



The Office of Accessibility Newsletter

Welcome Back from the OA Director

Welcome students to the spring 2014 semester! I hope all of you had a restful winter break.

The Office of Accessibility is ready to help you make this spring semester your best semester ever! Everyone in the Office of Accessibility is ready to help guide, advise and mentor you as you work towards your academic goal. Please feel free to contact us by phone at 330-972-7928 to set up an appointment to discuss how we can assist you. If you prefer email, you can email us at access@uakron.edu.

I want to remind you that the Office of Accessibility has programs such as PASS and Connect U that you may benefit from. Please inquire with your Disability Specialist if you are interested in any of these programs. We want to be your Go-To office when you don't know what to do or who to talk with. If we cannot assist you with the problem/concern, we will find the person/office on campus you need to work with. Don't be a stranger! Stop in and say hi!

Best Wishes for a great Spring 2014 semester,
Kelly Kulick, Director

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Testing Accommodations Reminders

Those students receiving and planning to use their testing accommodations should be aware of important details when scheduling their tests in the Office of Accessibility or Counseling Center.

- ◆ If you plan to utilize your testing accommodations (reader, writer, extended time, distraction reduced space) at either location, these **test requests must be scheduled through STARS**. Tests can be scheduled by the student through the STARS website, <https://gunadiframework.com/Akron/>, under the Alternative Testing tab.
- ◆ If you wish to take a test with the class and not in the Office of Accessibility or the Counseling Center, you [Bold: do not] need to submit a test request through STARS.
- ◆ It is important to schedule your test at least **4 business days** prior to the day you would like to take the test. Given the bulk of tests processed by our office on a daily basis, late requests can and will cause detriment to processing requests and retrieving the tests from your instructors. Problems can range from not having a room or proctor available at the requested time, to not having the test delivered at the intended testing time. In the event of late test requests, you the student, are responsible for cooperating with your instructor to arrange for delivery of the test.
- ◆ Remember to schedule early during midterms and finals week due to high volume of testing requests!
- ◆ If you want to change the date or time for a test you have already submitted, you can do so by modifying the test request on STARS. Be sure to do this as soon as possible before your scheduled test.
- ◆ If you need to cancel a scheduled test, you can do so through STARS as well.
- ◆ Please arrive on time for all scheduled tests. If you arrive late for a scheduled test at either location, you may not receive your full extended time accommodation and your late attendance will be noted by both offices. You will be asked to complete a form at the Counseling Center and provide your signature stating you forego your full time extension due to your late arrival.
- ◆ Remember to bring your ID when arriving for a test at the Counseling Center.

Tutorials are also available on the Office of Accessibility's website: <http://www.uakron.edu/access/STARS/>. Please contact the Office of Accessibility for further questions and concerns regarding your testing accommodations, 330-972-7928 or Simmons Hall Room 105.

Try the Buddy System this Semester

Meredith Sodik, a Disability Specialist in the Office of Accessibility, would like to provide students with helpful advice about making friends in their classes. Read below to find out the perks of being friends with classmates and some tips for starting conversations with them.

Your classmates at The University of Akron are your greatest allies! Take advantage of this built-in resource by making connections with at least one person in each of your classes. No need to search for future grooms or BFF's...just try getting a little friendly with the person sitting next to you!

Perks of befriending a classmate:

- ◆ Confused about the big assignment due Monday? Call your classmate! Chances are he/she is spending the weekend working on the very same project!
- ◆ Instant "study buddy"
- ◆ Stuck in traffic and expect to be 10 minutes late? Text your classmate so that he/she can notify the professor.
- ◆ You can peek at each other's notes in case one of you gets behind during the lecture.
- ◆ Group work? No problem!
- ◆ Fill each other in on missed work/assignments in case one of you misses class.
- ◆ Remind each other of due dates.
- ◆ We could keep going!!!

Tips for striking up a conversation:

- ◆ During the first couple weeks of school, pick out a person that you wouldn't mind being cordial with. You don't have to have a lot in common—you are both registered in the same class, and that's common enough!
- ◆ Make small talk- Compliment his/her laptop stickers, comment on the weather, or commiserate about the traffic—Anything will do!
- ◆ Tell the student your name, and give him/her a smile.
- ◆ A few days after initially introducing yourself, ask the student if you could write his/her name, email address, and phone number in your planner just in case either of you run into an issue with the class. Offer your contact information and encourage the student to contact you if ever in a bind.
- ◆ Better yet, find each other on Facebook and connect while you're waiting for the class to start!
- ◆ Does talking to a complete stranger put you out of your comfort zone? Just remember, chances are that most of your classmates are also feeling jitters about the beginning of a new semester.
- ◆ No one needs to know that you've always been considered a shy person—New semester, new you!

