McMASTER UNIVERSITY
CENTRE FOR STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

2000 - 2001 YEAR END REPORT
to
THE MINISTRY OF TRAINING, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

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

Office for Students with Disabilities, Staffing and Support
In 2000 - 2001 the Centre for Student Development had a compliment of 9 staff. The staff included three disability coordinators, three psychologists, an academic skills coordinator, an administrative assistant, and a receptionist/accommodations assistant. Additionally, the Centre had 3 part-time/temporary staff including one part time personal counsellor, a technology support position, and a psychological intern. As well, the Centre recruited and hired a number of students throughout the year to work on projects or assignments including promotion, Disabilities Awareness Week, a student day planner, and the Centre’s resource room.

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. Caroline was on maternity leave for most of 2000 - 2001, and was replaced by two interim staff: Lisa Bourque and Anne Chaffee.

Marge Marriott, Programme Coordinator (Disability Specialist) provides assistance to students with mental health disabilities, chronic medical disabilities or students 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 three 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 that aspect of their disability which 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.
In 2001 McMaster encountered its first ever labour disruption involving members of the McMaster University Staff Association (MUSA). On March 01, 2001 the staff were advised that a disruption to the workplace would begin. Staffs of the Centre for Student, including those that provide support assistance to students with disabilities, were away from work for five consecutive weeks, returning on April 09. Services to students with disabilities were continued as best as possible, with some disruptions.

**New and Ongoing Support Services and Accommodations**

In 2000 - 2001 the CSD planned, organized and/or introduced a number of new and ongoing initiatives to assist students with disabilities.

**Support Groups (Ongoing)**

A support group for students with mental health disabilities was organized again this year. A number of students participated in this program, which was conducted by one of the program coordinators with the assistance of a peer helper. The MUSA strike disrupted the final month of the group which did not allow for proper closure. However, student feedback indicated that the group was still beneficial, although the number of participants was small. 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 expect to continue this program in 2001 - 2002.

**Peer Helpers (Ongoing)**

The Centre recruited and hired a number of students to work in the peer program assisting students with disabilities. One peer was trained to work with students with learning disabilities and ADHD teaching them study strategies and time management skills. This peer 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.

Three peer helpers were again on board to co-ordinate the Centre’s notetaking program. In its third year, the notetaking program again experienced a high demand for class notes from (paid) volunteers. Due to a number of reasons, the program experienced some pitfalls which we plan to change for the coming year.

Lastly, a new peer position was introduced in the area of transcription services. With the number of custom course packs used by instructors on the rise, the Centre introduced a peer helper position to co-ordinate the conversion of custom course material to alternate format.

**Staff Changes (Ongoing)**

Caroline Cayuga, our Learning Specialist, was away for most of the year on maternity leave. Caroline’s position was aptly filled by two temporary staff: Lisa Bourque and Anne Chaffee. Anne had previously worked for the Centre in 1997-98 when Caroline was on her first maternity leave, and Lisa Bourque had recently completed an internship at the Centre as a personal counsellor and assisting Caroline with LD assessments.
Additionally, some changes occurred with our systems support. Chris Jennings, who had worked with the Centre over the past few years and was most instrumental in the set-up of our accessible web site, decided to return to school to work on a Master’s Degree in Computer Science. The result was Chris worked for a few hours per week to maintain our web site and we hired a student to work part time assisting with hardware/software and general departmental needs.

**Day Planner**
We revised and improved our day planner for students with disabilities this year. Feedback on the planner indicated that it was very well received. We also made up approximately 340 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 folds: raise money for the Jamie Grellich 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. The general student version has become quite popular and is now in high demand.

**Workshops (Revised)**
A series of workshops on wellness and alternative therapy was offered to students with disabilities and non-disabled students on campus. 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 specific themes changed from the previous years sessions to better meet student feedback. The series was centred on how to manage the impact of tests and exams before, during and after the test/exam process. The series included sessions on reflexology and therapeutic touch, massage and aroma therapy.

**Centre for Leadership and Learning Newsletter**
An awareness newsletter was developed for the Centre for Leadership and Learning. The newsletter provided information for faculty about disability services, and tips on how best to accommodate a student with a disability in the classroom. At this point in time we are uncertain as to whether this will be a yearly or bi-yearly publication.

**Wellness Therapy (Ongoing)**
Continued in 2000 - 2001 was a program of providing complimentary therapy to students with physical disabilities. This program funded by the McMaster Students’ Union was again most successful. Students have indicated a marked difference in their ability to manage their course work because of this program. Massage therapy and reflexology/therapeutic touch are offered.
Attendant Care Programme (Ongoing)
Negotiations continued this year to develop an attendant care programme in the residence in conjunction with the March of Dimes (MOD). Discussions continued although there was no commitment forthcoming from the MOH. Deliberations with OMOD were most important due to a student who moved into residence who required attendant assistance. Once a funded program is established with a commitment from the MOH, a program will be set up with consultation from our applied Health Sciences programs.

