PRESIDENTIALLY APPOINTED COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY PROMOTION

Annual Report 2016 - 2017

ACCESSIBLE OHIO: Inspiring Inclusion at Ohio University
A Progress Report for implementing the Ohio University Disability Strategic Plan for Inclusion and Accessibility and fulfilling the City/University MOU to reduce barriers for persons who live with disabilities in our community

Submitted to Interim President David Descutner and Mayor Steve Patterson
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

President Roderick McDavis charged the Presidentially Appointed Committee on Disability and Accessibility Promotion (PACDAP) to lead Ohio University’s efforts in implementing the University Disability Strategic Plan for Inclusion and Accessibility (Strategic Plan). Prepared as a visionary document for 2014-2024, the Strategic Plan’s priorities and initiatives provide an overarching direction for Ohio University to advance the work of inclusion and accessibility. FY 2016-17, the second year of its implementation, marked a significant time for enhancing individuals’ awareness of accessibility and inclusion at a department level, as well as improving access within OHIO’s built environment, information technology, educational environment and support services across the university.

The Strategic Plan’s six priorities are: 1) Leadership, 2) Assessment, 3) Inclusion, 4) Communication, 5) Universal Design and Assistive Technology, and 6) Resources and Funding. As the Strategic Plan’s steering committee, PACDAP establishes the priorities and identifies the charges, team membership and tasks for the year’s progress. During FY 2016-17, PACDAP oversaw four implementation teams (Leadership, Communication, Information Technology Accessibility Policy Implementation Team, and Universal Design – Facilities), and the new Accessibility Liaisons group.

Centered within all discussions is the guiding question: Can everyone access our facilities, programs, and services? Using a social model of disability, institutional conversations focus on how we can proactively make decisions that promote accessibility and inclusion and minimize barriers that inhibit access to our community’s offerings.

FY2016-17 Highlights

PACDAP Steering Committee

PACDAP met regularly with co-chairs for each of the implementation teams and the Accessibility Liaisons, to hear about progress made and to provide support and guidance as teams fulfilled their charges. These meetings also allowed for natural, cross-team collaboration enriching each team’s work product.

Leadership Implementation Team

The Leadership Implementation Team launched a university-wide Department Self-Assessment for Inclusion and Accessibility. Designed as a teaching tool, the self-assessment provided an opportunity for many departments to discuss the concept of inclusion and accessibility. By doing so, departments could begin
identifying simple, no-cost ways to improve their own processes and practices to reduce barriers for students, employees and community members living with disabilities.

One hundred thirteen (113) departments responded to the self-assessment. Patton College of Education graduate students coded the data which is being reviewed this summer to prepare reports and recommendations to University Leadership and key areas.

**Communication**

The Communication Implementation Team fulfilled an important function in both highlighting the work accomplished by the other implementation teams, but also communicating stories about students and staff living with disabilities, “making it real” to our community.

**Information Technology Accessibility Policy Implementation Team (ITAP)**

As an equal opportunity educational institution, Ohio University is committed to providing equal access to its programs and services, including courses, using accessible technology. Last year’s Universal Design & Assistive Technology Team (UDAT) prepared a draft policy for Information Technology Accessibility. This year, the Information Technology Accessibility Policy Implementation Team (ITAP) finalized the draft policy for procuring accessible information technology. The policy is in the Executive Staff Policy Committee’s final review process, with anticipated completion by the end of the summer. The Information Technology Accessibility policy will require an accessibility review for purchases of hardware, software and third-party vendor services. As a result of this policy, Ohio University will have infrastructure necessary for future efforts in web accessibility and web content accessibility.

Additionally, ITAP reviewed and identified the assistive technology resources available on campus; worked with university departments to prepare a policy process flow and web accessibility guidelines based on federal WCAG 2.0 standards; and provided next steps within the broader umbrella of information technology accessibility.

**Universal Design – Facilities (UDF)**

In addition to referencing ADA standards, Universal Design – Facilities Implementation Team employed universal design processes and concepts to identify recommendations that will be provided to the Design Standards Committee for consideration. Recommendations focus on improving accessibility in 1) paths of travel and doorways, 2) classroom design, 3) accessible restrooms, and 4) the emergency blue light system used at the university.

One recommendation is for the University to review its standard practice of installing interior door closers for new construction projects. Research indicated that individuals had removed these closers themselves in private residence hall bathrooms to improve accessibility and that, in many cases, the closers are not necessary unless they are required for security, safety, energy, or other considerations. Currently closers are installed on every door during new construction costing approximately $300 per door. In reviewing the door closer decisions for the recent McCracken Hall renovations, the University could have saved $27,000.

**Accessibility Liaisons (AL)**

Accessibility Liaisons represent a critical voice in the work of inclusion and accessibility, that of persons who live with disabilities or who understand disability impact. During their inaugural year, the Accessibility Liaisons served as resources to OHIO departments such as the Alden Library, Instructional Innovation, and Parking and Transportation Services. With a keen understanding of disability impact, this group of students, faculty and staff provided personal insight and suggestions for improving access to the facilities, programs and services.
provided on campus, “making real” the need for working toward a more accessible and inclusive environment. Their recommendations often were no/low cost, and even cost-saving, solutions which will benefit future community members whether or not they live with disabilities.

One example of this group’s impact was Transportation Services launch of a new texting service for all students to access rides after an Accessibility Liaison who is Deaf pointed out that phone service did not provide an accessible option for persons who are unable to use a regular telephone to communicate.

