

The President's Advisory Committee on Disability Issues

2023-24 Annual Report

Introduction

The President's Advisory Committee on Disability Issues (PACDI) was established in 1987 to ensure broad institutional input on matters relating to persons with disabilities at MSU. PACDI is charged with analyzing and identifying issues, proposing solutions, and making recommendations to the President and directly to community stakeholders on matters of particular concern to persons with disabilities.

During the 2023-2024 academic year, 20 speakers presented to the committee on a variety of topics including web and digital accessibility, student accommodations and supports, buildings, physical spaces, parking, culinary accessibility, employee accommodations and supports, student concerns regarding remote and hybrid meetings/classes, and prevention, outreach, and education for persons with disabilities impacted by sexual violence.

This report summarizes the information shared during meetings and includes recommendations to relevant stakeholders.

Committee Meetings

September 2023 Meeting - Digital and Web Accessibility

The subject of the September 2023 meeting was digital and web accessibility. The Committee heard from Dennis Bond (Digital Accessibility Coordinator - Office for Civil Rights), Brendan Guenther (Chief Academic Digital Officer - Center for Teaching & Learning Innovation), Heidi Schroeder (Accessibility Coordinator – Libraries), and Nick Noel (Instructional Designer and Media Producer – Education Technology).

Digital Accessibility Team

The MSU Digital Accessibility Team coordinates digital accessibility compliance as part of the Office of the ADA Coordinator in the Office for Civil Rights.

This team is the policy owner of the MSU Digital Accessibility Policy and its accompanying technical standard, currently Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 AA. The Digital Accessibility Team was established in April of 2023. The Digital Accessibility Team:

- Reviews major websites and provides units with feedback so inaccessible content can be remediated.
- Surveys leadership and coordinates with Digital Accessibility Liaisons.
- Has responsibility for the Annual Self Review process.
- Develops dashboards to display accessibility metrics which can be reviewed by unit leadership and Digital Accessibility Liaisons.
- Provides programming and support for the Digital Accessibility Liaisons meetings.
- Updates the training and resources on the webaccess.msu.edu website.
- Reviews, approves, and maintains the Equally Effective Alternative Access Plan process.
- Hosts liaison subgroup meetings on specific topics.

The Digital Accessibility Team stated PACDI could assist by:

- Continuing to emphasize the importance of accessibility at the MAU leadership level.
- Advocating for accessibility and web development resources in OCR and other MSU units.
- Empowering the Digital Strategy Team to improve their responsiveness and clarify their strategic timelines and capabilities so MSU units can make appropriate hiring decisions.
- Reaching out to faculty, staff, and students with disabilities to determine whether MSU's current approach is effective and where we can improve and communicate this information.
- Determining whether there should be more coordination between MSU's various disability service teams and what that might look like.
- Assisting in efforts to encourage campus trainers to cover digital accessibility.

Center for Teaching & Learning Innovation (CTLI)

The mission of the CTLI is to support MSU's educators and their practices through collaboration and consultation. The vision of the CTLI is to support MSU communities where educators work together across roles to provide inclusive, research-informed experiences that support student success. The CTLI:

- Builds a path to success for every educator by leading the university with unwavering integrity and a strong culture of teaching and learning practices.
- Collaborates with and empowers MSU educators in their engagement in equitable, student-centered teaching and learning practices.
- Provides consultations, curriculum & course design, workshops, and online program management.
- Emphasizes the inclusion, accessibility, accommodations, and flexibility for students in syllabus language and developed templates.
- Provides instructional consultations individualized and experience/course specific.
- "Course Design" includes Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
- CTLI "Affiliates" are individuals working in units across the MSU ecosystem supporting educator professional development and growth.

The CTLI stated PACDI could assist by:

- Sharing information regarding CTLI's Affiliates Program.
- Refer struggling or excelling educators to CTLI.

The Libraries Accessibility Unit

The Libraries Accessibility Unit is responsible for projects and initiatives that improve and ensure accessible library spaces, services, and collections. The unit evaluates and improves digital and physical accessibility, works with e-resource vendors and library accessibility groups, and identifies/promotes relevant accessibility training and support for library staff. The Accessibility Unit welcomes partnership and collaboration across Library divisions to further advance library accessibility.

