



The Office of Accessibility Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 1, Fall 2013

Welcome!

The Office of Accessibility welcomes everyone to our office, The University of Akron, AND the beginning of a brand new academic year. Lots of great things are in place for you!

The new academic year brings with it the opportunity for you to take your talents and use them in the classroom setting and while participating in the activities that make The University of Akron an exciting place to be!

The new school year also brings a few changes in how the Office of Accessibility assists you. All of the changes are put in place to make your life easier!

What will never change is our commitment to assist every student registered in the Office of Accessibility in having the best educational experience possible. The educational experience at The University of Akron goes beyond the classroom to meeting new friends, joining new clubs, and participating in everything the University has to offer.

You will be receiving information about programs being offered through the Office of Accessibility plus many of the resources and scheduled campus events.

It is our privilege to work with you as together we start the new Fall 2013 semester. Stop by and say hi!! We look forward to seeing you throughout the Fall 2013 semester.

Sincerely,
Kelly Kulick
Director
Office of Accessibility

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New Testing Procedures

The Office of Accessibility, in collaboration with the Counseling Center – Testing Services, has streamlined the test request process using our Student Testing and Accommodation Request System (STARS). This new process will better aid and support students in a more seamless and efficient manner.

This new testing procedure became active July 15, 2013. The new procedure requires that all students requesting testing accommodations, whether testing in the Office of Accessibility or in the Counseling Center – Testing Services, use STARS to schedule their tests. Students will need to ensure that **Alternative Testing** is selected within the ‘Select Accommodations for Course’ box, when requesting accommodations each semester through STARS. If Alternative Testing is not selected, the testing module will not activate and you will be unable to request your tests.

To view a video tutorial or user guide on how to schedule a test request, visit the Office of Accessibility’s website, <http://www.uakron.edu/access>, and click on the STARS link on the left hand side.

If you have any questions about the new testing request process, you can contact the Office of Accessibility at (330)972-7928 or access@uakron.edu.

Notetaking Accommodation Reminders

If you are a student who is utilizing notetaking accommodations this semester, please review your responsibilities in the Office of Accessibility's Student Handbook:



- Request the course needing a notetaker through STARS; ideally prior to the start of classes.
- By the end of the first week of classes, students must determine for which classes a notetaker is still desired. While a student remains eligible for notetakers, many students find that there are some classes they either don't need or want a notetaker. Throughout the process, the OA will continue to reach out to students to determine continuing need for notetakers. If no notetaker is in place by the end of the first week of the semester, the OA has reached out to the student at least twice, and the student has not contacted the office, the OA will assume that the student is no longer interested in this accommodation.
- If students no longer require a notetaker for their services, they must notify the OA by the second week of the semester. If no notetaker is required, students must update the accommodation request for each class in STARS.
- A student who wishes to obtain a notetaker beyond the sixth week of the semester is required to meet with his or her Disability Specialist to review and discuss this request.
- If notetakers upload the notes to STARS, students will need to download notes for use. For assistance in downloading your notes, please view the STARS tutorial at <http://www.uakron.edu/access/STARS/tutorials.dot> or contact the Office of Accessibility.
- Students must attend class to receive notes for that day, unless the student is prevented from attending due to genuine personal or health reasons.
- Students receiving notes are responsible for notifying the OA if the notes they receive are inadequate or not supplied on regular basis. Contact the Notetaker Coordinator at ooaga1@uakron.edu or (330) 972-7928 if you are having problems receiving adequate notes on time. You know notes are adequate when:
 - ◆ They are legible.
 - ◆ They include important information from lectures.
 - ◆ They include information that was written on the board.
 - ◆ They include information on homework assignments.
- At the end of each semester, students will have the ability to evaluate their notetakers through STARS. This can be done through completing an invoice. Please review the STARS tutorial for further information, <http://www.uakron.edu/access/STARS/tutorials.dot>.