The University and City of Athens MOU’s agreement expresses the City and University’s desire to collaborate in identifying ways to educate our community about inclusion and accessibility and to reduce barriers for persons living with disabilities. In furtherance of the university’s cooperation, the ALs served as the external contact with the Athens City Commission on Disabilities. The City Commission is currently developing an Accessibility Audit to assess and support uptown Court Street businesses’ efforts toward inclusion and accessibility. Through the MOU, it is anticipated that the AL’s will have other opportunities for such partnerships which will be of mutual benefit to our community.

Other University Inclusion and Accessibility Efforts

**OHIO ADA Transition Plan 2018**

Under the project management leadership of University Planning and Space Management (UPSM), OHIO is hiring a consultant to prepare the OHIO ADA Transition Plan 2018. This document will fulfill our federal obligation under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act to identify the physical structures and pathways that limit access to programs and services and provide direction for remediation. The final report will identify barriers to compliance, align with the current Capital Improvement Plan where appropriate, and establish a timeframe for barrier removal.

**Office for Information Technology**

As part of OHIO’s efforts to provide accessible infrastructure and web content, OIT has hired a new Web Accessibility Coordinator and is launching a three-year university-wide conversion to Drupal, an accessible content management system.

**Universal Design – Learning**

Following the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) review process, Student Accessibility Services worked with seven faculty participants from six different colleges to explore Universal Design in Learning (UDL). Faculty reported that UDL enhanced the level of student engagement, led to deeper mastery of content, decreased need for individual accommodations, and better supported students with disabilities as well as international students.

**Recommendations for 2017-2018**

PACDAP continues to review the progress made to date and develop plans for 2017-2018.

Considerations include:

- Continuing to review the Department Self-Assessment data and determine next steps, one of which is to create a team to support university departments in meeting their goals in training, service provision, policy and procedure review, and communication;
• Launching a Universal Design in Learning project, following the pilot project with AQIP;
• Augmenting the Communication Team efforts to include the coordination of communication at the College and planning unit level, to encourage stories at a “local” level focusing on inclusion and accessibility;
• Supporting the next steps in implementing the new Information Technology Accessibility Policy, Web Accessibility and identifying resources for the subsequent phase of web content accessibility;
• Establishing a group to create “personae,” descriptions of fictitious persons representing “real” circumstances encountered by people with various disabilities. The personae would provide a vehicle for thinking through problem-solving related to construction, learning environments and teaching styles, and access to programs and services;
• “Pausing” the Universal Design – Facilities Team during the creation of the OHIO ADA Transition Plan 2018 and recommending that the subcommittee researching universal design in classrooms be integrated into a previously existing Classroom Task Force led by senior leaders in Instructional Innovation and University Planning and Space Management;
• Extending Strategic Plan implementation outreach to include more regional campus participants; and
• Addressing the principles described in the “Inclusion” and “Assessment” Priorities directly with university departments without establishing named Implementation Teams.

Acknowledgements

As the saying goes, “It takes a village...” to undertake many worthwhile efforts, including bringing an awareness about inclusion and accessibility to the forefront of decision-making and to aim high in seeking change. Our goal is to empower and educate people throughout the university to become the voice of positive change within their own sphere of influence.

Many thanks to the OHIO leadership, to the City of Athens leadership and City Commission on Disabilities for their continued support and involvement in moving this work forward. The accomplishments enumerated in this document would not have happened without the many university-wide partners engaged in this work: the PACDAP Steering Committee for providing guidance, insight and leadership in designing the implementation process; the implementation team co-chairs for their organizational acumen and functional expertise; the team membership for their commitment to accessibility and willingness to go above and beyond to move forward accessibility and inclusion for persons living with disabilities; and to the Accessibility Liaisons for openly initiating improvements, enhancing current efforts, and contributing to the progress being made.

On behalf of the PACDAP steering committee, we look forward to expanding the university’s efforts to be more accessible and inclusive for persons living with disabilities.

Dianne Bouvier, PhD
PACDAP Chair
Director for Equal Opportunity and Accessibility
ADA/504 Coordinator
University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance

June 8, 2017
STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

PACDAP Steering Committee

2016-17 PACDAP Membership
Appointed by the President, PACDAP membership is selected to provide representation of functional areas (ADA Coordinator, facilities, academic areas, administrative roles that are responsible for incorporating ADA compliance into their units, those who provide ADA accommodations to students and staff) and persons living with disabilities.

- Dianne Bouvier, Director for Equal Opportunity and Accessibility, ADA/504 Coordinator, Office of University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance, chair
- LuAnn Bowman, Chief Financial & Administrative Officer, College of Engineering and Technology
- Carey Busch, Assistant Dean, Student Accessibility
- Brad Cohen, Senior Vice Provost for Instructional Innovation
- Lisa Koch, Instructor, American Sign Language, Communication Sciences & Disorders
- Carolyn Lewis, Instructor, School of Communication Studies; Director and General Manager Emerita, WOUB Center for Public Media, Scripps College of Communication
- Greg Robertson, Associate Vice President for Architecture, Design and Construction
- JW Smith, Associate Professor, School of Communication Studies, Scripps College of Communication

PACDAP Charge
To oversee the forward movement of the Disability Strategic Plan, including:
- Determining the approach for addressing priorities
- Ensuring alignment to compliance priorities and advancing accountability
- Coordinating information on the Plan
- Communicating actions and information
- Making revisions or updates to the Plan

University Disability Strategic Plan for Inclusion and Accessibility
Word and pdf versions of the full strategic plan are available from this site: https://www.ohio.edu/equity-civil-rights/strategic-plan.cfm
STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION TEAM REPORTS

The following reports provide overviews for each of the current implementation teams, the related Strategic Plan priorities and initiatives, 2016-17 membership, charges and tasks, the activities performed to date and recommendations for next year. Summary reports are provided for: Leadership, Communication, Information Technology Accessibility Policy Implementation, and Universal Design – Facilities. Additionally, a report is included for the Accessibility Liaisons group.