During the 2023-2024 academic year, the Accessibility Unit of the Libraries has been working on the following projects and initiatives:

- Collections/e-resources: licensing & vendor work, documenting accessibility.
- Accessibility & Disability Studies fund/collection.

- Open Educational Resources (OER) accessibility requirements, accessibility digitization procedures, auto OCR to interlibrary loan documents.
- Web/User Experience Unit incorporates accessibility.
- Website Redesign - accessibility testing, continuous improvement.
- Accessibility services/resources: Assistive Technology Center, remediation service, accessibility accommodations for digital reserves.
- Promoting accessibility training/education & culture.
- Participating in outreach & advocacy.
- A member of, and an active participant in, the Big Ten Library Accessibility Group & Library Accessibility Alliance.
- Campus partners with RCPD, IT, ADA Coordinator, Digital Accessibility Team.
- Libraries is its own purchasing agent for library materials.
- Developed procedures to mirror MSU's central accessibility purchasing procedures while considering factors unique to libraries.
- Most e-resources are the sole source – the Libraries Accessibility Unit cannot choose where/how to obtain access to resources.
- Many contain materials digitized from print (may not be accessible).
- Many are essential to the educational and research mission and practices at MSU.

The Libraries Accessibility Unit offered the following suggestions on how PACDI could assist:

- Raising awareness of accessibility issues or potential improvements students, staff and community users have with the Libraries Accessibility Unit.
- Assist the Libraries in navigating the predicament of inaccessible library e-resources and meeting digital accessibility policy requirements & technical guidelines.
- Advocating for more training and resources to support digital accessibility.
- Providing guidance/best practices for annual accessibility survey.

Educational Technology

Educational Technology administers centrally supported software used in instruction, and designs, maintains, and supports classroom hardware. Educational Technology also provides training and consulting on software, course design and online/hybrid pedagogy and creates media content for courses and other offerings. In addition, Educational Technology:

- Reviews courses using Quality Matters rubric.
- Reviews software using Web Content Accessibility Guidelines standards.
- Creates media content which meets accessibility standards.
- Incorporates Universal Design for Learning concepts in course design.

Educational Technology offered the following suggestions for how PACDI could assist:

- Encourage the use of centrally supported Learning Management Systems in all courses.
- Encourage annual reviews of courses using Quality Matters (or similar) rubric.
- Encourage Institutional Accessibility Certification for those teaching online Courses.

Committee Recommendations – Digital Accessibility

Based on the information shared with those responsible for digital accessibility across campus, PACDI is recommending the following:

- a. Digital Accessibility Team – Publish dashboards (behind an MSU login) showing university wide digital accessibility metrics related to culture, trainings, websites, courses, and videos.
- b. Digital Accessibility Team – Develop mandatory digital accessibility training based on employee role.
- c. Educational Technology - When appropriate, encourage the use of the centrally supported LMS in all courses.
- d. Educational Technology - When applicable encourage colleges and others providing academic content to conduct annual accessibility reviews of courses.
- e. Continued meeting and collaboration between units responsible for digital accessibility to include the Digital Accessibility Team in OCR, RCPD’s Assistant Director of Assistive Technology, the Accessibility Coordinator for the Libraries, Educational Technology, the Center for Teaching and Learning, University Communications, and Institutional Diversity and Inclusion, to coordinate sharing of information, resources, and trainings to enhance digital accessibility at MSU.

November 2023 Meeting - Supporting Students with Disabilities

The November 2023 meeting topic was supporting students with disabilities. The Committee heard from Michael Hudson (Director – Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD)), Shelby Gombosi (Assistant Director of Case Management, Assessment, & Programmatic Innovation - RCPD), Virginia Martz (Ability Access Specialist: Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Mobility - RCPD), Tyler Smeltekop (Assistant Director of Assistive Technology Innovation - RCPD), and Chris Stone-Sewalish (Associate Director for Administration – Residence Education & Housing Services).

RCPD

- RCPD’s reporting line transitioned from the Office of the Provost to University Health and Wellbeing (UHW).
- RCPD created and will be posting a new leadership role in the clinical and medical program accommodation process.
- RCPD has developed extensive donor support including 18 endowments plus expendable gift accounts providing direct programming including 8 scholarship programs that provide over \$80,000 annually for student academic support.
- Population growth of student and employee registrations grew by 8% this year.
- Since 2020 (pandemic), population growth (students and employees registered with RCPD) has increased over 40%.
- RCPD staff has not grown by 40%. RCPD has 22 full-time employees including 13.5 full time Access Specialists supporting student and employee accommodations.
- The ideal case load per RCPD specialist would be in the 250 students/specialist range. RCPD has not been at those ratios for about 20 years yet has worked diligently to address student needs including by private gifts and partnerships that provide 4 (18.8%) of our staff.

