McMASTER UNIVERSITY
CENTRE FOR STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

1999 - 2000 YEAR END REPORT
to
THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

ENHANCED ACCESSIBILITY FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
Section 1 – Accessibility Fund for Students with Disabilities – Activity Report

Office for Students with Disabilities, Staffing and Support

The Centre for Student Development in 1999 - 2000 had a full time compliment of 10.2 staff. The staff included three disability coordinators, three psychologists, an academic skills coordinator, an administrative assistant, a receptionist/accommodations assistant (sessional position), one part time personal counselor, and a technology "evangelist".

The Centre has three full time Programme Coordinators who provide service to students with disabilities: Caroline Cayuga, Programme Coordinator (Learning Specialist) provides assistance to students with learning disabilities, attention deficit – hyperactive disorders, and students with acquired brain injuries. Marge Marriott, Programme Coordinator (Disability Specialist) provides assistance to students with mental health disabilities, chronic medical disabilities or who are Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing. Tim Nolan, Programme Coordinator (Disability Specialist) assists students with physical disabilities and students who are blind or visually impaired. There is some overlap among the Coordinators in their work with various students. Students who have more than one disability work directly with the Coordinator that is most closely associated with the disability that requires the greatest accommodation.

The Centre for Student Development is a team of professionals working together to assist students on campus with a range of disability, personal and academic related needs. The three disability coordinators work closely with the faculty and staff of the University in the provision of services to students with disabilities. The coordinators consult with faculty on issues related to students' needs, and with staff regarding the delivery of services. Assistance with the completion of tests/exams, registration, disability related counselling, timetabling, scheduling of classrooms, library services, taped textbooks, and all other appropriate accommodations are facilitated with assistance from Caroline, Marge and Tim.

New Support Services and Accommodations

In 1999 - 2000 the CSD planned, organized and introduced a number of new initiatives to help improve the range of services and programs offered to assist students with disabilities.

Support Groups
A support group for students with mental health disabilities was organized for the first time this year. Five students participated in this program, which was conducted by one
of the program coordinators with the assistance of a peer helper (and briefly, a placement student from Mohawk College's Psycho-Social Rehabilitation Programme). Feedback from the students indicated that although the number of participants was small, the benefit was substantial. Students found the opportunity to meet and talk with others with similar issues and concerns very helpful – particularly with regard to their feelings of isolation on campus and the stress they experience as students with mental health issues. We hope to repeat this program next year.

Peer Helpers
Last year, we trained three peer helpers to work with students with learning disabilities and ADHD teaching them study strategies and time management skills. This year, the three peers also worked as a resource in the library for any student with a disability, helping them to find pertinent research articles and also help them work on their essays and papers.

New Staff
The Centre also hired another staff member on a nine month sessional basis to work as a Receptionist/Accommodations assistant to oversee the Peer Helper Note-taker Coordinators and assist with exam administration. Julia Shelly assisted with the distribution and receipt of note-taker applications, distribution of notes to students’ files, and monitored the note drop off process to ensure notes were being provided on a regular basis. Julia was also responsible for overseeing and making test/exam arrangements for students writing in the Centre. She also worked 11:30 to 7:30 on Mondays and Tuesdays so that the Centre could make better use of its resources in the delivery of services to students. Our later hours allowed for more exams to be written in our office and for students in night classes to pick up their notes.

Day Planner
We revised and improved our day planner for students with disabilities this year. Feedback from the planner indicated that it was very well received. We also made up approximately 250 additional revised day planners for the general school population. These day planners did not have the specific disability related information in them. The goal of selling these planners was two fold: raise money for the Jamie Grelich Bursary for students with disabilities and to preserve confidentiality for students with disabilities. The day planner initially was only given to students with disabilities. Thus, it had the potential to single out students as a person with disability. Since the distribution was more widespread this year, students with the day planner could not be immediately recognized as students with a disability.

Workshops
A series of workshops on wellness and alternative therapy was offered to students with disabilities and non-disabled students on campus. The series was offered in conjunction with the University’s Student Health Services. The aim of the series was to provide students with the information tools they need to reduce stress and anxiety in order to help them be more successful in their academic pursuits. The series was offered in both terms and included sessions on reflexology, Reiki and massage therapy.
Feedback from these sessions was very positive and more are planned for next year.

**Attendee Care Programme**

Negotiations continued this year to develop an attendant care programme in the residence in conjunction with the March of Dimes. An assessment of the residences was done and an estimate for retrofit costs was obtained. A proposal requesting funding for this project has been submitted to the Ministry of Health and we hope to move further on this project once the funding has been established.

