ADA and Accessibility Advisory Committee

Annual Report to the Chancellor

2015-2016

The campus Americans with Disabilities Act committee was reestablished in fall of 2015 by co-chairs, Aura Hirschman – Senior Counselor/Alternative Text Coordinator, Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) and Beth Traylor - Media Librarian, UWM Libraries with guidance and collaboration from Phyllis King, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Barbara Simon, Interim Director of the Accessibility Resource Center. The committee was renamed ADA and Accessibility Advisory Committee (ADAAAC) to reflect changing campus initiatives for accessibility and universal design, in addition to ADA compliance. In addition to the committee charge, the chairs set the goal of making ADAAAC a campus-wide focal point for the exchange of information regarding disability and accessibility initiatives throughout campus and in the larger community.

The following information summarizes the committee charge, membership, and activities since the 9-30-15 meeting. The ADAAAC co-chairs, Aura Hirschman and Beth Traylor respectfully submit this report, on 10-7-16.

# Committee Charge:

## General Intent:

## To assist the university in:

### To continue developing a campus that is universally accessible

### To oversee ongoing compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, by acting as an advisory body to the Chancellor, Provost and the ADA Coordinator.

## Functions:

### To develop and recommend within the campus governance and administrative structures, policies pertaining to campus compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and other disability laws.

### To lend influence and support campus education, outreach and programming regarding disabilities, universal design, accessibility and legal obligations pertaining to these.

### To create a centralized accessibility and disability information website.

# Membership:

Members represent the UWM faculty, staff (classified and academic staff), and student body and shall be appointed according to their expertise, interest, or experience with individuals and/or groups concerned with disabilities. In addition to those requirements, inclusion of people with disabilities is encouraged. All members have voting rights.

The committee will also be composed of members from the following groups:

Accessibility Resource Center (ARC); Athletics; Alumni Association; Career Development Center; Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning; Equity and Diversity; Human Resources; LGBT Center; Legal Affairs; Library; Military and Veterans Resource Center (MAVRC) and/or Veterans Affairs; Norris Health Center; PASS; PEPNet (grant funding ended 9/30/16); Physical Plant/Facilities; Purchasing Office; R2D2; Safety and Assurances; School of Education; Student Affairs; UITS; Student representatives; Community Based Organization (IndependenceFirst).

# 2015/16 COMMITTEE PROJECTS

## Creation of the ADAAAC website:

### <http://uwm.edu/adaaac/>

* The website, developed by the committee co-chairs became active September 2016. David Delgado will assist with future updates. It is available on the Office of the Chancellor’s web page under Strategic Directions - Climate & Culture.

## Disability/Accessibility Initiatives on Campus - Establishing campus alliances and awareness:

### AT/IT Committee

### A new campus committee was developed consisting of UITS staff members, Aura Hirschman and Barb Simon from ARC, and Beth Traylor from the Library. The committee has met to talk about Adaptive Technology and what the campus has in the computer labs, classrooms and the library. This group will continue to meet annually/biannually to determine student assistive technology needs in the computer labs and determine purchases accordingly. The group is now lead by Kevin Jahnke.

### Barrier Study/Campus Accessibility Group Achievements - [handout](https://panthers-my.sharepoint.com/personal/hirschma_uwm_edu/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B71050732-F42C-4120-93F7-F090346C2EFB%7D&file=Barrier%20Committee%20Achievements%20160408(1).docx&action=default)

* This group was formed to look at issues regarding accessibility of the campus physical environment, including ramps, signage, and barriers. Claude Schuttey presented to the ADAAAC on two occasions to the group. In summary, Roger Smith’s Design & Disability course students conducted a study of the campus looking for accessibility barriers that either do meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) or while they technically meet the ADA standard could still pose barriers for individuals with disabilities. Goals are to address barriers that have the most impact with the least amount of funds and the focus is currently in the central part of the campus. Only the exterior and physical aspects of campus were considered in the first study. Another study is currently underway from this group that involves students with disabilities and a study of “way finding” and interior campus buildings.
* 2016 activities will include replacement of battery operated buttons, custodial staff will check operability of door buttons weekly, barrier study collaboration with facility services in summer 2016, classroom services is investigating the possibility of adding assistive listening device information to the ROAR inventory.
* An Accessibility campus app is in development with rollout expected in Fall

Questions/Suggestions from ADAAAC members:

* Include a study of campus barriers for individuals with cognitive and sensory disabilities (e.g. closed captioning on TVs in all public areas, quiet places for individuals with autism).
* Assistive Listening Devices or Systems (ALDs) - Challenging for Accessibility Resource Center with so many different systems around campus and having to arrange access in some buildings that are managed by Classroom Support or the college. One universal type of system on campus would benefit many departments and the individuals who use the systems for access. A demonstration of new ALDs was given by the vendor.

