to work in our Technical Services department; this will facilitate cataloguing of new material to add to the Library collections, further enhancing services for students.

**6. NON-ACADEMIC STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES****Student Job Postings****Barrier Identified**

- Job postings are located high on office wall and are difficult to access for students with physical disabilities.

**Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Make all student job postings available in portable format (e.g. paper copies placed in a binder).

**Status as of August 2004**

- Completed. Students may access binder in the Centre for Advising, First-Year & Campus Life.

**Financial Assistance****Barrier Identified**

- 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.

**Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- The Services for Students with Disabilities office will fund a number of psycho-educational assessments.

**Status as of August 2004**

- The Centre funded a number of psycho-educational assessments in 2003/04 and continues to do so in the 2004/05 academic year.

## Barriers Identified in 2004-2005 for Ongoing Planning

### 1. **PUBLICATIONS AND INFORMATION RESOURCES**

#### **Communication**

##### **Current Status**

- Improvements have been made, and there remains a need to communicate information in a more efficient manner. An inability to access critical information may contribute to feelings of isolation for some persons with disabilities.

##### **Barriers Identified**

- Lack of centralized access points (physical or virtual) where persons with disabilities can find critical information.
- Lack of appropriate web- and print-documents containing critical information for persons with disabilities.
- Persons with disabilities may have difficulties utilizing the College's email system for communications.

##### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Add a Student Information Section in a prominent location on OCAD's website, which contains information about accessibility options for students with disabilities.
- Introduce a searchable web directory to facilitate contact identification.
- Introduce a basic bulletin board system throughout the College for posting information.
- Establish a centralized Information & Security Desk, to better handle wayfinding questions for classes and events. Ensure that Desk staff are well informed.
- Introduce new scheduling system.
- Develop policy to make printed publications available in html or wide format upon request.
- Create a printed brochure for the new Centre for Students with Disabilities (CSD).
- Investigate and implement further enhancements to make OCAD's email system more user-friendly, intuitive & accessible.

#### **Curricular Materials**

##### **Current Status**

- Access to electronic materials has improved greatly. However, people with visual or cognitive impairments may have difficulty using print materials.

##### **Barriers Identified**

- Lack of Policy/Procedures to acquire materials in alternate formats for persons with disabilities.

##### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Revise the Library's Collection Development Policy with the input of both faculty and students. Include specific provisions for acquiring materials in alternate formats.
- Designate a portion of the Library's Acquisitions Budget to replacing videotapes with close-captioned DVDs.
- The Library and CSD will establish protocols for acquisition of books on tape.
- Investigate the possibility of videotaping or audiotaping lectures.

#### **Registration System**

##### **Current Status**

- Improvements have been made, but registering online can still be difficult for some students with disabilities.

##### **Barriers Identified**

- The present registration system is neither user-friendly, nor intuitive. Course lists are difficult to decipher. The master timetable is not available in some service areas.

##### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Investigate the feasibility of acquiring a more intuitive registration system.
- Simplify course lists so that students can better understand them.
- Distribute the master timetable list more widely, so that public services staff can provide assistance and direction to students.

### **Web Pages**

#### **Current Status**

- Improvements have been made, but information on the OCAD website may still be difficult to read for persons with visual impairment.

#### **Barriers Identified**

- OCAD's web site does not meet accessibility standards.

#### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Convert all web documents to accessible formats. Examine the best practices at other universities and colleges and develop guidelines on accessible design; implement these where appropriate.

### **Signage**

#### **Current Status**

- The campus has expanded this year. Wayfinding has become more complicated.

#### **Barriers Identified**

- The current text-based signage may present an obstacle for persons with disabilities.

#### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Consult design guidelines relating to the creation of signage and wayfinding devices for people with disabilities.
- Plan to implement a College-wide signage and wayfinding programme that is fully accessible.

## **2. *EQUIPMENT AND ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGY***

### **Studio facilities and equipment**

#### **Current Status**

- Some studios do not have adaptive equipment.

#### **Barriers Identified**

- Some equipment is not designed to allow full accessibility, e.g. table saws and drill presses.

#### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Provide "helping hands."
- Conduct ongoing research regarding solutions.
- Hire an external consultant with sufficient expertise in identifying and addressing barriers related to OCAD studio facilities
- Ensure printers and copiers are accessible.

### **Student/Faculty email and online curriculum support.**

#### **Wireless access.**

#### **Current Status**

- Systems in place allowing increased access to curriculum support and communication
- Wireless network allowing mobility and flexibility of access.

#### **Barriers Identified**

- Concern related to ensuring accessibility needs are met.

#### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Assess accessibility.
- Seek feedback from faculty and students.
- Review guidelines for international accessibility standards.
- Provide links to information regarding accessibility concerns via the student/faculty web portal.

- Hire an external consultant with sufficient expertise in identifying and addressing barriers related to online services.
- Increase wireless access.
- Research and promote third party resources and information that might be available online.
- Conduct information sessions/workshops on the use of online and networked services.

