Steering Committee
Annual Report
Academic Year 2015 - 2016

STOCKTON
UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL
DIVERSITY & EQUITY

New Jersey's Distinctive Public University | Stockton is an AA/EO institution.

STOCKTON
UNIVERSITY
NEW JERSEY'S DISTINCTIVE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY

Galloway, NJ

STEERING COMMITTEE
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

CO-CHAIRS

Dr. Valerie Hayes ....Esq., Chief Officer/ADA-504 Coordinator, co-chair

Robert Ross .... Assistant Director of Counseling & Health Services, co-chair

MEMBERS (in alphabetical order)

Thomas Chester .... Director of Human Resources

Pamela Cross ....Coordinator Skills Center Writing Lab

Stephen Davis ....Associate Dean of Students

Diane Epps ....Manager for Institutional Diversity and Equity

Dr. Susan Fahey...Associate Professor of Criminal Justice

Dr. Linda Feeney .... Director of E-Learning

Dr. Thomas Grites..Assistant Provost – Academic Support Services

Dr. Priti Haria ....Assistant Professor of Education

Robert Heinrich .... Chief Information Officer

Donald Hudson... Associate Vice President Facilities & Construction

Dr. Jonathan Johnson .... Director of the Office of Community Wellness & Health Education

Joseph LoSasso...Registrar

Dr. William Quain ....Associate Professor of Hospitality & Tourism Management

Meaghan Resta ....Manager of Publications & Special Projects

Dr. Laurie Shanderson .... Assistant Dean Health Sciences

Mary Beth Sherrier .... Assistant Dean SOBL

Edna Ortiz, Professional Services Specialist in the Office of Institutional Diversity & Equity is staff person for the ADA-504 Rehabilitation Act Steering Committee.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Stockton University is committed to building a community that values differences of race, religion, gender, ethnicity, national origin, socio-economic status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, age, ability or disability. We accept our responsibility to create and preserve an environment that is free from prejudice and discrimination.

OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL DIVERSITY AND EQUITY

The Office of Institutional Diversity & Equity oversees Stockton's progress towards equity, diversity and inclusion through its leadership and collaboration with members of the University community. The office oversees this progress through Stockton's non-discrimination policies, which are based within federal and state non-discrimination laws. The office handles concerns and complaints, particularly those related to harassment and other forms of prohibited discrimination under Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace and Student Policy Prohibiting Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination in the Academic/Educational Environment. In the interest of shared governance, the Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity engaged the members of the University community in furthering the work of equity and diversity at Stockton. The office coordinates Stockton's compliance with Title IX, ADA and Section 504 compliance. The Chief Officer for Institutional Diversity and Equity is Stockton's ADA/504 Coordinator.

INTRODUCTION

In compliance with the New Jersey Law against Discrimination N.J.S.A 10:5-3 et seq. and the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 42 U.S.C. §1211 (8), it is the policy of Stockton University ("Stockton") to ensure equal employment opportunities for qualified applicants and employees with disabilities and to provide reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals with a disability who are employees or applicants for employment. Every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate properly documented special needs.

Located in The Wellness Center, the Learning Access Program is Stockton's student disability support services office. Its role is to educate, advocate and facilitate equal access for students while maintaining a welcoming, inclusive and accessible University community. The LAP upholds and extends compliance standards set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act in all of its operational policies, procedures and practices.

The Office of Human Resources facilitates reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities. The Guidelines for Requesting Reasonable Accommodations describes the ways in which applicants for employment and employees with disabilities seek accommodations.

STOCKTON ADA-REHABILITATION ACT STEERING COMMITTEE

The Stockton ADA-Rehabilitation Act Steering Committee (Steering Committee) is charged with providing ongoing assistance to the Chief Officer/ADA-504 Coordinator in coordinating Stockton's effort to ensure that its (1) living, learning and working environments are accessible to persons with disabilities and (2) procedures, practices and plans for addressing disability issues are responsive to the current understanding of the ADA and Rehabilitation Act requirements.

The Steering Committee has five (5) subcommittees that subcommittees meet between full Steering Committee meetings.

1. The Academic Access subcommittee identifies the needs of students with disabilities, reasonable academic accommodations and how best to incorporate the concept of universal design in Stockton's academic spaces, with recommendations.

2. The Policies/Procedures subcommittee reviews existing University policies and procedures to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). When appropriate or as needed, the subcommittee will revise existing handbooks and procedures pertaining to students and employees with disabilities.

3. The Facilities/Parking subcommittee identifies accessibility issues related to Stockton facilities and parking. This subcommittee might interface in appropriate ways with other identified Stockton committees addressing similar issues.

4. The Technology subcommittee identifies technology accessibility issues related to technology which include, but may not be limited to, E-learning, websites, etc.

5. The Communication subcommittee identifies ways in which the work of the Steering Committee is publicized to the University community.

The Steering Committee held its first meeting on April 17, 2015. Meetings of the full Steering Committee are held four times a year: September, November, February and April.

REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973, AS AMENDED

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehab Act) as amended, prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs that receive federal financial assistance.

