

Accessibility Plan

September 2010 – to August 2012

Vision:

To be a Great Learning College

Mission:

To Meet the Learning Needs of our Students and Communities

Executive Summary:

St. Lawrence College is committed to providing a barrier free working and learning environment. It strives to accommodate individuals with disabilities so that they may share the same level of access to opportunities, participate in the full range of activities that the college offers, and achieve their full potential as equal members of the college community. The main focus for 2010 -2012 was completing an environmental scan of the College's complete operation. Data from the scan allowed us to identify gaps and prioritize areas of focus for 2012/2013. Our activity for 2010-2012 was guided by the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity. The College has two major goals for the 2012/2013 (September – August);

1. To implement the 2012-2013 requirements of the AODA's IASR
 - Providing education and training resources in conversion- ready electronic formats. (15)1
 - Providing student records and information on program requirements, availability and descriptions in an accessible format. 15 (2)
 - Providing accessibility awareness training related to accessible course delivery and instruction 16(1) and keeping a record of training. 16 (2)
 - Developing general accessibility plans. 4(1)
 - Developing general accessibility policies. 3(1)
 - Incorporating accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities. 5(1)

2. To address the following issues identified as gaps in the environmental scan;
 - Provide accessible software in all libraries and accessible workstations with adaptive technology software.

- Add Braille signage on elevators
- Accommodate students, staff and community members who need fire alarms to give visual and auditory signals
- Provide classroom desks that can be raised or lowered for easy wheelchair access
- Ensure that all doors to essential services for students and staff with disabilities have electronic door openers
- Ensure that students, staff and community members have access to all parts of the college
- Ensure that **Accessibility** is integrated into the College's strategical plan, business plan and into all documentation dealing with the governance of the college.

Objectives of the Accessibility Plan:

- To foster the identification and promotion of disability related issues
- To identify barriers to inclusion and to develop plans to remedy those barriers
- To design a mechanism where disability related issues are continuously gathered, assessed and acted upon
- Create an environment where disability related issues become part of each planning decision
- To implement the 2011/2012 (September – August) requirements of the AODA's Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulations by
 - Providing Individualized emergency plans for employees requiring assistance in an emergency. 27 (1)
 - Making available to the public, all emergency procedures, plan or public safety information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports. 13 (1) (2) and (3)

Description of the Organization:

St. Lawrence College, established in 1967, is one of Ontario's twenty-four colleges of applied arts and technology. It has full service campuses in Brockville, Cornwall and Kingston and serves the six counties along the St. Lawrence River from Frontenac County in the West to Glengarry County on the Ontario-Quebec border. All three campuses provide residency living opportunities. St. Lawrence College annually provides – to approximately 6,700 full-time students – practical, hands-on education in a

range of certificate and diploma programs delivered through the schools of Applied Science and Computing, Business, Community Services, Justice Studies and Applied Arts, Health Sciences and Skilled Trades and Tourism. The college also delivers three degree programs – Behavioural Psychology, Bachelor of Business Administration and Bachelor of Science in Nursing. The college records 25,000 registrations in part-time studies and corporate training programs.

The college’s Key Performance Indicator rates for learning environment, quality of faculty, excellence in graduate preparation and employment rates for our graduates is among the highest for community colleges in Ontario and testimony to our ability to consistently exceed expectations.

Accessibility Working Group:

Person	Year	Department	Campus
Gillian Axten	2012	Counsellor, Accessibility Services	Cornwall
Wendy Herzan	2012	Accessibility Advisor, Adaptive Technologist	Brockville
Melanie Steers	2012	Manager, Counselling and Accessibility Services	Tri-Campus Responsibilities
Emily Koolan	2011	Manager, Human Resources	Tri Campus Responsibilities
Stephen Holmgren 2012	2011, 2012	Manager, Human Resources	Tri Campus Responsibilities
Eleanor Condra	On-going	Faculty, Community Services, Coordinator of First Generation Project	Tri-Campus Responsibilities
Louise Chatterton Luchuk	2012	Associate Director, Learning and Development Centre	Tri-Campus Responsibilities
Stefan Corriveau	2012	Student	Cornwall Campus
Kelly Wiley	2012	Director of Marketing and Communications	Tri-Campus Responsibilities
Robin Hicks	2012	Associate Dean of	Kingston

Person	Year	Department	Campus
		Community Services	
Rose Bell	2011	Associate Dean of Health Sciences	Kingston
Bill Peairs	2012	Associate Director - Engineering and Building Maintenance	Tri- Campus Responsibilities
Paige Agnew	2011	Associate Director of Capital Planning & Sustainability Facility Management Services	Tri-Campus Responsibilities
Lisa Grothier	2012	CIO Information Technology and Application Services	Tri-Campus Responsibilities
Lynn Walker	2012	Director, School of Part Time Studies	Tri-Campus Responsibilities

Consultants to the Committee:

Person	Year	Department	Campus
Wanda Williams	2011, 2012	Director of Student Services	Tri-Campus Responsibilities
Blayne Mackey	2011	Director, Facility Management Services	Tri-Campus Responsibilities
Patricia Kerth	2012	Director of Finance	Tri-Campus Responsibilities
Lorraine Carter	2012	VP Academic	Tri-Campus Responsibilities

Commitment to Accessibility Plan:

The College is aware of the need for an accessible workplace for staff and an accessible learning environment for students. The College's major focus for 2010 - 2012 was carrying out an environmental scan on each area of its operation in order to pinpoint gaps in service. The gap analysis formed the foundation for addressing barriers and for creating a priority list of items for action. Six areas were addressed in the scan;

- Physical Facilities
- Student Support Services
- Academic: Teaching and Learning
- Information and Communication
- Corporate
- Human Resources

Based on the gaps identified, the College implemented the following changes

1. A new Field Placement Policy for students with Disabilities was developed.
2. Two accessible washrooms were installed.
3. The Accessibility office on Kingston campus was redesigned to increase accessibility.
4. Accessible-height water drinking foundations were installed on each campus.
5. A New College Program was launched for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

Staff Training:

The College continues to train staff in the AODA Customer Service Standard and the training is now a condition of employment. AODA concerns that were brought forward by customers, students and/or employees were investigated and the situations were used as learning experiences for improving our practice.

Below is a list of presentations offered by the college as professional development opportunities for staff:

- Adaptive Technology in the Classroom May, 2011
- Working with Students Experiencing Mental Health Issues May 2011
- Accommodations and the Classroom Jan, 2011
- Universal Design for Learning – Faculty Cyber Connections 2011
- Mental Health and the Classroom Jan, 2012
- Memory Aids as an Accommodation – Jan, 2012

- Introduction of the New Field Placement Policy for Students with Disabilities, - May 2012
- Student Panel on Accommodating Students with Disabilities – May 2012
- Talking about Mental Illness, June 2012
- Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers, June, 2012

ASIST Training:

A tri-campus initiative to enhance the capacity within our college and communities to prevent suicide was launched. Part of this initiative involves the delivery of Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) for students at the college. Two employees were chosen to be the ASIST trainers. They participated in 'LivingWorks' Train-the-Trainers program in May to become trainers of ASIST. They will provide workshops for groups of students on an on-going basis throughout the year

AODA - Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (IASR)

Employment Standard: Individual emergency plans for staff members who need assistance in an emergency situation are in progress

Information and Communication Standard:

(a) A brochure for staff on the requirements of the new IASR was distributed in May during the College's Professional Development Conference

(b) A college-wide staff and faculty awareness training session was held on August 27th on regulation 15(1). Follow up staff training is planned for the fall semester.

Recent Barrier – Removal Initiatives:

The following barriers have been addressed:

Cornwall Campus

- **Accessible Student Services Area:** In the summer of 2011, the student service area was renovated and it includes a stand-alone accessible washroom with a lift hoist, resting table and automatic door opener which accommodates students who need attendant care when using the washroom facilities. As well, a small set of stairs which connected two hallways which created a major accessibility barrier for students and staff with mobility disabilities was removed and replaced with a gentle rise ramp type floor allowing easy access for students and staff who use assistive devices (wheelchairs, scooters, walkers, canes)

Kingston Campus

- **Accessible Washrooms, Summer 2012:** Two accessible washrooms (1 male, 1 female) replaced inaccessible washrooms just inside the entrance of the college
- **Accessibility Office Renovation, summer 2012:** The renovated office includes an electronic door opener and a counter with two levels to better serve students with disabilities.
- **Spring Orientation Camp for Students with Disabilities, 2011, 2012:** The College continued our successful orientation camps for students with disabilities. In May, 2011 and 2012, Kingston Campus held a very successful transition camp – two days on campus with one overnight stay in residence. 20 students participated in 2011; 21 students in 2012. Students were oriented to residence and college life. The camp was run by staff members from Accessibility Services and by upper-year students who also had disabilities. The visiting students were introduced to key college personnel and services; as well they spend a night in residence. The goal of this program is to remove barriers to success by preparing the students in advance to navigate college life and to provide them with a social base of peers before they arrive on campus.
- **Fall Orientation for Students with Disabilities, 2011, 2012:** In early September of 2011 and 2012, before the general student body arrived on campus, orientations for students with disabilities and their parents were held. On Kingston campus, approximately 125 people attended the 2011 orientation and 100 people attended the 2012 orientation. An orientation for students with disabilities was extended to our Brockville and Cornwall campus in 2012. 20 people attend the Cornwall orientation and 15 people attended the Brockville orientation. Students were introduced to key college personnel. They were given tours of the campus and shown key college locations and were given priority access to their student cards. When the general college orientations were held later in September the students with disabilities had already been exposed to the college services and facilities and could concentrate on program specific information rather than trying to juggle too much information at one time. This advance orientation removed potential barriers by preparing the students for college expectations in a quieter calmer atmosphere where they had easy access to services and college personnel.
- **Funding Proposal:** The College submitted a proposal to the Federal ENABLING ACCESSIBILITY FUND for \$4 million dollars to upgrade our

facilities on each campus. This proposal included a new state-of-the-art accessibility centre on Kingston campus. Unfortunately, we were not successful with our application.