Disability Strategic Plan for Inclusion and Accessibility: Leadership

The Leadership Implementation Team supports the first priority, and its initiatives and strategies enumerated in the Strategic Plan:

Priority 1: Leadership Strategic Plan Charge

To develop sufficient transformational leadership within Ohio University that includes people living with disabilities that is inspirational in its practice, collaborative in its approach and resolute in its commitment to create pathways with those living with disabilities to experience themselves as welcomed, wanted and needed members of the Ohio University community.

Initiatives and Strategies

1. Ensure that individuals within decision-making positions at the University sustain institutional commitment for inclusion and accessibility for persons living with disabilities.
   a. Provide continuous support to key decision-makers that enables them to participate in creating an inclusive and accessible community for persons living with disabilities
   b. Integrate inclusion and accessibility into university campus planning efforts
2. Create an institutional culture which engages all faculty, staff and students as leaders in the work of inclusion and accessibility.
   a. Orient campus employees to Universal Design and inclusion
   b. Support employees to incorporate these concepts within their sphere of influence
   c. Incentivize opportunities for faculty and staff to incorporate accessibility and inclusion into their research, curriculum, service and operations
   d. Foster student involvement in the work of inclusion and accessibility
3. Collaborate with local communities to improve inclusion and accessibility within our region.
   a. Develop community partnerships with organizations and agencies working with and advancing the lives for those living with disabilities in our community
   b. Make Ohio University expertise and resources available throughout the region
4. Establish Ohio University as an advocate and leader in inclusion and accessibility at the State and national levels.
   a. Fulfill our commitment to become a model educational institution and leader striving for full inclusion and accessibility
   b. Advocate for increased resources to support inclusion and accessibility in higher education
5. Actively include Disability Leadership at the highest levels of decision-making.
   a. Proactively seek and obtain input from people living with disabilities, ADA/504 Coordinator, Student Accessibility Services (SAS), and Employee Accommodations Coordinator in assessing,
influencing and affecting policies, practices, and planning throughout the University
b. Engage departments to develop processes and procedures around campus inclusion and accessibility

Leadership Implementation Team Report

The Leadership Implementation Team developed a process to assist university leadership in assessing inclusion and accessibility on a university-wide level to enable the institution to monitor our progress over time and develop leaders who proactively embed processes and consideration for inclusion and accessibility for persons living with disabilities in their decision-making.

2016-17 Leadership Implementation Team Members

- Dianne Bouvier, Director for Equal Opportunity & Accessibility & ADA/504 Coordinator, University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance, co-chair
- Saira Brown, undergraduate student; Student Senate
- Kendall Brown-Clovis, Director of Administration, College of Arts & Sciences; co-chair
- Alicia Chavira-Prado, Special Assistant to the Vice Provost for Diversity and Inclusion
- Brad Cohen, Senior Vice Provost for Instructional Innovation
- Howard Dewald, Professor, Associate Provost for Faculty & Academic Planning, Office of the Provost
- Mark Ferguson, Executive Director of Campus Recreation, Division of Student Affairs
- Sherrie Gradin, Professor and Department Chair, English; Faculty Senate
- Dennis Irwin, Dean, College of Engineering
- Joe Lalley, Senior Associate VP of Technology & Administrative Services, Finance and Administration
- Krisanna Machtmes, Associate Professor and Dept. Chair, Educational Studies, Patton College of Education; Faculty Senate
- Christine Sheets, Assistant VP for Capital and Facilities Planning

Charge

For a deep commitment to the Strategic Plan, OHIO needs a structure that will persist through changes in leadership personnel within units. The Leadership Implementation Team charge is:

- To create implementation strategies that leaders will use to integrate accessibility and inclusion into all functions.
- To develop and enact processes for moving forward the Disability Strategic Plan for Inclusion and Accessibility.
- To promote the concept of the University valuing accessibility, therefore, it must be absorbed into what units do (including funding both institutionally and within units)
- To accept responsibility as leaders across campus to advance this initiative which includes discussing with leaders in their unit how accessibility will be considered and integrated into facilities, functions, programs, and services.
- To think broader than their own individual units when considering processes.

Summary of Activities

In order to develop a baseline tool for leadership across the university to assess their own areas, the Leadership Team’s first priority was to launch a university-wide self-assessment. During the 2015-2016 Academic Year, team members drafted and first piloted the Department Self-Assessment for Inclusion and Accessibility. During 2016-17, the Leadership Implementation Team:
• Conducted second pilot of self-assessment tool
• Launched university-wide Department Self-Assessment for Inclusion and Accessibility (Jan 24 – Mar 14, 2017)
• Worked with Communication Team to create Communication Plan for Self-Assessment
• Presented information about Self-assessment tool to over 20 leadership groups
• Dr. Kris Machtmes’ Patton College of Education doctoral students reviewed and coded findings

**Highlights from Conducting the Department Self-Assessment for Inclusion and Accessibility**

Over 110 academic, administrative and leadership units responded to the self-assessment, representing departments on the main and Regional campuses. The self-assessment focused on five areas: Policy and Procedures, Training, Service Response, Communication, and Assessing Physical Barriers. The self-assessment results will inform future prioritization decisions and resource planning for the university.