Notetaking Program (Ongoing)
The Centre offered a notetaking program again in 2000 - 2001. This program utilized the volunteerism of three peer helper students co-ordinating the recruitment, training, and support of notetakers. Additionally, the peers oversaw the distribution of notes and addressed any problems that arose from the delivery of the program. Due to a staff strike during spring months, the program experienced some pitfalls which we intend to address for the coming year. Additionally, a new database was created to track and help match notetakers to courses in which notes were needed, and this database was a welcome addition to our service.

Promotional Campaign
CSD continued its promotional campaign to enhance awareness of services via a series of eye-catching posters.

Research (Completed)
Our Learning Specialist, Caroline Cayuga completed her 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. Presentations of these results were made at CACUSS 2000 at York University and at the LDA International conference in New York City, NY in February, 2001.

Equipment and Technology
Two new scanners and Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software was purchased to assist with the delivery of transcription services. Other upgrades were needed to maintain computers used for the delivery of tests and exams. Additionally, some upgrades were needed for computers in a library resource room to bring them in line with other networked library computers. Additional office furniture and equipment was purchased as needed (e.g. file cabinets, book shelves).
Professional Development and Awareness Activities

Disability Awareness Week
The Centre planned and organized the fourth annual Disabilities Awareness Week. Two students were hired 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 McMaster’s men’s and women’s basketball teams, a movie night, 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 with professionals, and guest lectures including one by the Honourable Lise Thieau - Lieutenant Governor of Quebec. We believe that each of these activities was successful in enhancing awareness.

Presentations
A number of workshops/presentations and consultations 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. Consultations took place with members of various Associate Dean’s office including faculty/staff in the Michael G. DeGroote School of Business, the Midwifery program, and the undergraduate Nursing program. The workshops/presentations and consultations 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 Toronto, the CACUSS 2000 conference in Toronto where a presentation was made on research regarding the criteria used to diagnose learning disabilities, AHEAD 2000 in Kansas City where a presentation was made regarding CSD’s notetaking program, a NASPA workshop on Mental Health Disabilities in Williamsburg W. Virginia, LDA conference in New York City where a presentation was made on research regarding criteria used to diagnose learning disabilities, and the NEADS conference in Ottawa.

New Construction on Campus
Staff of the Centre have been actively involved with the planning and accessible design of new construction projects on campus. The university will be constructing a new residence in the fall to help meet the demands of the double cohort in 2003. Staff of the office were consulted on the accessibility and design of the new facility. Additionally, plans to convert washrooms on campus to single use attendant-style washrooms has included consultations with staff of CSD.
Community Involvement/Committee Representation
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, as well as representation on the Inter-University Disability Issues Association executive, and the MTCU Transcription Services Steering Committee. 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.

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 worked 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 met on a regular basis. This process had been underway since the Spring of 1998. All of the hard work that went into creating the undergraduate policy culminated in Senate's adoption of the new McMaster University "Policy for Academic Accommodation of Undergraduate Students with Disabilities" in February, 2001. This policy is attached as Appendix II.

Following the adoption of the new undergraduate policy, the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies is now reviewing the University's Graduate Policy on Students with Disabilities with the view to streamline the policy and bring it more in line with the undergraduate policy.

See Appendix II for a copy of the new policy.

**Section 2 - Client Statistics**

Please see Appendix III(a) for graphs and charts of 2000 – 2001 statistic, and Appendix III(b) for three year comparisons.

The Centre for Student Development in 2000 - 2001 provided assistance to a total of 341 students with disabilities, an increase of 20.3% over the previous year. This represents the greatest one year increase the Centre has experienced since the early 1990's. Student services included assistance to 12 Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing students, 12 blind or visually impaired students, 106 students with a learning disability or attention deficit disorder, 109 students with chronic medical, psychological or systemic disabilities, 65 students with a physical disability, and 14 students with an acquired brain injury, 23 students with multiple or other disabilities (students not fitting into other specified categories).
**Note taking program**
As mentioned above, the Centre again provided students with note-taking services.

Below is a chart comparing our numbers of users of this service between this year and the last two:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Note takers</th>
<th>Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>98-99</td>
<td>99-00</td>
<td>00-01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 1</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>137</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 40 screenings of students who were suspected of having a learning disability and 33 screened for ADHD or LDAD. Of these, 13 students had no LD or AD and were referred for academic or personal assistance, 4 were referred for mental health testing, and 3 were referred for neuropsychological testing. Of the remaining students 13 were sent for psychoeducational testing, of which 1 was LD/ADHD, 2 had ADHD, 4 had a LD, and 6 were awaiting results (at the time the statistics were compiled). To received an updated psychoeducational assessment, 7 students were screened. Of these, 1 student had no LD, 5 had ADHD, and 1 student was awaiting test results (again, at the time the statistics were compiled).

