

Item	6.2
Approved by	UOIT Board of Governors
Last approved	June 2010

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

I. PREAMBLE

UOIT is committed to creating a campus community that is inclusive of all individuals and ensures equal opportunity among its members to experience success in their academic and/or employment endeavours with the institution. The university recognizes that successful learning and employment outcomes are the result of shared responsibility and commitment on the part of students, employees, faculty and administrative staff. This policy is written with consistent with UOIT's values of integrity and respect, honesty and accountability, and intellectual rigour.

1. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to establish standards for ensuring that all students, employees and faculty of UOIT experience an optimally accessible learning and working environment.

2. Definitions

For the purpose of this Policy:

- a. **"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)
- b. **"Essential Requirements"** - The essential requirements or academic integrity of a course/program 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/program.
- c. **"Undue Hardship"** - The Ontario Human Rights Code prescribes three factors that are to be considered in assessing whether a requested accommodation would cause undue hardship. These are: cost; availability of outside sources of funding; and, 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.

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3. Basic Principles

a. 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. UOIT is committed to upholding these principles, as they apply to the provision of academic services. Part I, Section I of the Code states: "Every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to services, goods, and facilities, without

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discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, or disability." 1981,c53, s. 1; 1986,c.64,s.a8(1).

b. Flexibility

Consideration for the individual will prevail. Faculty and administrative staff will operate with flexibility where required on matters regarding accessibility.

c. Protection of Privacy

UOIT is concerned with protecting the privacy of students, faculty and employees with disabilities. At the same time, UOIT needs sufficient information to reasonably evaluate and respond to a student's, faculty's or employee's request for accommodation. For this reason, students, faculty and employees 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 Students with Disabilities (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 UOIT guidelines on Access to Information and Protection of Privacy.

d. Duty to Provide Evidence of Disability

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

e. Duty to Accommodate

Without undue hardship to the university, all students, employees and faculty with disabilities shall receive, in a way that respects their independence and dignity and encourages integration and equality of opportunity, those accommodations required to allow them an equal opportunity to experience success.

f. Dispute Resolution

Means shall exist for raising concerns and for determining resolution of disputes concerning matters regarding accessibility.

In the event of ambiguity in the interpretation or application of this Policy, the matter should be resolved by resort to these basic principles.

II. POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Compliance with Legislation

All University policies, procedures and practices regarding accessibility will comply with applicable federal and provincial legislation such as the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

2. Accommodations

UOIT will make every effort to accommodate the particular needs of self-identified individuals providing the accommodation does not;

- a. Exceed undue hardship;
- b. Alter the essential requirements of a programme or course;

- c. Threaten the integrity of contracts of employment by significantly altering essential job requirements or responsibilities;
- d. Position the university in violation of any existing legislation.

3. Facilities

All university facilities will be physically and technologically accessible within the limits of physical and financial resources.

4. Academic and Employment Access

- a. UOIT will monitor admissions policies and procedures to ensure that disability related circumstances for students who are otherwise academically qualified, are weighed in the process.
- b. The University will monitor employment postings to ensure that they support and encourage all qualified applicants including those with disabilities.

5. Responsibilities

UOIT is responsible for providing an accessible learning and working environment that includes:

- a. Appropriate support services for persons with disabilities;
- b. The promotion of awareness of accessibility legislation and the promotion of a positive attitude towards persons with disabilities;
- c. Regular Accessible Customer Service training, available in a variety of formats, for all UOIT employees (including administrators, faculty and staff), volunteers, agents, contractors and others who deal with the public or third parties, and those involved in developing customer service policies, practices and procedures. The university will keep accurate, up-to-date records of the training provided, including the dates training is provided and the number of persons trained;
- d. The provision of academic accommodations involving a collaborative process which 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;
- e. Notice of the availability, upon request, of documents relating to the provision of goods and services for persons with disabilities;
- f. The provision of a mechanism which allows the public to provide feedback on the manner in which the university provides programs, goods and services to persons with disabilities, and details the university's process for receiving and responding to feedback including timelines and contact information;
- g. Accommodation for persons requiring the assistance of guide dogs, service animals, support persons or assistive devices as per the requirements set out by the AODA Customer Service Standards;
- h. The establishment and maintenance of an Accessibility Working Group (AWG) responsible for addressing and advising on university wide accessibility concerns and recommending changes to policies in this area.

APPENDIX 1

The Ontario Human Rights Code defines "Disability" as:

- a. Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- b. A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- c. A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- d. A mental disorder; or
- e. An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

APPENDIX 2

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) includes five regulations:

1. Customer Service
2. Transportation (under review)
3. Information and Communications (under review)
4. Employment (under review)
5. Build Environment (under review)

UOIT will review its policies, procedures and practices on a regular basis to ensure ongoing compliance with the standards under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).