Section 503 of the Rehab Act prohibits employment discrimination based on disability and requires affirmative action in the hiring, placement and advancement of people with disabilities, largely by federal contractors or subcontractors. Section 504 of the Rehab Act makes it illegal for programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance to discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities.

Section 504 requires reasonable accommodation for employees and students with disabilities, effective communication with people who have hearing or vision disabilities, and accessible new construction and alterations. Section 508 requires electronic and information technology to be accessible to people with disabilities, including members of the public.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as amended prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in employment, transportation, public accommodation, communications and governmental activities. The ADA also establishes requirements for telecommunications relay services. There are five federal agencies that enforce the ADA.

1. Department of Labor – provides publications and other technical assistance on basic ADA requirements.

2. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces regulations covering employment.

3. Department of Transportation enforces regulations governing transit.

4. Federal Communications Commission enforces regulations covering telecommunication services.

5. Department of Justice enforces regulations governing public accommodations and state and local government services.

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[1] Accessible information technology system is one that can be operated in a variety of ways and does not rely on a single sense or ability of the user (Source: https://www.disability.gov/rehabilitation-act-1973/).
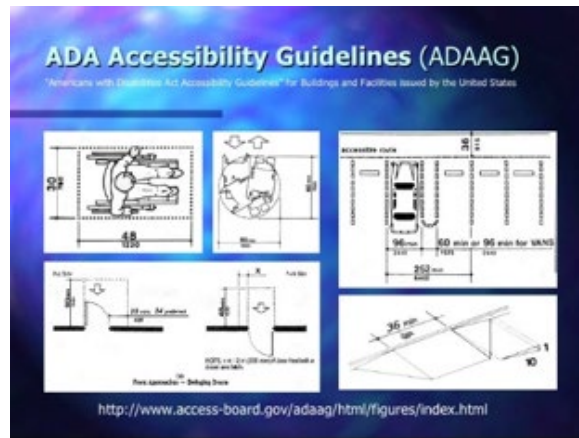
The Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines provides guidance on the design, construction and alteration of public facilities in order to ensure that these facilities are readily accessible and usable by persons with disabilities. With facility alterations to a place of public accommodation, to the maximum extent feasible the path of travel to the altered area must be readily accessible and usable by persons with disabilities.

STEERING COMMITTEE CONNECTION TO STOCKTON'S STRATEGIC THEMES

Stockton is committed to fostering a climate of lifelong learning that challenges and continually transforms all members of the Stockton community. The Steering Committee's work, as a whole, connects to all four strategic themes of learning, engagement, global perspectives and sustainability.

Subcommittees

The Academic Access subcommittee identifies the needs of students with disabilities, reasonable academic accommodations and how best to incorporate the concept of universal design in Stockton's academic spaces, with recommendations.

Strategic Themes: Learning, Engagement and Sustainability

The Policies/Procedures subcommittee reviews existing University policies and procedures to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). When appropriate or as needed, the subcommittee will revise existing handbooks and procedures pertaining to students and employees with disabilities.

Strategic Themes: Learning, Engagement and Sustainability

The Facilities/Parking subcommittee identifies accessibility issues related to Stockton facilities and parking. This subcommittee might interface in appropriate ways with other identified Stockton committees addressing similar issues.

Strategic Themes: Learning and Engagement

The Technology subcommittee identifies technology accessibility issues related to technology which include, but may not be limited to, E-learning, websites, etc.

Strategic Themes: Learning and Global Perspectives

The Communication subcommittee identifies ways in which the work of the Steering Committee is publicized to the University community.

Strategic Themes: Learning, Engagement, and Sustainability

Academic Access Subcommittee
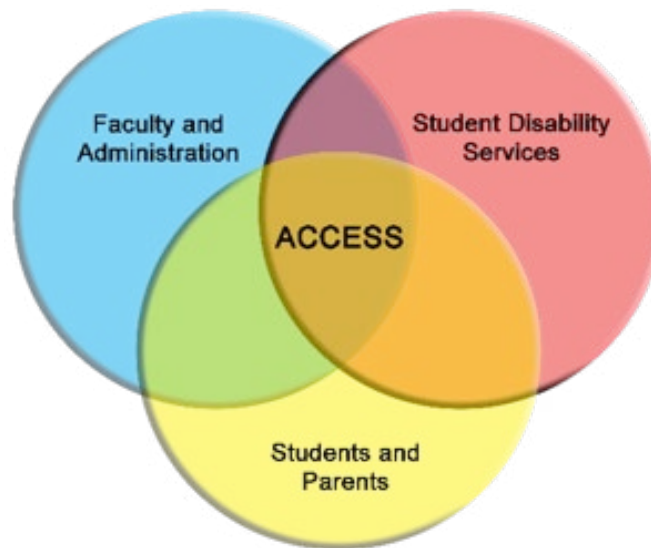
Members: Mary Sherrier, Dr. Priti Haria, Stephen Davis, Dr. Thomas Grites, Pamela Cross, Robert Ross and Dr. Valerie Hayes, Esq.