Confidentiality and Notetaking:

Your confidentiality is important to this office. If you receive notetakers, the office will share your contact information with your notetaker to help facilitate the process and coordinate the delivery of notes. If you wish to remain confidential from your notetakers it is your responsibility to notify the Office of Accessibility and update STARS in order to effectively provide you with your academic accommodations. Follow these steps to update STARS:

1. Log into STARS
2. Select Notetaking Services under My Accommodations
3. Under "My Preference" select "yes" that you would like to hide your name from your notetaker
4. Work with the Office of Accessibility to get course notes from the assigned notetaker

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your notetaking accommodation throughout the semester, please contact your Disability Specialist or the Notetaker Coordinator at (330) 972-7928.

Get Involved with The Office of Accessibility!

Are you looking to learn valuable study and organizational tips, meet new people, or get more involved with The Office of Accessibility? We have a variety of events and groups available for you to participate in!



Follow our Facebook Page

The Office of Accessibility at The University of Akron will soon be on Facebook! Stay tuned for more information on this page where you will be able to find details regarding office events, study and organization tips, and updates.

Attend Disabilities Awareness Week

Mark your calendars! The Office of Accessibility will be holding its annual Disabilities Awareness Week on the following dates:

November 4-8, 2013

Check back for more information and updates on events!

Participate in Connect U

Are you interested in meeting new students on campus? Would you like to participate in more campus activities? Or, would you like to help another student feel more comfortable on campus? If so, please join us for **Connect U**!

Connect U is a group for students registered with the Office of Accessibility that are interested in connecting with one another and becoming more active on campus. The group will meet in Simmons Hall 105 every Wednesday from 5-6 PM and participate in fun, monthly activities. Activities will range from sporting and leadership events, to bowling, to just grabbing a drink at Starbucks together. We are also open to ideas if you have a fun activity that you would like to suggest!

Meetings are held each Wednesday night at 5:00PM in The Office of Accessibility. The first meeting will be held Wednesday, September 4th. Please contact Meredith Sodik by calling 330-972-7928 or emailing MLL38@uakron.edu if you are interested in participating!

Join Peer Assistance and Support for Success (PASS)



The Office of Accessibility is interested in YOUR success and wants to help you achieve your academic goals. Please sign up for the Peer Assistance and Support for Success (PASS) program today! With PASS, you will receive:

- ◆ A one-on-one relationship with a peer mentor from the Office of Accessibility
- ◆ Ongoing support and meetings throughout the semester
- ◆ Tips for learning, organizing, and studying
- ◆ Help with accessing campus resources

Please contact Meredith Sodik with questions or to sign up for the PASS program. She can be reached by phone at (330) 972-7928, by email MLL38@uakron.edu, or in person in Simmons 105.

Important Reminders

Testing in The Office of Accessibility and Counseling Center:

- ◆ If you have an alternative testing accommodation and are testing in the OA or the Counseling Center, please remember to schedule your test at least **4 business days** prior to the day you would like to take the test. Tests can be scheduled by the student through the STARS website, <https://qunadiframe.com/Akron/>, under the Alternative Testing tab. For assistance in scheduling tests, please contact our office.

Schedule Classes:

- ◆ Registration for Spring 2014 classes begins in October. Be sure to check your My Akron account for your enrollment date and time.

Update STARS:

- ◆ Once you have scheduled classes for the upcoming semester, make sure to **update your class schedule in STARS!** It is very important that we have your most updated schedule in STARS to best serve your accommodation needs.

Request your accommodations:

- ◆ When updating your schedule on STARS, make sure to also request your accommodations for the upcoming semester.
- ◆ If you are receiving transcribers or interpreters as an accommodation for next semester, it is recommended that you submit these long term transcriber and interpreter requests at least **six weeks prior** to the beginning of the semester.

Notetaking accommodations:

- ◆ If you are utilizing notetakers as an accommodation this semester, please remember to contact the Notetaker Coordinator at (330) 972-7928 or ooaga1@uakron.edu if you are having issues receiving adequate notes in a timely manner.