**Research**

Our Learning Specialist, Caroline Cayuga undertook a major research project this year to survey former and current McMaster students with learning disabilities and attention deficit hyperactive disorders. The five main goals of the research were to a) describe the basic demographics of the population, b) to determine the impact of accommodations on learning, c) to describe the typical LD/ADHD cognitive profile, d) to compare the cognitive profiles of those diagnosed before age 18 and those diagnosed after age 18 and e) to determine what model of Learning Disabilities was most typically used when diagnosing LD. Implications of this research are large, particularly when discussing what criteria we should be using to diagnose LD and who should be eligible for services. In addition, we also hope to use the data to improve existing programs and services for students, and to learn more about students’ understanding of their disability in order to prepare more effective educational programs. Data collection will be completed by July 30, 2000 and a full report will be prepared for publication. Presentation of these results were made at CACUSS 2000 at York University and an application has been made to present these results to the LDA International conference in New York City, NY in February 2001.

**Promotional Campaign**

Another major undertaking of the entire Centre for Student Development was a promotional campaign to increase awareness of our services on campus and in the community. A new 12 page colour brochure was developed as well as a number of additional promotional materials. Findings from a recent survey indicated that the new materials were effective in building awareness of our services.

**Equipment and Technology**

A new computer with accessible software was purchased for one staff member for at home use. Additional computer equipment purchased this year included a printer, scanner, 2 zip drives and additional software. In addition, we purchased speakers for our testing rooms so that "pink noise" could be used to cover the sounds from the office. Equipment to aid in updating our website was also purchased. New furniture included 3 high back accessible chairs for students to use during exams and new office furniture for the front office (2 credenzas and a bookshelf).
Professional Development and Awareness Activities

Disability Awareness Week
The Centre planned and organized the third annual Disabilities Awareness Week. Two students were hired (one through the Summer Experience Programme) over the summer to plan and coordinate Disability Awareness Week - a week designed to promote awareness of disability issues to students, faculty and staff. Several events and activities were planned for the week: a wheelchair basketball game between The Hamilton Steel City Wheelers and members of the men’s and women’s basketball teams, an outdoor pizza fest and concert featuring a local swing band, a comedy show at the pub on campus, a Career Fair featuring displays from disability related employers and professionals, and a disability information display set up at the main library. We believe that each of these activities was successful in enhancing awareness. Perhaps the overall highlight of Disabilities Awareness Week this year was the performance of The Famous People Players before a nearly packed Hamilton Place crowd. Over 1500 tickets were sold!

Presentations
A number of workshops on disability awareness were presented to Teaching Assistants, Faculty, staff, and students. Two workshops were held for T.A.’s and faculty members to provide information about our services and raise awareness regarding disability issues. A presentation was also made to exam invigilators to prepare them for working with students with disabilities during exams. In addition, our peer helpers conducted three interactive and participatory awareness outreach activities for students living in residence. The workshops included teaching students about disabilities and helping them improve their awareness about pertinent issues. The workshops were well received. Programme Coordinators also made a number of presentations in classes and for outside organizations (e.g., SHAD).

Conferences
Disability coordinators attended a range of disability related conferences and workshops throughout the year including the Inter - University Disability Issues Association annual meeting in Windsor, the 1999 CACUSS conference in Victoria (where two coordinators made a presentation on our note taking program), LDA International in Reno, Nevada, the Ontario Psychological Association annual conference, workshops on “Universities and the Law”, post traumatic stress disorders, psychotropic medications, and on attention deficit hyperactive disorders. Additionally, one staff member participated in the Western Ontario Region LD Round Table.

University Centre
Staff of the Centre have been actively involved with the planning committee responsible for the construction of a new University Student Centre. Plans are underway to have CSD relocate their offices to the new facility. In this regard, staff have been working actively with the planning committee to ensure the accessibility of the new office design. As well, staff have been working with the committee on issues related to general accessibility to ensure that the needs of students with disabilities will be thoroughly
considered in the design phase.

**Community Involvement**
Disability coordinators continue to be active in the Hamilton community representing McMaster and the Centre for Student Development including representation on the local CNIB Client Services Committee, the Canadian Hearing Society Local Community Council, and the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (Hamilton) Board of Directors. Staff find that this close relationship with local agencies supporting people with disabilities is an important connection, one that results in an overall better delivery of services to students with disabilities on campus. In addition, one programme coordinator is serving as Secretary-Treasurer for the Inter-University Disabilities Issues Association and another is the IDIA representative on the Transcription Services committee.

**Personal Professional Development**
Disability coordinators continue to pursue additional post-secondary courses. Tim Nolan continued with courses toward a second degree in Social Work.

**Organizational Charts**
See Appendix I for Flow Chart of Centre for Student Development staff and reporting structure through to Student Affairs.

