September 28, 2016

TO: Members of Undergraduate Council

FROM: Tamara Bates
Governance Advisor and Assistant University Secretary

RE: Notice of Meeting

The next meeting of Undergraduate Council will be held on Tuesday, October 4, 2016 at 2:30 p.m., in the Council Room, Gilmour Hall (GH 111). The items of business to be discussed are outlined on the agenda provided with this meeting notice.

Should you be unable to attend the meeting, please notify the University Secretariat at extension 24337 or e-mail univsec@mcmaster.ca
McMaster University
UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL

Tuesday, October 4, 2016 at 2:30 p.m.
in the Council Room (GH 111)

AGENDA

I MINUTES of the meeting of September 13, 2016 (attached – for approval)

II BUSINESS ARISING

i. Awards with Insufficient Funds in Undergraduate Calendar

III CHAIR’S REMARKS

IV REVISIONS TO ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY (attached – for review/approval)

V REPORT ON AD HOC COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC STRUCTURES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS (CASS) AND AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PROGRAMMING IN THE ARTS AND SCIENCE FACULTIES (PASF) (oral – for information/discussion)

VI DISCOVERY CREDITS (oral – for discussion)

VII OTHER BUSINESS
I MINUTES

On a motion duly moved and seconded, the minutes of the meeting held on April 12, 2016 were approved.

II BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

III CHAIR’S REMARKS

The Chair welcomed new and returning members to Undergraduate Council. She noted that there are approximately 6000 new first-year students on campus, which is the largest cohort McMaster has ever had.

IV ELECTION OF THE UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL VICE-CHAIR

The Chair reported that she has nominated Dr. Lori Campbell for the position of Undergraduate Council Vice-Chair and called for additional nominations. No additional nominations were made and Dr. Campbell was elected by acclamation as Vice-Chair for 2016-2017.

V REPORT OF THE UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(Appendix A)

i. Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Structures for Student Success

On June 24, 2016, the Undergraduate Council Executive Committee struck an ad hoc committee to review the Academic Regulations. In the Spring of 2015, the Provost struck the Task Force on the Future Directions for the Faculties of Humanities, Social Sciences and Science; the Task Force released its report (the Warner Report) in February of this year. This new Undergraduate Council ad hoc committee has been struck as one of three committees that will address the concerns raised in that report. A letter from the Provost to the McMaster community explains the role of each of the three
committees and how they will work together.

The membership of the new ad hoc committee was also appointed at that time and is included in the list of committee assignments under Item V (ii). The ad hoc committee was initially approved as the Ad Hoc Academic Regulations Committee (ARC); however, at the request of the Provost, who will chair the ad hoc committee, the name was changed to the Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Structures for Student Success (CASS).

ii. 2015-2016 Undergraduate Council Committee Assignments

Undergraduate Council reviewed the Committee Assignments for 2016-2017. It was noted that with additional ad hoc committees, this will be a busy year for Undergraduate Council.

VI OTHER BUSINESS

i. Closure of Technology Certificate and Technology Leadership Certificate Programs (Appendix B)

Members heard that at its meeting of February 23, 2016, Undergraduate Council approved the closure of the Technology Certificate and Technology Leadership Certificate programs in the Faculty of Engineering. The programs were closed in error in place of the similarly named Technology Diploma and Technology Leadership Diploma programs. The error was noted prior to final approval at Senate and the motion to close the programs has been rescinded by the University Planning Committee and now must be rescinded by Undergraduate Council and the Certificates and Diplomas Committee. The closure of the two diploma programs will be brought forward for closure in due course.

It was duly moved and seconded,

That Undergraduate Council rescinds the following motion:

that Undergraduate Council approves, for recommendation to the University Planning Committee, the closure of the Technology Certificate and Technology Leadership Certificate programs, effective September 2016, as recommended by the Faculty of Engineering and set out in Appendix A (ii).

The motion was carried.

ii. Report from the Awards Committee (Appendix C)

Members reviewed a report from the Awards Committee that was circulated at the meeting.

