

Accessibility at Fleming College 2014-15 Annual Report

Submitted by:

The Fleming Accessibility Steering Committee

Coordinated by:

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SECTION 1: Executive Summary

Introduction

Fleming College strives to provide an inclusive learning and working environment for all students and employees, and an accessible facility that serves its community. To that end, Fleming College ensures it meets accessibility standards as laid out by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* and its related Standard Regulations. The purpose of the AODA is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers to their full participation in the life of the province. To this end, the AODA mandates that each college carry out accessibility planning. This year's annual report addresses the third and final year of the college's Multiyear Accessibility Plan (2012-2015) objectives, and a full report follows, beginning on page 4.

The Fleming Commitment to Accessibility

*At Fleming College, we are committed to building an inclusive and accessible learning and working environment. We believe in and promote the rights of all persons with disabilities as enshrined in the **Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms**, the **Ontario Human Rights Code**, and the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA 2005)** and its related **Accessibility Standards Regulations**. The College supports the intent of the AODA and its goal of achieving accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodations, employment, buildings, structures and premises. The College also affirms the rights of all persons, including those with disabilities, to have access to equal opportunity in employment, education, accommodation or business dealings with the College.*

The College further affirms its commitment to promoting the following principles in all of its policies and interactions with persons with disabilities:

Dignity - *treating those with disabilities as customers and clients who are as valued and deserving of effective and full service as any other customer.*

Independence – *freedom from control or influence of others; freedom to make your own choices.*

Integration – *allowing people with disabilities to fully benefit from the same services, in the same place and in the same or similar ways as others.*

Equal opportunity – *having the same chances, options, benefits and results as others.*

Description of Fleming College

Fleming College is an Ontario public College of Applied Arts and Technology. Located in the heart of Central Ontario, Fleming College has campus locations in Peterborough, Lindsay, Cobourg and Haliburton. Named for famous Canadian inventor and engineer Sir Sandford Fleming, the college features more than 100 full-time programs in Arts and Heritage, Community Development and Health, Continuing Education, Environmental and Natural Resource Sciences, Justice and Business, Skilled Trades and Technology, and General Arts and Sciences. Fleming College has more than 5,900 full-time and 10,000 part-time students, more than 65,000 alumni, and approximately 500 full-time and 1,800 part-time employees.

The Accessibility Steering Committee

An Accessibility Working Group was constituted at Fleming College in 2003 to address the AODA, however in January 2015, the working group was developed into a Steering Committee comprised of senior leaders representing all areas of the college who champion and are accountable for the successful planning and implementation of the AODA. The Committee was coordinated by the Coordinator, Diversity, Accessibility and International Student Supports, and overseen by the Vice-President, Human Resources and Student Services.

Members of the 2014 – 2015 Accessibility Steering Committee:

Jim Angel, Chief Information Officer

Roger Fitch, Acting Chief Information Officer

Jodie Boudreau, Learning Strategist

Sonia Crook, VP Human Resources & Student Services, & ODA Representative

Nick Duley, HR Consultant, & Human Rights Officer

Ian Guest, Accessibility Facilitator

Debbie Harrison, Coordinator, Diversity, Accessibility & International Student Supports

Audrey Healey, Coordinator of Accessible Education Services

Trudy Heffernan, Director, Centre for Learning and Teaching

Red Keating, Director, Counseling and Learning Support Services

Kristi Kerford, Associate Vice President, Student Services

Judith Limkilde, Dean, School of General Arts & Sciences

Terry Williams, Director, College Facilities

Major Successes in 2014-15

Fleming College achieved numerous successes this past year, particularly in the development of working groups that engaged more employees in implementing accessibility in their Departments and Schools. As members of these committees have gained more knowledge and skills in applying an accessibility lens to College services, our capacity to make broader institutional change has grown. One example was the excellent inter-departmental collaboration in addressing Disruptions to Services, both in how disruptions are communicated and the solutions found to service issues, such as elevator accessibility. Employee training has also increased both in participation and the breadth of sessions offered. A new standard for identifying accessible washrooms was developed, and more washrooms renovated to a higher standard of access that also considered gender diversity. At the Sutherland campus, a new accessible Information and Security booth created a more welcoming and inclusive entrance. A new support staff role was created (Accessibility Facilitator) to assist with accessible documents, and the new portal successfully launched with a WCAG compliant framework. This year concluded our three-year action plan and the Accessibility Steering Committee

SECTION 2: 2014– 2015 Accessibility Report

The Accessibility Working Group reports that the following objectives were addressed in 2014-15, listed by area and Standard (S.) regulation number. For more information about the AODA Standards, and a full list of regulations, please go to:

<http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/en/mcass/programs/accessibility/index.aspx>

Integrated Standards (IASR)

General Requirements:

S. 4: Ensure the three year accessibility plan and annual report is approved by the Board of Directors and posted to the external web site.