- Current caseloads peak at 400-500 students/specialist. Big 10 Universities are facing similar challenges.
- Discontinued the use of the term “VISA” to refer to student accommodations. Now using the term “Accommodation Letter.”
- RCPD Accessibility Specialists are now assigned as liaisons to academic units.
- RCPD will be asking University Health and Wellness (UHW) to provide resources for a new data system. The current data system is nearly 25 years old. The current data system is not sustainable. The new system is imperative to collect medical documentation, generate accommodation letters, document work of the unit, etc.
- Testing accommodations. RCPD is looking at a multifaceted set of solutions to address scheduling and space issues around testing accommodations. The MSU Testing Center is a possible solution. RCPD has only three testing rooms.
- Post pandemic sign language interpreters (American Sign Language (ASL)) and captioning stenographers (Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART)) have been a lean resource.
- Wisconsin received centralized funding for all CART and ASL services.
- RCPD is funded for CART and ASL services only for academic courses for credit.
- RCPD works with 3D printing and embossers to convey complex scientific and mathematic concepts in tactile form.
- RCPD is working on the Good Map app. Gives walking directions inside buildings (available in three buildings now).
- Piloting Sign Glasses – glasses with augmented reality using an ASL interpreter.

PACDI could assist RCPD by:

- Supporting efforts to seek funding for data systems modernization.
- Supporting efforts to locate and hire ASL interpreters.
- Supporting efforts to facilitate additional spaces for testing accommodations.

Residence Education and Housing Services

Residence Education and Housing Services (REHS) is a department in the Division of Student Life and Engagement. REHS focuses on a variety of areas impacting students’ overall on-campus living experience, including residence education, housing assignments, housing operations, conference services, facilities, and maintenance. REHS manages 27 residence halls and two apartment communities, housing nearly 175,000 students, faculty, staff, families, and guests annually.

REHS has been working on the following initiatives:

- In Fall 2022, REHS had 500 students in transitional housing (adding a fifth person to a four-bedroom suite, or a third person to a two-bedroom room, etc.). By the end of the fall semester, all students in transitional housing had been offered permanent spaces outside of transitional housing.
- Fall 2022 brought many more students needing housing. REHS retained 94% of Fall 2022 students for Fall 2023.

- 2023 saw a decline in housing related accommodation requests – 458 students requested accommodations with 600 related needs.
- Allergen friendly housing suites have been introduced.
- No student needing accommodation was turned away.
- REHS repurposed a permanent, full time staff member to work specifically with accommodations and partner with RCPD in the housing assignments office.
- REHS and Culinary Services are rolling out a process to help students specifically with food allergies and sensitivities live near Thrive.
- REHS developed a three-to-five-year plan to bring all accessible rooms to a specific standard, better track the existing inventory, and strategically invest in larger accessibility related projects.
- Started an elevation plan for student issues. Who addresses a student issue, how it gets documented, how follow up occurs, timelines, and responding to emails etc.
- More students are wanting apartment style housing and not the traditional residence hall experience.
- Students would benefit from priority registration dates for accommodation applications (in use at other Big 10's).
- Students would benefit from priority dates and timelines for submission and completion.

REHS stated PACDI could assist with the following:

- Supporting an operational team across campus to include representatives from RCPD, IPF, SLE, OCR, student organizations that allows for coordination and engagement on projects, planning, and process – taking a view of the entire student experience.
- Supporting a process so students move through a single campus experience – they do not move between departments.
- MSU needs an agreed upon approach for student and parent concern elevation and management.

Committee Recommendations – Supporting Student Accommodations

- RCPD – Evaluate and consider funding to hire an additional full-time employee to support student accommodation needs to address the 40% increase in students requesting accommodations post-Covid.
- RCPD - Continue efforts to evaluate options for increasing physical spaces for students needing testing accommodations.
- RCPD – Evaluate and consider funding for data systems modernization.
- RCPD and REHS – Consider forming an operational team consisting of representatives from RCPD, IPF, SLE, ISPM, OCR, and students from the Council for Students with Disabilities (CSD), Council of Graduate Students (COGS), Graduate Student Accessibility Support Network (GSASN) etc., to coordinate planning and projects for student housing updates and upgrades related to ADA accommodations.