In addition to fulfilling the university’s federal obligation under the ADA and Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act to assess and remove barriers to accessing programs and services for persons living with disabilities, the self-assessment process also:

• Provided an update to the university community about upcoming initiatives supporting inclusion and accessibility for persons living with disabilities
• Stimulated critical thinking and planning for leadership around inclusion and accessibility.
• Allowed department respondents to note low/no cost “low-hanging fruit” they can immediately implement within their areas.
• Generated a list of physical barriers within departments’ facilities.

**Next steps**

After evaluating the self-assessment results, PACDAP recommends establishing a new team to develop and implement an action plan for responding to the data by providing: 1) summaries to units; 2) recommendations to key stakeholders such as University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance (ECRC), University Human Resources (UHR), Student Accessibility Services (SAS), Office for Information Technology (OIT), Office for Instructional Innovation (OII); and 3) preparing and communicating the results to the university community.
Disability Strategic Plan for Inclusion and Accessibility: Communication

Communication is the fourth Priority in the Strategic Plan:

Priority 4: Communication Strategic Plan Charge

To develop and implement an ongoing communication strategy that encourages, engages, educates and empowers all Ohio University community members to embrace the emerging paradigm for the work of inclusion and accessibility.

Initiatives and Strategies

1. Develop a communication plan to educate and promote the work of inclusion and accessibility for persons living with disabilities.
   a. Articulate and promote a university-wide commitment to incorporate intentional inquiry around disability into every decision and promotional opportunity on campus
   b. Engage all campuses to participate in the work of inclusion and accessibility through continuous training and outreach
2. Develop a communication plan to educate Ohio University about support services for persons living with disabilities.
   a. Convey clear procedures for students, faculty, staff and community to request and access accommodations
   b. Deliver on-going communication regarding grievance and complaint procedures

Communication Implementation Team Report

The Communication Implementation Team plays a critical role in communicating the broad message of inclusion and accessibility to the university community and supports communication of work being completed by the other implementation teams.

Communication Team Members

- Lori Bauer, Director of Communication, College of Arts & Sciences
- Josh Bodnar, Director for Access, Transaction and Video Services
- Dianne Bouvier, Director for Equal Opportunity and Accessibility and ADA/504 Coordinator, University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance (in advisory capacity)
- Joan Butcher, Director of Program Services, WOUB Center for Public Media
- Meghan Drapcho, Assistant Director for Communication, Office of Admissions, co-chair
- Kerri Griffin, Assistant Director, University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance; co-chair
- Jill Harris, Emergency Program Manager, Risk Management & Safety
- Simone Hicks, Graduate Student, Patton College of Education
- Sarah Lack, Communications Specialist III, University Communications and Marketing
- Lacey Martin, Project Approval Facilitation Manager, Finance & Administration
- Teresa McKenzie, Student Accessibility Services, Southern Campus
- Jamie Patton, Assistant Dean of Students, Dean of Students
- JW Smith, Associate Professor, School of Communication Studies, Scripps College of Communication, PACDAP
2016-17 Charge
To develop and implement an ongoing communication strategy that encourages, engages, educates and empowers all Ohio University community members to embrace the emerging paradigm for the work of inclusion and accessibility.

2016-17 Tasks
1. To create and update the 2016-2017 communication strategic plan
   a. Incorporate regional campuses and accessibility improvements into strategic communication plan
   b. Provide communication for Implementation Team efforts
2. To focus on communication initiatives related to support services
   a. Procedures for accessing accommodations and grievance procedures

Summary of Activities for the Communication Implementation Team

During FY 2016-17, the Communication Team:
1. Created the 2016-2017 Communication Strategic Plan, including developing consistent key messages and talking points about the University Disability Strategic Plan for Inclusion and Accessibility implementation work; placing Accessible OHIO signs near completed renovation/construction projects; promoting accessibility and inclusion to campus networks (social media and Campus Communicator Network); and partnering with existing channels of communication to gather information about accessibility work to highlight in future communications.
2. Developed and implemented a Communication Plan for the Department Self-Assessment for Inclusion and Accessibility, including publishing Compass articles on its purpose, collaboration efforts with the Patton College of Education doctoral research students and the incentive program for early responders.
3. Focused communication to the campus and community of events and initiatives that support the Strategic Plan, including the Puppy Panel, Class Gateway Opening, McCracken renovation opening and the Ohio University Southern Campus Envision Access conference.
4. Initiated targeted communications about inclusion by publishing a series of Compass profiles on Accessibility Liaisons and partnering with the Provost’s Office to create a video with Provost Benoit on Leadership’s support for inclusion and accessibility.
Communication Highlights

• Class Gateway renovations add accessibility features to iconic campus entrance (Oct 13, 2016)

President Roderick J. McDavis encourages audience members to pass through the newly renovated accessible Class Gateway after the ribbon cutting ceremony (L). Athens Mayor Steve Patterson speaks during the reopening of the Class Gateway (R).