**Outreach to Prospective Students**
The Centre works with numerous other departments on campus to bring about awareness of the existence of services to students with disabilities. Notification about the Centre is included in the undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education calendars. The McMaster Association of Part-Time Students also includes information in their handbook about CSD, as does the McMaster Students Union. The registration package/booklet that is sent to all returning students, either full or part-time, includes a large notice on the front of the registration package about services to students with disabilities. The Centre places advertisements in the student newspaper promoting services during both the first and second terms. The Centre also advertises its services on various television screens throughout the campus.

The Centre provides McMaster's Liaison Office with information about our services just prior to their national recruitment campaign each year. This is important information when making presentations to prospective students. More in-depth enquiries for information are passed on to the Centre for response. In addition to the active recruiting campaign the Liaison Office, the Centre also participates in all Liaison information days held on campus. At this time, students and their families have an opportunity to visit the campus to obtain information about academic and student service programs which may influence decisions about which university to attend.

The Centre is involved in information sessions for first year students from all Faculties.
These sessions provide information to students about the services and programs offered at the Centre. These sessions also provide support and advice on how to be successful at university.

The Centre sent out a term newsletter for students this year. The newsletter included updates, reminders, information about old and new initiatives and financial assistance. We found this newsletter to be a very helpful tool for students.

Policy for Undergraduate Students with Disabilities

The Centre has been working closely with the Associate Vice-President (Student Affairs) on the development of an undergraduate policy for students with disabilities. To assist with this process, a policy working committee was established and is meeting on a regular basis. This process has been underway since the spring of 1998, and although no firm completion date is yet established, the committee is proceeding with a final version of a policy in sight. The new undergraduate policy will eventually replace the current Policy Statement on Applicants and Students with Disabilities adopted by McMaster in January 1985.
Section 2 - Client Statistics

Please see Appendix II for graphs and charts outlining three year comparisons.

The Centre for Student Development in 1999 - 2000 provided assistance to a total of 281 students with disabilities. This included assistance to 7 Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing students, 15 blind or visually impaired students, 100 students with a learning disability or attention deficit disorder, 84 students with chronic medical, psychological or systemic disabilities, 64 students with a physical disability, and 11 students with multiple disabilities (mostly students with acquired brain injuries).

Note taking program
The Centre also provided students with note-taking services. With the assistance of our new Receptionist/Accommodations Assistant and three peer helpers, our note-taking program expanded considerably this year. In the first term we collected notes for 74 students 117 courses (86 note-takers were hired) and in the second term we collected notes for 69 students for 115 courses (78 note-takers were hired). Below is a chart comparing our numbers for use of this service between this year and last:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Note takers</th>
<th>Courses (includes 6 unit courses)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>98/99</td>
<td>99/00</td>
<td>98/99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st term</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd term</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Psycho-educational assessments
The Centre conducted a number of screenings and/or assessments on several students with a learning disability or suspected learning disability. The Programme Coordinator (Learning Specialist) completed 56 screenings of students who were suspected of having a learning disability. Of these, 18 students were sent for a full psycho-educational assessment, 14 of which were identified as having a specific learning disability or attention deficit disorder. The Centre conducted 13 additional assessments on students who had been previously diagnosed as having a learning disability or attention deficit disorder. One student was referred for a neuropsychological assessment. Of the 32 total number of assessments referred by the Centre, 13 were completed in-house (9 were done by a PhD intern who was appropriately supervised) and 19 were referred off campus.
Tests and Exams

In 1999 - 2000 the Centre administered a number of tests or exams on behalf of instructors and the Registrar's Office. The Centre conducted 454 tests on behalf of instructors, and a total of 71 exams on behalf of the Registrar's Office. These numbers have greatly increased since last year because of our new extended office hours which allowed greater opportunity for students to write in our facility.

The Centre was responsible for arranging, with the Registrar's Office, the administration of all University exams. In this regard, a total of more than 200 exams were scheduled for the main gymnasium, and 156 exams were scheduled for separate invigilation during the December 1999 period. For April 2000, over 200 exams were scheduled in the main gymnasium, and 209 scheduled for separate invigilation. A total of 7 exams were scheduled during the 1999 summer deferred exam period.
Section 3 - Funds for Interpreter, Intervenor, Computerized Note-Taking, Real Time Captioning

The Centre for Student Development did not have any students in 1999-2000 who needed access to these types of services. The Centre made no submissions to the Ministry for Reimbursement of any expenditures.

Section 4 - Financial Statement

Please see Appendix III for the year end financial statement.

During the 1998 –1999 fiscal year, there was a surplus of more than $37,000 in the Enhanced Accessibility Fund for students with disabilities. During the 1999 – 2000 fiscal year, the Centre took strides to reduce this surplus. Many one time initiatives took place which resulted in a deficit of $8010.00.