Administrative Responsibility: Nick Duley

Champion: Debbie Harrison

Status: Fully successful

The annual report and 2014-15 action plan were approved and posted in October 2014. The Accessibility Working Group approved a new committee structure to address the broadening influence of the AODA on College-wide planning, and terms of reference for the following committees will be developed in 2015.

Accessibility Steering Committee: Is comprised of senior leaders representing all areas of the college who champion and are accountable for the successful planning and implementation of accessibility initiatives, and in particular the AODA Accessibility Standards. Other committees and working groups report to the Steering Committee.

Accessibility Advisory Committee: Is comprised of students, employees, community members and key stakeholders across the college and provides input and consultation to the Steering Committee on the identification and removal of barriers, as they relate to goods, services and facilities.

AODA Academic Working Group: Is comprised of representatives from the Academic area, and leads planning and implementation related to accessible curriculum and instructional materials, and promotes Universal Design for Learning principles.

Accessible Records Working Group: Is comprised of Student Services representatives who work towards the development of accessible records and documents.

Accessible Information and Technology Working Group: Is comprised of information and technology (IT) and Marketing staff who implement the principles of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0), including content (documents, images, audio, video, multimedia), systems (e.g., Desire2Learn, Evolve, etc.), and processes.

Built Environment Working Group: Is comprised of Facilities and other stakeholders involved in ensuring the physical environment and public spaces are accessible. This Group implements the Built Environment Standard and Ontario Building Code.

S. 5 Procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities.

Administrative Responsibility: *Brian Baker & Sonia Crook*

Champion: *Linda Humphries, Nick Duley, Debbie Harrison*

Status: *Fully successful*

A procurement tool kit developed by Ontario Colleges Human Resources Coordinating Committee AODA Sub-Committee was posted to an updated and revised Fleming Purchasing web page, and employees were notified. As Purchasing worked on procurement projects with staff or managers, they referred them to these resources so that they became familiar with the requirements. Managers received an updated accessibility checklist of their responsibilities under the AODA, and training sessions for Requestors addressed the need to consider accessibility and resources for accessible procurement.

S. 6 Incorporate accessibility features in self-serve kiosks.

Administrative Responsibility: *Terry Williams*

Champion: *Facilities*

Status: *Fully successful*

A new accessible Security and Information Booth was built at the main entrance of Brealey campus, and the new design also facilitated the full functioning of the accessible door openers by resolving heating issues. New accessible Pay and Display machines were also installed in the Brealey parking lots, and all accessible parking is currently under review.

s.7: Implement the IASR and human rights training module for compliance by January 1st, 2014.

Administrative Responsibility: Nick Duley

Champions: Debbie Harrison, Karen Nolk

Status: *Fully successful*

Employee participation rates in the IASR module continue to improve, and currently 1,101 employees have completed the training. The AODA modules now form a permanent part of the employee professional development calendar, and that, combined with the external web page access established early in 2014, has resulted in employees reporting less difficulty accessing the training. Some complaints were made that the Learning and Development page was not clear and that the titles of the modules should be revised for easier access. Employees have also requested being able to see what modules they have not completed, and this would require a different tracking system. These items will be reviewed next year.

Information and Communications Standard

S. 11: Ensure feedback processes are accessible.

Administrative Responsibility: Judith Limkilde

Champions: Debbie Harrison

Status: *Fully successful*

This year Disability Services changed its name to Accessible Education Services. Online feedback channels have been maintained on both the external Accessibility web page and the internal Accessible Education Services page. The first meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee was held in May 2014, and students, employees, and community agencies serving persons with disabilities participated in giving feedback. Recommendations from the meeting have been shared with the departments responsible for their implementation and helped to design the 2015-18 Action Plan. This open-invitation forum for feedback will be held twice annually to encourage more feedback.