January 2024 Meeting – Buildings, Physical Spaces, Parking and Dietary Accessibility

Buildings, physical spaces, parking, and dietary accessibility were the subject of the January 2024 meeting. The Committee heard from Stephen Troost (Campus Planner - Infrastructure Planning and Facilities), Barb Kranz (Assistant Provost – Institutional Space Planning and Management), Lisa Sudia

(Space Planner/Project Manager – Institutional Space Planning and Management), Diane Barker (Chief Planning and Projects Officer – Student Life & Engagement), Stephanie O’Donnell (Police & Public Safety, University Traffic Engineer), Kelsey Patterson (Registered Dietitian – Culinary Services Administration).

IPF and ISPM

IPF and ISPM have been working on removing the barriers to accessing buildings and facilities, and often going beyond what is required by code. In terms of physical barriers, there are less than a handful of buildings on campus that are not accessible in terms of getting into the door and being able to navigate through the facility.

- Vision 2050
 - Integrated facilities and land use plan, tackling all 5,300 acres of campus, and statewide facilities.
 - A two-year process to get this plan into place.
 - Flexible framework that's going to evolve over time as needs evolve and change.
 - Trying to provide an unencumbered center of campus as is possible.
 - Vision founded and guided by 4 overlapping strategies: enhance research and academics, student success, improve connectivity, and facilitate the celebration of diversity.
 - Enhance research and academics - Do not spread academic enterprise. Keep academics compressed.
 - Student Success – Bringing successful initiatives into the academic neighborhoods to enhance student engagement. For instance, doctor visits, wellness checks, community functions, etc.
 - Improving Connectivity - Enhance the pedestrian non-motorized realm of connecting around hubs of activity. Minimize the impact cars have on campus. Barrier free parking will always exist throughout the campus.
 - Facilitate the celebration of diversity – Using spaces for a variety of functions.
- Pedestrian pathways
 - All curve and pathway ramp projects were completed in 2022, now adding sidewalk banding.
- Farm Lane construction
 - Farm Lane non-motorized bridge complete. A non-motorized bridge was built first so there was a pathway for students to get to and from classes.
 - The entire vehicular bridge was taken down during winter break 2023. It will be offline until August 2024. The new bridge will have wider sidewalks, bike lanes and 2 dedicated travel links. One north and one south.
- Completion of Packaging renovation and addition.
 - A single occupant toilet room and a personal health room were added to the space. Collaboration and seating areas were provided along the main concourse area. In the classroom, a flat floor was created to account for a variety of seating types, to include movable desktop surfaces, tables and chairs that are at standard seated height, and taller tables with counter height stools. In classrooms height adjustable tables are included for accessibility.

- Accessibility Suggestion Form – On ISPM’s website to provide a space for suggestions to remove physical barriers on campus. ISPM reviews and triages the suggestions and forwards to appropriate unit to address.
- Major administrative units – Colleges can make alteration and improvement requests, that are not new construction. ISPM also administers the Teaching Learning Environment fund. Those are typically funds that go toward technology related to teaching and learning.
- Committee Member comment - No healthy food options are available below Wilson Road.

Parking & Transportation

MSU Police & Public Safety is responsible for parking and transportation on campus.