**Tests and Exams**
In 2000 - 2001 the Centre administered a number of tests or exams on behalf of instructors and the Registrar’s Office. The Centre conducted 603 tests on behalf of instructors, and a total of 79 exams on behalf of the Registrar’s Office. These numbers have greatly increased this year because of our 23% overall increase in student population and again because of our extended office hours.

The Centre was responsible for arranging, with the Registrar’s Office, the administration of all University exams to students with disabilities. In this regard, a total of more than 869 exams were conducted.
Section 3 - Funds for Interpreter, Intervenor, Computerized Note-Taking, Real Time Captioning

The Centre for Student Development assistance to two students who are Deaf – one graduate student, one undergraduate student, and one deafblind student in 2000 – 2001.

The Centre provided interpreter, intervenor and computerized notetaking services to meet these students' needs. Submissions regarding associated costs can be found in Appendix IV.

Section 4 - Financial Statement

Please see Appendix V for the year end financial statement.

During the 1999 - 2000 fiscal year, there was a deficit of more than $8,000 in the Enhanced Accessibility Fund for students with disabilities. This deficit was carried forward to the 2000 – 2001 budget. The Centre also faced a decrease in the allocation from the Ministry when compared to the 99/00 budget. Additionally, the Centre encountered its first Deaf student in a graduate program, and its first ever deafblind student. All these factors combined meant the department faced significant financial challenges in 2000 – 2001.

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 assist in the provision of needed services. There will be peers providing support in a number of areas this year including our three Notetaker Coordinators (who also provide Disability Awareness workshops in Residences), one peer helper assisting students with LD and ADHD, one peer will assist students with library research, two peers will provide transcription services and one peer will co-ordinate volunteer services.

Awareness Presentations
There are no scheduled presentations at this time, however the department is actively involved on a regular basis with presentations to level 1 students in social work, the OT/PT program, and other programs upon request.
Workshops
We hope to continue the successful Mental Health support group which was continued 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. We also plan to hold a workshop on Attention Deficit-Hyperactive Disorders for the general population to present several information regarding this disorder.

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
There will be further changes to the staff this year. Marge Marriott will be seconded to a new leadership programming initiative. The Centre will replace Marge’s position on a temporary basis until the end of May, 2002. Caroline Cayuga is back from maternity leave and will continue in her role on a modified basis, taking some time to spend with her young family, and to concentrate on her registration with the Ontario College of Psychologists. Additionally, we will continue with a half time technology position.

Disability Awareness Week
Due to funding restrictions our annual disability awareness activities have been suspended. The Centre is considering some awareness activities in the second term with support from the McMaster Student’s Union.

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 $200.00 will be charged for in-house assessments and the BSWD or bursary 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.
Section 2 - Budget for 2000 - 2001

Please see Appendix VI for the 2000 - 2001 budget.

McMaster has its first student in a Science program who is blind. The University also has a student who is deafblind. The costs of providing support to these two students alone will be tremendous. Coupled with reductions in MTCU allocations, and increases in the MUSA contract for 2001/2002, the Centre has had to make some difficult decisions with respect to some initiatives. Disabilities Awareness Week has been postponed, and other potential services have again been put on hold.

1. Continued reduction of hours for Technology Evangelist
2. Access BSWD for psycho-educational assessments in the community and charge $200.00 for in-house assessments
3. Significantly scale back Disability Awareness week (cost of coordinators will be covered through MSU grant)
4. Access bursary where possible for tutors and note takers

Section 3 - Fund for Interpreters, Intervenors, Computerized Note-taking and Real Time Captioning

See Appendix IV for details.

The Centre will be providing assistance to two Deaf students (one graduate and one undergraduate), and one deafblind student (undergraduate) in 2001 - 2002.
Organizational Structure of the Centre for Student Development

Associate Vice President
(Student Affairs)
Dr. M. Keyes

Director
(Student Services)
Gina Robinson

Psychologist
Dr. D. Nifakis

Program Co-ordinator
(Learning Specialist)
C. Cayuga
(L. Bourque / A. Chaffee)

Psychologist
Dr. W. Wilkinson
Budget Co-ordinator

Team Leader Program Co-ordinator
(Disability Specialist)
M. Marriott

Program Co-ordinator
(Disability Specialist)
T. Nolan
Budget Co-ordinator

Academic Skills Co-ordinator
Dr. D. Palmer
(P. Burek)