This deficit was due in part to several cost ventures, including the production of new publicity materials (one time cost), and enhanced Disability Awareness Week (by hosting the Famous People Players) to further promote awareness on campus. In addition, we hired a new sessional staff member to look after note taking and exams, and we paid 50% of the Technology Evangelist position (the rest was covered by a grant from the McMaster Student's Union (MSU)). An increase in the number of notetakers and invigilators needed for exams also cost more than expected. In addition the Centre covered the cost of all psycho-educational assessments.

A number of cost reducing plans have been proposed for the 2000 – 2001 year to ensure that no deficit occurs next year. Please refer to Section 2 of Projections and Plans for 2000-2001 for further details.
2000 - 2001 PROJECTIONS AND PLANS

Section 1 - Planned Activities

The Centre has a number of new initiatives planned for the 2000 - 2001 year.

New Initiatives and Continued Support Programs and Services

Peer Helpers
The Centre plans to continue using the services of our trained peer helpers to aid in the provision of needed services. In addition to our three Disability Volunteer Coordinators (who coordinate the note taking program and provide Disability Awareness workshops in Residences), we will also have two peer helpers assisting students with LD and ADHD, as well as assisting other students with disabilities with library research. New this year will be a Transcription Peer who will work closely with our library staff to provide alternative format for students requiring it and who will coordinate volunteers to put text on to disk or tape.

Awareness Presentations
Further awareness promotion will take place through several venues. Presentations are planned for Teaching Assistants and Faculty, and students in residence, to help promote awareness of disability issues. In addition a Disability Awareness newsletter will be created to be sent out to instructors through the University's Centre for Leadership and Learning.

Workshops
We hope to continue the successful Mental Health support group which was initiated last year. In addition we intend to continue to provide individual wellness therapy for students with physical disabilities through a grant from the MSU. These therapies will include massage, reflexology and therapeutic touch. Students who are eligible for this service will be able to access up to one treatment per week for each of the therapy procedures. The Wellness workshops also are planned to continue with an emphasis on stress relief before, during and after exams. There will be one workshop on reflexology, one on massage therapy and one on Aroma Therapy.

Day Planner
We will be handing out a revised and improved day planner to all students with disabilities, and will continue to sell a modified version of the day planner to the general student population. Revenue from the sale will go towards the Jamie Grelich Bursary for students with disabilities.

Staff
We will be reducing the Technology Evangelist position to part time since no additional
funding was provided (e.g., MSU grant).

**Disability Awareness Week**
Disability Awareness Week is again scheduled for the last week of September 2000. The MSU has provided us with a grant to hire two students to coordinate this event. This week will be a scaled down version from last year, but will still include a number of participatory events to help promote disability awareness on campus.

**Psycho-educational Assessments**
The Centre will continue to provide support and assistance to students with tutoring, and the administration of complete psycho-educational assessments. However a fee of $100.00 will be charged for in-house assessments and the BSWD will be used when possible for community referrals. As well, the Programme Co-ordinator (Learning Specialist) will continue to screen students for suspected LD or ADHD and refer for assessment as necessary.

**Attendant Care Programme**
Work will be continuing with representatives of the Ontario March of Dimes and McMaster’s Housing Services to implement an attendant care program at McMaster as we wait for funding for the project.

**Undergraduate Policy**
Along with the Associate Vice-President (Student Affairs), the CSD will continue the development and eventual introduction of an undergraduate policy for students with disabilities. Upon adoption of such a policy, by the University’s Senate, the Centre will also begin to work more actively on awareness activities for faculty, providing information about the policy and strategies on how to effectively accommodate the needs of students with disabilities.

Section 2 - Budget for 2000 - 2001
Please see Appendix IV for the 2000 - 2001 budget.

As mentioned earlier in the report, a number of cost reducing strategies have been planned to eliminate our deficit:

1. **Reduction of hours for Technology Evangelist**
2. **Access BSWD for psycho-educational assessments in the community and charge $100.00 for in-house assessments**
3. **Scale back Disability Awareness week (cost of coordinators will be covered through MSU grant)**
4. **Access bursary where possible for tutors and note takers**
5. **No major promotional campaigns are planned for this year**
Section 3 - Fund for Interpreters, Intervenors, Computerized Note-taking and Real Time Captioning

The Centre has had, as of the date of this report, one request from a deaf student who will be full time in a Graduate program this Fall. This student will require the services of ASL interpreters and computerized note taking. It is unclear at this time how much service the student will require thus all the appropriate reports will be completed by the given deadlines and be submitted to the Ministry for consideration.
Center for Student Development
Organizational Structure of the

Diagram showing the hierarchy and positions within the Center for Student Development.