- Scooters and Bikes and Walkways
 - Scooters and bikes are not supposed to be on walkways and pathways.
 - Scooters have designated parking areas where they are supposed to be parked.
 - The contract with the student for scooter use contains language stating where scooters should be parked.
 - Police do not aggressively impound scooters. A recommendation from PACDI could result in more aggressive impounding of scooters.
 - A communication campaign about where scooters/bikes should be operated and parked is a good first step.
 - Report issues to O’Donnell, particularly if having a repeated experience at the same time of day.
- CATA Service and Parking
 - Construction detours have been a major headache, particularly for students – as indicated on social media and parent channels.
 - Working with CATA for swifter update of changes on transit app. It currently takes a couple of days for the app to be updated.
 - CATA presents to MSU the user data from the previous semester. Discussions then occur between CATA and MSU (DPPS, SLE, academics, government affairs, and other stakeholders) on status, what was served, what was underserved, etc. CATA service to students is arranged every semester from this input, which also includes student and parent comments on social media.
 - Full CATA busses during bad weather or events.
 - Additional buses are employed during bad weather and events, but recently confluence of bad weather and school closures impacted CATA’s ability to add additional buses.
 - Spec-Tran – Curb-to-Curb Transit
 - RCPD receives many complaints about Spec-Tran.
 - O’Donnell is the contract manager for all CATA Services. Reach out to her with issues. Lynne Swerhone from RCPD manages Spec-Tran issues for RCPD.
 - Complaints regarding Spec-Tran
 - How far in advance need to book travel does not provide flexibility.
 - Students are not picked up on time to get to class or if class runs over, not being picked up.
 - Students are not getting responses to their request for a ride.

- Spec-Tran is so unreliable that most students who have that accommodation do not use it.
 - Spec-Tran does have an app – My Ride CATA. It is new, but has not been updated, and does not work very well. Need input from the app to find out what’s working and what is not. Depending on the data, consider shifting to a more centrally based or more campus centered, paratransit type of service.
 - Council for Students with Disabilities (CSD) – Heard similar complaints from their members.
 - CSD proposed solution – Change providers to the same company that does Safe Ride or the Transit app so students can see where their driver is and when they may be picked up.
- Disability parking for students and employees.
 - A state issued disability placard is necessary to park in disability spaces on campus.
 - Employee lots - can park there without an employee permit, but employee permits are recommended to be able to park in gated employee lots.
 - If parking in a pay-by-plate lot, student/employee needs to pay for parking, even if they have a disability placard, unless they have a gold seal.
- Disability and parking at events.
 - For football and baseball there is a parking lot on South Campus for disabled parking with a shuttle to accessible entrances to the stadiums. Basketball is similar but on a smaller scale.
- Wharton
 - A portion of the Wharton parking structure has been reserved for disability parking for events at Wharton.
 - The elevators at the Wharton ramp are scheduled for repair and updates which should result in 2 functioning non-problematic elevators at the Wharton Center ramp.
- Other Events
 - All other parking-related accommodations are addressed on a case-by-case basis.
 - Steve Grice reports to O’Donnell. If you have questions about disability parking reach out to O’Donnell or Grice.
 - The parking website has forms available for anyone that needs assistance with parking.
- Challenges: Making detours safe for pedestrians.
 - Making detours safe for pedestrians
 - Police & Public Safety determines detours for construction projects.
 - Efforts are made to make the detour as short as possible, without requiring detours through parking lots.
 - RCPD and other constituents review the detour plan and walk the route to ensure it is safe for all users.

- Committee Member Concern - The Farm Lane bridge construction added over a mile each way to their walk. Many of the detour signs did not assist as they are legally blind.
 - Notify O'Donnell if there are issues with detour routes and they will be addressed.
 - MSU vehicles and snow removal vehicles on sidewalks
 - They are trying to keep vehicles off the sidewalks. For IPF it can be the only way they can access certain parts of campus. O'Donnell is working with IPF on this issue.
 - Separation of pedestrian walkways from bikes and electronic scooters
 - Technically it is not legal to ride anything motorized on the sidewalk.
 - Need a robust communication/education campaign informing students, faculty, and staff they cannot ride bikes and scooters on sidewalks, and the impact to those who are blind encountering a scooter/bike in a walkway.
 - A robust communication and education plan is likely better before penalizing (tickets) for non-compliance.

Student Life & Engagement – Residence Hall Renovations

- Campbell Hall renovations
 - Originally built in 1939.
 - Has significantly deferred maintenance costs.
 - Will be taken offline for infrastructure and accessibility improvements through August 2025.
 - Renovations will maintain the historical and architectural context of the building while assessing hall safety and accessibility, and enhancing living, gathering, and studying spaces for both students and staff. Planned upgrades will include updating staff apartments, addition of an Honor's Program space, bathroom upgrades, addition of gender inclusive and ADA accessible bathrooms, upgrades to student program spaces, interior improvements including the replacement of window and window treatments, replace flooring, interior paint throughout, wood repair and restoration, improved building systems including roofing, replacement dormers, brick and mortar, HVAC systems, electric and lighting upgrades, replace fire alarm systems, automatic fire suppression, and access controls, accessibility features for entry, elevators, bathrooms, and rooms, and the creation of a centralized mail and packaging processing center in the West Circle neighborhood.
 - Currently it's almost impossible to get into Campbell Hall with a wheelchair. Post renovation Campbell Hall will be accessible, and include ADA parking, and signage.
 - Campbell Hall houses about 300 students. Eight students have accommodations.
 - No issues are anticipated from a housing standpoint by taking Campbell offline.