Psychologist
Dr. K. Henry
Communications Co-ordinator

Administrative Assistant
(temporary)
L. Freeman

Administrative Assistant
N. Myers

Receptionist / Accommodations Assistant
J. Shelley

Counsellor
Ozge Akcali

Network Administration
C. Jennings / V. Malik
Appendix II
McMASTER UNIVERSITY
POLICY FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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Appendix 1
INTRODUCTION

1. McMaster University is committed to ensuring that each student is afforded an academic environment that is dedicated to the advancement of learning and is based on the principles of equitable access and individual dignity. The Directions I document, which sets forth the mission, vision and goals of McMaster University, emphasizes the importance of developing “policies that protect academic freedom, reduce barriers to university education, and foster the realization of potential” and of supporting “programs that ensure equal treatment, assist those with special needs,... and provide a welcome environment for all students” (p. 4).

2. To this end, this policy aims:
   
   (a) to foster a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of all persons and to protect the privacy, confidentiality, comfort, autonomy and self-esteem of students with disabilities;
   
   (b) to ensure that students with disabilities are accommodated in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code, and to encourage all students to reach their full academic potential;
   
   (c) to preserve the academic integrity of the University by re-affirming that all students must satisfy the essential requirements of their respective courses and programmes, while at the same time, recognizing that students with disabilities may require reasonable accommodations to enable them to do so;
   
   (d) to reinforce an application process that is based on equitable access to all courses and programmes;
   
   (e) to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the students, instructors, Departments, Faculties and administrative staff in the provision of accommodations.

3. This policy applies to academic issues involving full-time and part-time undergraduate students and undergraduate University applicants. Students enrolled in University-sanctioned outside learning environments (co-op placement, internship, practicum) will first access the policies of the hiring or supervisory agencies (where such policies exist). In the absence of such policies and provided the University has so contracted with the outside learning environments, the students shall have access to the provisions of this policy. In all circumstances, the student shall have access to the policies of the relevant Human Rights Commission.

4. The approach of the University to the provision of academic accommodations involves a collaborative process that imposes certain responsibilities on all of those involved. This policy reflects the shared responsibilities of students with disabilities, instructors, Departments, Faculties and administrative staff in the provision of academic accommodations and the ongoing development of an accessible, open and supportive learning environment.
I PRINCIPLES REGARDING ACCOMMODATION OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

5. Application of The Ontario Human Rights Code

The Ontario Human Rights Code, Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1990, Chapter H.19., states that it is public policy in Ontario to recognize the inherent dignity and worth of every person and to provide for equal rights and opportunities without discrimination. McMaster University is committed to upholding these principles, as they apply to the provision of academic services. Part I, Section 1 of the Code states:

"Every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to services, goods, and facilities, without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, or handicap." 1981,c53,s. 1; 1986,c.64,s.18(1).

6. Definition of Disability

The definition of the term “disability”, for the purposes of this policy, is as defined in the Ontario Human Rights Code. (See Appendix 1, attached)

7. Duty to Provide Evidence of Disability

It is recognized that there is a duty on the student to provide relevant and recent psychological or medical documentation that substantiates his/her disability. The student must also demonstrate that the disability impacts his/her ability to benefit equally from the University’s educational services.

8. Duty to Accommodate

It is recognized that there is an obligation on the University to make its services available in a manner that does not discriminate. This duty involves accommodating students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of The Ontario Human Rights Code. Accommodation involves removing barriers for students with disabilities in a way that respects their dignity and provides them with equality of opportunity. Once accommodated, (and hence provided with an equal opportunity), it is the student’s responsibility to meet the essential requirements of a course/programme.

9. Limitations on the Duty to Accommodate

(a) Undue Hardship - The University is required to accommodate students with disabilities to the point of “undue hardship”. The Ontario Human Rights Code prescribes three (3) factors that are to be considered in assessing whether a requested accommodation would cause undue hardship. These are: (1) cost (2) availability of outside sources of funding, and (3) health and safety requirements.
There may be other factors that are relevant, including, but not limited to, the degree that an accommodation negatively impacts other students, staff and faculty. Costs are considered in the context of the University as a whole, not on the basis of a Department, Faculty or programme. The onus is on the University to prove "undue hardship".

(b) **Essential Requirements** - The University is required to make efforts to reasonably accommodate a student with a disability when the disability precludes the student from fulfilling the essential requirements of a course/programme. In some circumstances, the nature and degree of a disability may mean that no reasonable accommodation would enable an individual to perform the essential requirements of a course/programme. In these cases, the University is not required to accommodate and may refuse accommodations in order to preserve the academic integrity (meaning the essential requirements) of a course/programme. A person cannot be presumed incapable of performing the essential requirements of a course/programme unless an effort has been made to canvass all reasonable options for accommodation. In a university setting, the essential requirements of a course/programme may include, but are not limited to, the knowledge and skills which must be acquired or demonstrated in order for a student to successfully meet the learning objectives of the course/programme. The onus is on the University to prove the essential requirements of a course/programme and that no reasonable accommodations would enable the student to meet those requirements.

