Level Up Your Support: Collaborating for Student Success with Academic Accommodations Service and Library Accessibility Services

Presented by:

Michelle Zidner – Academic Accommodations

Megan McMeekin and Isabelle Castonguay – uOttawa Library

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Learning Outcomes

• Gain insights from data on student disabilities at uOttawa.
• Discover the range of support that Library Accessibility Services and Academic Accommodations Service (AAS) offer.
• Learn effective strategies to contribute to the success of students with disabilities in your courses.
• Learn more about what accessible formats students are using and your role in ensuring students who need accessible formats receive them in a timely manner.
• Learn how you can use Ares, the library’s digital course reserve system, to help ensure readings assigned to your students are accessible.
Collaboration
Number of Students Registered with Accommodations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>1372</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>1627</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>2033</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>2254</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>2474</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>2812</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-2020</td>
<td>3032</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020-2021</td>
<td>3253</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021-2022</td>
<td>3598</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022-2023</td>
<td>4435</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2023-2024 (anticipated)</td>
<td>4700</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Students with Accommodations by Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Students with accommodations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civil Law Section</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Law Section</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Arts</td>
<td>568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Education</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Engineering</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Health Sciences</td>
<td>585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Medicine</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Science</td>
<td>498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Social Sciences</td>
<td>1203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telfer School of Management</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Rector Academic</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4352</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Academic Accommodation Process

- **Identifying Needs and Eligibility:** Student initiates registration process by sharing pertinent medical documentation on Ventus
- **Accommodation Plan:** Student meets with assigned Learning Specialist and accommodation plan put in place
- **Advocacy and Support:** Student and professor(s) welcome to reach out to Learning Specialist as needed, or vice-versa
Identifying Needs and Eligibility

**Step One**
Student creates Ventus account

**Step Two**
Student shares diagnosis and appropriate medical documentation based on A-6*

**Step Three**
Student completes Intake Questionnaire

**Step Four**
Student books initial meeting with their assigned Learning Specialist

*Some examples of appropriate medical documentation include a Psycho-educational Assessment, Psychological Assessment, uOttawa Documentation of Disability Forms signed by my medical professionals able to diagnose.

**Academic Regulation A-6**
Accommodation Plan

Assessment Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composites</th>
<th>Standard Score</th>
<th>Percentile Rank</th>
<th>Descriptive Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Reading</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Low Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>High average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Expression</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Language</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Low average</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendations from the Medical Professional

CONSIDERATIONS FOR AN ACCOMMODATION PLAN?

Program of Enrollment

Students

uOttawa.ca
Advocacy and Support

Throughout the student's university journey, we...

- work on learning strategies,
- edit the accommodation plan as needed (it is a living document and should be changed as needs evolve),
- facilitate communication with professors if needed,
- answer accommodation questions,
- clarify accommodations,
- facilitate a collaborative accommodation process,
- brainstorm solutions with students and educators

Please continue reaching out as we are happy to collaborate with you all (adapt@uottawa.ca)
One Size Does Not Fit All...

Classroom Accommodations
(Dec 2023)

- Extended time on assignments: 1911
- Volunteer peer note-taker: 1652
- Digital audio recorder: 873
- Fluctuating condition: 729
- Class material in advance: 499
- Reduced course load: 499
- Frequent breaks: 355
- eText - PDF: 268
- Access to recorded lectures for academic purposes: 248
- Laptop: 228
Extension on Assignment

- A student might need an extension due to limitations in:
  - Executive functioning (ex., time management, planning, execution)
  - Fluctuations in their condition (ex., chronic pain disturbing their routine)
  - Processing speed (ex. student requires more time to complete tasks as related to their documented cognitive weaknesses)

**How can you support?**
- offer flexibility with deadlines and in-class evaluations
- offer one “late” assignment per semester - no questions asked
- scaffold assignments so they are due in chunks
- have sample assignments available
- share assignment details as soon as possible
Volunteer Peer Notetaker and Digital Audio Recorder

- A student might require a volunteer peer notetaker or the ability to audio record their lectures due to limitations in:
  - Physical ability to write
  - Focus and attention management
  - Processing, retaining and noting auditory information

How can you support?
- share slide decks prior to class so students can annotate directly on the slides
- record and share lectures so students can take their own notes at a later time, at their own pace
- share learning outcomes for each lecture to guide students’ focus
Fluctuating Condition

- A student might require the accommodation of fluctuating condition for:
  - Medical conditions that require frequent appointments/symptom management
  - Medical conditions that flare up unexpectedly
  - Medical conditions with fluctuating symptoms

How can you support?
- flexibility around attendance
- supporting student in receiving missed lecture content
- alternative evaluation options
- have contingency plans for missed assignments and exams
Library Accessibility Services – who are we?

Design & Outreach (Learning & User Services)

Megan McMeekin
Inclusion Librarian

Julie Rochon & Kahina Joseph
Library Technicians

Cecilia Tellis
Head, Design & Outreach
Library & accessible format support

How can you support students who require accessible formats of their reading materials (and how the library can help)?
Just say no to course packs!

Course pack
MUC123
What’s wrong with course packs?

