McMaster Accessibility Council
2015-2016 Annual Report

DATE: January 2017

SUBJECT: McMaster Accessibility Council – 2015-2016 Annual Report

TO: Patrick Deane, President
David Wilkinson, Provost and Vice President (Academic)
Roger Couldrey, Vice-President (Administration)

FROM: Anne Pottier, Associate University Librarian and Chair of McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC)

Please find enclosed, for your review, the seventh annual report from the McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC).

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Message from the MAC Chair

This last year we saw an increased awareness of accessibility across campus, partly as a result of increased communication around how best to do the work of the university accessibly, but also as a result of involving more people in completing this work. After years of talking about AODA regulations and compliance, in terms of policies and procedures, we can now see that the way we do our work is beginning to change and progress is being made across all areas of the university.

The Council was successful in receiving money from the University Budget Committee for several targeted activities, and we are starting to see results from this work. We were able to upgrade various assistive technology software licenses campus wide, acquire and enable access to SensusAccess, (a software used to convert documents into accessible formats), and to provide the campus with support for close captioning the media being created and/or shown on campus. Funds were also provided for large creators of media to retroactively caption videos created since 2014, and tools are now in place to support captioning of all newly created videos being used administratively or academically. Large media creators are now incorporating captioning as part of their standard production process. Great work is being done on the creation of a resource to support those who teach, in a variety of capacities, to do so more accessibly. It has been exciting to watch this resource come to life and I look forward to seeing the final product. The last remaining activity is to undertake a high level audit of the various websites on campus to identify where these websites are not in compliance and to provide support to moving them into compliance.

In December 2015, we successfully filed our AODA Compliance Report with the Ontario government. Over the coming year we will be incorporating changes, which were made to the AODA in July 2016, into our accessibility plan.

We sense there is more conversation taking place across campus around accessibility today. Questions are being asked about the best way to incorporate accessibility into renovations and

new physical design work and about how to ensure that we taking into consideration the broad range of individuals who may attend our classes, meetings or other public events on campus, or attend any of these activities virtually. We can see that communication is key to advancing this work, so you will note that one of the major activities planned for the coming year is a comprehensive, well integrated communication plan. We need to share what work has been done to date with all areas of our campus, in order to encourage all areas to work together. We hope that this will ensure that work isn't being duplicated, and more importantly, will support the sharing of what is working, what isn't, and why.

While the Council is actively working hard to advance accessibility at McMaster, it is important to acknowledge the staff, students and faculty who are also working to move the accessibility agenda forward. Accessibility is a shared endeavor and is not just the work of the Council. We all need to reflect on how we can integrate accessibility into our everyday work and ensure that accessibility becomes part of the way we do things at McMaster.

I am looking forward to a year filled with conversations around carrying out work more accessibly, and to see outcomes which incorporate this work naturally. I encourage everyone to do the same.

Anne Pottier, Associate University Librarian

Chair, McMaster Accessibility Council

Purpose and Approach

The McMaster Accessibility Council provides a mechanism for planning, reviewing and evaluating the implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005. The Council is chaired by a member of McMaster's faculty or staff appointed by the President, upon the recommendation of the Provost & Vice President (Academic) and the Vice-President (Administration). The Council is comprised of senior officers of the University and subject matter experts from the Equity and Inclusion Office, Human Resources and Student Accessibility Services.

The AODA is provincial legislation that aims to make Ontario barrier free by 2025 through a series of accessibility standards under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR):

- General Requirements
- Information and Communication
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces
- Customer Service

McMaster University is committed to advancing accessibility at all levels of the institution. Accessibility is an exciting opportunity to rethink traditional ways of working and to incorporate innovate methods of working that meet the needs of the majority. Accessibility in the workplace, accessibility in the teaching and learning environment and accessibility in all of our work across campus necessitates dedicated, proactive, innovative and deliberate strategies to ensure that accessibility becomes part of the way we do things at McMaster.

During the 2015-2016 academic year, MAC has focused on implementing the regulations under the IASR. MAC recognizes that in order for accessibility to be a reality for staff, students and faculty, the focus of its work moving forward needs to be on **implementation**. The establishment of University-wide policies are necessary and appropriate but due attention to

implementation is what will make a substantive difference to individuals and communities who have historically been denied access to the University and its services.

Accessibility Accomplishments

Accessible Teaching and Learning Project (ATLP)

The ATLP is a MAC-funded initiative that was born out of the AODA requirement to provide accessibility training to educators across campus (AODA IASR s.16). The Council recognized that in order for enhanced accessibility in the teaching and learning environment to take place, appropriate and relevant supports and resources needed to be available for all educators at McMaster, including professors, instructors, lab coordinators, instructional designers, and teaching assistants from every discipline.