The Learning Access Program hosted five (5) Best Practice webinars addressing significant ADA and Rehabilitation Act compliance issues and questions faced by colleges and universities. Several of the webinars were available for replay.

Webinar 1: Managing the Testing Environment

Webinar 2: Documentation Standards: Is there a safe harbor left

Webinar 3: The Unique Landscape for Medical and Allied Health Programs

Webinar 4: Designing Effective Emerging Technology Procedures

Webinar 5: Legal Updates and Compliance Issues on the Horizon

Course syllabi typically contain a notice about accommodating students with disabilities; however, the notice varied in content. This subcommittee drafted an accessibility statement that faculty could place in their course syllabi that would be consistent across the board.

Future Goals

- Develop live and online training for faculty and staff
- Encourage faculty to incorporate the concept of Universal Design for Learning and Instruction
- Develop consistent syllabus statement used by all
- Develop faculty questionnaire to assess knowledge and to guide future training

Policies and Procedures Subcommittee

Members: Robert Ross, Thomas Chester and Joseph LoSasso

This subcommittee drafted a policy on Service and Emotional Support Animals, which was presented to the Board of Trustees for first reading at its July 6, 2016 meeting.

Future Goals
- To work with the Accessibility Work Group's Policies and Procedures subgroup to develop procedures that guide the campus community on accessibility matters.
- Update LAP's faculty/staff procedures handbook.

Policies and Procedures Subcommittee

Members: Stephen Davis, Dr. Susan Fahey and Donald Hudson, and Diane Epps.

Note: As the domain of this subcommittee involves the physical facilities which often require long-term planning, financial commitments and construction projects, progress on addressing the following areas of concern may be slower than other subcommittees.

Ongoing Projects (2015-2016) include the following

- Increase the overall supply of ADA compliant parking space to meet demand; minimize distance and provide a more direct route to main buildings. Additional parking added on Pomona Road to compensate for the loss of parking due to construction of the new Unified Science Center and academic building.

- Improve concrete paths leading to the Performing Arts Center (PAC) and West Quad. These improvements will be accomplished through funding from the Capital Improvement Funds.

- Improve signage requirements for visually impaired, such as font and placard size, placement of placard, and the addition of Braille.

- Change in the amount of time a door remains open and the amount of pressure needed to open automatic doors to meet compliance.

- Redesign of restrooms to provide accessible facilities.

- Recommendations were made to install a new, user-friendly chair lift for access to the Experimental Theater.

Lactation Rooms and All-Gender Bath Rooms

The Facilities/Parking subcommittee of the Steering Committee identifies accessibility issues related to Stockton facilities and parking. In its deliberations, the Facilities/Parking subcommittee also discussed all-gender restrooms and lactation rooms, both of which are Title IX issues.

The F-Wing Lactation Room was renovated as a result of conversations with students, faculty and staff about the physical conditions of the then existing lactation room. The renovation of the F-Wing Lactation Room was incorporated into and occurred simultaneously with the renovation plan for the first floor restrooms in F-Wing.

Pictures of the Renovated Lactation Room – Lower F Wing

Technology Subcommittee

Members: Dr. Susan Fahey, Dr. Linda Feeney, Robert Heinrich, and Diane Epps.

The subcommittee with the assistance of the Office of E-Learning offered a six-week Access MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) "Designing and Teaching Courses for All Learners" sponsored by EDUCAUSE and SUNY Empire State.

During this six-week course, participants were introduced to concepts to learn how to:
- Recognize and address challenges faced by students with disabilities related to access, success and completion.
- Articulate faculty and staff roles in reducing barriers for students with disabilities.
- Apply the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in designing accessible learning experiences.
- Analyze the benefits of Backward Design when developing learning experiences.
- Use Section 508 standards and WCAG 2.0 guidelines to create accessible courses.
- Determine which tools and techniques are appropriate based on course content.

The Technology Subcommittee supplemented the MOOC with roundtable discussions on February 25, March 9, March 24 and April 6.

Other subcommittee activities included reviews of the following items and resources for further information and discussion:
- Use of Alternative Online Tools in Instruction Document
- Purchasing procedures, suggesting 504 and 508 compliance language for inclusion in RFPs
- Sample Voluntary Product Accessibility Template
- Vendor Accessibility Resource Center
- Accessibility of Third Party Tools

The subcommittee also discussed the possibility of a Faculty Institute for Universal Design in Summer 2017.

The subcommittee also collaborated on the University's response to a survey developed by EDUCAUSE for input on the U.S. Department of Justice Web Accessibility Regulations.

Accessibility Work Group

The Accessibility Work Group ("AWG") was formed specifically to gain more insight into the Atlantic Cape Community College consent decree. The AWG was an extension of the Technology subcommittee; however, the AWG's work was incorporated into appropriate subcommittees of the Steering Committee.

Communications Subcommittee

Members: Mary Sherrier, Dr. Thomas Grites, Dr. Laurie Shanderson and Dr. Valerie Hayes, Esq.

This subcommittee prepared content for an ADA/504 Steering Committee webpage.

Future Goals
- Develop accessibility newsletters

STOCKTON UNIVERSITY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY INSTITUTION