

UNBF Accessibility Advisory Committee
Annual Report to Senate – 2006-07
April 3, 2007

Overview

As endorsed by the UNB senior Management Committee in January 2006:

The University of New Brunswick must be known as an institution of inclusion. In accordance with this objective, the University will make its best efforts to ensure there is barrier-free access to learning and employment for qualified people who have different types of disabilities. The University accepts as a priority that future construction of campus facilities, including buildings, parking areas, pedestrian routes, and related infrastructure, will incorporate principles of universal design and barrier-free access. Recognizing our special challenges, e.g., the topography and legacy of old buildings on the Fredericton campus, the University is working and will continue to work towards the renovation of existing facilities to ensure accessibility for students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors who may have a disability.

The UNBF Accessibility Advisory Committee was established in the Spring of 2005 by the Office of the Learning Environment, with the encouragement and support of the VP Fredericton (Academic) and the President, reporting to the Vice President Fredericton (Academic) (VPF(A)). It was formed in large measure from a recommendation of the Accessibility Audit Report prepared under the direction of Prof. Sandra Latchford and the committee she struck to prepare recommendations for improving accessibility on the Fredericton campus, based on the accessibility audit carried out in the summer of 2004.

The Committee responds to issues related to accessibility for students and employees regardless of disability. The mandate of the committee includes:

- Being the campus contact point for physical accessibility concerns (learning-related needs of students and assistive technology needs are met through the Student Accessibility Centre; individual employee needs are met by HR);
- Building on the Accessibility Audit Report, develop a 10-year campus plan for improving accessibility; championing the items in the plan through the annual budget process and government infrastructure opportunities; monitoring the success of completion of the plan, and reporting success to VPF(A) and the University Management Council (UMC);
- Building on the Accessibility Audit Report and its updates, each year define and implement a 1-year campus plan for improving accessibility;
- Serving as a filter for accessibility projects for Physical Plant;
- Receiving expressions of concern from the Student Accessibility Centre, Human Resources, and individual students and employees, and respond, taking action as appropriate;
- Sharing information with all stakeholders: Deans Council, Directors Plus, students, unions;
- Developing recommendations for campus and university-wide policies on accessibility, to be presented to the VPF(A), UMC, and Senate committees where appropriate;
- Developing and implementing a campus awareness campaign;
- Serving as a link with the Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons;
- Reporting annually to Senate and to the public through the campus Website (www.unbf.ca/vp/learn/access.html).

The membership consists of:

- Chair, Jane Fritz, Learning Environment Office
- Bill Morrison, Education (previously Ed Biden, Grad Studies and Mechanical Engineering)
- Lee Ellen Pottie, Student
- Hélène Lang/Beth Corey, Human Resources
- Reade Branch, Physical Plant
- Reg Jerrett, Security
- Randy Dickinson, Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons
- Patricia Kirby, Student Accessibility Centre

Activities and Accomplishments:

The committee met 5 times during 2006-07. An important aspect of the work of the Committee is to foster awareness of accessibility issues across campus. To that end, the Committee co-hosted a launch of the new ramp at the Harriet Irving Library in conjunction with the opening of the new Library Cafe. We also held an Open House at the Student Accessibility Centre in conjunction with Fridays@4 on January 12, 2007. Related to our mandate, the STEP (Successful Transition to Employment Program) program run jointly by the Student Accessibility Centre and Easter Seals, held a very successful annual conference on employability for students with disabilities, targeted at employers and educators, at the Wu Centre on March 30. In addition, the Accessibility Committee maintains a web site at www.unb.ca/accessibility/UNBF.

We have responded to many individual and departmental accessibility concerns that have been addressed to the Committee. These have ranged from need for new automatic doors to changing location and signage of disabled parking spots.

We were recognized with a 2006 Disability Awareness Week New Brunswick Award for the steps the university has taken towards becoming more responsive to accessibility and accommodation needs. We still have a long way to go. Some of the important successes have been through the excellent work of the Student Accessibility Centre. This Centre serves in excess of 300 students with a variety of needs. It operates an externally funded and very successful program in partnership with Easter Seals to help students with disabilities transition to employment.

Funding has been included in the 2007-08 UNBF Budget to proceed with our plan for physical improvements.

Accessibility projects completed in 2006-07:

Carleton Hall	Detailed design completed for elevator, tender prepared
Harriet Irving Library	Ramp at front entrance
Eaton Multimedia/D'Avray	Automatic door operators on inside swinging doors
Head Hall	Major elevator project completed, ensuring that all floors of the complex are accessible
Several Campus Buildings	Installed accessible water fountains as part of a fuller program to have both accessible and higher fountains
Bailey Hall	Designed entrance ramp
Many buildings	Automatic door operators installed or replaced in Wu Centre, MacLaggan, Bailey, Alumni Memorial Hall, Tilley, SUB, Head Hall

Accessibility projects completed in 2006-07 (cont'd.):

Many areas	New or improved parking spots and signage at Kierstead, Head Hall A-level, McConnell, new residence
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Activities planned for 2007-08:

Carleton elevator project	Funding has been secured and is awaiting approval of the budget by the Board on April 12
Marshall D'Avray	Accessible washroom improvements
Head Hall	Accessible washroom
Various buildings	more automatic door operators
Signage project	Develop a signage standard, start implementation in Marshall D'Avray (left over from last year)
Bailey Hall	Construct Exterior Handicap Ramp

Respond to individual concerns

Plan and present awareness sessions and events

Planned for 2008-09 (Subject to funding approval)

Continue signage project	
Old Arts Building	Elevator design if it is possible with donor support
Various Buildings	Install automatic door operators
Old Forestry/Geology	Design ramp for front entrance (inside and out)

Continuing:

Ensure accessible access for all buildings, and barrier-free access within buildings. Our rationale is not to have buildings to which someone can gain access but not get past the main lobby or ground floor. Some buildings have restricted-access (freight) elevators that can slowly be converted to fully-accessible public elevators.

Prepared by: Jane Fritz, Chair of Accessibility Committee