### Sociocultural Student Programming inclusive of Disability Awareness and Education

* This group brought in the Union display from St. Louis University. They conducted "The Ability Ally Workshop" on 4-15-15, in conjunction with "Allies for Inclusion: The Ability Exhibit".
* Following the efforts of ADAAAC student representative, Megan DuFrane, the Union Cinema will view “Right Footed” (http://rightfootedmovie.com/) Oct. 18th (confirmed). The cost is $250 for unlimited viewing rights and co-sponsors are welcomed. The film will be donated to UWM Libraries after the screening debut.
* Brian Peters, community representative from IndependenceFirst would like to collaborate with departments at UWM to demonstrate various assistive technologies utilized by individuals with disabilities in the union.

### Task Force Committee on campus interpreter/captioning needs

### This committee met to assess the overall campus interpreter/captioning needs and recommend a centralized place as well as centralized funding for interpreter uses for non-classroom needs. Requests for campus related real-time captioning and sign language interpreting are now received in the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC). ARC will provide staff to cover the request if available and for a fee to the department. This requires an online form. When staff isn’t available to cover campus requests, the ARC refers department to contract directly with an outside agency for services. Centralized Coordination of Interpreting/Captioning Services began on July 1, 2016.

### ARC will be taking over all campus service requests for interpreting and speech-to-text services. This new process of centralizing services streamlines the process and reduces paperwork. Cassie Franklin from the ADAAAC committee is on this task force.

### Accessibility of Instructional Media – CETL

* CETL has a grant to create a D2L based program that creates a portal for faculty and staff to be able to submit video for captioning, have it captioned and returned to them. CETL was also awarded a federal grant to open “The National Research Center for Distance Education and Technological Advancement (DETA)”. The DETA Research Center looks to identify and evaluate effective course and institutional practices in online learning, including competency-based education, specifically addressing underrepresented populations.” David Delgado from the committee is creating this.

### Accessibility of Learning Management Systems (LMS) - David Delgado presented on D2L accessibility and other LMS systems being purchased by faculty. [Powerpoint Slides](https://panthers-my.sharepoint.com/personal/hirschma_uwm_edu/Documents/ADAAAC/D2L%20LE%20and%20Accessibility%20presentation.pdf)

* Summary of main points: UWM hosts D2L for entire UW System. Each campus has the ability to customize D2L to meet their needs. D2L is an accessible product though there are several add-ons that are not hosted by UWM or D2L and were not vetted for accessibility.
* A software upgrade in June will include additional support for caption files of videos directly uploaded to D2L courses and dyslexic friendly fonts. There is an attempt to integrate a captioning workflow at the UW System level within D2L for departments to include billing information for the captioning services.

### Efforts are being made to insure the accessibility of D2L and also to proactively vet new LMS purchases (non-D2L) at all levels in a collaborative process involving Aura from ARC and Jennifer Herzog. A standard protocol for vetting accessibility and security is being developed.

# A discussion concerning lack of coordination throughout UW-System and the challenges involved in doing so developed. At this time, UWM will continue working independently with the plan of eventually providing a full report and suggestions to UW-System.

### Veterans Advisory Committee

Organized around campus units with roles in supporting the success of military and veteran students. It is used as both a forum for reports on military and veteran student topics as well as a place for problem-solving, advocacy and feedback on related topics. Tiffany Thornton from the committee is on this committee.

### Jason Kuiper reported on ADA Coordination

* Per the S45.1 policy, all accommodation requests for employees are currently approved or denied by the UWM ADA Coordinator. Jason received 44 accommodation requests in his six years at UWM and 15 within 2015 alone. It seems the trend is increasing in the number of accommodation requests. HRS identifies 155 employees who self-identify as having a disability. Employees include academic staff, faculty, LTEs, project staff, students employees, university staff and anyone else who is on the UWM payroll. Examples of the accommodation requests include larger monitors, ergonomic chairs or desks, and other items that are relatively inexpensive.
* UWM Reasonable Accommodation Policy and Procedures for Employees <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S45_1.pdf>
* Some discussion addressed the many staff who are likely not asking for accommodations or are receiving them in their own department with no HR intervention.