- $$$ - Often, much of the content is available for free via the library
- Non-OCR scanned PDF
- Print versions not accessible
- The library can help!
Scanned documents

- Consider scanning in black and white
- Scan one page at a time
- Check if the scanner has Optical Character Recognition (OCR)
- Avoid:
  - Crooked pages
  - Cut off text
  - Dark shadows at the margins (from the book spine not being pushed down)
Test your PDF – can software read it aloud?

- https://www.naturalreaders.com/online/
- Does the text read out properly?
Syllabus & reading list

START EARLY
Other things to keep in mind....

- Last minute readings
- Videos/films
- Alternate assignment options to accommodate
- Book format and year of publication
- Textbook alternatives
  - Open Education Resources (OER)
How does using Ares improve accessibility of course readings?

• Library staff ensures documents have OCR (text is machine readable)
• Library has access to high-quality scanners, ensuring pages are clear, straight, no dark shadows
• Good quality PDF with OCR can be converted to other required accessible formats by Library Accessibility Services team → Word, ePub, audio
What is Ares?

✓ Ares is the Library’s course reserve platform

✓ It allows instructors to set aside course materials for short-term use by students

✓ It provides a single point of access for all course materials
When and how to submit requests

• Requests are treated in the order they are received. Some items may need to be purchased, so be sure to submit your requests early so materials can be available on time.

• How:
  – email your course syllabus or reading list to ares@uottawa.ca
What does the Library do behind the scenes?

• We will locate the materials listed in your syllabus/reading list:
  – Link to e-resources material
    • Articles, ebooks, videos
  – Purchase electronic version when possible
  – Digitization of print materials

• We will manage the application of copyright and licensing agreements
Where / how to access Ares

Library Course Reserve page:
https://www.uottawa.ca/library/services/course-reserves

• Directly online

OR

• Accessible from Virtual Campus (once Ares has been activated)
Access Ares directly

1. Go to https://ares.uottawa.ca/en/
2. Enter your User Name, which is the short name before your @uOttawa.ca email address (e.g.: jsmith), and password. (uoAccess ID)
Activate Ares in Virtual Campus (Brightspace)

1. Login to Virtual Campus (Brightspace)
2. Follow the instructions to enable Ares in Brightspace: https://www.uottawa.ca/library/sites/g/files/bhrskd381/files/2024-04/course_link_ares_env2.pdf
3. You'll need to repeat the steps for each course.
For more information

- Visit our course reserve website: https://www.uottawa.ca/library/services/course-reserves
- For assistance with course reserves, please contact ares@uottawa.ca
- For help with activating Ares in Virtual Campus, please contact TLSS: https://saea-tlss.uottawa.ca/en/teaching-technologies/virtual-campus-brightspace-for-instructors
Exam Accommodations (Dec 2023)

- No more than one exam per day: 1210
- NC headphones: to be provided: 1356
- Word processor no spell/grammar checker: 1599
- Quiet space: 1629
- Word processor with spell/grammar checker: 1747
- Extended time 25%: 2827
- Extended time 33%: 3950
- Extended time 50%: 4031
- Low visual distraction: 4389
- Low auditory distraction: 5126

Fall 2023 – about 12000 adapted exams were written
Winter 2024 – expecting more adapted exams to be written than the Fall 2023 term
How can you support?

• Upload Notice of Examinations (NOEs) to correspond with all evaluations in your course at the **beginning** of the term to ensure deadlines are not missed
  – It would be fair to assume you will have at least one student with exam accommodations in your courses
• Upload a copy of the exam, including information about memory aids, access to learning tools, etc. at least 3 days before the exam date
• Include contact information where you can be reached during the exam if students have questions
• Contact exam centre if needed during the exam (exams@uottawa.ca)
• Consider alternative evaluation formats (e.g., online, non-timed, take-home, project, assignment, etc.)
Case studies

Assessment Scores

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<td>27</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Language</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Low Average</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considerations for an Accommodation Plan?

Program of Enrollment

Students
### Persona: Arianne

| Demographics                      | Age: 19  
|                                 | Education: BSc Student in Chemistry  
|                                 | Employment: Works part time in retail |
| Environment                      | -Lives with two roommates not too far from campus  
|                                 | -Frequently come to the library to study |
| Teaching Accommodations          | -Volunteer peer notetaker  
|                                 | -Extended time on assignments |
| Exam Accommodations              | -33% extended time  
|                                 | -Word processor  
|                                 | -Dragon text-to-speech software  
|                                 | -Low auditory distraction |
## Persona: Max

| Demographics          | Age: 18  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Education: BA History student, first year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Environment           | - Lives in residence  
|                       | - Uses assistive technology often |
| Teaching Accommodations | - Audio recording of lectures  
|                       | - Material in alternate format (PDF) |
| Exam Accommodations   | - 75% extended time  
|                       | - Memory aid  
|                       | - Word processor with spell/grammar checker  
|                       | - Assistive technology |
# Persona: Julie

| Demographics        | Age: 32  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Education: Bachelor of Health Science, 3\textsuperscript{rd} year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Environment         | -Lives in the west end of the city  
|                     | -Drives to get to campus  
|                     | -Works part time at a nursing home |
| Teaching Accommodations | -Fluctuating condition  
|                     | -Ergonomic chair  
|                     | -Adjustable desk  
|                     | -Volunteer peer notetaker/digital audio recorder |
| Exam Accommodations | -50% extended time  
|                     | -English scribe  
|                     | -No more than one exam per day |
Conclusion