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Services for Persons with Disabilities

University of Waterloo:

Library Survey of Information and Accessibility Needs of Students with Disabilities

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University of Waterloo:

Library Survey of Information and Accessibility Needs of Students with Disabilities

1. INTRODUCTION

The "Library Survey of Information and Accessibility Needs for Students with Disabilities" at the University of Waterloo was conducted by the Community Needs Assessment Committee (CNAC) of the University of Waterloo Library between February 9, 2004 and May 7, 2004.

The purpose of the survey was to study the satisfaction level of students with disabilities with respect to the Library's services and resources. This survey was conducted on behalf of Janet Wason, Coordinator of Library Services for Persons with Disabilities, and in conjunction with the Office for Persons with Disabilities, University of Waterloo. It was done to comply with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 and the University of Waterloo Library's Accessibility Plan for 2003-2004.

Following the passing of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act of 2001, the University of Waterloo created an accessibility plan[1]. Within this context, the UW Library produced its own accessibility plan[2] in the fall of 2003. Initiatives included an accessibility audit targeting physical elements at the three largest libraries on campus, and a review of reference services which included meeting with a focus group of students with disabilities.

2. THE SURVEY

Goals

The goals of the survey were:

1. To obtain information about physical accessibility at the various library locations (for example entrance and exit, moving around within the libraries, furniture, signage, barriers to communication with library staff).

2. To obtain information about satisfaction with current library services (circulation, reference, library instruction, etc.).

3. To obtain information about the accessibility of library resources. Users who utilize specialized accessibility software packages, audiotapes, Braille, etc. as well as those who do not, were considered.

4. To identify potential new directions and possible changes to current services and resources.

Methodology

The target population was all students registered with the Office of Persons with Disabilities (OPD). All disabilities were included. To ensure confidentiality, it was agreed that contact information would not be made available to the survey team in the library. Once the survey had been developed, it would be passed on to the OPD who would contact the students and invite them to complete the survey.

CNAC determined that a web-based survey was the most appropriate assessment tool for this project. Considering the fact that the population to be surveyed was a special group, it was agreed that the survey would also be made available in print to those who requested. phpESP (php Easy Survey Package) survey software was used to create the questionnaire. Jack Cooper, of UW's Information Systems & Technology, assisted with the project and provided invaluable assistance with the development of the survey, with technical support during the collection phase, and with statistical support afterwards.

Ethics clearance was obtained through the University's Office of Research Ethics.

Paper and web versions of the survey were pre-tested by students visiting the Adaptive Technology Centre in the Dana Porter Library. The online survey was tested with the JAWS screen reading software to ensure that it was accessible to the target population.

The OPD had determined that over 950 students with disabilities on campus were registered with that office. The survey team developed the web survey hoping to target all of these students. It became clear at the time of delivery that current contact information was available for only a small number of students. The first wave of the survey was sent out to 162 students, and 74 surveys were returned. The survey team felt that many students had been missed, and the OPD made a second attempt to obtain contact information. They relied on the information provided by students who had approached the office for assistance with exam accommodation. A second wave of the survey was sent to all of these students, asking them not to answer the survey if they had already done so. Altogether 492 students were invited to participate and a total of 107 surveys were completed.

Confidentiality

Ensuring the confidentiality of the respondents was a major issue. Because the targeted population is a special population, the survey team was required to ensure that not only were the responses to be confidential but also that those contacted were to remain anonymous. It was understood that the very fact that these students had been contacted and/or had responded to the survey would single them out as "students with disabilities."

In order to receive appropriate accommodation at UW, students provide documentation and disclose detailed information concerning the nature of their disabilities to Office for Persons with Disabilities. This information is treated as private and confidential, as is a student's registration with the office. Students sign a form giving permission to OPD staff to share confidential information with each other and to disclose to and/or obtain information from professors so that academic support services can be properly implemented.

Since only the Co-ordinator, Library Services for Persons with Disabilities is included in this disclosure, CNAC members could not directly administer the survey. The OPD agreed to contact the students by e-mail and ask them to respond to the survey. This added another layer of complexity to sending out the survey.