The Disruptions in Service Procedures were also reviewed this year, and communications procedures were revised. All disruptions are now posted to both the external website main page and the portal main page, and key stakeholders are notified by email (Accessible Education Services, Community Living, etc.), in addition to physical signage.

S. 12: Provide accessible formats and communication supports.

Administrative Responsibility: *Jim Angel (Roger Fitch)*

Champions: *George MacDougall, Denise Wedderburn (Ian Guest)*

Status: *Fully successful*

The Accessible Records Committee reported that progress has been made in some areas. Many forms have been reformatted in the Registrar's Office and accessibility notices about accessing different formats has been posted on their web page, however not all forms are accessible. Currently students who are not able to write and complete their own forms have to seek support. Fillable forms could be more accessible, and this could be supported by IT, as it is a PeopleSoft project to generate more fillable forms across the college. AES is procuring a new version of Clockwork that will improve access to many processes without paper forms, such as alternative testing arrangements. In Athletics, Fleming staff at the Peterborough Sport and Wellness Centre are also responsible to report to the City of Peterborough Accessibility Committee, so staff are very aware. The new Athletics Marketing Coordinator is currently reviewing all documents and the website for accessibility, and it is an advantage having a lead person to identify issues.

S. 14: Ensure websites and web content conform to guidelines, including MyCampus portal, the learning management system (D2L), and student information systems (PeopleSoft). Assess them for future compliance requirements and ensure new websites and web content meet WCAG 2.0 Level A by January 1st, 2014.

Administrative Responsibility: *Jim Angel (Roger Fitch), Drew Van Parys*

Champions: *George MacDougall, Julien Feyen, Scott Ramsey*

Status: *Partially successful*

Audits were carried out on both the external website and the internal portal. Given that our contract with CAMPUS EAI for both the website and portal are expiring in June 2015, it was deemed ineffective to make major fixes to them, and those efforts are being reserved for the new sites in development. The ACC Checker audit of the portal revealed the current Affinity framework is compliant, and a report identified known, likely, and potential problems. As old web pages were converted to Affinity, many inaccessible pages were purged. Externally hosted web sites continue to be a problem.

The college also procured Site Improve, an internationally recognized software service for tracking and improving web accessibility on the external web site. The college is using Site Improve to simultaneously address WCAG 2.0 Level A issues on the current sites, as well as in development of a new external site. The new website planned for Fall 2015 will meet WCAG 2.0 Level A compliance when launched. Site Improve's online training certificates have provided a strong basis for training web developers and content providers within the Marketing Department.

Consistent with the experience of many PSE institutions, conversion of existing pdf-based content to accessible standards (1,500+ documents) has proven to be challenging. The college is exploring alternatives to address the issue from a technical perspective.

All web materials are available in alternate formats upon request.

S. 15: Provide accessible or conversion-ready electronic formats of educational or training resources / material as needed. Provide program information and student records in an accessible format.

Administrative Responsibility: *Jim Angel (Roger Fitch), Brenda Pander-Scott*

Champions: *Trudy Heffernan, George MacDougall,*

Status: *Partially successful*

The AODA Academic Working Group continued to expand its representation from different Schools and Departments, and to develop an implementation plan to further work in the academic area. Staff changes in the Accessibility Facilitator role slowed progress in terms of supporting accessible curriculum renewal, however active promotion of the availability of this technical support service to faculty has increased access. The committee continued to focus on opportunities for building UDL into curriculum and program renewal periods, and engaging Deans and Chairs in promoting the importance of accessible curriculum content. Course outlines are now significantly more accessible.

S. 16: Provide accessibility awareness training to educators.

Administrative Responsibility: *Nick Duley*

Champions: *Trudy Heffernan, Jennifer Ramsdale, Mary Overholt, Debbie Harrison*

Status: *Fully successful*

To date, 605 Fleming educators have completed the mandatory Universal Design for Learning module, including full and part-time faculty. The college is pleased with the full-time rates of participation, and Human Resources continue to communicate with the remaining full-time faculty who have not completed the training and their managers. Constant turnover of part-time faculty, and the high numbers of short-term contracts at Haliburton (such as one week art course instructors) continue to present challenges to participation and the remaining part-time faculty will be addressed through different strategies, such as a weekly summer orientation program at Haliburton.