• Puppy Panel to feature OHIO’s working dogs and their handlers Oct. 26 (Oct 19, 2016)
• Students, faculty and staff meet the working dogs at OHIO and their handlers (Nov 7, 2016)
• New self-assessment launching Jan. 24 will help departments evaluate accessibility efforts (Jan 23, 2017)
• Incentives announced for departmental accessibility self-assessments: Deadline to be eligible for incentives for completing the self-assessment is Feb. 23 (Feb 8, 2017)
• Doctoral students share experience working on OHIO’s Department Self-Assessments for Inclusion and Accessibility, winners announced (Mar 27, 2017)
• Southern Campus’ Envision Access conference addresses needs of students with disabilities (Mar 30, 2017)
• OHIO welcomes the Accessibility Liaisons as a vehicle of change (Apr 7, 2017)
• OHIO Accessibility Liaisons: Meet John Mollica (Apr 13, 2017)
• OHIO Accessibility Liaisons: Meet Kim Dominguez (Apr 28, 2017)
• PACDAP All Team Meeting Tweet (April 14, 2017)

Next Steps

1. Build on current efforts across the university by coordinating stories with existing communication professionals within planning units to increase “local” messages and stories on inclusion and accessibility
2. Update Communication Plan for 2017-18, including increased social media presence.
3. Continue to communicate efforts by Strategic Plan implementation teams.
4. Seek program budget for campus awareness efforts (i.e., digital display signs, incentives/stickers for offices that participate in training, sleeves for beverages at campus cafes.)
Disability Strategic Plan for Inclusion and Accessibility: Universal Design and Assistive Technology

The fifth priority, Universal Design and Assistive Technology priority, has been implemented through two teams, the Information Technology Accessibility Implementation Team and the Universal Design – Facilities Team.

Priority 5: Universal Design and Assistive Technology Charge

To incorporate universal design principles and assistive technology resources as fundamental components of all planning and delivery aspects associated with the operations of Ohio University so that the University experience is seamless and comparable for persons of all abilities.

Initiatives and Strategies

1. Infuse Universal Design principles into all program planning, physical planning, design, and service delivery.
   a. Incorporate Universal Design principles into new construction and renovation of existing facilities
   b. Employ Universal Design concepts to provide a seamless experience for persons of all abilities to travel to and around all campuses
   c. Design the interior spaces within buildings to fully support the access and inclusion of people living with disabilities in academic and non-academic settings

2. Utilize information technology that is accessible and inclusive for people of all abilities.
   a. Select technologies that are fully accessible for people living with disabilities including those who utilize assistive technology and alternative communication methods
   b. Integrate assistive technology throughout the University

3. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) will be promoted and supported as a viable method of curriculum design and instruction.
   a. Provide awareness and training around UDL for curriculum and instruction
   b. Incentivize integration of UDL into academic and applicable co-curricular activities

Information Technology Accessibility Policy Implementation Team (ITAP) Report

The Information Technology Accessibility Policy Implementation Team provided feedback on the policy draft, identified accessible technology resources currently in place, and outlined next steps related to policy implementation and furthering web and content accessibility in the future.

Providing an accessible information technology infrastructure will enable the university to fulfill its federal mandate to deliver educational, employment and/or public-facing electronic or digital information or services so that the University experience is seamless and comparable for persons of all abilities.

2016-17 ITAP Membership

- Chris Ament, Assistant Chief Information Officer for Academic Technology and Customer Support Services; co-chair
- Toni Marinucci, Web Services Manager, OIT, co-chair
- Jill Bateman, Web Administrator, Web Services
• Dianne Bouvier, Director for Equal Opportunity and Accessibility, ADA/504 Coordinator, University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance (in advisory capacity)
• Matt Dingo, Instructional Technologist, Instructional Innovation
• Chris Guder, Reference & Instruction Librarian, Alden Library
• Alex Eckert, Accessibility Coordinator, Student Accessibility Services
• Audra Hilterbran, Instructional Technologist, Instructional Innovation
• Greg Kessler, Faculty, Arts & Sciences; Faculty Senate
• Lisa Koch, Instructor, American Sign Language; PACDAP
• Mary Lou Malone, IT Director, Southern Campus
• John McCarthy, Faculty, Communication Sciences & Disorders
• Robert Pleasant, Co-Director of Resource Commons & Coordinator of College Credit Plus, Southern Campus
• Sara Trower, Executive Director, University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance

ITAP Charge
To review the proposed Information Technology Accessibility policy and assess what is currently in place to support the policy requirements and identify what will be needed to fully implement the policy so that the University experience using information technology is seamless and comparable for persons of all abilities.

2016 – 17 Tasks
1. Review and revise the IT accessibility policy to clarify scope and purpose.
2. Identify what resources and processes are available and what is needed to support the successful implementation of the policy
3. Develop a timeline for phasing in policy implementation and recommended next step

Summary of Activities for ITAP
ITAP revised the Information Technology Accessibility Policy draft; the policy focuses on ensuring that “from here forward” OHIO procures accessible information technology, including software, server, hosted, web-based, cloud-based, and third-party vendor purchases. Final policy approval is anticipated by summer’s end.

After researching best practices in procurement, and working collaboratively with ECRC, Procurement, Legal, and OIT, ITAP developed a flow chart for policy implementation. Operating procedures include assessing risk (i.e., “higher risk” purchases are those targeted for students or the public, and will be used more than 50 people) and evaluating accordingly. The policy affords the opportunity for seeking exceptions.

In addition, ITAP finalized assistive technology resource list of existing assistive technology resources, to be included on new Accessibility website, to be located at: https://www.ohio.edu/accessibility/resources/assistive-tech.cfm and OIT prepared Ohio University web accessibility WCAG 2.0 guidelines, to be located at: https://www.ohio.edu/web/accessibility/index.cfm
Next Steps:

1. Communicate and train university community on new Information Technology Accessibility Policy (for “from here forward” purchases) and procurement intent and procedures.
2. Communicate new university-wide web accessibility WCAG 2.0 guidelines and seek resources to provide training to content developers.
3. Identify standards, process and resources needed for ensuring that content produced for official University use is accessible, such as course materials, applications, documents (PDF, Word, Powerpoint, video). Content may include information produced in an electronic format such as documents and multimedia.
4. Develop a plan for assessing additional information technology related purchases including non-web-based technologies.
5. Ensure monitoring mechanisms are in place to fulfill compliance obligations.

