



# The Office of Accessibility Newsletter

## Letter from the Associate Director

Dear Office of Accessibility Students,

I would personally like to welcome you back for the 2012-2013 academic year. If this is your first year attending The University of Akron, or utilizing the Office of Accessibility (OA) thank you for choosing to attend the University and work with the OA to meet your needs. The OA is committed to providing accommodations that service and facilitate the academic goals of the students it serves.

The OA and its programs and services for students with disabilities are here to assist you in gaining equal access to classes. We also will assist you in determining how the OA can best help you meet your accommodation needs within the classroom. The OA staff have specialized knowledge and experience in disability issues and are here to help you navigate the accommodation process.

The OA and its staff are very excited to be able to bring you the new Student Testing and Accommodation Request System (STARS). You will utilize STARS in order to stay connected to the office, request accommodations, and to check status of alternative technology and note takers. In order to best facilitate the use of accommodations, I would like to remind you to request accommodations early and stay connected to the office. Please remember it is your responsibility to request accommodations each semester as needed. Some accommodations cannot be effectively arranged if they are requested on short notice.

I also encourage you to discuss your accommodations with your faculty members within the first two weeks of the semester. I would also recommend that you stay connected to your instructors throughout the semester and keep them informed in a timely manner as to when you will be utilizing accommodations. Early coordination and intervention are key to successfully navigating and utilizing accommodations.

I would like to encourage you to stay connected to the OA throughout the semester and academic year. The staff within the office is here to support you throughout your time at the University. If you need assistance or have questions, please contact the office at (330) 972-7928 (voice), (330) 972-5764 (TTY) or [access@uakron.edu](mailto:access@uakron.edu).

I wish you the best luck in the coming semester!

Jessica DeFago, M.A.  
Associate Director

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**"If you can imagine it, you can achieve it; if you can dream it, you can become it."  
-William Arthur Ward**

## Introducing... STARS!

The Office of Accessibility is excited to launch their new web-based Student Testing and Accommodation Request System (STARS) to better serve and support our students! Through this system, students will be able to request and coordinate their accommodations all online. This system will help to manage accommodation letters, testing, note taking, alternative media, and equipment electronically.

To begin using STARS, you must contact The Office of Accessibility to receive a user name and password. You can contact us by calling (330) 972-7928, emailing [access@uakron.edu](mailto:access@uakron.edu), or visiting our office in Simmons 105. During this transition, please feel free to call us or stop in our office for additional help as well as visiting our website for a user guide and STARS tutorials.

# ASSP Workshops

For the upcoming workshops, please join us to get tips about staying organized in college and test taking. We'll provide you with useful resources and insight on steps to take that will help lead to success!

Sign up today! Spaces are limited. Free drinks and snacks will be provided.

**Thursday, September 6th**  
**Simmons Hall 105, 10:30 AM-12 PM**  
Time management/organization

**Monday, October 1st**  
**Simmons Hall 105, 5:30-7 PM**  
Test taking and testing strategies

## Disabilities Awareness Week

- Monday, November 5th**      **"The Short Bus Stories"**  
- Jonathan Mooney will share his personal experience as well as inspiring stories of individuals with disabilities who he encountered when traveling the country on a Short Bus  
Student Union Theatre, 3:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, November 6th**      **"A Crash Course in Working with Students with Asperger's Disorder: Practical Strategies for Faculty and Staff."**  
- A workshop for faculty and staff to learn practical strategies to use in difficult situations and how to prevent these situations from occurring  
Leigh Hall 414, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- "Student Stories of Success and Setbacks in Higher Education"**  
- A panel discussion for students with disabilities to share their personal stories about navigating  
-Simmons Hall 111, 3:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, November 7th**      **"Strategies to Promote a Positive Classroom Climate"**  
- A workshop for faculty and staff that will address strategies to create an accepting classroom climate that promotes learning for all students  
Leigh Hall 414, 12:00 - 1:30 p.m.
- "What Makes You Tic?"**  
- Marc Elliot will use his life story to convey fundamental lessons about the importance of tolerance  
Student Union Theatre, 3:20 p.m.
- SAMS (Students Against Multiple Sclerosis) Rock Alike!**  
- Annual lip-sync contest which raises funds for MS research.  
Student Union Ballroom, 8:00 p.m.
- Thursday, November 8th**      **Activities Fair**  
Student Union Ballroom A, 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
- Friday, November 9th**      **Celebrating Inclusive Excellence Awards Tribute**  
- Awards given to faculty and staff nominated by students with disabilities for excellence in teaching and service provision
- Weeklong Events**              **Paint your Perception**  
- Paint a mask to express creatively how you perceive a disability  
- Student Union, Trapezoid Lounge

## Highlighting Student Success

College is an unforgettable experience in a new town, with different surroundings and numerous fellow students within each course. Being in college is a time in life to expand your knowledge, possibly find the education set that you want to obtain or find subjects that are definitely not for you. You are going to get out of college what you put into it and whatever you decide there are people and resources that can assist you in every part of the way.