10. **Accommodation Specific to Individual**

In fulfilling its obligation to accommodate students with disabilities, the University recognizes that the needs of each student with a disability must be individually assessed to determine the appropriate accommodations. Not all students with the same disability will have the same needs.

11. **Confidentiality**

The University is concerned with protecting the privacy and confidentiality of students with disabilities. At the same time, the University needs sufficient information to reasonably evaluate and respond to a student’s requests for accommodation. For this reason, students are required to provide information concerning the nature of their disability, their needs and restrictions. At times, the accommodation process may require that the student disclose such information to staff and faculty, beyond the Centre for Student Development (CSD), on the basis that they “need-to-know” this information to perform their duties under the terms of this policy. All personal information disclosed to such staff or faculty shall be governed by the "McMaster University Guidelines on Access to Information and Protection of Privacy".
12. **Flexibility**

The provision of accommodations for students with disabilities will require that students, instructors and administrative staff all exercise creativity and flexibility in crafting solutions that both meet the needs of the students, and preserve the essential academic requirements of the University’s courses/programmes.

II **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The provision of academic accommodations is based on a collaborative process that includes many individuals and groups within the University. Effective and open communication is the key to assessing and meeting the needs of all parties in this process.

13. **Roles and Responsibilities of the Centre for Student Development**

CSD is dedicated to the overall development of all students while they are at McMaster. More specifically with regard to students with disabilities, the Centre shall:

(a) provide support, academic, personal and disability counselling to students when requested;

(b) assist and provide information to instructors, Chairs, Associate Deans and other administrative staff as needed;

(c) consult with Associate Deans on a regular basis;

(d) coordinate the requests for, and assist in the provision of, accommodations;

(e) receive and verify a student’s psychological or medical documentation. Such documentation to be provided by an approved and regulated health professional and to be recent and relevant in nature;

(f) ensure that all student information and all medical and psychological documentation is treated confidentially and maintained in individual student files;

(g) review all documentation and consult with each individual student in order to determine if they qualify for services;

(h) inform and consult with various individuals and offices, as required, and in accordance with the process provisions of this policy;

(i) where appropriate, develop and advocate for a proposed accommodation plan with each qualified student based on the student’s needs (as determined by CSD after consultation with the student), and any available course/programme information and requirements;
(j) provide letters outlining the proposed accommodation plan, as required;

(k) educate, when appropriate, students, faculty and administrative staff as to their rights and responsibilities under this policy.

14. **Roles and Responsibilities of Students**

The University recognizes the importance of a student’s experience and knowledge with respect to their disability and its impact on learning. This being the case it is imperative that the student with the disability participate fully in determining the appropriate accommodations.

The students needing an accommodation shall:

(a) prior to registering in a course/programme, consider discussing with CSD, their instructor, and their Department or Faculty, any concerns they may have about whether or not they would be able to meet the essential requirements of a course/programme;

(b) contact CSD about any required accommodations in a timely manner as outlined in Section 25 of this policy;

(c) provide to CSD relevant and recent psychological or medical documentation (from an approved and regulated health professional) to substantiate their disability and any resultant restrictions;

(d) communicate their needs and resultant restrictions in sufficient detail in order for the University to assess their needs and determine the appropriate accommodations;

(e) work with CSD, instructors, and others (for example, academic advisors, Associate Deans, library staff etc.) to develop an appropriate accommodation plan;

(f) follow the procedures outlined in Part III of this policy when an accommodation is required, and comply with CSD’s instructions relating to the implementation of any specific accommodation;

(g) meet with instructors from time to time, as needed, to discuss arrangements for accommodations.

15. **Roles and Responsibilities of Instructors**

Instructors play a vital role in shaping a student’s post-secondary educational experience. An important relationship for many students while at university is the one established between themselves and their instructors, and one which can be the key to success for many students. Although this relationship is very important to all students, it perhaps takes on more importance to students with disabilities whose academic success may rely on good communication with their instructors.
To help facilitate a student's academic success and maintain the University's academic standards for the benefit of all students, instructors shall:

(a) refer all students with disabilities (and/or suspected disabilities) and all requests for accommodation to CSD;

(b) identify, upon request, and with the assistance of their academic department, the essential requirements of a course;

(c) assist students and CSD in determining the manner and extent to which a student's needs can and should be accommodated;

(d) participate, as appropriate, in structuring a suitable accommodation plan that meets the needs of the student's and satisfies the essential requirements of the respective course/programme;

(e) refer any proposed accommodation plan that has substantial financial implications to the Provost in accordance with Section 28 (a) of this policy;

(f) notify the student and CSD if a proposed accommodation plan is not acceptable on the basis that the student, even if reasonably accommodated, as proposed, will not be able to fulfill the essential requirements of the course/programme; continue to work with the student and CSD to explore alternative forms of accommodation which might be acceptable; if unsuccessful, refer the case to the Department Chair (or equivalent) as outlined in Section 28(b) of this policy.