- **Program Launch - Accessible College Program for Students with Intellectual Disabilities:** The College launched a new program in September, 2011, The **Community Integration through Cooperative Education** (CICE) program. It is a two year certificate program designed for adults with developmental disabilities, intellectual disabilities, acquired brain injury or other significant learning challenges who wish to further their education/vocational training in a community college setting. Students have the opportunity to complete an individualized program of study made up of courses from an area of concentration that they choose from St. Lawrence College's program offerings, based on seat availability. The courses are tailored through a modification process to fit each student's academic abilities. Students are offered opportunities to develop and enhance their academic skills, and to develop and/or refine their abilities in a number of potential work environments through field placement experiences arranged by CICE program staff. Students receive support such as curriculum modification, note-taking, tutoring and other related academic services as needed. Upon successful completion of all courses and the field placement requirements, students graduate with an Ontario College Certificate in CICE. Five students participated in the program during the 2011/2012 academic year and an additional 10 spaces have been added for the 2012-13 academic year
- **Name Change:** Effective September 7th, 2011 the name **Counselling and Disability Services** was changed to **Counselling and Accessibility Services** in order to place the focus of the service on accessibility not disability.
- **A.S.K Project for Students at Risk of Self Harm or Suicide:** Two counsellors from the Accessibility Office were off-loaded to design and develop educational material for staff to identify and interact with students at risk of self-harm or suicide. These students may or may not have a diagnosed mental health disability

A = Ask questions, **A**ctively listen, **A**cquire information

S = **S**afety first, **S**canning internally, **S**ituationally and Environmentally

K = **K**now your limits, **K**now when and who to ask for help, **K**now your resources.

The development of the training material was completed in July 2012. The design and production of the user manual is in development and is expected to be ready for the first staff training session scheduled for early 2013.

- **Student Representation on Accessibility Working Group, January 2012:** The College was successful in securing one student with a disability to join the Accessibility Working Group. It will continue to seek more student representation
- **New Position:** In January 2012 the College created a new position

Manager of Counselling and Accessibility Services. One of the main focuses of this position is to cater to the accessibility needs of our students and to advise on accessibility related issues for all college users.

- **Field Placement Policy, spring 2012:** To better serve our students with disabilities the College developed a new policy and procedure for accommodating students with disabilities in field placement. This development of this new policy and procedure was championed by faculty members who identified the lack of a process that translates classroom accommodations to the field placement arena. Work began on creating the policy and procedure in the spring of 2011. The development committee included faculty and accessibility service staff. The policy and procedure were approved by the college's academic council and received final approval from the College's executive team in the spring of 2012. The goal of this new policy and procedure is to make the transition from the classroom to field placement a seamless one. Student with disabilities will receive appropriate placement accommodations suitable to their learning needs. The new policy will be implemented in the fall of 2012.
- **Adaptive Technologist Position, June, 2012:** A 1/2 time Adaptive Technologist was hired to handle the volume of student requests for adaptive technology instruction and support.
- **Accessibility Advisor Positions, June, 2012:** Two Accessibility Advisor positions were created in order to provide a more comprehensive service to student with disabilities. The role of the advisor is to guide each student with a disability through the documentation gathering part of the process so that when accommodations are being determined that the student's file is complete with all the necessary documentation. The Accessibility Advisor is also responsible for outreach to high schools and referrals to related community resources.

Barrier Identification Methodologies and Barriers to be addressed:

The following methods were used to solicit feedback from the campus community regarding barrier identification

- Feedback from the Accessibility Advisors on each campus
- Feedback from the Human Resources Department re. employee concerns about specific barrier issues
- Feedback from academic schools
- Feedback from AODA customer service feedback process
- Feedback from the Health and Safety Committee
- Feedback from the Accessibility Working Group
- Feedback from the environmental scans
- Feedback from students, staff and visitors with disabilities

Proposed Improvements to Accessibility at St. Lawrence College:

For the 2012/2013 Accessibility Plan the college will begin the process of implementing the priority items identified as gaps on the environmental scan. As well it will implement the 2012/2013 requirements of the AODA's IASR.

Review Process:

The Accessibility Working Group will review quarterly the progress of targeted improvements and examine barrier issues brought to the committee by college students, staff and/or visitors.

Communication:

This Accessibility Plan has been made available to students, staff and members of the public on the college's website. As well, the plan has been shared with staff at department meetings and is available in print and in an electronic format from Human Resources.

To obtain a copy of the Accessibility Plan in an alternate format, please contact the Executive Director, Human Resources and Organizational Development at (613) 544-5400.