Student Life & Engagement – Culinary

The Culinary Services Team is a Division of Student Life and Engagement. The Culinary Services Team is responsible for dining in the residence halls, Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center, Breslin Student Events Center, and various administrative offices.

- Culinary Services Successes
 - Thrive at Owen - Certified free from 9 major allergens.
 - Now open 7 days a week.
 - Uses a custom-built, order-ahead application for students registered with RCPD called Order It. Over 400 orders have been placed with Order It since the beginning of the year.
 - Allergen training. Working to implement an app that translates allergen training into over 100 different languages for students whose second language is English.
 - Working on a process to streamline housing for students that have food allergies and a need to live close to Thrive.
 - Currently have a Request for Proposal out to several management system providers. A set budget is in place for the management system. Looking at how digital signage may or may not be a part of that.
- Culinary Services Challenges
 - Aging technology. Culinary has an app that provides nutrition information, but it is difficult to use.
 - MSU has an app that displays menus that are updated hourly if students are not able to tap into our technology and update on the fly. Some information can be outdated when the guest sees it and that can risk an allergic reaction or someone getting sick. It's a concern to not be able to update menus as they are changed.
 - Student outreach. Students not aware of how to seek dietary accommodations.
- How can PACDI assist?
 - Support efforts for funding for enhanced technology, including digital signage, new apps, new order management system.
 - Support funding for increased support of one additional full-time dietician. Currently there is only one dietitian in the unit. The dietician also oversees the menu management program. Most Big 10 schools have at least 2 people in that role.
 - Support for more outreach to students so they are aware of options.
 - Continue to enhance the RCPD referral process and information that is shared.
 - Students don't know that a dietician exists and that there is someone who can help them navigate the culinary space.
 - Supporting students on-going needs for dietary accommodations.
 - RCPD made 43 referrals to the dietician. The dietician responds to about 400 direct student requests per semester with on average about 1.6 restrictions per student.

Committee Recommendations - Buildings, Physical Spaces, Parking and Culinary Accessibility

- MSU Police & Public Safety - Collect available data from Spec-Tran app – My Ride CATA to determine what is working and what is not working as it relates to paratransit services. Depending on the available data and based on the concerns of students using Spec-Tran services, gather information and input to evaluate whether the university should continue to use Spec-Tran or explore the feasibility and cost of shifting to alternative paratransit service.
- MSU Police & Public Safety - Collaborate with the College of Communication, Arts and Sciences or other community partners to develop an education and awareness campaign addressing scooters and bikes in walkways and the dangers to people with disabilities.

- MSU Police & Public Safety – Evaluate whether there is a need for additional bus service during the winter months.
- Culinary Services – Evaluate and consider funding for enhanced technology, including digital signage, new apps, and a new order management system.
- Culinary Services – Evaluate and consider funding for one additional full-time dietician, based on student demand, and supports by other Big 10 programs, who employ at least 2 dieticians.
- Culinary Services – Partner with RCPD and the ADA Coordinator to raise awareness of available services for students needing dietary accommodations.

March 2024 Meeting – Employee Accommodations, Prevention Outreach & Education Supports and Student Concerns

The March 2024 meeting addressed the topics of employee accommodations, prevention outreach and education efforts for those with disabilities who experience sexual violence, and student concerns regarding hybrid and remote meetings and courses. The speakers included Kelly Schweda (Executive Director POE – Office for Civil Rights), Amanda Evans (Accommodation Specialist – Office of Employee Relations), Hannah Jeffrey (President – COGS).

Prevention Outreach & Education

Prevention Outreach & Education is a branch of the Office for Civil Rights responsible for the prevention of gender-based violence through education, outreach, and social change.