(g) implement the terms of any agreed accommodation plan relying, as required, on the support and resources available from the Department Chair, CSD, the Faculties, the Centre for Leadership in Learning and the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships Office.

16. **Roles and Responsibilities of Department Chairs**

The accommodation of students with disabilities will place some economic demands on the University. In this regard, Department Chairs, in conjunction with Associate Deans and Deans, often act as financial resource managers. In addition, Department Chairs may act as educators and assist instructors to informally resolve accommodation issues. When required by the policy, a Department Chair may review an instructor's decision not to provide accommodation. The Department Chair shall:

(a) provide an opportunity for all faculty members to familiarize themselves with this policy;

(b) ensure that instructors receive the departmental resources and support necessary to implement any accepted accommodation plan;

(c) seek resources from the University, eg., the Provost, CSD, The Centre for Leadership in Learning, and the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships Office to support necessary accommodations;
(d) refer any proposed accommodation plan that has substantial financial implications to the Provost in accordance with Section 28 (a) of this policy;

(e) review, upon a student’s request and in accordance with Section 28(b) of this policy, an instructor’s decision not to provide an accommodation.

17. Roles and Responsibilities of Associate Deans

The Associate Dean or equivalent shall:

(a) work in conjunction with the Department Chairs to ensure that all instructors are made aware of this policy and that the practices associated with the delivery of accommodation services are consistent with this policy;

(b) consult with students and CSD, upon request, when students have first identified their need for accommodation. This may occur prior to registration, following registration, or when a student first approaches CSD with an accommodation request. Discuss with the student and CSD any Department or Faculty concerns about the accommodations and/or how the accommodations relate to the essential requirements of the course/programme;

(c) refer any accommodation plan that has substantial financial implications to the Provost in accordance with Section 28(a) of this policy;

(d) review, upon a student’s request and in accordance with Section 28 (c) and (d) of this policy, a Department Chair’s decision not to provide an accommodation.

18. Roles and Responsibilities of Deans

The Deans shall:

(a) ensure that Departments receive the University resources necessary to implement any accommodation plan.

19. Roles and Responsibilities of the Registrar’s Office

The Registrar’s Office shall:

(a) forward any accommodation requests and documentation provided by a student, before or at the time of registration, to CSD;

(b) coordinate, with support from CSD, all aspects of accommodations required for individual students with disabilities scheduled to write Registrar administered examinations. These include, but are not restricted to, such accommodations as: extra time on exams, separate locations for writing, enlarged exams, provision of a scribe, etc. Ensure that the security measures for such examinations are equivalent to those provided for all other Registrar administered exams;
(c) provide assistance, in consultation with CSD, in implementing other accommodations where the requirements fall within the jurisdiction of the Registrar's Office, for example the provision of special timetabling or classroom use;

(d) make special arrangements for convocation ceremonies if provided with advance notice from the student and CSD, Department Chair, or Associate Dean.

20. Roles and Responsibilities of the Sexual Harassment and Anti-Discrimination Office

The Sexual Harassment and Anti-Discrimination Office ("SHADO") is responsible for the application of the Anti-Discrimination policy. This policy protects all University members from discrimination on the basis of disability. The Office shall:

(a) act as a resource for students, faculty and administrative staff as to their rights and responsibilities under the terms of both this policy and the Anti-Discrimination policy;

(b) assist, whenever appropriate, students, faculty and administrative staff in the informal resolution of accommodation issues.

21. Roles and Responsibilities of Library Services

The Library shall:

(a) make every reasonable effort to provide students with disabilities equal access to information.

22. Roles and Responsibilities of The Centre for Leadership in Learning

The Centre for Leadership in Learning shall:

(a) provide assistance and advice to faculty members related to instructional design, delivery and evaluation methods which may facilitate the academic success of students with disabilities;

(b) identify and circulate, at times, teaching and learning insights related to the provision of academic accommodation for students with disabilities.

III. PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING ACCOMMODATION

23. University Applicants

McMaster encourages applications from students with disabilities. Students with disabilities have successfully completed a wide variety of programmes at McMaster and have made significant academic contributions to this University.
(a) McMaster will, upon request, provide admission information to applicants in alternate forms (Braille, audio tapes etc.) within a reasonable timeframe.