The most important resource I used while at The University of Akron was the Office of Accessibility (OA). This is where the foundation of my college success was based. Some of the accommodations that I used during my career at Akron were the extended time on exams, note takers in my classes, as well as parking accommodations around campus. The biggest advice I can give to current and future students of U of A is take advantage of the help that OA offers. This office is here to assist you and it is only beneficial if used properly along with professors' suggestions and study sessions. OA will not guarantee achievement alone; however, is a power tool that will support you along the way.

All the Best,  
Graduate of 2012



### Important Dates and Deadlines

**September 3, 2012**  
Labor Day Holiday- no class

**September 10, 2012**  
Last day to drop classes without "WD"

**October 2012**  
Look for Spring 2013 Class Registration to begin

**October 2012**  
Request accommodations for next semester once you have your spring schedule

**October 14, 2012**  
Last day to process course withdrawals for Fall Semester 2012

**November 12, 2012**  
Veteran's Day observance- classes held

## Meet the OA Staff:

Read below for some tips from our staff!

**Jessica DeFago,**  
*Associate Director*  
Attend the Organizational Workshop on Thursday, September 6<sup>th</sup> between 10:30-12:00. Space is limited, so please RSVP!

**Ashley Poulos,**  
*Disability Specialist & Service Coordinator*  
Make sure to talk with your instructors about your accommodations and maintain good communication.

**Leigh Sveda,**  
*Adaptive Technology & Service Coordinator*  
Check your UA email regularly for office updates, events and opportunities.

**Virginia Donnelly,**  
*Office Manager*  
If you have alternative testing, remember to put in test requests at least 4 days before the test date.

**Mara Byers,**  
*Transcriber Coordinator*  
Develop your self-advocacy and communication skills! Keep the circle of communication open between yourself, your instructor, and staff at the OA.

**Julie Sandish,**  
*Graduate Assistant*  
Let the notetaking coordinator know if you are having problems with your notetaker ASAP!

**Amy Liikala Conwi,**  
*Leadership & Transition Coordinator*  
Try to get involved in at least one extracurricular activity! We can help you with that, just ask!

**Trillah Culver,**  
*Graduate Assistant*  
You are ultimately the only one who can determine whether you can succeed. Choose the tools now that will strengthen that path for you and watch your dreams come true.



## Student Question & Answer

**Q: How do I talk to my professor about my accommodations?**

A: Set up a meeting with your professor to talk about your accommodations. You can set up this meeting by email, speaking with them during their office hours, or before or after class. At the meeting, talk to your professor about your accommodation. Speak in a clear and direct manner. Be courteous and respectful to your professor. Maintain eye contact.

<http://www.going-to-college.org/campuslife/sharing.html#talking>

**Q: I have a note taker as one of my accommodations, how do I get one?**

A: It is now week two of the semester. The Office of Accessibility Student Handbook (<http://www.uakron.edu/access/forms/>) states that "if no note taker is in place by the end of the second week of the semester, students must contact the Office of Accessibility." The note taker coordinator will work with you and your professor to secure a note taker. If you have a tape recorder accommodation, use a tape recorder to record class lectures to ensure you are getting addi-

tional support for the notes you take. If you need a tape recorder, please see an Office of Accessibility employee to check out a tape recorder for the semester!

**Q: I have alternative testing as an accommodation, how do I schedule my tests on STARS?**

A: First, determine your testing location. You can either test in The Office of Accessibility or The Counseling Center-Testing Services, both in Simmons Hall.

To test in The Office of Accessibility, testing requests can be submitted through the STARS website. The following steps can be used to submit your requests:

1. Visit STARS at <https://gunadiframework.com/Akron/>
2. Sign in with your STARS user name and password
3. Click "Alternative Testing" on the left side of the screen
4. Select the class you want to schedule an exam for and click Schedule Exam
5. Fill in the request type, date, time, services requested, and any additional notes, then click add exam request

If you are still unsure about how to schedule your tests, please

call or visit our office as well as viewing the STARS tutorial. [www.uakron.edu/access/STARS](http://www.uakron.edu/access/STARS)

To test in the Counseling Center-Testing Services use the following steps:

1. Notify your instructor that you would like to test in the Counseling Center-Testing Services and specify a date and time allowing for your extended time and class schedule.
2. Your instructor will fill out the Testing Proctor Sheet and send it to the Counseling Center-Testing Services with the test. You may print the Testing Proctor Sheet from [www.uakron.edu/counseling/testing](http://www.uakron.edu/counseling/testing).
3. Make sure your instructor knows the accommodations you receive for testing. If it is not indicated on the Testing Proctor Sheet, you will not receive the accommodations for the test.
4. Make an appointment with the CC-TS (330)972-6741 for the time of the test.
5. On test day, go to Simmons Hall 304, CC-TS. Make sure to bring a photo ID to show before the test.

## Suggestion Box

We want your feedback!

Email [ooaga1@uakron.edu](mailto:ooaga1@uakron.edu) with comments about the current newsletter or ideas you would like to see in future newsletters.

Office of Accessibility Phone: 330-972-7928  
Simmons Hall 105 TDD: 330-972-5764  
The University of Akron Fax: 330-972-5422  
Akron, Ohio 44325-6213 E-mail: [access@uakron.edu](mailto:access@uakron.edu)

Fall & Spring Office Hours:  
Monday: 8 a.m.-7 p.m.  
Tuesday-Friday: 8 a.m.-5 p.m.



Simmons Hall at The University of Akron