It was agreed that all students registered with the OPD would be invited to participate in the web survey. Altogether 492 e-mail messages were sent out in two waves by the OPD; the first from February 9 to March 5, 2004 and the second from April 19 to May 7, 2004. Printed copies of surveys were made available to those who needed them from the Adaptive Technology Centre in the Dana Porter Library and from the Office of Persons with Disabilities. A cover letter accompanying print copies of the survey included the name and contact information for the Co-ordinator of UW Library Services for Persons with Disabilities.

Formulating Survey Questions, from Goals to Questions

A sample of questions was prepared using *Planning for Library Services to People with Disabilities*[3] for ideas and guidelines. The type of information sought was then identified, and the questions were reviewed to determine what information might be missed. Additional questions were formulated. The questions were then categorized according to which of the survey's goals each addressed. It was recognized that certain questions pertained to more than one of the stated goals.

In the question designed to determine the nature of respondents' disabilities, the five categories of disabilities listed were those used by the Office for Persons with Disabilities in its reporting to the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (2003):

Deaf, Deafened or Hard of Hearing
Learning Disability
Medical
Mobility
Visual

Input from the Office for Persons with Disabilities

The OPD was asked to suggest additions, deletions, and/or editorial changes to the survey questions. Many of these were made; however, some of the additional questions suggested were determined to be extraneous to the survey's stated goals. It was decided that some of the data that the OPD wished to collect would be better gathered through focus groups rather than via the survey, and that this could occur after the survey was completed.

Suggestions for ways to improve the survey were also solicited from students registered with the OPD. Some of these suggestions were approved, and the survey was adjusted accordingly. (See Appendix A: Survey Questions)

The cover letter wording was also vetted by the OPD. It was finalized after making a few changes at the suggestion of the OPD. (See Appendix B: Survey Cover Letter)

Prize Allocation

Respondents to each survey had the opportunity to enter a draw for two UW Retail Certificates of fifty dollars each.

From the start there was some concern regarding how prize winners would be identified without violating anonymity. Participation in the draw was voluntary and available to all those who answered the survey. Each survey respondent who wished to enter the draw was assigned a number. A random

number generator was used to identify the two "winning numbers." These numbers were sent to the Co-ordinator of Library Services for Persons with Disabilities, who then looked up the respondents' e-mail addresses and sent them notifications. No other person on the survey team had access to or met the winning respondents.

3. ANALYSIS

Seventy-four surveys were returned after the end of the first phase and 33 after the second. The return of 107 surveys gave the response rate of 21.8%. The data was entered into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and frequencies were obtained for multiple-choice questions. Open-ended comments were analyzed by the survey team to determine whether they applied to the above-mentioned goals.

It was apparent that some questions in the 107 returned surveys (chiefly questions 18 to 24) had a very low response rate. The group agreed that in cases where there were a large number of non-responses, the responses would be analyzed based on the number of people that actually answered a particular question, rather than using 107 as the base for all answers. Analysis of responses was done using this principle and is indicated when the base number used is other than 107.

At least two factors account for the low response rate on certain questions, one being the nature of the targeted population, and the other being the phrasing of the questions. As a special population, survey respondents were specifically instructed that answering any of the survey questions was optional. This was done to prevent undue pressure on them. Pre-testing on a larger scale could have ensured that all disabilities were represented and that questions were suitable, making optional questions unnecessary. An explanation of missing values for certain questions could be the way the questions were phrased. For the questions starting with "if...", only those respondents who had an opinion responded.

The majority of respondents were undergraduate students; however 8.4% noted that they were in graduate programs at UW. Students were also spread out over the various faculties with the highest percentage, 46.7%, in the Faculty of Arts.

In regard to the nature of disability, learning disability was noted most often (40.2%). The Dana Porter Library was the library of choice for 69.2% of the students while 23.4% used the Davis Centre Library most often.

4. FINDINGS

A. Goal 1

To obtain information about physical accessibility at the various library locations (for example entrance and exit, moving around within the libraries, furniture, signage, barriers to communication with library staff).