### Wisconsin Association of the Deaf Legislative Day - Erin Wiggens (ASL Studies Department)

* Erin discussed the efforts to get Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing Wisconsin residents out to meet their legislators at the capital. The Deaf community have five priorities to discuss with representatives: Deaf education improvements, American Sign Language and language deprivation, employment issues in the D/HH community, emergency preparedness and communications during disasters and other times of crisis, and mental health initiatives to provide culturally competent services to D/HH individual with mental health needs.

### Presentation on Accessibility of On-line Instruction by Diane Reddy, CETL – [Powerpoint Slides](https://panthers-my.sharepoint.com/personal/hirschma_uwm_edu/Documents/ADAAAC/D2L%20LE%20and%20Accessibility%20presentation.pdf)

### Universities recently had Office of Civil Rights (OCR) complaints brought on by students. The University of Montana in the process of resolution changed their assumptions about accessibility issues. Pre-complaint assumptions versus post-complaint assumptions from the perspective of the University shows how disability services became more proactive and less reactive.

### Policy on syllabus announcement for disability services: The ADAAAC committee discussed a standardized statement required by all professors to include with the class syllabus. Several suggestions were made such as avoiding the term “special” since special education is terminology for K-12 institutions. At the college level it is called “academic accommodations.”

### Aura suggested having the ARC website be a resource for professors to find examples of syllabus policies they could copy and paste.

### Another suggestion was to send to administrators, such as the Provost, so the information can be disseminated more widely.

### Cassie recommended that professors also consider student confidentiality when accommodations are being made.

### Barb Simon offered that hard deadlines cannot be required for disclosure of disability. Once they have disclosed, the appropriate accommodations would be arranged, no matter when in the semester a student requests services.

### Making websites, open textbooks, and other online academic resources accessible - Some professors utilize websites for supplemental instruction and not all are accessible to students with disabilities. Professors share a part in responsibility for ensuring access to classroom content. More discussion on departments supporting staff through this process.

* Some Questions raised:

### How can UWM bring the post-complaint assumptions to campus without litigation?

### How do we ensure we are focusing on all disabilities and not just obvious sensory/mobility disabilities?

* + Several comments were made about accommodations for students in the Autism spectrum. Some students very independent and others are very dependent on unique service requests like changing the classroom environment or having a parent with them at all times. Some students have more social than academic challenges on campus.

### What is the process from student disclosure of disability to receiving accommodation services?

* + Barb explained the process step-by-step. She mentioned that ARC and CETL are creating a self-paced online course to bring the campus up to speed on accommodations and the Verified Individual Services and Accommodations (VISA) Plan. Questions about this process can be directed to Barb Simon (ARC Interim Director).

## Presentation by Mike Priem from campus facilities and architect Bob Barr, of Continuum Architects, on the construction project currently going to bid to improve several classrooms in 4 buildings on campus. [Powerpoint Slides](https://panthers-my.sharepoint.com/personal/hirschma_uwm_edu/Documents/ADAAAC/2-10-16%20Presentation%20on%20upcoming%20classroom%20renovations.pdf)

* ADAAAC committee will be brought in on the next project slated for 2017/19 at the 35% Completion mark of the construction plans.
* Claude Schuttey from campus planning also provided information about the project and future projects.
* The rooms getting renovated are in Bolton, Cunningham, Lapham and Mitchell. Some changes are cosmetic while some require removing walls to create bigger classrooms, adding flexible seating, widening doors, adding visual alerts to any fire alarms and other improvements.
* Listening receivers are being installed in all the new rooms. There are approximately 20-30 spaces with these kinds of receivers in them.
* Questions arose about white boards being added to all the spaces and not chalk boards that provide a white on dark work surface for better visibility.

Suggestion was offered for sliding whiteboards and for multi-heights. Blackboards will be left in the rooms where they were and white boards will be added.

* Suggestion was made to include ADAAAC campus personnel in a tour of the classrooms where updates are proposed.
* Mike Priem is on the ADAAAC committee and suggested that there be a couple of liaisons from ADAAAC to the Classroom Update Group who can offer input and who can report issues from the ADAAAC meetings that need to go to the campus planning department.
* Information about campus projects can be found on the campus planning website at <http://www4.uwm.edu/uap/projects/>.

## Accessibility & Universal Design - Presentation by Aura Hirschman on accessibility, campus and universal design. [Powerpoint Slides](https://panthers-my.sharepoint.com/personal/hirschma_uwm_edu/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B3EB2FF47-4F27-4CDD-8360-6AC1B657F372%7D&file=1-13-16%20slides%20For%20ADAAAC.pptx&action=default)

* Roger Smith directed members to the [Access-ed Website](http://access-ed.r2d2.uwm.edu/), developed in the [R2D2 Center](http://www.r2d2.uwm.edu/), to learn more about accessibility in higher education and to find related resources.