**Dedicated access to assistive technology**

**Computer studios allow accessibility and prevent discomfort**

**Current Status**

- Assistive technology in place in Library
- All operating systems have built in accessibility features
- Specialized assistive technology needs to be set up and installed on designated system in computer studio(s).
- Some computer studios have been set up to allow more space to ensure mobility.

**Barriers Identified**

- Private access required for proper use of assistive technology
- Some assistive technology needs to be reviewed and re-installed.
- Computer studios need to be reviewed to assess accessibility.

**Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Allocate dedicated private, sound-proofed space for the use of assistive technology and other equipment.
- Investigate close-captioning in future media purchases.
- Investigate Braille printers.
- Investigate documenting/recording classes.
- Ensure all chairs are adjustable.
- Ensure blinds and curtains are available to help limit eye strain.
- Hire an external consultant (occupational therapist) with sufficient expertise in identifying and addressing barriers related computing facilities.

**3. *PHYSICAL FACILITIES***

**Entrance door to 115 McCaul Street**

**Current Status**

- Automatic door in place for wheelchair accessibility

**Barriers Identified**

- Automatic door is usually not unlocked by security.

**Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Director, Plant Service to send written notice to Security management and staff to ensure that door is unlocked before 8:30am.

**Entrance door to 113 McCaul Street**

**Current Status**

- Doors at McCaul Street are difficult to open

**Barriers Identified**

- One automatic door is located at Dundas St. entrance but not at 113 McCaul St. entrance.

**Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Write to management at 113 McCaul, asking them to consider adding an automatic door at McCaul Street entrance (cite economic and ethical reasons).

**285 Dundas St. West (OCAD Student Gallery)**

**Current Status**

- Gallery is not wheelchair accessible

**Barriers Identified**

- Feasibility study by architect to determine how best to address this, and costs involved.

**Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Engage in preliminary design and costing exercise.

**100 and 113 McCaul St.**

**Current Status**

- Supposed to be designed to meet physical accessibility needs
- New construction with accessibility features built in

**Barriers Identified**

- Hallways are often cluttered with furniture and objects that obstruct passageways enough to hinder accessibility.
- Various: Centre for Students with Disabilities does not have an automatic door; sinks in classrooms are not suitable for use by those with physical disabilities; fabrication and printmaking shops are not equipped for accessibility; room sizes are too small for class sizes, and classroom set-ups do not accommodate physically disabled users; door frames and doors are not painted to established visibility standards; strobe lights are needed in hallways for the hearing impaired; wayfinding signage needs improvement; all elevators must be checked to ensure that they have Braille signage.

**Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Plant Services will develop, announce and implement an official strategy to alleviate the problem of frustrated faculty moving things into hallways, e.g. by devising a tagging system to be used in classrooms (coloured tags for cleaners who cannot read English) for timely removal each week of unwanted items; and planning for swift removal of any items left in hallways.
- All areas identified should be assessed and prioritized this year into a long-term plan that includes potential costs.

**4. *HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES FOR FACULTY AND STAFF WITH DISABILITIES***

**Faculty and Staff Recruitment Policies and Practices**

**Current Status**

- All internal and external advertisements and postings have employment equity statement.
- All external advertisements appear on the College's website in HTML format.

**Barriers Identified**

- Advertisements not available in alternative formats

**Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Research options regarding alternative formats for postings (link with Communications).

**Supporting Employees with Disabilities**

**Current Status**

- While individual requests are being addressed as per the OHRC, there is a lack of formal policy for employees requesting accommodation of a disability
- Lack of a centralized person/office for harassment complaints (including those related to a disability)

**Barriers Identified**

- Without a written policy, employees are unsure of the process to be followed in requesting accommodation of a disability, and what is required
- Without an independent person/office, it is more difficult to establish and promote anti-harassment initiatives, and to ensure that such complaints are addressed in a consistent manner across the College.

**Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- There needs to be research into such policies at other institutions in order to facilitate the development of a formal accommodation policy.

- Research the structure and definition of such positions at other institutions, develop an independent position at OCAD to address harassment complaints and promote anti-harassment activities, and advertise and fill this position.