Physical Environment: Barriers that make the Library Difficult to Use

Sixty-five students did not answer the question. This was quite surprising as the survey team had provided a comprehensive list of possible barriers and left the possibility of adding to the list in an open-ended choice. One possibility could be that many students do not face any barriers and the assumption of the survey team that students face barriers may not be correct. The question should have been formulated with closed wording as: "Are there barriers that make the library difficult to use? Yes or No. If yes then please identify them," rather than with the open wording used: "If you face barriers...."....."

This was a multiple choice question that allowed respondents to identify more than one barrier. Of the 42 students who answered the question, the breakdown of the barriers that make the library difficult to use is as follows:

Barrier	Number of Responses	Percentage
Entrance	4	9.5%
Exit	2	4.8%
Aisles	3	7.1%
Book Stacks	10	23.8%
Washrooms	9	21.4%
Elevators	1	2.4%
Photocopiers	7	16.7%
Information Desks	4	9.5%
Circulation Desks	2	4.8%
Doors inside the Library	1	2.4%
Lighting	11	26.2%
Other	16	39.1%

This shows that lighting in the library was the most significant barrier, identified by 26.2% of students who answered the question. Comments about lighting specifically mentioned the lighting in the Davis Centre Library, with one student describing it as "horrible". Accessing book stacks was next, at 23.8%. Nine students, or 21.4%, responded that they faced barriers in using the washrooms. It should be noted here that the survey was conducted prior to the renovations in Davis Centre Library and some responses to this question may thus no longer be valid.

Signage

To the surprise of the researchers, 88.79% (95) of students noted that signs in the library were clear. This contradicts the experience of staff members at the Information Desk who quite frequently field questions about the location of washrooms, photocopiers, course reserves material, specific call numbers, and so on.

Comments showed that respondents found the Library of Congress call numbers confusing to use and would like to see posters describing which subjects are on which floor. Other comments made about signs were that they should be simple, easy to follow, and easy to find; that larger signs should be posted at the end of bays; and that better instructions should be available for the use of the micro readers. Directions from the main floor to the Rare Book Room on the first floor were also requested.

Students would like staff – either those working on the Information Desk or those working in the stacks – to help them find the call numbers they're

seeking. These respondents were unaware of the service provided by the Adaptive Technology Centre and the User Services Department, whereby staff retrieve books and journals for students requiring such assistance.

Furniture and Equipment

The majority of respondents found study carrels to be suitable for their needs, while 27.1% (29) students noted that they were not suitable. Some students expressed the need for: more stools (to enable them to reach books on higher shelves); more comfortable, ergonomic chairs for the computer workstations (chairs are too high); lounge furniture close to book stacks; more garbage pails closer to where people are working; large tables where students can spread out their work; larger study carrel surfaces without graffiti.

Kurzweil software was desired on computers other than those in the Adaptive Technology Centre, in order to enlarge text. The provision of 11x17 paper in all photocopiers was requested. The need for lockers was also expressed in the comments.

B. Goal 2

To obtain information about satisfaction with current library services (circulation, reference, library instruction, etc.).

Library Services

Eighty-six, or 80.4%, of survey respondents found staff at the Circulation Desk to be very helpful to somewhat helpful. Less than 4% found circulation staff to be not helpful at all.

Eighty-four, or 78.5%, of survey respondents found the Information Desk staff to be very helpful to somewhat helpful. 4.7 percent (5) of respondents found them to be not helpful at all.

The survey team was not surprised to find that more than 60% of respondents had never attended a library instruction session. 33.6% found these sessions to be somewhat helpful to very helpful. More than half of the respondents, 60%, preferred to participate in sessions held for the general student population. The remaining respondents preferred separate sessions held for students with disabilities. In almost all of the comments, students wished to have a mix of both types of instructional sessions – those specifically for students with disabilities, and those open to all students.

They emphasized the importance of locating accessibility/adaptive technology workstations in quiet areas, or better still in separate rooms, in order to lessen distractions and to aid concentration.

Forty-one, or 38.3%, of the survey respondents reported that they hadn't used any of the library services listed in the survey. This was as expected as survey after survey has shown that many students are not familiar with all of the services provided by the library. One example already mentioned is the book retrieval service for students with disabilities.