Important Dates

August 26, 2013
Fall Semester 2013
classes begin

September 2, 2013
Labor Day Holiday-
University Closed

October 2013
Spring 2014
registration begins

**November 27-
December 2, 2013**
Thanksgiving Recess

December 8, 2013
Final Instructional
Day for Fall 2013
classes

**December 9-15,
2013**
Finals Week

**December 13-14,
2013**
Fall 2013
Commencement

Are you graduating soon?

If you are graduating this semester or next, please be aware that accommodations are available to you and your guests. When applying for graduation, please note if you need special accommodations for the commencement ceremony. Accommodations for your guests are also available.

Please arrive one hour prior to the ceremony to ensure that your needs are comfortably accommodated. E.J. Thomas Performing Arts Hall ushers are available to provide any needed assistance. Please be advised that wheelchair seating is limited and that accompanying family members may be seated in nearby rows as space allows. Also note that a sign language interpreter signs each ceremony and that a special sound system is available at the Information Counter in the main lobby. Questions may be directed to 330-972-7595.

Parking for vehicles with a valid state disability parking placard is available in the E.J. Thomas Performing Arts Hall deck and in the lot located at the intersection of Hill St. and E. Buchtel Ave. Wheelchair access to the hall is available through the E.J. Thomas Performing Arts Hall parking deck.

For more information, please contact The University of Akron's commencement services at commencement@uakron.edu or visit their website, <http://www.uakron.edu/registrar/graduation/>. Information for guests can also be found in the following document: <http://www.uakron.edu/dotAsset/81129447-411b-4414-b0c5-455c31f1230d.pdf>.

Communicating Effectively With Your Instructors

Building relationships and maintaining communication with your college instructors is very important to your college success. It can help you stand out among your peers, become more invested in your academics, and may even get you a recommendation letter later in your career! Read below for some more tips on how to communicate effectively with your professors at The University of Akron:

- Personally introduce yourself on the first day of class
- Make an appointment—instructors are required to have office hours so stop by their office or make an appointment to tell your professor more about yourself or to ask about an assignment
- Address them appropriately by their title—“Dr.,” “Mrs.” “Mr.” Many instructors will inform you at the beginning of the semester which they prefer.
- Learn how your professor *prefers* to communicate—some professors don’t check voicemails and some only check their e-mail once a week. Learning how your professor communicates will ensure you the quickest response possible.
- Don’t hesitate to ask for help when you need it. Professors may be more eager to help you if they know you have an interest in the course work and doing well.
- Let your instructor know as soon as possible if you will be taking a vacation, have an appointment, or have any other event that might cause you to miss class.
- Compose appropriate e-mails that address your instructor by their correct title, have no spelling errors, and don’t contain excessive colors, crazy fonts, or emoticons. Also, be sure to re-read before sending.

Did you hear about the new Kurzweil?

The Office of Accessibility, in partnership with Information Technology Services, has updated to a new version of Kurzweil for The University of Akron. With this new version, you no longer have to be connected to the University's network. All you need is access to the internet. Instructions for downloading the new version can be found <http://www.uakron.edu/access/adaptive-technology/downloading-kurzweil.dot>. Specifics regarding changes to the process and accessing alternative media are listed on the Office of Accessibility's website, <https://www.uakron.edu/access/adaptive-technology/alternative-media.dot>.

For questions about the new Kurzweil or your username and password, contact Leigh Sveda at (330) 972-7928 or lab10@uakron.edu.

Suggestion Box

We want your feedback!

Email ooaga1@uakron.edu with comments about the current newsletter or ideas you would like to see in future newsletters.

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Simmons Hall 105 TDD: 330-972-5764
The University of Akron Fax: 330-972-5422
Akron, Ohio 44325-6213 E-mail: access@uakron.edu

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



Simmons Hall at The University of Akron