Universal Design – Facilities Implementation Team Report

The Universal Design - Facilities Implementation Team (UDF) reviewed accessibility in the Ohio University Design & Construction Standards and examined University processes for including accessibility reviews in construction and renovation projects. With the goal of ensuring that the experience of Ohio University facilities is seamless and comparable for persons of all abilities, UDF developed recommendations both for the Design Standards and for established processes.

2016-17 Universal Design – Facilities Team Membership

- Dianne Bouvier, Director of Equal Opportunity and Accessibility, ADA/504 Coordinator, ECRC (advisory role)
- Luanne Bowman, Chief Financial & Administrative Officer, College of Engineering and Technology; PACDAP
- Lynnette Clouse, Director of Interiors and Renovations; Architecture, Design and Construction
- Sam Crowl, Sustainability Project Coordinator, Office of Sustainability; co-chair
- Marty Dagostino, University Professional Ergonomist, Environmental Health & Safety
- Jason Farmer, Associate Athletic Director, Facilities & Operations, Intercollegiate Athletics Office
- Dusty Kilgore, Executive Director of Event Services
- Steve Mack, Director of Facilities Management
- John Mollica, Russ College of Engineering and Technology student; Accessibility Liaison
- Randy Nogrady, Senior Manager, Information Technology Field Support
- Dick Planisek, Special Projects, Facility Planning & Space Management; Architecture, Design and Construction; co-chair
- Greg Robertson, Associate Vice President for Architecture, Design and Construction; PACDAP
- Lt. Tim Ryan, Ohio University Police Department
- Det. Rick Sargent, Ohio University Police Department
- Thom Stevenson, Adjunct Instructor, Human and Consumer Science Education, Patton College of Education
- Pete Trentacoste, Executive Director of Residential Housing
- Dana Wright, Administrative Specialist, Residential Housing
UDF Charge
To review the Design & Construction Standards and make recommendations on how we could incorporate universal design principles into the Standards so that the University experience is seamless and comparable for persons of all abilities.

UDF Tasks
1. To review the Ohio University Design Standards and provide ADA/504 updates where needed, and site the related regulations.
2. To develop universal design recommendations and provide an explanation for why it would make sense for our community and provide recommendations to Architecture, Design & Construction.
3. To review overall design & construction process and make recommendations to maximize the likelihood that we will meet our ADA/504 and universal design standards, for both internal spaces and overall construction.

Summary of Activities:
UDF fulfilled the first two tasks by first reviewing the 7 Principles of Universal Design, the ADA Standards for Accessible Design, an ADA Checklist for Existing Facilities, the current Ohio University Design & Construction Standards and Ohio University’s federal obligations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The UDF Team then divided into four subgroups to research and make recommendations on one aspect of the four ADA Standards. These recommendations focused on: 1) Accessible Approach and Entrances (pathways and entrances); 2) Access to Good and Services (accessible classrooms); 3) Access to Public Toilet Restrooms (Restrooms); and 4) Misc. (Emergency Communication Systems).

Recommendations for the third task are being finalized and provided to departments involved with the design and construction process.

UDF Research & Recommendations
UDF is providing specific recommendations to appropriate university offices and committees for their consideration, as discussed below.

ADA Priority 1: Pathways & Entrances

Pathways Summary:
The Americans with Disabilities Act 2010 Design Standards address access to/from buildings, paths of travel and parking. In pursuing Universal Design, consideration must also be given to the pathways between buildings and across open areas of campus. Ideally, a person using a wheelchair would have the ability to self-navigate to any point on campus, without dependence on motorized transportation. Given the variable terrain of the Ohio University Campus and the City of Athens, this can be a difficult challenge. The team provided ECRC and ADC with recommendations for reviewing signage, curb cuts and crosswalks, and available paths of travel.
Ohio University strives to improve accessibility, brick-by-brick.

Entrances Summary:
People with mobility issues, especially those using wheelchairs, often find it difficult to open doors. The difficulty stems from the effort required to offset the weight of the door, the differential in air pressures on either side of the door, and, primarily, the force of the pneumatic door closer found on most doors throughout campus.

The specific Design Standard focus for this sub-group was the use of automatic door closers on non-fire-rated doors, such as this one:

Research indicated that individuals had removed these closers themselves in private residence hall bathrooms to improve accessibility, and that most closers are not necessary for security, safety, energy, or other considerations. While the OHIO Design Standards do not require closers on all doors, they do not discourage their use and most projects have included them on the majority of doors.

Incorporating a new design standard to limit door closers increases access for people with mobility issues and reduces construction and renovation project costs (approximately $300 per closer). For example, following this standard in the McCracken Hall renovation project could have saved approximately $27,000 by only installing the closers necessary for security, safety, energy, or other considerations on non-fire-rated doors.
Additional information from the Pathways and Entrances sub-committee is available from ECRC and will be provided to the Design Standards Committee.

**ADA Priority 2: Access to Programs & Services**

Summary:
In 2016-17 the UDF Programs & Services Sub-Group focused primarily on making Universal Design recommendations to improve accessibility in classroom spaces.

“...the capability of classroom spaces to support different teaching styles is a significant predictor of student engagement, communication, collaboration, image, and making students feel valued”

Dr. Michael O’Neill (2009)

**Recommendations:**

- Establish a sample classroom, lab, residence life (housing) and event space to serve as pilot/template spaces for Accessibility Liaisons and others to experience and offer feedback.
- Utilize the Scripps College Immersion lab and other available academic resources to create augmented reality/virtual reality experiences in which multiple students and faculty can provide feedback prior to investing in designs that may inadvertently create barriers.
- Incorporate technology components as a more central role in providing an accessible learning environment in classrooms. An in-depth presentation from the major IT/Audio Visual consultants utilized by Ohio University would help to reveal the changes/capabilities that can be utilized to increase accessibility for both internal and external users.
- Include specific universal design lighting, sound and furniture recommendations within OHIO’s Design Standards.