The students that had used the services listed often used more than one. Forty-one, or 38.3%, said that they had used the study space in the Adaptive Technology Centre. Twenty-six, or 24.3%, had used the Book and Article Retrieval Service (TUGbars) to obtain items from the TriUniversity Group (TUG) of Libraries (University of Waterloo, University of Guelph, and Wilfrid Laurier University Libraries). Adaptive hardware and software in the Adaptive Technology Centre and assistance with research were the next most-used services.

Categories	Number of Responses	Percentage
Book Retrieval	9	8.4%
Book Delivery	9	8.4%
Study Space	41	38.3%
Individual Assistance	17	15.9%
Adaptive Hardware/Software	26	24.2%
Term Loan	15	14%
4-track Tape Recorders	8	7.8%
TTY (Teletypewriter)	1	0.9%
Alternate Format Materials	6	5.6%
TUGbars	26	24.2%
Other	4	3.7%

Use of the Adaptive Technology Centre

Forty-seven, or 43.9%, of respondents had never used the Adaptive Technology Centre. Of the remaining respondents that had used the facility, 35.5% used it less than once per week, and 19.6% used it once a week or more. Having resources throughout the library was chosen by 50.5%, while having them in a separate area was chosen by 38%.

C. Goal 3

To obtain information about the accessibility of library resources. Users who utilize specialized accessibility software packages, audiotapes, Braille, etc. as well as those who do not, were considered.

Online Public Catalogue (OPAC)

Of those who responded, 47.7% (20) reported no difficulty in using the OPAC (TRELLIS). Only 1 respondent had not used the OPAC. 19% (8) of respondents had suggestions for improvements to the OPAC, including: better instructions, improved search capabilities, and a 'browse results' feature for when no exact hit is found. 4.8% (2) of respondents requested provision of abstracts or synopses of items found in the OPAC. Some respondents asked for services that were already available, indicating the need for better publicity.

Books

Thirty-six, or 33.6%, respondents answered the question about how books could be made more accessible to them. As noted previously, many respondents were unaware of the library's book retrieval service. Of those who responded to this question, 30.5% (11) reported no difficulty in accessing books. Two found Library of Congress call numbers to be confusing and 2 requested more books in alternate formats such as audio and large print.

Periodicals

Thirty-seven, or 34.5%, respondents answered the question about making print journals, electronic journals and/or newspapers more accessible. Of these, 9 responded specifically that they had no difficulties. We can safely assume that the 65.5% of respondents who did not answer this question had not used journals and newspapers, whether electronic or in print, as the question was framed as: "If you use Journals/E-journals/Newspapers, please comment below on how they could be made more accessible to you."

Fourteen, or 13.1%, of those who had used these resources reported encountering difficulties of various sorts. Four of these requested better instructions (including how to access online resources from off-campus). Four of the respondents made comments relating to formats, including requests for formats of choice and requests for a consistent format for all resources. One wanted to be able to search all journals from a single search interface, and 1 requested that abstracts be available for all search results. Two requested more journals. 1 requested large print or audiotapes for "breaking news." Two expressed a desire for staff assistance when searching.

Journal Indexes and Databases

Twenty-nine, or 27.1%, respondents answered the question regarding how to make journal indexes and databases more accessible. Of these, 34.5% (10) reported experiencing no difficulty using journal indexes and databases. Two had never used them. Nine reported experiencing difficulties of various sorts in attempting to access these resources. Two requested better instructions. Five requested improved search interfaces (e.g. ability to search across all databases simultaneously, a common search interface for all indexes and databases, and the ability to limit search results to items in the library's collection). Three requested more journal indexes and databases, and "more content." Two requested that everything on the screen be enlargeable.

Rare Book Room

Seventeen, or 15.9%, respondents answered the question regarding accessing material in the Rare Book Room. Of these, 53 % (9) had not used the Rare Book Room or Special Collections. 1 reported experiencing no difficulty in accessing these resources, while 2 did encounter difficulties.

Other Resources

Thirty, or 28%, respondents answered the question about "other resources." Responses tended to relate to the physical environment (e.g. fragrance in public areas, the difficulty of finding an unoccupied computer, the need for lounge areas on floors six to ten in the Dana Porter Library, use of the OPD lab because of the private environment and because their bags do not need to be checked, the need for more study rooms in the Adaptive Technology Centre) rather than to information resources. Three of those who responded encountered no difficulties with other resources. Four reported never having used other resources.

