

Disability Access and Compliance Committee (DACC) Annual Report 2011-2012

Membership and Functions

In June 2011, the committee submitted a revised charter which unfortunately was not acted on in time to be effective in 2011-12. Therefore, we are requesting that the attached revision be approved for implementation at the start of 2012-13.

The change is necessary to accurately reflect the current function and makeup of the committee, including its role in the Accommodation Review Board (ARB) process as required by policy. The draft also recognizes two additional faculty nominated by the Academic Senate to serve as ARB members only as needed.

Committee Activities and Actions

In 2011-12, DACC continued to meet quarterly as needed. No meeting was held in the fall, but meetings were held in winter and spring. Agendas and minutes are posted online at: <http://accessibility.calpoly.edu>. While the broader group met only twice this year, the Physical Access Subcommittee met more frequently. The following summarizes the committee's and subcommittee's activities and actions this year:

Disability Resource Center Budget

The committee discussed the potential impact of past and proposed budget and staffing reductions on the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The committee raised concerns about Cal Poly being able to meet its regulatory and compliance obligations. A memo was drafted but never sent to the president when it was learned that alternative funding (e.g., Student Success Fee) may be used to support DRC services.

Parking and Transportation

Every two years, Cal Poly is required to submit to the CSU Chancellor's Office a parking audit that includes an audit of disabled parking spaces. No review was done this year, it but this will be on the DACC agenda for 2012-13. Accessible transportation services for commencement and the overall campus was discussed by the subcommittee. A need to do a more comprehensive review in the future was identified.

Physical Access

The physical access subcommittee toured completed buildings (Meat Processing Plant, Recreation Center) and identified minor items to be reviewed by the project manager; reviewed and made recommendations relating to Saturday football game tailgating and its impact on accessibility/parking issues; kept updated on the progress made on the new Science Building; and reviewed numerous barrier removal and physical access improvement efforts, including the Child Development Lab patio and playground areas, Vista Grande ramp, UU Plaza/Perimeter Road paths of travel, and various accessibility improvement projects in and around Spanos Stadium.

In 2011-12, Cal Poly completed its response to the Office of Civil Rights' (OCR) investigation into accessibility issues involving Spanos Stadium and is awaiting OCR's acknowledgement and acceptance of the campus response and planned actions.

In conjunction with the DRC, Facilities Services sponsored a webinar on "Campus Compliance with New ADA Access Standards in March. Other webinars in the same series addressed compliance issues involving distance learning and emerging technologies, pending litigation and revised ADA regulations affecting various areas.

Accessible Technology Initiative (ATI)

DACC was updated on campus and CSU activities and plans towards achieving goals in the three ATI priority areas: Web Accessibility, Instructional Materials and Procurement.

Annual progress reports were submitted to the Chancellor's Office in November and aggregate data from all campuses was returned to the campus in June.

Cal Poly staff were contracted by or volunteered to assist the Chancellor's Office ATI team in developing RFPs, guidelines, requirements, training, templates and other resources to benefit all CSU campuses. Examples include captioning guidelines, a captioning service RFP, a template to document equally effective access plans for non-compliant E&IT products, and implementation of a new tool to evaluate compliance of campus websites and web applications.

A major focus this year involved ensuring that the redesigned Cal Poly web page and related template were accessible and migrating more departmental websites to Cal Poly's web content management system. Both efforts were very successful and led to development of an accessibility help page for the Cal Poly home page. Accessibility help was also developed for Cal Poly's learning management system, PolyLearn.

While Cal Poly has made great progress in Web Accessibility and Procurement, Instructional Materials remains problematic. With the formation of a consolidated ITS Academic Technology group, this is expected to receive more attention.

The assistive technologist position funded by ITS and DRC continued to provide valuable assistance by conducting research, consulting with individual faculty and departments, evaluating tools for potential campus use, and assisting in evaluating campus applications and procurements. One significant improvement this year was the installation of Read & Write Gold on all library computers not just ADA workstations.

Staff attended the annual CSUN conference and shared information back about new developments in technology that might positively impact or be of use on campus, including way finding technologies to assist people with visual disabilities navigate physical environments.

Continuing Issues and Action Items

1. Service Animal Policy: Lack of clarity about the difference between service and therapy animals (which resulted in complaints being filed against other universities) caused this effort to be put on hold. Awaiting results of legal cases and interpretation.
2. Instructional Accommodations: Academic department responsibilities for responding to accommodation requests (when not barrier removal) should become clearer as ATI is implemented. Roles and responsibilities should be formally documented as part of the ATI plans.
3. Event Planning: Need to develop a checklist to ensure that individuals who put on campus events think about all aspects of accessibility. Checklist will be shared with affected campus entities (clubs, departments, divisions) annually. Follow up on suggestion to involve students in an applicable course to help document this.
4. DRC Services: Continue to advise DRC as needed about setting priorities and maximizing limited resources while minimizing risks and meeting campus obligations.