

Briefing on Accessibility and Disability Action Planning Team (ADAPT): Winter 2022

History of the Committee:

The need for a CWU committee on information technology accessibility gained institutional traction as a result of Washington State Chief Information Officer [Policy 188](#) on Accessibility. Policy stipulated that state agencies and HE institutions must, by June 30, 2017, a) identify an information technology accessibility coordinator and b) develop policy and processes to support and ensure compliance with this policy.

In 2018, Disability Services invited NASPA to conduct an audit of disability services for students. That report supported the creation and activation of ADAPT, through the following paragraph:

Support and implement the work of the ADAPT committee, particularly related to the development of accessible electronic information and technology policy/procedures. Ensure that the policy/procedure is reviewed and endorsed by the Faculty Senate. Make this an official governance structure committee and create a formal charge, with high level annual reporting on accomplishments. Develop training and supports for faculty to create accessible instructional materials.¹

Accessibility and Disability Action Planning Team (ADAPT) was formalized as a university standing committee in 2019, with the following purpose and charge:

Purpose:

ADAPT reports to the President, through the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusivity. The team provides advocacy and advice to the university on matters related to accessibility (academic classes, programs, services, activities, facilities, etc.) and equal opportunity. ADAPT advises Disability Services and Human Resources on disability-related matters for the entire university community including student, faculty, staff, and the public.

Charge:

1. Create a continuous environmental scan of accessibility enterprise-wide by using self-examination tools;
2. Educate faculty and staff regarding policies and processes for meeting the needs of students with disabilities in academic programs and services;
3. Develop and recommend policies and procedures pertaining to accessibility throughout the university, including university centers, information and data accessibility, procurement and maintenance of accessible technology;
4. Review impacts affecting accessibility, including physical spaces and issues pertaining to mobility access;
5. Evaluate, assess needs and plans to ensure compliance with Washington State and federal laws, rules, and regulations.

¹ Disability Services Review, NASPA Advisory Services, July 18, 2018, Revised Final Report, page 5.

Accomplishments:

Finished

- Created Accessible Technology Policy (approved by UPAC 2.20.19)
- Created Accessible Technology Procedures (approved by UPAC 2.19.20)
- Formalized ADAPT as university standing committee (approved by UPAC 2.20.19)
- Created ADAPT website; drafted, working on revisions, and waiting for approval to make public
- Reviewed CWUP 2-35-080 Service Animal Policy and Procedure for accuracy and revisions.
- CWU Website training includes basic image, video, links, and content accessibility.
- CWU Website partnership with DubBot, who has a product that scans webpages for accessibility issues and highlights them, as well as provides additional information as to what the ADA issue is, and how to fix it, allowing for Content Creators across the site to have the tool necessary to build ADA friendly pages.

In Progress

- Began work on a CWU Accessible Technology Plan.
- Began work to ensure that all software and technology vendors meet minimum state requirements for accessibility to be considered for university contracts through the Academic Technology Advisory Council (ATAC)
- In collaboration Multimodal Learning, created a series of faculty professional development workshops addressing course accessibility, specifically:
 - Creating Accessible Documents
 - Captioning for instructional videos
 - Introduction to Universal Design for Learning (UDL) workshop
 - UDL: Faculty Community of Practice, Spring 2021
 - An Accessibility module in the Instructor Resources in Canvas
 - Integration of Ally, an accessibility checking platform, with Canvas and promotion of its features and uses

Recommendations for the future:

- Identify, create, and support, an IT accessibility coordinator position for CWU for a holistic and community-wide approach to addressing accessibility issues on campus. We suggest locating this position with under the Office of Civil Rights Compliance or Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity.
- Identify, create, and support an Accessibility faculty/ staff fellow that functions through the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity.
- Establish institutional strategic plans and policies for adoption of any new technology or software for the university.
- Increase education of faculty and staff on ADA obligations, strategies, and innovation.
 - Promotion of a Universal Design for Learning and Inclusive Pedagogy program for new/ current faculty.
 - 20-minute Introduction to Accessibility training for faculty.
- Conduct a policy/procedure audit to ensure CWU is up-to-date and in compliance.

APPENDUM: Disability Services for Students at CWU

Student interactions

The most accurate representation of the work performed by DS is the number of students who interacted with the office throughout the quarter. This includes students with appointments, those who worked with the office to resolve issues and those who requested academic accommodations. Although this number is far less than the total number of students who have registered with DS, it reflects the true number of students that the department is actively working with in each quarter.

In 2018 when fall CWU enrollment was 12,342, DS interacted with 422 students. In fall 2021, when the overall enrollment was 10,200 the number of students who interacted with DS increased to 462. In other words, *while the university experienced a 17% decrease in enrollment, DS experienced a 9% increase.*

Accommodation Requests

Each quarter students use the online DS system to request accommodations from their faculty. The number of students who requested accommodations reached an all-time high in fall 2021. The most requested accommodation is alternative testing, which also increased over this period and largely accounted for the increase.

While the request process is automated, DS is responsible for supporting students and faculty in managing the logistics of implementing accommodations. With faculty and students both experiencing high levels of anxiety and fatigue, DS has experienced many more calls than usual from people struggling with basic processes such as completing Testing Agreements and scheduling exams. Resolving a single issue with a professor who did not know how to complete an online form correctly last week required 12 calls/emails from DS staff.



◀ **Disability Services for Employees**

Employee accommodation is managed through Human Resources. As of January 2022, there are a total of 114 employee accommodations in place. This includes 28 employees with COVID related medical exemptions.

Membership:

Lidia Anderson
Jonathan Belford
Ruben Cardenas
Joy Fuqua
Wendy Holden
Kurt Ikemeier
Cheyanne Manning
Thomas Pedersen
Stephen Robison
Marty Romero
Chad Schone (Chair)
Nik Simurdak
Staci Sleigh-Layman
Stacy Swayze
Stuart Thompson
Carolyn Thurston
John Vasquez
Mark Weld
Lauren Wittek



◀ LEARN. DO. LIVE.