D. Goal 4

To identify potential new directions and possible changes to current services and resources.

Survey respondents made many useful suggestions concerning the removal of barriers which cause them difficulties in conducting research. The library will be looking into the implementation of some of these suggestions. It should be mentioned that many respondents requested services that the library already provides. The library should consider ways of improving communication with this particular user group, and of promoting existing services.

Seventy-six, or 71%, of those completing the survey responded to the question about which additional resources they would like to see available in the library. Approximately 78% (83) of these respondents requested additional electronic texts, books, and journals. Fifty-four, or 50%, requested books on audiotape (while 1 respondent indicated a strong preference for books on CD).

There was an expressed interest in having more large print material available to our users. Respondents also requested that improved enlargement features be made available from the library's public workstations. In the same vein, respondents also expressed the need for larger signage in the book stacks to indicate the call numbers contained in each range.

Some respondents stated that they required more individual one-on-one help in using electronic information resources.

Seventy-four, or 69.1%, responded regarding the types of adaptive technology software and/or equipment they would like to see in the library. Of those, 64% requested writing software and 60% requested organizational software. Word prediction software was requested by 45%. Math software was requested by 38%. A suggestion was made that the MS Office Suite should be made available on the public workstations.

Additional quiet study space and a cleaner study environment were requested. Complaints were voiced regarding the lack of ergonomic seating and comfortable study carrels.

There was a request that the library provide access to electronic books (especially novels).

Currently the library employs attendants to sit by the exit. One of their tasks is to check the contents of patrons' bags as a means of deterring book theft. There was a recommendation that the library switch to an electronic security system as a means of preventing items from leaving the library without being signed out. This measure would improve security and at the same time reduce the infringement of the personal privacy of our patrons.

There was a suggestion that an Adaptive Technology Centre be created in the Davis Centre Library (Engineering, Mathematics & Sciences), and that the coffee shop in the Dana Porter Library (Arts, Social Sciences, Humanities) should be moved away from the Adaptive Technology Centre located there (one respondent).

One student emphasized the need to have math software mounted on public workstations located in a private, comfortable study area. Another student suggested that it would be very helpful to be able to access the library's copy of the Kurzweil screen-reading software from home, rather than having to purchase the expensive software on his/her own.

It was suggested that course reserve material on one-hour loan be made available for longer periods for students with disabilities.

Access to the Davis Centre Library for motor vehicles could be improved.

5. CONCLUSION

This was the first time that the library had conducted a survey of students with disabilities. Many lessons were learned about planning such a survey and

about the format of the questions asked.

Maintaining the confidentiality of and not having direct access to the respondents added an additional layer of complexity to the analysis of the survey. Only after the first batch of surveys was sent out did the survey team realize that all potential respondents could not be contacted, due to incomplete information available in the OPD. The OPD strove to update the contact information to enable the survey team to send out additional surveys in the second wave.

The format of the survey questions resulted in above-average missing values and the cause could not be categorically determined. It is the opinion of the survey team that it is most likely that the large number of non-responses was a function of the questionnaire rather than a result of students experiencing difficulties answering because of their disabilities. However we suggest that a larger number of respondents be included in the pre-test to cover all disabilities.

After the survey it became very clear that there are many similarities between this subset of students and other students. For example, not knowing about library services and hence not utilizing them is common to students with and without special needs. Survey after survey has identified the need to enhance publicity of library services. Another striking similarity was the number of students that had availed themselves of library instruction. Most in the survey had not, which is very similar to surveys done of the general student population.

It was found that a large number of students with disabilities were satisfied with the level of library service that included staff and resources. Many did not experience physical barriers accessing our services and resources. This indeed was an eye-opener as the survey team had assumed that most if not all would have experienced difficulties. It would appear that the large number of "non-responses" can be attributed to the formulation of survey questions with this assumption as a basis.

Following are some of the suggestions made that can help us improve our services.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Consider ways of improving communication with this particular user group, and of promoting existing services.