## **5. AWARENESS ISSUES FOR FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS**

### **Faculty Awareness**

#### **Current Status**

- Faculty orientation includes introduction of Centre for Students with Disabilities, with reference in faculty handbook

#### **Barriers Identified**

- Attitudes and a lack of information among faculty persist as barriers for students with disabilities

#### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Research and develop a more in-depth disability workshop for all new faculty and staff to be offered through the Centre for Students with Disabilities
- Such training should include the communication of a formal policy regarding the accommodation of students with disabilities, as well as related information and services
- Offer more in-depth training for faculty on dealing with people with mental health disability issues

### **Staff Awareness**

#### **Current Status**

- Staff have not recently received training regarding disability issues

#### **Barriers Identified**

- Attitudes and a lack of information among staff persist as barriers for students with disabilities

#### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Research and develop a general disability workshop for all staff to be offered through the Centre for Students with Disabilities in conjunction with Human Resources
- Offer training for front-line staff in general customer service to include the wide range of student needs including those with disabilities
- Research and develop more in-depth training for staff and managers on dealing with people with mental health disability issues

## **6. ACADEMIC SERVICES AND POLICIES FOR STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES**

### **Classroom Accommodations and Instruction**

#### **Current Status**

- Awareness workshops were offered by CSD staff during the 2003/04 academic year, but were poorly attended.
- CSD staff presentation given during 2004/05-faculty orientation day. Well attended.

#### **Barriers Identified**

- Attitudinal barrier on the part of some Faculty members; lack of awareness and/or misconceptions regarding disabilities and their impact on learning, particularly regarding invisible disabilities. This can serve to discourage some students from disclosing and accessing appropriate accommodations.
- Methods of instruction and course evaluation at times are incompatible with learning styles.
- Classroom furniture set-up not always suitable for persons with disabilities.

#### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- CSD staff to provide mandatory disability orientation workshop for all new faculty and staff.
- Review the feasibility of providing faculty training in principles of Universal Instructional Design.
- Develop policy and guidelines regarding classroom set-up procedures

### **Exam Accommodation**

#### **Current Status**

- Centre for Students with Disabilities has limited computer equipment with only minimal assistive technology installed for facilitation of exam accommodations.

#### **Barriers Identified**

- Students with disabilities do not have access to a range of assistive technology, such as voice-activated software and screen readers.
- Lack of private space with assistive technology for exam accommodations

#### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Develop a policy to designate a certain percentage of funds allotted for the purchase of new computer equipment to assistive technology.
- Institutional review of space on campus which could accommodate the growing need for individual exam rooms.
- Review the possibility of privatizing the CSD computer in the Library.
- Designate funds for the acquisition and upgrade of computer equipment in the CSD workshop space.

### **Off Campus Programs**

#### **Current Status**

- Available only to full-time students.

#### **Barriers Identified**

- Students with disabilities who are part-time are not able to participate.

#### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Review Off Campus program administration policy for feasibility of part-time eligibility.
- Offer Florence Studio Coordinators an orientation regarding disability issues, and their impact on learning.

### **Computer Labs**

#### **Current Status**

- Only one computer in one computer lab (317) has assistive technology installed.

#### **Barriers Identified**

- Extremely limited access to assistive technology on campus.

#### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Designate a certain number of computers in every computer lab to have assistive technology available for student use.
- Provide staff opportunity for training in the use of and maintained of AT.

### **Academic Policies and Transcription Services**

#### **Current Status**

- Code of conduct policy under review and needs to be updated.

#### **Barriers Identified**

- Current policy not inclusive regarding students with disabilities.

#### **Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Review code of conduct in light of ODA/Human Rights Code.

### **Disability Support Services**

#### **Current Status**

- Insufficient staff to provide essential services to increased demand (FT Coordinator; PT Admin Assistant; FT Assistive Technologist for LD students only; FT Learning Strategist for LD students only).

#### **Barriers Identified**

- No access for non-LD students with disabilities (TBI, psychiatric disabilities, etc.) to academic support and disability counselling.
- Timely response and access to CSD staff and service.

**Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Hire a Disability Counsellor to provide learning support and case management for non-LD students (psychiatric disabilities, Traumatic Brain Injury, etc.)
- Increase staffing to include a full time receptionist and Disability Counsellor.

**7. NON-ACADEMIC STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

**Orientation, Social Events, Student Governments, and Clubs**

**Current Status**

- Bus tours to galleries are an important part of orientation programs.

**Barriers Identified**

- Accessible transportation and trained guides are not available; information about students is not collected in advance.

**Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Review Orientation offerings; assess locations in advance; provide better training for guides and Student Union members. Advertise that “Events will be accessible to all students; if you have a disability, please inform us in advance so that we can make accommodations”

**Counselling Services**

**Current Status**

- Health and Wellness Centre is at maximum service capacity

**Barriers identified**

- Students who require accommodations for psychological disabilities may not have adequate access to staff.

**Strategies to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

- Ongoing review of needs.

## Review and Monitoring Process

The Accessibility Planning Committee will meet regularly to review progress.

## Communication of the Plan

Copies of this plan are available on the OCAD website at: <http://www.ocad.ca>. Paper copies are available at the Dorothy H. Hoover Library & AV Imaging Services, 113 McCaul Street.

Updates on accessibility planning at OCAD, including information on how to access the report, will be submitted to *The Canvas*, a monthly newsletter for the OCAD community.

Inquiries regarding the OCAD's 2004–2005 accessibility planning process may be directed to the Coordinator of the Accessibility Planning Committee (below) or any member of the Committee listed previously.

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