The ATLP is housed in The Paul R. MacPherson Institute for Leadership, Innovation and Excellence in Teaching and Learning and is supported by the McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC) and Equity and Inclusion Office (formally the Office of Human Rights & Equity Services). The project is taking an integrative and adaptable approach to the creation of tools that can be integrated into any teaching, research or service activity on campus.

An invitation to participate in the Accessible Teaching and Learning Advisory Committee (ATLAC) was made in early 2016 and the response from graduate students, faculty and instructors was remarkable. Accessibility in teaching and learning is clearly an important subject for educators on campus and this is reflected in the composition and number of participants on the advisory committee. The project staff are a team of educators and students with expertise in instructional design/course design, lived experience of disability and a strong background in critical mental health, disability, Mad Studies and other studies related to equity-seeking groups.

The resources that will be created under this project are intended to provide McMaster educators with the tools, resources and supports needed to integrate accessible teaching and

learning practices into every classroom on campus. The expected roll out date for this project is Summer 2017.

Web Accessibility Project

Section 14 of the AODA IASR requires that all McMaster websites conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA. In order for university-wide compliance, the Council recognized that a campus-wide strategy was required to ensure that staff responsible for websites and web content have the required tools and resources in order to ensure the standards are met and maintained.

Efforts to ensure compliance with the web accessibility standards are ongoing and there has been greater awareness of the requirements across campus since the establishment of the Web Accessibility Advisory Group (WAAG). This working group is made up of IT and web specialists across campus with representatives from each Faculty. The group was tasked with providing recommendations on the hiring of a Web Accessibility Specialist who will be tasked with creating a campus-wide strategy for ensuring compliance with the web accessibility standards. The hiring for this position will be complete in the 2016-2017 academic year. The Council expects that this project will provide greater access to McMaster's online information for staff, students and faculty and will reduce the barriers encountered by individuals who have historically met barriers in accessing information online.

Closed Captioning

Part of the web accessibility standards is to ensure that closed captioning is available on all videos produced and shown at McMaster University. The Closed Captioning Working Group (CCWG) was established to develop a workable university-wide solution that will:

a) inform all media producers on campus of this requirement and,

b) provide the necessary tools and resources to ensure compliance with the requirement

The CCWG is a campus-wide group made up of representatives from all Faculties and departments involved in the creation of videos for or on behalf of McMaster. The CCWG has proactively engaged producers of media on campus to inform them of the requirements for closed captioning and offer assistance to retroactively caption media dating back to January 1, 2014 (compliance date). Most of the large producers of videos are now incorporating closed captioning into their work flow.

The campus-wide strategy for closed captioning will be finalized and communicated across campus in 2016-2017. In the meantime, CCWG has created an internal ticketing system for departments, instructors, and anyone else on campus to submit their videos for closed captioning. Requests to have videos closed captioned can be made through the McMaster Accessibility website: http://requestcc.mcmaster.ca/view.php

CCWG and the McMaster Libraries have produced a series of videos on closed-captioning:

- Introduction to closed captioning
- When YouTube Automatic closed captioning goes wrong
- How to upload transcripts to YouTube videos
- How to edit automatic closed captions on YouTube

For videos that are longer than 5 minutes, the CCWG recommends using rev.com, a 3rd party vendor that charges $1 per minute, offers 99% accuracy and provide a 24-hour turnaround time. CCWG compared the service, cost and reliability of a number of closed captioning companies and found rev.com to be the most accurate, reliable and cost effective.

The CCWG is proud of its work to date. Providing greater access to videos shown in classrooms, on department websites and across campus eliminates the needs for individual requests for accommodations and is a tangible demonstration of McMaster's commitment to ensuring greater accessibility for all its students, staff and faculty. The finalized closed captioning strategy will be communicated to the campus-community in 2016-2017.

AODA Training

AODA training for staff, students and faculty is an ongoing requirement of the AODA. New requirements of the training have led to the expanded version of the AODA Customer Service Training available in Mosaic and Avenue to Learn. The Council recognizes that in order for training to be effective and purposeful, the content and form must be engaging, relevant and practical. Efforts are underway to revamp the training to ensure that it meets these objectives. A series of McMaster specific training tools will be made available in 2016-2017, accompanied by practical tips to help each member of the McMaster community understand the importance of their role in making McMaster a more accessible place to work, live and learn.