Additional information from the Programs & Services Sub-Group is available from ECRC and will be provided to the Classroom Task Force.

**ADA Priority 3: Restrooms**

Summary:
The Restrooms Sub-Group prepared architectural drawings for accessible restrooms and provided recommendations to the Design Standards Committee. The drawings include ADA and Universal Design considerations, including full restroom layouts and mounting heights.

Additionally, the offices of University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance and Architecture, Design and Construction initiated a review of the availability of accessible restrooms in academic buildings on the Athens campus.

**Recommendations:**

Restroom Layout & Design
Design specifications and recommendations were researched and vetted during public forums and with community members living with disabilities in 2014-2015. Details for the following recommended Restroom
Layouts and Designs are available from ECRC and will be provided to the Design Standards Committee for their consideration:

- ADA Bathroom New Mounting Elevations
- ADA Bathroom New Typical Multi-User Layout
- ADA Bathroom New Multi-User Layout
- ADA Bathroom New Typical Single-User Layout

2017 ADA Restroom Assessment and Recommended Solutions

Design standards currently recommend that every new construction includes at least one single user restroom, available to all community members; this practice has been well-received across the university, including the LGBTQ community, families, and community members who require personal attendants, and those who for any number of reasons, seek the privacy of a single user restroom. The ADA requires that every newly constructed multi-user restroom have at least one accessible restroom.

Older academic facilities on campus often lack accessible restrooms. As an initial step to remediate, it is recommended that there is at least one accessible set (women & men) of ADA compliant restrooms or one single-user ADA compliant restroom for every academic building. Nineteen academic buildings were assessed in January 2017. Of these, eight buildings currently have ADA compliant restrooms (per the 2010 standards), and need only the addition of power door operators and adjustment of restroom accessories to make them usable. The eleven remaining buildings need various levels of remediation to be compliant.

*The ADA Restroom Assessment and Recommended Solutions and Restroom Layouts and Designs are available from ECRC and will be provided to the Design Standards Committee.*

**ADA Priority 4: Miscellaneous**

Summary:
The Miscellaneous Sub-Group focused on the accessibility and use of campus emergency communication systems. These systems enable students, staff, faculty, and community members to make contact with emergency services, primarily the Ohio University Police Department. The following research and recommendations focus on the Blue Light system currently placed across campus, and included in the Design Standards.

Thirty-six Blue Light phones are located across the Athens campus, including some locations along the bike path.
Current Ohio University Design Standards are located in:

*Division 28 – Electronic Safety and Security: Blue Light Emergency Phones (Type: Code Blue):*
  - Coordinate locations of building based emergency blue light phone system at main entrance of every building. University will provide, contractor will install blue light phone system.

The sub-group consulted with university departments and peer universities to assess the usage and accessibility of the devices used at the university. At Ohio University, Blue Light phones dial directly to OUPD. OUPD reported that the system is rarely, if ever, used. OIT’s usage statistics show that the only real use the Blue Light phones get are when OIT tests them on a monthly basis.

In 2010, the Presidential Advisory Council for Campus Safety conducted a survey regarding campus safety, which included the Blue Light system. The Council recommended for the university to keep pedestal/free-standing blue lights in place, with the understanding they would be phased out, and to add blue light/courtesy phones at entrances/near ramps (on the building itself) for future construction.

The current units are not fully accessible to individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing. Additionally, some units are placed in locations not accessible for individuals with limited mobility. Accessibility of the Blue Light system has not been notably improved beyond the models that are already installed on the Athens campus. Options such as video relay service (ASL interpreter service) and other ADA/Universal Design features are not available.

As the 2010 Campus Safety survey conclusion noted, technology has evolved, eliminating the need for hardline phones placed across campus. The personal cell phone has contributed greatly to this system losing its relevance.

**Recommendations:**
- Discontinue the installation of new blue light phones until the OHIO Leadership has a conversation regarding the future of the system. Accessibility is unlikely to improve with the current device available on the market.
- While the Emergency Blue Light Communication System does not currently have an accessible solution, OHIO still needs to review the overall emergency response options to be sure direct access is provided to persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (per 28 CFR 35.160-35.164).

**ADA / ADC Process Flow**

**Summary:**
UDF Team members from University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance (ECRC); Architecture, Design & Construction (ADC); and the Office of Sustainability examined ADC processes for including ADA/504 reviews before, during and after renovation and new construction projects. The following draft recommendation for ADC would maximize the likelihood that Ohio University will meet ADA/504 and Universal Design standards, for both internal spaces and overall construction.

With the goals of increasing program accessibility, being responsible stewards of university funds, reducing costs associated with retrofitting, fulfilling compliance obligations and increasing efficiency by streamlining processes, UDF established process recommendations. Adopted procedures would be incorporated into existing e-Build processes.
Recommendations:
The Universal Design – Facilities Implementation Team examined the current process for reviewing accessibility issues during ADC renovation and new construction projects. Historically the process has been inconsistently followed, and in recent years, progress has been made. Recommendations include adding initial steps in determining the project scope and evaluative steps at the conclusion of the project.

Recommendations are being presented to ADC and University Planning & Space Management (UPSM) for their consideration.

Full details of the process flow are available from ECRC.

