



The Office of Accessibility Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 4, Spring 2014

The Art of Being Persistent

As the semester starts to wind down, I'm guessing some of you are finding it difficult to stay focused on your classes, especially when the nice weather finally gets here. If you feel like skipping that class, or you're worried you are losing your motivation to stay on track with your studies, I want you to remember why you came to The University of Akron. Do you remember the day you made the decision to attend The University of Akron? How did that feel? Do you remember the excitement that was mixed with a little nervousness as you tried to imagine what it would be like to be a Zip? You can find that feeling inside you again. It's that feeling that can help you reach the end of the semester on a good note. I want you to look at where you are today and what you've accomplished this semester. You've met new people, had experiences in and out of class that made you look at the world around you differently, while becoming a member of the campus community. There have been people along the way who helped guide you, professors who helped you understand subject material, and family and friends who supported you. Now is the time to plan for new opportunities and experiences. Many of you have decided what classes to take for the Fall 2014 semester, while possibly debating whether taking a class in the summer is the right thing to do. Whatever you decide, school or work for this summer, you should ultimately make the best decision for you. If you need help deciding the best path for you, The University of Akron has resources and people ready and willing to sit down with you to discuss your specific circumstances or to help you discover where you want to be in 5 years. Remember, persistence is the game changer. It's what gets you to your goal. The staff in the Office of Accessibility is ready to help you on your journey to your academic goal. Come meet with us anytime.

Best of Luck and Warmest Regards,
Kelly, Director of the Office of Accessibility

Inside This Issue:

Seeking Volunteers	2
Returning to Learning Group	2
A Party Worth "Noting"	2
Important Reminders	3
Faculty Spotlight	3
Zips Assistance Pantry	4

Tips for Final Exams

Since finals week is right around the corner, the Office of Accessibility would like to provide you with final exam and studying tips so that you can do your best!

- 1. Don't Procrastinate-** Plan ahead to start studying early. Do not start studying for an exam the night before. This can cause extra, unnecessary stress that could set you up for failure. Instead, start studying for the hardest exams now and schedule yourself time to study for all of your exams.
- 2. Find a quiet place to study-** In order to fully concentrate on studying, you need to reduce the number of distractions. This includes cellphones, social media, and loud places. Take the time to find a quiet, comfortable space that allows you to focus on the material for your exam.
- 3. Study with a partner IF you think it will be beneficial-** Studying with a friend or classmate can be extremely beneficial. Just keep in mind to stay focused on studying and not to get distracted.
- 4. Get enough sleep-** Studying all night for an exam the next day is extremely risky. Instead of all of the information sinking in, it is actually more likely for you to forget the information you are trying to cram in. Being tired the day of the exam also negatively affects your performance. Make sure you study often prior to exam day and set yourself an early bedtime.
- 5. Keep everything in a positive perspective-** Do not stress out over an exam. As hard as that sounds, stressing over a test actually just makes you more anxious and can also damage your performance. Try to relax and remember... it's just a test!

REMEMBER! Always arrive early, eat a good breakfast, wear comfortable clothes, bring extra materials, and prepare yourself. Finals week can be a breeze if you just take the time to follow these tips.

Seeking Volunteers!

The Office of Accessibility wants to **share your story!** We are in the process of organizing an outreach video, and we would like to feature YOU! The video will be used as a tool to help incoming students with disabilities prepare for college. It will also be used in helping faculty and staff understand ways that they can support students with disabilities. What advice would you give to a student transitioning from high school? Or is there anything that you would want instructors to know about students with disabilities? Participating in this video is a great opportunity to help others be successful at The University of Akron. If you would like to share your story, please contact Jessica DeFago (ild4@uakron.edu) or Meredith Sodik (mll38@uakron.edu) by **April 25th**. Volunteers will also be entered into a raffle to win a **\$20 Chipotle gift card!!**

Returning to Learning Group

The Office of Accessibility would like to introduce one of our newest programs, **Returning to Learning!** **Returning to Learning** is a group designed to benefit students with disabilities that have returned to education after a period away. The purpose of this group is to connect non-traditional students with The University of Akron and with one another. Students are invited to participate in discussion and activities that increase communication skills, self-awareness, and self-esteem. Students will also participate in campus events and gain information about how to utilize resources at The University of Akron.



You may be interested in Returning to Learning if you:

- ◆ Have returned to education after some time away and identify yourself as a non-traditional student
- ◆ Have expressed difficulty with transitioning back to an educational setting after being away
- ◆ Are interested in connecting with other students on campus
- ◆ Would like to participate in more on-campus activities

We held our first meeting on March 20th, and following are some comments students shared about participating in Returning to Learning:

- I'd like to meet more people like me that are tired of stumbling.
- I want to feel better about myself and learn how to work a computer better.
- I desire a sense of unity and would like to be more involved with activities on campus.
- I'd like to give back and help increase the level of knowledge of how disabilities affect students.
- I'd like to start a math study group for students like me.