Accessibility Policy

The McMaster Policy on Accessibility was created in 2010 as per the initial requirements of the AODA Customer Service Standard. The Policy outlines McMaster's commitment to the principles of accessibility and further details the processes for certain aspects of accessibility, e.g. service animals on campus.

The AODA has since expanded the Policy requirements and as such the Council will be undertaking a review of the University's Accessibility Policy to ensure that it is reflective of the legislative requirements but also articulates the University's holistic approach to accessibility as part of its broader goals of building an inclusive community with a shared purpose.

Moving Forward: 2016-2017

The 2015-2016 academic year has been a busy year identifying accessibility priorities, managing expectations and establishing processes to ensure the timely and effective implementation of projects. A lot of work began this year and the focus in 2016-2017 will be to ensure those initiatives are completed and a new set of priorities are established.

A review of the McMaster Accessibility Policy will help set the tone for how the University will address and integrate accessibility into the work of McMaster. Emphasis will be placed on the proactive nature of accessibility with thoughtful consideration of how accessibility can be integrated into our thinking from the outset.

The revised AODA Training that all staff, students and faculty are required to complete will support the tone established in the revised Accessibility Policy and will connect the dots for individuals on what their role is in making McMaster a more accessible place to work, live and learn.

The establishment of the Web Accessibility Project in 2016-2017 will be a significant stepping stone in ensuring our websites and web content are created and maintained according to the web accessibility standards. Removing barriers for historically marginalized communities who have been denied access to online information and have had to request individualized accommodations for public information will hopefully be addressed through this project.

Completion of the university-wide closed captioning strategy will be a significant milestone for enhancing accessibility at McMaster. A comprehensive communication strategy to ensure that campus community members are aware of their responsibilities and the supports available to them will ensure the success of the strategy.

A well-coordinated communication and marketing plan for the various components of accessibility at McMaster will be required to ensure that the key messages are delivered, received and implemented will be a priority for 2016-2017.

The McMaster Accessibility Council will also be reviewing its AODA Implementation Plan in 2016-2017. It intends to ensure that persons with disabilities are consulted throughout this process through the establishment of an advisory committee.

McMaster University Scorecard: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

KEY/LEGEND:
Not in compliance - RED
Approaching compliance - YELLOW
In compliance - GREEN

1) AODA REGULATION: CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

a) **Establishment of Policies, practices and procedures (s.3)**
   i) **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN**

b) **Use of service animals and support persons (s.4)**
   i) **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN**

c) **Notice of temporary disruptions (s.5)**
   i) **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** Approaching compliance **- YELLOW**
   ii) **PROPOSED ACTION TO ACHIEVE COMPLIANCE -** Information on this will be part of the campus-wide communication plan on accessibility requirements in 2016-2017.

d) **Training for staff (s.6)**
   i) **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN**

e) **Feedback process for providers of goods and services (s.7)**
   i) **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** Approaching compliance **- YELLOW**
   ii) **PROPOSED ACTION TO ACHIEVE COMPLIANCE** - Information on this will be part of the campus-wide communication plan on accessibility requirements in 2016-2017.

f) **Notice of availability of documents (s.8)**
   i) **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** Approaching compliance **- YELLOW**
   ii) **PROPOSED ACTION TO ACHIEVE COMPLIANCE -** Information is available, upon request, in alternative formats. Campus-wide communication on this requirement will be part of the 2016-2017 communication plan.

g) **Format of documents (s.9)**
   i) **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN**
   ii) **PROPOSED ACTION TO ACHIEVE COMPLIANCE -**Campus-wide communication on this requirement will be part of the 2016-2017 communication plan.

2) AODA REGULATION: GENERAL STANDARDS

a) **Establishment of Accessibility Policies (s.3)**
   i) **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** Approaching compliance **- YELLOW**
   ii) **PROPOSED ACTION TO ACHIEVE COMPLIANCE** - The Accessibility Policy Review Committee will be struck to revise the Policy and ensure it meets the AODA requirements.

b) **Accessibility Plans (s.4)** …establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan
   i) **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN.** McMaster University has its Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.
   ii) **PROPOSED ACTION TO ACHIEVE COMPLIANCE** - The next review will take place in 2016-2017

c) **Procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities (s. 5(1))** …shall incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so.
   i) **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** Approaching compliance **- YELLOW.** Statement incorporated into RFP template for purchases over $100,000, however, no resources or statements guiding staff and faculty purchases under $100, 000.
   ii) **PROPOSED ACTION TO ACHIEVE COMPLIANCE**: Procurement to provide information on their websites, training and other outreach materials to help staff and faculty in considering accessibility features for all their purchases.

d) **Self - Service Kiosks (s.6)**
   i) **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** Approaching compliance **- YELLOW**
   ii) **PROPOSED ACTION TO ACHIEVE COMPLIANCE**: Currently identifying best practices and working requirements into University's purchasing processes.

e) **Training (s.7).** Every obligated organization shall ensure that training is provided on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in this Regulation and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities
   i) **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN.** However, current training is being reviewed.
   ii) **PROPOSED ACTION TO ACHIEVE COMPLIANCE**: New training tools to be available in 2016-2017.