- Undergraduate Services include the SARV Prevention Workshop, Bystander Network, Greeks take the Lead, Spartans Against Violence, Online Undergraduate Training, Student Voices for Prevention Initiatives, Peer Educator and Peer Mentor Programs, It's On Us Week of Action, Spartan Men & Masculinity Workshops, and the Empowerment Series.
- The Climate and Response team is unique to MSU and works with units across the university in developing strategies to promote healing and culture change.
- 10,822 graduate students completed online training, 12,758 employees completed online training, 52 training sessions completed for employees, 9 training sessions completed for graduate & professional students.
- MSU Healthcare - 827 Participants, 29 Sessions - 100%.
- 63,018 Spartans participated in required trainings.
- 76,490 total engagements in prevention education.
- 21,616 e-mails received and responded to in the empower@msu.edu inbox.
- 233 trainings requested by units, offices, departments or student leaders.
- 13,472 Spartans participated in additional educational opportunities.

Office of Employee Relations

The Accommodation Specialist in the Office of Employee Relations is a neutral party that gathers information from employees, their supervisor or unit and decides reasonable accommodations for employees.

- As of March 18, there are 463 active employees registered with RCPD (168 faculty, 259 support staff, 36 graduate students).
- The percentage of employees registered and seeking accommodations is very low.

- The disability breakdown among registered employees is Autism Spectrum: 4, Blindness/Visual Impairment:12, Brain Injury: 5, Chronic Health Condition: 93, Deaf/Hard of Hearing: 16, Learning Disability: 22, Mobility: 29, Psychiatric: 71, Other: 6, 2 or more disability categories: 205.
- OER has not yet done benchmarking against other Big 10 Universities to compare percentage of employees registered or seeking accommodations.

PACDI can assist by

- Referring employees to WorkplaceAccommodations@hr.msu.edu or <https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/get-started>.
- Let others know about employee accommodations and the HR Website.
- Participate in DEI initiatives related to disabilities.

Student Concerns Regarding Remote Meetings and Courses

Student representatives from COGS and GSASN presented concerns regarding remote meetings (e.g., workshops, seminars, etc.) and courses, including the following:

- Students are encouraged to attend courses and meetings in person.
- Incentives are offered for students who attend meetings in person.
- During Covid, courses and meetings were held remotely, yet there is resistance to holding classes and meetings remotely post-Covid.
- Encouraging in-person attendance at meetings and courses and discouraging remote or hybrid attendance is detrimental to people with disabilities.
- While free IT support and technology for hybrid and remote options is available for courses, for extracurricular meetings the same support and technology comes with costs that may prohibit some units from offering hybrid and remote options.

PACDI can assist by supporting a statement to units recommending remote or hybrid meetings when possible and noting that negative inferences should not be drawn by hybrid attendance at meetings.

Culinary Update

Avenue C Micro Markets have opened in the College of Law, College of Human Medicine. Micro Markets are planned for opening in April and this summer in the College of Veterinary Medicine and the Administration Building. The markets include:

- Fresh foods, snacks, frozen items, and bottled beverages.
- Hot and iced coffee options.
- Self-checkout that accepts credit, debit, and Spartan Cash.
- Opportunity for 24/7 availability.

Committee Recommendations to POE, Office of Employee Relations and Regarding Hybrid Meetings

- POE – Include in reporting metrics, the trainings offered to address the specific needs of students/employees with disabilities who experience sexual violence.
- POE - Provide programming to the CSD, COGS, GSASN, and other RSOs addressing the needs of students with disabilities who experience sexual violence.

- OER – Evaluate and consider conducting benchmarking surveys to determine how MSU compares to other Big 10 Universities as it relates to the percentage of employees, faculty and staff who identify as having a disability or seek accommodations to perform essential job functions.
- OER – Coordinate with campus partners like RCPD, and the ADA Coordinator to advance a campaign to raise awareness of disability and accommodations for employees with disabilities.
- OER - In partnership with RCPD and the ADA Coordinator develop training for employees registering a disability and seeking accommodations.

Conclusion

PACDI heard from 18 campus partners that resulted in more than 20 suggestions and recommendations to improve accessibility for people with disabilities at MSU. PACDI's recommendations will be sent to relevant stakeholders following the April 22, 2024, meeting. The Chair of PACDI will follow up on the status of implementation of committee recommendations to be included in PACDI's 2024-2025 Annual Report.