In addition to the online mandatory training, there were 11 unique professional development offerings on topics related to accessibility (15 sessions in total) provided to Fleming employees in the 2014/15 academic year. These include; ongoing components of the Faculty Professional Development program, such as the module 'Building Inclusive Learning Communities', part of Teaching and Learning at Fleming; the integration of accessibility services in new faculty orientation; and drop-ins for faculty needing just in time assistance. Other professional development opportunities included; specific AODA/UDL sessions; 'Understanding the Teacher's Role in Disability Accommodations'; the Faculty Cyber Connection (FCC) module 'Universal Design for Learning' and 'Accessible Documents'. Two Schools (Law and Justice, Health and Wellness) also participated in 'The Coordinator, Counsellor & Registrar's Office Connection: Understanding the Education Plan Process for Students with Disabilities'. The Accessibility facilitator has met with 85 faculty and coordinators about creating accessible educational materials.

The integration of departments and services providing support for faculty is improving, although further work is needed for faculty to fully address accessibility in their classrooms and in their curriculum. The breadth of topics related to accessibility has expanded, but needs to be reinforced through the academic leadership and by ensuring participation in mandatory training.

S. 18: All campus libraries must provide or acquire an accessible or conversion-ready format of print (2015), digital or multimedia (2020) resources or materials upon request.

Administrative Responsibility: *Judith Limkilde, Jim Angel (Roger Fitch)*

Champions: *David Luinstra*

Status: *Fully successful*

Fleming Libraries are now using the ACE Database, in partnership with Ontario Council of University Libraries and Internet Archives. If items are not in the database, accessible versions of any item in our print collection can be made upon request.

Currently, recommendations regarding digital or multimedia resources are being developed by the provincial Heads of Libraries and Learning Resources AODA committee for application across Ontario Colleges. Fleming will continue to support this planning process over the next 3 years and apply HLLR recommendations as feasible.

Built Environment Standard:

S. 80: Provide accessible public spaces.

Administrative Responsibility: *Brian Baker*

Champion: *Terry Williams*

Status: *Fully successful*

An audit has been completed of all doors, locks, and closures, as well as exterior lighting, and an RFP process has been initiated to make improvements. More accessible parking spots have been added, and the walkway between Sutherland Residence and the main building have better winter maintenance programs in place. Due to poor visibility and high use by Wheel Trans stops, a better stair demarcation system was added to the front entrance. The new soccer fields were completed in 2014, and the Tipi managed by Aboriginal Student Services was relocated closer to Brealey campus, however the accessibility of these structures and their pathways is unknown and will need to be audited in 2015.

Address requirements of the standard and/or any changes to the Ontario Building Code.

Administrative Responsibility: *Brian Baker*

Champions: *Terry Williams*

Status: *Fully successful*

The new Ontario Building Code was enacted in January 2015. Master Planning processes are taking the new requirements into consideration, and aim to significantly improve access between floors and buildings at the Frost campus. Wider doors is one example of changes to the code, however 38" doors are not currently stocked and there will be delays implementing. New accessible features at Brealey this year include a new way finding system that includes Braille signage and 4 more fully accessible washrooms, bringing the total to 10. The Facilities Department web site also has a new RSS feed that will allow for better access to information.

Other Accessibility Objectives

Students with disabilities offer input to Fleming accessibility planning.

Administrative Responsibility: *Judith Limkilde*

Champions: *Debbie Harrison*

Status: *Fully successful*

There was limited success in gathering feedback through Student Ambassadors to the Accessibility Working Group in 2013-14, and given the high-level discussions that take place at those planning meetings, it was agreed that the committee structure was a barrier to participation and a more student-friendly and community-friendly environment could be offered by separating the feedback and planning processes. Students with disabilities were invited to participate in an open forum discussion with the Accessibility Advisory Committee. The Human Rights Officer and the Coordinator of Diversity and Accessibility were present to gather feedback from students and relay it to other departments. Five students and graduates participated, as well as two community representatives. See S. 4 above for more information.

Communication of the Report & Contact Information

Copies of this report are available: in the staff lounge at each Campus location; in the Learning Support Services department at the Brealey and Frost campuses; on the MyCampus portal, Human Resources web page, under Diversity and Accessibility; and on the external College web site under Services/Accessibility found at:

[Fleming College web site, Services tab](#)

The report is also available upon request in an alternate format, such as by e-mail attachment, on computer disk, in large print, or in Braille. For a copy or any other information about the annual plan, please contact Nick Duley, HR Consultant and Human Rights Officer, at 705-749-5520 ext.1982 or nick.duley@flemingcollege.ca