(a) Terms of Award

i. Terms of Award for New Awards

ii. Changes to Terms of Awards
iii. New Bursaries
iv. Changes to Bursaries
v. Awards and Bursaries Removed from the Undergraduate Calendar
vi. Awards/Bursaries Added to the Undergraduate Calendar

(b) Award Value Changes

The above items were reviewed together. In the past, awards and bursaries removed from the Undergraduate Calendar were brought forward for information only. Undergraduate Council approves all revisions to the Undergraduate Calendar, which includes material deleted from the calendar. It is unclear why this practice has not been followed for awards and bursaries that are being deleted from the calendar; therefore, going forward, these items will be brought forward for approval.

A small number of awards and bursaries were removed prematurely and erroneously from the Undergraduate Calendar. At the time of removal, the funds for these awards were insufficient to enable allocating them to students. The funds have now grown and the awards can be allocated again.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that Undergraduate Council approve the terms of award for three new awards, changes to three terms of award, three new bursaries, changes to the terms of one bursary, nine awards and bursaries removed from and two added to the Undergraduate Calendar, as circulated at the meeting.

The motion was carried.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.
Complete Policy Title: Academic Accommodations of Students with Disabilities (Draft 10)

Approved by: Provost

Responsible Executive: Provost

Enquiries: University Secretariat

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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION
PREAMBLE

1. McMaster University is committed to excellence in teaching and learning. We strive to ensure every student is afforded an academic environment that is dedicated to the advancement of learning and is based on the principles of equitable access and individual dignity. Educating for capability is to nurture a sense of discovery in students, faculty and staff so that they will continue to grow, think critically, adapt to a constantly changing world and develop an approach to life-long learning, professionally and personally.

2. At McMaster we nurture and support a culture of acceptance, inclusion and celebration of diversity. Creating a learning environment that is accessible to all students is a value embedded within the University’s fabric as well as our policies, services and practices. One way of achieving this goal is through the implementation of policies that focus on equity and accessibility. The Academic Accommodation policy has been created as part of a set of policies and procedures that respond to accommodation and accessibility needs.

RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

3. This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policies and statements. Any question concerning the application of this Policy or related policies shall be determined by the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) or the Vice-President (Administration) as appropriate, and in conjunction with the administrator of the other policy or policies. The University reserves the right to amend or add to the University’s policies and statements from time to time (this is not a comprehensive list):

- Academic regulations requirements in OP/PT and medicine for physical for competency Accessibility Policy http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/General/HR/Accessibility.pdf
- Graduate Course Outlines http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/faculty/Teaching/GraduateCourseOutlines.pdf
- McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/
- Personal Health Information Protection Act https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/04p03
• Petitions for Special Consideration – see the Undergraduate Calendar / Graduate Calendar
• Professional Behaviour Code of Conduct for Graduate Learners – Faculty of Health Sciences http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/Professional%20Code-Graduate.pdf
• Professional Behaviour Code of Conduct for Undergraduate Learners – Faculty of Health Sciences http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/Professional%20Code-Undergraduate.pdf
• Petitions for Special Consideration – see the Undergraduate Calendar / Graduate Calendar
• Research Integrity Policy http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/faculty/Research/Research%20Integrity%20Policy.pdf
• Sexual Violence Response Protocol http://svrp.mcmaster.ca/
• Student Appeal Procedures http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/StudentAppeal.pdf
• Undergraduate course management policy covers course outline etc. http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/UGCourseMgmt.pdf

SCOPE

4. This Policy applies to all members of the University community. "Members of the University community" includes, but is not limited to, faculty, staff, postdoctoral fellows, medical residents¹, students (graduate, undergraduate, and continuing education), adjunct professors, librarians, visiting professors, volunteers, observers and institutional administrators and officials representing McMaster University.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

5. Accommodation is not a courtesy or a favour, neither is it a lowering of standards. Rather, accommodation is recognition that individuals may require adjustments in order to support their performance in a practice-based context or in the classroom. Accommodations are intended to provide access for students with disabilities; they do not guarantee or predict outcomes. Accommodations are based only on functional limitations, not on individual preferences.

¹ Except where the medical resident’s employment relationship takes precedence.
6. The provision of an accommodation is based on 3 principles:
   • Dignity
   • Individualization
   • Inclusion

Dignity:
Students with disabilities have the right to receive educational services in a manner that is respectful of their dignity. Human dignity encompasses individual self-respect and self-worth. It is concerned with physical and psychological integrity and empowerment. Dignity is harmed when individuals are marginalized, stigmatized, ignored or devalued.