2. Place call number signs in large print at the ends of each range.

3. Re-assess the lighting in the Davis Centre Library. This could be accomplished through a focus group.

4. Investigate the feasibility of adding math software, such as MatLab and Maple, to library computers, particularly those in the Adaptive Technology Centre.

5. Provide adaptive technology (hardware and software) and quiet study space for this user group in the Davis Centre Library.

6. Investigate the feasibility of providing adaptive technology throughout the library.

7. Continue to offer separate library instruction sessions for this user group, as well as promoting the general instructional sessions.

8. Ensure that the adaptive technology is kept up-to-date.

9. Investigate the feasibility of providing lockers within the Adaptive Technology Centre.

10. Provide additional study areas in both libraries to meet the specific needs of these students. For example, students with environmental sensitivities need fragrance-free areas, while students using text-to-voice and screen-reading software might disturb other library users.

Submitted September 20, 2005

[1] University of Waterloo, University of Waterloo Accessibility Plan 2003-04, http://www.studentservices.uwaterloo.ca/disabilities/AccessibilityPlan.htm (accessed Aug. 15, 2005).

[2] University of Waterloo Library, University of Waterloo Library Accessibility Plan 2003-2004, http://www.lib.uwaterloo.ca/News/UWLibDocs/access/plan.html (accessed Aug. 15, 2005).

[3] Rhea Joyce Rubin, Planning for Library Services to People With Disabilities (Chicago: American Library Association, 2001).

Appendix A: Survey Questions

The University of Waterloo Library is conducting a survey to assess the information and accessibility needs of students with disabilities. This survey is being conducted with the approval and assistance of the Office for Persons with Disabilities with whom the Library collaborates to provide a variety of services to students with disabilities.

Please complete the survey even if you do not use the library or its services - your input will help in our assessment. **There will be a draw for two UW Retail Certificates of $50 each. You will be given the option to enter the draw when you have completed the survey.**

Your feedback on library accessibility, resources, and services will help us identify areas requiring fine-tuning or possible change. Additionally, your comments will aid in determining potential new directions to make the libraries more accessible and useful.

Library Survey for Persons with Disabilities

Background Information

1. Are you:

- an Undergraduate
- a Graduate

2. Please indicate your year of study:

- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th

- Other:

3. What program are you in:

- Regular
- Co-op

4. What is your faculty?

- Applied Health Sciences
- Arts
- Engineering
- Environmental Studies
- Mathematics
- Science
- Independent Studies

5. How would you classify your disability? (optional) Please check all that apply:

- Deaf, Deafened, or Hard of Hearing
- Learning Disability
- Medical (including Psychiatric)
- Mobility
- Visual
- Other: (please specify)

Physical Environment

6. Which library location do you use most often?

- Dana Porter Library
- Davis Centre Library
- Optometry Learning Resource Centre
- University Map and Design Library
- Other Campus Libraries

7. Are there barriers in the Library that make it difficult for you to use its services and resources? Please check all that apply:

Entrance

- Exit
- Aisles
- Book Stacks
- Washrooms
- Elevators
- Photocopiers
- Information Desks
- Circulation Desks
- Doors inside the Library
- Lighting
- Other: (or make your comments here)

8. Are the signs in the library suitable for your needs?

- Yes
- No

9. Are the study carrels, computer workstations and chairs suitable for your needs?

- Yes
- No

10. Do you have sufficient access to equipment and adaptive technology in the library related to your needs?

- Yes
- No

Library Services

11. When you need assistance from Circulation Desk staff, do you find them:

- Very helpful
- Somewhat helpful
- Not helpful
- I have never requested assistance

12. When you need assistance from Information Desk staff, do you find them:

- Very helpful
- Somewhat helpful
- Not helpful
- I have never requested assistance

13. Do you find the Library Instruction sessions to be:

- Very helpful
- Somewhat helpful
- Not helpful
- I have never attended any sessions
- Other: (or make your comments here)

14. For Library Instruction, would you prefer to participate in:

- Separate sessions for Students with Disabilities
- Sessions held for the general student population

15. The following library services are available to students registered with the Office for Persons with Disabilities. Please check the ones you have used:

- Retrieval of books from the stacks
- Campus book delivery
- Study space in the Adaptive Technology Centre
- Individual assistance with research and using the library
- Adaptive hardware and software in the Adaptive Technology Centre
- Term loan borrowing privileges
- 4 track tape recorders
- TTY for use in the Dana Porter Library
- Access to audio, large print, and Braille textbooks
- Book and article retrieval from the UW, WLU, and UG Libraries
- None of the above
- Other:

16. How often do you use the Adaptive Technology Centre in the Dana Porter Library?

- Less than once a week
- One to two times per week
- Three times a week or more
- Never

17. When using library services, such as adaptive technology or accessible workstations, would you prefer:

- A separate area for persons with disabilities
- To have such resources available throughout the library
- Other: (make your comments here)

Accessibility of Library resources

18. If you use TRELLIS, the library catalogue, please comment below on how it could be made more accessible to you:

19. If you use books, please comment below on how they could be made more accessible to you:

20. If you use Journals/E-journals/Newspapers, please comment below on how they could be made more accessible to you:

21. If you us Journals Indexes and Databases, please comment below on how they could be made more accessible to you:

22. If you use Microfilm/microfiche, please comment below how it could be made more accessible to you:

23. If you use material housed in Rare Books and Special Collections, please comment below how it could be made more accessible to you:

24. Please specify below any other library resources you use and how they could be made more accessible to you:

Alternative formats and adaptive technology

25. Which of the following have you used? Please check all that apply:

- Alternate formats (Braille, large print, audio books)
- Adaptive technology (JAWS, Kurzweil 3000, Inspirations)

26. What additional resources would you like to see available in the library? Please check all that apply:

- Electronic texts, books and journals
- Materials in Braille
- Materials in large print
- Books on audio tape
- Other: (please specify)

27. Have you encountered difficulty accessing electronic or online library resources from library public workstations? Please comment below:

28. How could the library make its print and electronic information resources more accessible to you? Please comment below:

29. What kinds of adaptive software or equipment would you like to see in the Library? Please check all that apply:

- Math software
- Word prediction software
- Writing software
- Organizational software
- Other: (please specify)

30. What would you add or change to make the Library more useful to you? Feel free to use your imagination here.

31. Please provide any additional comments, or feel free to offer your own suggestions, your ideas are important to us:

Appendix B: Survey Cover Letter

UW Library Survey of Information and Accessibility Needs of Students with Disabilities

The University of Waterloo Library is conducting a survey to assess the information and accessibility needs of students with disabilities. This survey is being conducted with the approval and assistance of the Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD) with whom the Library collaborates to provide a variety of services to students with disabilities.

Your feedback on library accessibility, resources, and services will help us identify areas requiring fine-tuning or possible change. Additionally, your comments will aid in determining potential new directions to make the libraries more accessible and useful.

There will be a draw for two UW Retail Certificates of $50.00 each. You will be given the option to enter the draw when you have completed the survey.

Your participation is voluntary and anonymous. Any information you provide is confidential.

You may decline to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. Should you choose not to complete the survey after starting it, the information you have already entered will not be transmitted to us. Collected data will only be accessible to the library researchers conducting the survey. IP addresses of respondents are not accessible to the researchers.

Summarized data results will be posted to both the OPD and the Library Services for Persons with Disabilities websites in June 2004. No individual will be identifiable from these summarized results.

Please complete the survey even if you do not use the library or its services.

To complete the survey, go to the survey website at:

http://ist.uwaterloo.ca/~jack/disability_survey/surveycoverletter.php between April 19 and May 7, 2004.

Paper copies of the survey may be obtained from the Office for Persons with Disabilities (Needles Hall, room 1132) or the Adaptive Technology Centre in Dana Porter Library.

If you have any questions, comments, concerns, or technical problems accessing the web survey, please contact:

Rose Padacz, Director, Office for Persons with Disabilities (519) 888-4567 ext.5231 or e-mail rmpadacz@uwaterloo.ca

This survey has been reviewed and has received ethics clearance from the UW Office of Research Ethics.

For questions dealing with ethical issues contact: Dr. Susan Sykes, Director, Office of Research Ethics (519) 888-4567 ext.6005 or email ssykes@uwaterloo.ca

Thank you for your participation.

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