## Presentation on accommodations for deaf and hard of hearing students and employees[. Powerpoint Slides](https://panthers-my.sharepoint.com/personal/hirschma_uwm_edu/Documents/ADAAAC/3-9-16%20DHH%20Accommodations-PowerPoint%20Presentation.pdf)

* Cassie Franklin, from ARC, reviewed typical accommodations including American Sign Language Interpreters, cued speech, assistive listening devices, note takers, captioned media, and speech to text services such as CART and CPrint/Typewell. Cassie explained the differences between CART and Cprint (CART is word for word translation/ CPrint is meaning for meaning). Cassie noted the increased use of technology such as videophones, messaging/chat, cochlear implants, hearing aids have changed how deaf and hard of hearing individuals communicate.
* Cassie noted that the DOJ (Department of Justice) Standards and “Effective Communication” document is a very helpful guide in providing accommodations.
* Jason Anderson noted that in a work environment, DHH employees can be creative and use resources that are readily available (such as VRS) and don’t necessarily need an interpreter for everything.
* Cassie mentioned the case of a medical student who was denied interpreters and won a lawsuit against the institution. She explained accommodations that might be used (other than interpreters) to assist medical staff in an operating room.

## Collaborations through courses for Accessibility and Universal Design on campus

* There is a class on campus looking at the accessibility of the UWM campus, the Design and Disability class offered through the Department of Occupational Therapy.
* Community Design Solutions, also on campus, has done some accessibility assessment on campus. They had contracts with community organizations to do accessibility assessments in the past.
* The Layton Park neighborhood has recently been addressing accessibility issues in local housing in collaboration with Community Design Solutions.

# IV. New Developments and Resources

## New Student groups/initiatives:

##### National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) at UWM– New Student Org developed by Ben Fendrich. Ben helped get this student org started and is joining the ADAAAC as a student representative. The Student organization hosts mental health panels, support groups, and other events. They have a Facebook page and a schedule of events forthcoming.

* ADAAAC Student Representative, Chris Baumann, is the Disability Inclusion Student Senator. (There was one student who preceded him in this role for the last year.) Chris and one other student on campus with a visual impairment are hoping to start a student org for students with visual disabilities or for those who have a disability in general.
* Kara Mannor has indicated interest along with Chris to create a new student group of students with disabilities.

## Essentials of Accessible Instructional Materials Resource for UWM

### Aura presented a draft of this accessibility resource document requested by Jennifer Herzog, Campus Attorney. She collaborated with ARC, CETL and Legal. ADAAAC members offered feedback, which was incorporated. The document is intended as a resource to instructional staff as they plan and develop classroom materials and activities.

### The document is in review by Provost Office for approval and distribution to campus. It is not known when this will be completed.

### The documents is now available on ARC and ADAAAC websites, and hopefully will be added to the Provost website.

## ARC is working with Professor Jeb Willenbring on Math Accessibility

* Jeb is working with Aura to assist ARC students with vision impairments. A particular challenge for blind students is to access math content. It is becoming increasingly important to evaluate math software for accessibility. The current systems that the math department uses include ALEKS and Pathways and these are not uniformly accessible.
* A community outreach grant was successfully submitted and awarded from [Industries for the Blind](https://www.ibmilw.com/), written by Jeb Willenbring and Aura Hirschman for funding to create a more accessible learning environment for students who are blind and taking classes in the mathematical sciences. Seed funds from IB could produce a competitive proposal to be sent to the National Science Foundation for a sustainable program thereafter. Funds have enabled hiring of graduate students in Math as “accessibility tutors” and Occupational Therapy students to assist blind students in using assistive technology to access Math course content at UWM.

## Career Planning and Resource Center is hosting a Federal Workforce Recruitment Program here at UWM with ARC collaboration.

Jean Salzer announced there are 4 other UW Schools who have this program, and the Accessibility Resource Center has requested this program be on our campus for many years. The program gives a chance for 8 students to have an interview spot for a Federal government job. They need to apply for the interview spot in May, and interviews are conducted in Fall. Jean noted that students must be within 18 months out from graduation in order to qualify.