(b) In accordance with general admission procedures, McMaster will accept academically qualified candidates for admission to undergraduate programs by examining each applicant's academic record and the impact of any extenuating circumstances.

(c) Applicants are strongly encouraged to declare their disability in the application process, and to seek assistance in selecting their courses/programmes from CSD and their prospective Faculty (through the Associate Dean's Office).

As with all applicants, those with disabilities are encouraged to select programmes that are appropriate for their skills, abilities, and career goals.

(d) In the event that any questions arise during the application process pertaining to the applicant's ability, even if reasonably accommodated, to fulfill the essential requirements of a programme, the issue will be discussed with the Associate Dean of the applicant's prospective Faculty and CSD. The Associate Dean shall review the essential requirements of the programme and work with the applicant and CSD to determine what, if any, accommodations might be reasonable to enable the applicant to meet the requirements. In the event that the Associate Dean determines that accommodation is not possible, the applicant shall be so informed and other options shall be discussed. Failure of the Associate Dean to raise any objections, should not be interpreted as a guarantee of any sort, that the applicant will, in fact, be able to meet the essential requirements of the programme or any specific course at any time in the future.

(e) In the event that any questions arise during the application process pertaining to the University's ability to reasonably accommodate the applicant without undue financial hardship, the issue will be discussed with the Provost. In the event that the Provost determines that reasonable accommodation is not possible the applicant shall be so informed and other options shall be discussed.

(f) All personal information disclosed in the application process may be used by the appropriate staff and faculty members, (including, but not limited to, CSD, the Associate Dean of the student's Faculty and the Provost), to make decisions relating to admission.

(g) CSD and SHADO are available throughout the admission process to assist, support and counsel students with disabilities, as well as faculty and administrative staff.
24. **Requests for Accommodation**

Students who need academic accommodations should contact CSD. Students may also want to contact their Associate Dean’s Office for assistance. All requests for accommodations made directly to an instructor should be referred to CSD.

25. **Timing of Accommodation Requests**

To ensure that CSD has sufficient time to properly review requests and to coordinate any necessary arrangements, students are responsible for making their requests for accommodations and submitting all required medical documentation as soon as possible each term, or in the case of first year and transfer students, before the commencement of the term. Some accommodations take longer to arrange than others (e.g. sign language interpreters and transcriptions), and students with these types of requests should be particularly cognizant of the timing of their requests. Failure to make a request or supply the required medical documentation in a timely manner, may delay or prevent the implementation of the requested accommodation.

The following are some guidelines to be used by students in filing their material:

(a) First year students and transfer students are encouraged to contact CSD and provide the required information as soon as possible after they receive their offers of admission, or by August 1st of the academic year, whichever comes first.

(b) Returning students are encouraged to contact CSD and provide the required information as soon as possible following completion of registration.

(c) In any event, the required information must be provided each term before the last day for the withdrawal from courses without academic penalty (as published each year in the University Undergraduate Calendar).

(d) Students whose circumstances change or who develop difficulties after the aforementioned dates, should contact CSD and their Associate Dean’s Office immediately.

(e) All students are expected to provide the required information each and every term. Accommodations for new courses/programmes are not made automatically.

(f) All special arrangements for in-class tests should be confirmed with the instructor and/or CSD at least two weeks prior to the test.

26. **Assessment of Requests and Preparation of an Accommodation Plan**

(a) CSD shall review and verify all documentation provided by the student and will also consider any material that the student has pertaining to the course/programme (i.e. the course outline).
(b) If it is the student’s first request for an accommodation in a particular Faculty, CSD shall contact the Associate Dean’s Office to discuss the essential requirements of a programme and possible accommodations, in accordance with Section 23 (e) above.

(c) Subsequent requests for accommodation for a specific course or change of programme shall similarly be discussed with the Associate Dean’s Office and/or the instructor and/or SHADO.

(d) If CSD, following such discussions, determines that accommodations are required, CSD will work with the student to develop a proposed accommodation plan based on the student’s needs (as determined by CSD after consultation with the student) and any available course/programme information and requirements.

(e) CSD shall prepare a letter to the instructor outlining the proposed accommodation plan. In the absence of an agreed proposal, CSD shall notify the instructor of the student’s request and, if appropriate, schedule a meeting with CSD, the student and the instructor to discuss the request.

27. **Delivery and Acceptance of Proposed Accommodation Plan**

The student shall deliver the letter containing the proposed accommodation plan to the instructor. At this time, the student is encouraged to discuss the plan directly with the instructor.

If the instructor agrees with the proposed accommodation plan, or a revised plan, the instructor shall sign the letter, with any agreed revisions and have the student return it to CSD within seven days of its receipt.