If you are interested in attending a meeting, please contact Meredith Sodik (mll38@uakron.edu or x6719). She will be happy to meet with you to determine if Returning to Learning is a good fit!

A Party Worth "Noting"

Attention all notetakers! The Office of Accessibility will host a Notetaker Appreciation Party for all notetakers given assignments during the Spring 2014 semester. The purpose of this event is to show our gratitude for the hard work and dedication of all students who were assigned as notetakers this semester and to promote notetaker registration for the upcoming semesters. Our office will provide food and beverages for notetakers to enjoy throughout the day. The event will be held on **Friday, May 2nd** from **11:00am-3:00pm** in our office, **Simmons Hall Room 105**. If you plan to attend, please notify the Notetaker Coordinator, 330-972-2347 or ooaga1@uakron.edu. Questions and comments can also be directed to the Notetaker Coordinator. We hope to see you there!

Important Reminders

Schedule your final exams

- ◆ Remember that finals week is a very busy time for testing in the OA and Counseling Center-Testing Services. If you want to use your testing accommodations, be sure to schedule your exams **at least four business days before the test**. It is recommended that you schedule your final exams earlier than that deadline to ensure your preferred date and time. For assistance in scheduling your tests, please contact our office or view STARS tutorials on our website, <http://www.uakron.edu/access/STARS/tutorials.dot>.

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 Summer or Fall, 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.

Important Dates

April 2014
Fall 2014
registration
Begins

May 4, 2014
Final instructional
day for Spring
2014 classes

May 5-11, 2014
Final exams week

May 9-11, 2014
Spring 2014 com-
mencement

May 19, 2014
Summer Interses-
sion 2014 classes
begin

May 26, 2014
Memorial Day-
university closed



Faculty Spotlight

Last year, the Office of Accessibility recognized **Stacia Smilek**, a professor from the Department of Communication, for her outstanding qualities as an instructor and advocate for students with disabilities. Her supportive and positive learning environment has been recognized by her students.

The Office of Accessibility would like to acknowledge other faculty members who provide outstanding instruction and academic support to our students. We realize that at the core of student success are faculty members that go above and beyond meeting the unique needs of a diverse student population. The Faculty Spotlight allows students the opportunity to identify faculty advocates

that utilize universal design practices in the classroom which includes the recognition of diversity of learning styles.

Students must provide a brief description of their distinctive qualities as a faculty member and how they have provided a supportive, positive learning environment for students with disabilities. Complete the form provided on our website including all the required information and return to the Office of Accessibility. The form can be accessed from: <http://www.uakron.edu/access/faculty-and-staff/faculty-spotlight.dot>. Please be as specific as possible. If you need assistance in completing the form, please contact the Office of Accessibility. Forms must be submitted by **Friday, May 9th** for consideration. We look forward to reviewing your nominations and honoring other faculty members!

Zips Assistance Pantry

Have you heard about the new program on campus to help support students in need? The Zips Assistance Pantry is a program provided by The University of Akron that began just this school year. This program provides personal hygiene items and offers resources for UA students. In order to qualify for pantry services, students must be currently enrolled in classes at UA and must present their valid Zip Card. Students in need of emergency assistance can visit the pantry during open hours and a volunteer will be there to assist. Students will be asked to show their Zip Card and will be asked to fill out a short form. Information collected on the forms is kept confidential and is primarily used for the purposes of knowing and understanding the needs of students at UA.



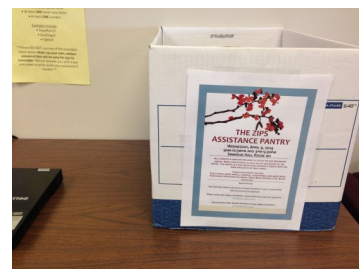
The Zips Assistance Pantry also provides information about various community resources available to UA students. These resources can also be found through the following website, <https://www.uakron.edu/dotAsset/fca61f0b-d51a-476c-84bc-d3c74086c60b.pdf>.

UA students, faculty, and staff wishing to support the party can do so in a variety of ways:

- ◆ Drop off donations at any time to Off-Campus Student Services (located on the first floor of the Student Union)
- ◆ Volunteer at the pantry
- ◆ Inform students about this service
- ◆ Request a donation bin for your office or department
- ◆ Suggest additional resources and items to be shared at the pantry

If you are interested in volunteering at the pantry, please contact Jennie Sette (jes67@zips.uakron.edu or 330-972-2341) for more information about qualifications and need.

The Office of Accessibility has joined in the effort to provide help to UA students by collecting donations for the pantry. At various times during the semester, a donation bin can be found in the front of our office. Feel free to donate items to our bin that will be provided to the pantry!



Additional information can be found on the Zips Assistance Pantry website: <http://www.uakron.edu/pantry/>

Suggestion Box

We want your feedback!

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

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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