## Health Heelers.

UWM libraries hosted 4 dogs and 1 cat for the first event. There were long lines of students and many left one line after petting one of the heelers and got into another line meet the other heelers. Estimate is between 500 -1,000 participants in the event. One of the handlers commented that there were never so many people at these type of events at Marquette University. This event took four years and several collaborations to realize and it was quite successful. Another event was scheduled during the meeting in the Fireside Lounge for Derby Days (11:30-1:00). Event organizers are aware of allergy concerns and the potential of interactions with service dogs. If you are interested in hosting an event with Health Heelers, contact Jim in Risk Management. Other vendors can also be used, but would need to be vetted first. Interested people/groups should contact Molly Susan Mathias.

# V. LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES: CONFERENCES, WEBINARS

Learning opportunities, conferences and webinars were discussed and advertised among the committee members, including:

* WI AHEAD <http://wiahead.org/conferences/>
* National ADA symposium <http://adasymposium.org/>
* Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North American (RESNA) <http://www.resna.org/>
* Webinars:
* “**Diversity 2.0” webinar** – held by UWM Inclusive Excellence Center
* **A Blueprint for Building, Maintaining, and Improving EIT Accessibility** <https://compliance.uw.edu/node/247> Electronic and Information Technology (EIT) is an essential element of today's higher education environment. As programs, services, and resources at institutions continue to expand and delivery methods are increasingly technology-centric, institutions are challenged to ensure that all students have access to the ever-evolving technological tools used on-campus while also meeting complex EIT compliance expectations. This webinar will examine the action steps and compliance strategies that have been delineated in recent settlement and resolution agreements as a necessary part of effective practices and procedures.
* “**When the DOJ/OCR Makes a Visit: Lessons Learned in Resolving Complaints about Inaccessible IT**”. <http://www.3playmedia.com/resources/webinars/lessons-learned-02-17-2016/> This has become a prominent topic in disability services/ADA prompted, in part, by recent lawsuits against Harvard, MIT and Netflix for inaccessibility of their products. Universities across the country are working to make their websites more accessible. Website accessibility includes having all videos captioned and text descriptions for pictures, photos, graphs, charts, etc. UWM departments, schools and colleges need to make their websites accessible. EIT (Electronic Information Technology) encompasses every level of web development/use; from how websites are built, to D2L, to instructor’s postings. It was recommended in the webinars that schools develop a policy for EIT and accessibility.
* “**Free and Low Cost Assistive Technology**” – With the Assistive Technology market booming, and budgets getting tighter and tighter in higher education and K-12, free and low cost assistive technology options are becoming a more mainstream option. However, with the sheer number of these tools being able to support students with a variety of needs, how does one stay abreast of the constant developments, updates, and new features? Participants of this session will learn about approximately a dozen of the latest and greatest programs, apps, and extensions that support student learners; all costing less than roughly $10. Topic areas include literacy support, writing support, notetaking and organization/task management. Having a toolbox of free and low cost assistive technology, such as these tools, is an asset to any AT program. [handout link](https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/16688492/Trainings/Free&LowCostAT_Handout.pdf)
* **AccessibilityOnline** on higher education and the ADA. AccessibilityOnline represents a collaborative training program between the ADA National Network and the US Access Board. The AccessibilityOnline Webinar Series is free and offers real-time captioning in all sessions. Sessions are held on a monthly basis and cover a variety of topics concerning accessibility to the built environment, information and communication technologies, and transportation. Archival links to their webinars can be found at <http://www.accessibilityonline.org/ada-legal/archives/>
* **Higher Education: A Partnership in Online Accessibility**In this webinar, you will learn how two Massachusetts colleges worked with the Carroll Center for the Blind to achieve a higher level of digital accessibility for their students. With the assistance of grant funding from the Gibney Family Foundation, Quincy College and Northern Essex Community College partnered with the Carroll Center to identify all of the online interactions these colleges have with their students. This digital content was evaluated and tested to discover whether students with disabilities can independently perform required online functions. Webinar archived at http://carroll.org/2016/03/higher-education-a-partnership-in-online-accessibility-webinar/

# FUTURE PROJECTS:

## Claude Schuttey indicated that Campus Planning committee would like the ADAAAC committee to come up with a set of universal design guidelines for new campus classroom projects that they can present to architects before new projects begin.

## Introduction and solicitation of ADAAAC members to pilot new campus Accessibility App

## Website Improvements and Maintenance

## Complete dissemination of Essentials List

## Guest Speakers for Fall – Mark Jacobson, Jeb Willenbring, Brian Peters

## Co-chairs to meet with Chancellor Mone

## Inviting Chancellor to a meeting

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