28. **Review of Accommodation Plan if Not Accepted**

Throughout the review process the parties are encouraged to consult with CSD and SHADO in their efforts to informally resolve any accommodation issues.

(a) If at any time during the review process, the instructor, the Chair or the Associate Dean decide that there are substantial financial implications to granting the requested accommodation, the plan should be forwarded directly to the Provost. The Provost shall review the plan and if he/she determines that the plan will not result in undue financial hardship to the University, the matter shall be returned to the appropriate Faculty. On the other hand, if the Provost determines that the plan cannot be implemented without undue financial hardship to the University, he/she shall notify CSD in writing, within ten days of being contacted, that the accommodation shall not be granted. The student may appeal the decision of the Provost in accordance with Section 29(b) of this policy.
If the instructor does not agree with the proposed accommodation plan, (based on
the principles outlined in Section I of this policy and excluding the financial
implications of the plan as contained in paragraph (a) above), the instructor shall
discuss the matter with the Chair of the Department within seven days of the
receipt of the accommodation request.

If the Chair, after such consultations, agrees with the terms of the proposed
accommodation plan, or a revised plan, the accommodation shall be granted
(subject to Section 29(a) below) and the Chair shall so advise CSD and the
student. However, if the Chair agrees with the instructor that the accommodation
is not appropriate, the Chair shall forward all relevant documentation, within ten
days of being contacted by the instructor, to the Associate Dean for his/her
review.

The Associate Dean shall, in turn, review all relevant documentation and consult
with the student and other appropriate offices in an effort to resolve the matter. If
the Associate Dean concludes that the student should be accommodated in
accordance with the proposed accommodation plan, or a revised plan, the
accommodation shall be granted (subject to Section 29(a) below) and the
Associate Dean shall notify CSD, the instructor and the Chair of the Department.

If the Associate Dean concludes that the accommodation is not appropriate, the
Associate Dean shall notify CSD in writing within ten days of being contacted by
the Chair, that the accommodation shall not be granted. A copy of this letter
shall be sent to the student, the instructor, and the Chair of the student’s Faculty.

29. Appeal by Instructor and Student

(a) Appeal by Instructor - If the Chair or the Associate Dean, in accordance with
Sections 28(c) or 28(d) above, agree to an accommodation plan, the instructor
may appeal the decision, within 48 hours of receipt thereof, to the Dean of the
Faculty.

(b) Appeal by Student - The student may appeal the decision of the Associate Dean,
the Dean, or the Provost within three weeks of receipt thereof, to either:
the Senate Board for Student Appeals as outlined in the Student Appeal
Procedures or, a Tribunal as provided in the Anti-Discrimination Policy.

30. Accommodation Pending Review and Appeal

(a) The University recognizes that decisions involving accommodations must be
made expeditiously to assist students in their on-going courses. Once an
accommodation plan is approved, it shall be implemented promptly. In the event
that a request for accommodation is denied and an appeal is pending, the
instructor and CSD shall review the accommodation plan to determine what
portion, if any, of the plan it is reasonable to implement immediately. Any such
accommodations shall remain in place until there is a final disposition of all
appeals.
(b) Where a student has been accommodated pending the final disposition of all appeals, and such disposition is that the accommodation should not be granted, an alternative means of fairly determining the student's course mark shall be determined by the instructor and the Associate Dean and communicated to the student. In some circumstances, the Associate Dean may, in his/her discretion, agree to withdraw a student retroactively from a course.
Appendix I
Appendix III (a)
Students by Disability category (2000-2001)

- Others
- Multiple
- Mobility
- Learning Disability / ADD
- Deaf/Deafened/Hard of Hearing
- Chronic Medical/Psychological
- Blind/Vision Impaired
- Acquired Brain Injury (cognitive disability)

Number of Students

- Mobility 19%
- Learning Disability/ADD 31%
- Deaf/Deafened/Hard of Hearing 4%
- Chronic Medical/Psychological 32%
- Multiple 1%
- Others 5%
- Acquired Brain Injury (cognitive disability) 4%
- Blind/Vision Impaired 4%
**Student by Disability and Faculty 2000 - 2001**

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<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Acquired Brain Injury</th>
<th>Blind/ Visually Impaired</th>
<th>Chronic Medical/ Psychological</th>
<th>Deaf/ Deafened/ Heard of Hearing</th>
<th>Learning Disability/ ADD</th>
<th>Mobility</th>
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Appendix III (b)
Three years comparison of Note Taking Program
Three year Comparison by Disability Group and Total Students

![Bar chart showing comparison of disability groups over three years]

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>Chronic Medical/Psychological</th>
<th>Deaf/Deafened/Hard of Hearing</th>
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Statistics for Tests and Exams: (Three years comparison)

Tests and Exams at CSD

Registrar Administered Tests and Exams for CSD Student in other locations