Also, remember that Connect U meetings are a great way to connect with other students on campus. We meet every Wednesday from 4:30-6 PM in Simmons Hall Room 105. Please join us!

Good luck with your Spring 2014 semester at The University of Akron!



Important Reminders

STARS Updates:

- ◆ STARS will automatically input your class schedule information for the current and subsequent terms. This means that once you register for courses in My Akron, STARS will update automatically and the courses that you are enrolled in will be added to your STARS schedule. You will still need to select the accommodations you wish to use for each class.

Request accommodations:

- ◆ Once you have finalized your class schedule for the spring, make sure to also request your accommodations on STARS.
 1. Log into STARS
 2. Scroll down to "Select Accommodations for Your Class"
 3. Select classes you are requesting accommodations and click "Step 2-Continue to Customize your Accommodations"
 4. Select the accommodations you would like to request for each class and the checkbox to email the accommodation letter to your instructor
 5. Select "Submit your Accommodation Request"
- ◆ Transcribers/CART or interpreter accommodation requests should be submitted at least **six weeks prior** to the beginning of the semester.

Speak to your instructors:

- ◆ Discuss your accommodations with your instructors at the beginning of the semester.

Important Dates

January 20, 2014
Martin Luther King Jr. Day- University closed

February 18, 2014
President's Day Observance- Classes cancelled

March 2014
Summer 2014 registration begins

March 24-30, 2014
Spring recess

April 2014
Fall 2014 registration begins

Communicating with Instructors

In order to effectively provide students with accommodations, collaboration between the student, their instructor, and the Office of Accessibility is required. Students are encouraged to communicate with their instructors at the beginning of the semester regarding their accommodations. The Office of Accessibility would like to provide you with some tips for speaking with your instructors.

- ◆ Personally introduce yourself on the first day of class.
- ◆ 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/after class.
- ◆ Bring a printed copy of your accommodation letter to reference when discussing your accommodations.
- ◆ Only disclose what you feel comfortable with about your disability. Instructors do not need to know the specific nature of your disability to provide you with accommodations.
- ◆ Be courteous and respectful to your instructor.
- ◆ Maintain eye contact when speaking.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Notify your instructor 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.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding speaking with your instructors about your accommodations, please contact our office or speak with your Disability Specialist.

Counseling Center Resources for Success

The Counseling Center at The University of Akron has many beneficial resources and programs available to students at UA.

College Success Programming

- ◆ College Survival Kit- free workshops that provide information and practical skills to students for college success. <http://www.uakron.edu/dotAsset/7020288d-92eb-4c09-82a7-b65f518c28a5.pdf>
- ◆ Study Skills Interactive Video- <http://www.uakron.edu/counseling/success/studyvid.dot>
- ◆ Test Anxiety- Steps for overcoming stress and test anxiety. <https://www.uakron.edu/dotAsset/733765.pdf>
- ◆ Web based learning skills programs- [Study Guide Zone](#) and [Studytips.org](#)

Stress-reduction programs

- ◆ Stress information video, relaxation MP3's, relaxation techniques www.uakron.edu/counseling/stress

Counseling services to students

- ◆ <http://www.uakron.edu/counseling/counseling/>

For further information, please visit the Counseling Center's website <http://www.uakron.edu/counseling/> or contact them directly by phone, 330-972-7082, or stopping in their office on the third floor of Simmons Hall.

Winter Weather at UA

The winter weather has arrived on campus! In addition to taking extra precautions while driving and walking around campus, students should also be aware of possible class cancellations due to inclement weather. The decision to close will be made as early as possible. News of closing will be disseminated several ways:



- ◆ **Radio and TV:** Closing information will be provided to major radio and television stations in Akron, Canton and Cleveland. A list of the stations is below.
- ◆ **On the Web:** Closing information will be posted on [the University's home page](#).
- ◆ **E-mail:** A message will be sent to students' and employees' University mailboxes.
- ◆ **Text messaging:** Alerts will be sent via the University's Z-Alert text messaging service. [Learn more and subscribe](#). We also will use [Z-Alert on Twitter](#).
- ◆ **By phone:** The University's emergency information phone line is updated around the clock as conditions warrant. The number is **330-972-SNOW (7669)** or 330-972-6238 (TDD/Voice).

If you are having accessibility and/or mobility issues due to snow or ice on campus, please feel free to call the Office of Accessibility for assistance! We will help to resolve these issues by working with other University departments on campus.

Suggestion Box

We want your feedback!

Email ooaga1@uakron.edu with comments about the current newsletter or ideas you would like

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

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