Next Steps
• Place the UD-Facilities Team on “pause” while the University engages a consultant in producing the OHIO ADA Transition Plan 2018.
• Continue the work of the universal design in classrooms sub-committee through the Classroom Space Committee under the leadership of Office for Instructional Innovation and UPSM. Provide them with the sub-committee’s research and recommendations.
• Submit the Universal Design – Facilities Reports on Pathways and Entrances and Restrooms to the Design Standards Committee for their consideration in adopting recommendations for the Design Standards.
• Review the Process Flow document with ADC and UPSM and incorporate into the e-Build process flow as appropriate.
• Provide the Restrooms in Academic Buildings assessment to the ADA Transition Plan consultants for incorporation into their data.

Accessibility Liaisons (AL Group) Report

Accessibility Liaisons are 14 students, faculty and staff in the university community who serve a one-year term and have a direct understanding of disability impact. They fulfill both an internal and external role.

• Internal role: Accessibility Liaisons provide guidance and feedback on university projects and initiatives, including the work of the University Disability Strategic Plan for Inclusion and Accessibility implementation teams.

• External role: Ohio University and the City of Athens have a Memorandum of Understanding to work together to make our community more inclusive and accessible. Accessibility Liaisons collaborate with the City Commission on Disabilities to fulfill the obligations within the MOU. ([https://www.ohio.edu/equity-civil-rights/upload/MOU-Appendix-Disability.pdf](https://www.ohio.edu/equity-civil-rights/upload/MOU-Appendix-Disability.pdf)]

Accessibility Liaisons Membership:
Selected by PACDAP, Accessibility Liaisons serve for a one year term and represent the voices and expertise of persons living with a broad range of disabilities, those who work in positions that directly serve individuals living with disabilities or promoting accessibility, and those who understand the world of disability (parents, faculty, colleagues, advocates, family members, etc.).
• Dianne Bouvier, administrator, University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance, ADA/504 Coordinator
• Barry Brady, administrator, Counseling and Psychological Services
• Kimberly Dominguez, undergraduate student, College of Arts & Sciences
• Nicole Eugene, graduate student, Scripps College of Communication
• Janice Haynes, classified staff, Student Affairs
• Chris Linscott, administrator, Student Accessibility Services; co-chair
• Shelly Lowery-Rowan, administrator, Innovation Center
• John Mollica, undergraduate student, College of Engineering
• Hope Moore, administrator, Instructional Innovation
• Kirsten Pribula, undergraduate student, College of Fine Arts
• Eileen Theodore-Shusta, administrator, University Libraries; Administrative Senate; co-chair
• Stephanie Tikkanen, faculty, Scripps College of Communication
• Noah Trembly, administrator, Health Sciences and Professions
• Adah Ward-Randolph – faculty, Patton College of Education

Charge:
Provide diverse voices and expertise of persons living with a broad range of disabilities, those who work in positions that directly serve individuals living with disabilities or promoting accessibility, and those who understand the world of disability (parents, faculty, colleagues, advocates, family members, etc.) to assist Ohio University and, through the MOU with the City of Athens, the community in making meaningful decisions around inclusion and accessibility within our educational, public, and work environments.

Summary of Activities for Accessibility Liaisons:
The Accessibility Liaisons served as resources and representatives in various venues at OHIO:

• Accessibility Liaison students represented the AL’s at the ribbon cutting at the new Class Gateway dedication, prepared videos about their experience for the Board of Trustees Presidential Spotlight Fall 2016, and attended the grand re-opening of McCracken Hall to provide feedback regarding accessibility.
• The AL group met with representatives from three university departments:
  o Alden Library - to learn about accessibility technology and services available at Alden Library and discussed how accessibility at Alden might be improved
  o OHIO Transportation & Parking Services - to discuss parking and transportation concerns, which led to implementation of new texting-for-rides option, allowing persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and unable to access services via phone calls, to be able to independently access to CATCAB and CATS Late Night services
  o Office for Instructional Innovation - to discuss online accessibility, course design, and Blackboard
• Collaborated and consulted with PACDAP and Implementation Teams on accessible classroom design, emergency communication systems, and general recommendations.
• The Communication Team published a Compass Series on the AL program and three Accessibility Liaisons

Under the new structure implemented in 2016-17, the Accessibility Liaisons co-chairs collaborated with the City Commission on Disabilities to fulfill the Memorandum of Understanding. This past year was important for building a strong relationship between the leadership of both organizations.
Two projects of mutual interest are initially being pursued. The first is to conduct Accessibility Audits in the uptown Athens businesses close to campus on Court Street and the second is to support the City Commission in their annual Disability Speaks awareness event, scheduled for September 2017.

Highlights from 2016-2017
The PACDAP Steering Committee and the Accessibility Liaisons themselves believe the Accessibility Liaisons are significant contributors to the university’s efforts to improve access and inclusion for persons living with disabilities. Accessibility Liaisons reported being inspired and encouraged from their involvement with the group; ALs stated that they:

- Gained a better understanding of how things work at Ohio University
- Enjoyed working with SAS
- Enhanced their ability to advocate for others with similar disabilities
- Created more awareness of others’ needs; ability to make more accurate assessments of changes
- Benefited in professional work and in the classroom
- Working with UD - Facilities team made the work more tangible, practical.
- Saw how their input led to improvements, visible change and more effective practice

Next Steps:
- Continue to work with the Athens City Commission and PACDAP subgroups to improve access and inclusivity throughout the Ohio University community by providing guidance on university processes/projects; and partnering with City Commission on Disabilities on areas of mutual interest
- Partner with the University and City on improving pathways, way-finding and signage throughout the campus, as well as City crosswalks and sidewalks.