3) AODA REGULATION: INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION STANDARDS

a) **Feedback (s11).** Every obligated organization that has processes for receiving and responding to feedback shall ensure that the processes are accessible to persons with disabilities.

     i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** Approaching compliance **- YELLOW**. McMaster University has a central feedback mechanism through the aoda@mcmaster.ca inbox and the feedback from on the accessibility website. These mechanisms need to be part of a campus-wide communication plan.

     ii)   **PROPOSED ACTION TO ACHIEVE COMPLIANCE**: Development of a campus-wide communication plan and notation on McMaster websites.

b) **Accessible formats and communication supports (s.12)** …upon request provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities.

     i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** Approaching compliance **- YELLOW**. Campus-wide communication plan required.

     ii)   **PROPOSED ACTION TO ACHIEVE COMPLIANCE**: Development of a campus-wide communication plan in 2016-2017.

c) **Emergency procedure, plans or public safety information (s.13)**

     i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN**

d) **Accessible websites and web content (s.14)**

     i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** Approaching compliance **- YELLOW**. McMaster is taking a university-wide approach to web accessibility through the development of the web accessibility project.

     ii)   **PROPOSED ACTION TO ACHIEVE COMPLIANCE**: Project to be completed in 2017-2018.

e) **Educational and training resources and materials, etc. (s.15).**

     i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN.** Library Accessibility Services provides accessible formats for course materials upon request.

f) **Training for educators s. 16 (1) I**… shall provide educators with accessibility awareness training related to accessible program or course delivery and instruction.

     i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** Approaching compliance **- YELLOW**.

     ii)   **PROPOSED ACTION TO ACHIEVE COMPLIANCE**: Accessible Teaching and Learning Project currently underway. Expected completion: Summer 2017.

g) **Producers of educational or training material (s. 17)** … a producer of print-based educational or training supplementary learning resources for educational or training shall upon request make accessible or conversion ready versions …

     i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN.**

h) **Libraries of educational and training institutions (s. 18)**

     i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN.**

4) AODA REGULATION: EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

    a) Recruitment (S.22)
        i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN**.

    b) Recruitment, assessment or selection process (s.23)
        i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN**.

    c) Notice to successful applicants (s.24)
        i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN**.

    d) Informing employees of supports (s.25)
        i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN**.

    e) Accessible formats and communication supports for employees (s.26)
        i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN**.

    f) Workplace emergency response information
        i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN**.

    g) Documented individual accommodation plans (s.28)
        i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN**.

    h) Return to work process (s.29)
        i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN**.

    i) Performance Management (s.30)
        i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN**.

    j) Career development and advancement (s.31)
        i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN**.

    k) Career development and advancement (s.31)
        i)   **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** In compliance - **GREEN**.

The Design of Public Spaces standard comes into effect on January 1, 2016. The scorecard for this standard will be available in the 2016-2017 report.

Appendix A: Physical Accessibility Upgrades Projects 2015-2016

1	Gilmour Hall – Fire notification system installed for individuals who have difficulty hearing bells
2	Applied Dynamics Lab - Fire notification system installed for individuals who have difficulty hearing bells
3	Alumni House - Fire notification installed for individuals who have difficulty hearing bells
4	TSH - Fire notification system installed for individuals who have difficulty hearing bells
5	KTH - Fire notification system installed for individuals who have difficulty hearing bells
6	Thode Library – Fire notification system installed for individuals who have difficulty hearing bells
7	IWC – PACE Gym – Automatic Door Operators installed
8	IWC – Install pull cords in washroom inside PACE Gym – E106, E109
9	IWC – Install push button on w/r door of IWC near PACE entrance
10	Gilmour Hall- Council Chambers: installed Automatic Door Operator on main doors to the Council Chambers and retrofitted internal washroom to be fully accessible
11	JHE – Automatic Door Operator for 2 Corridor Doors

The temporary ramp at IWC south entrance was removed and replaced with a new barrier free ramp last year.