Individualization:
Each student's needs are unique. At all times, the emphasis must be on the individual student and not on the category of disability. Two students with the same disability may have very different needs; for example, while some students with visual impairments read Braille, many do not. Different effects of a disability and different learning styles will or may call for different approaches.

Inclusion and full participation:
Inclusion is exemplified by policies, programs, services and activities designed inclusively with the needs of all students in mind. Inclusivity in design emphasizes equal participation and recognizes that all students have varying abilities and needs.

DEFINITIONS

Student

7. A student is any individual recorded by the University Registrar as enrolled in an educational course of study recognised by the Senate and for whom the University maintains education records (graduate, undergraduate, post-doctoral fellows and continuing education students).

University Applicants

8. University applicants are those who have submitted paperwork requesting consideration for admission to a program of study offered through McMaster University. McMaster encourages applications from students with disabilities.

Academic Program Lead

9. A person who leads the educational program; the role may be described in other ways, depending on undergraduate or graduate programs (e.g. Assistant Dean FHS, Associate Dean, Director, Chair)

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Essential Requirements

10. In a university setting, the essential requirements of a course/program may include, but are not limited to, the knowledge, skills and abilities which must be acquired or demonstrated in order for a student to successfully meet the learning objectives of the course/program. (See Appendix A: Essential Requirements Guidelines)

11. Professional programs have distinct essential requirements which will include expectations for professional practice. Such requirements are illustrated within entry level competencies that are central expectations for program graduation.

Disability

12. Disability is a concept that encompasses varied definitions including medical, socio-cultural and social definitions. Up to the present, the system at large including McMaster University, has relied on the definition of disability provided in the Policy and Guidelines on Disability and the Duty to Accommodate (2000), from the Ontario Human Rights Commission's [OHRC]. This approach is built upon a medical model of understanding disability. An alternate view is that of a social disability model, exemplified within the definition of disability articulated by the World Health Organization. This definition fits closely with the values and philosophy inherent within Forward with Integrity, the seminal document that provides guidance and direction to the McMaster community for meeting future challenges. It is our institutional aspiration to work towards a campus community that adopts the social definition of disability, responding with the creation of accessible classrooms through the use of universal design for instruction; and the need for on-going consultation with people with lived experience with disability to guide the design of buildings and instructional resources. However, this Policy acknowledges, upholds and aligns itself with the medical definition of disability to be in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Commission's definition of disability and accompanying policies and statements.

According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, disability includes: 3

a. any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,

b. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,

c. a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,

d. a mental disorder (illness), or an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Accessibility
13. The degree to which individuals with and without disabilities, can access goods, services, programs, and the environment without incurring barriers. Accessibility requires proactive measures to identify, remove and prevent barriers that prohibit full participation.³

14. McMaster University is committed to accessibility as expressed in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (hereinafter referred to as the AODA), which places a legal obligation on organizations to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025.

15. McMaster recognizes that barriers to participation exist and that adjustments to policies and practices of University are required. This is accomplished through the prevention, identification and removal of barriers within the University systems, structures and policies. It is understood that where this Policy refers to “barriers” it is referring to barriers such as a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, and information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, or a policy or practice.

**Academic Accommodation**

16. The definition of an academic accommodation is an individual arrangement that reduces or removes barriers that limit the ability of students with disabilities to participate in formal post-secondary education. Academic accommodations are developed based on the functional limitation of the student as it relates to the academic environment. For example, a student may have a functional limitation that affects their ability to maintain focused attention for prolonged periods⁴.

17. Accommodation will be considered appropriate if it will result in equitable opportunity to attain the same level of performance; or, to enjoy the same level of benefits and privileges experienced by others; or, if it is proposed or adopted for the purpose of achieving equitable opportunity, and meets the individual’s disability-related needs.

18. An academic accommodation is to provide equitable opportunity for students with a disability to meet the essential requirements of a course, a placement, or other work, related to their program of study. Essential requirements of courses/programs are outlined by the program/course being assessed. The Undergrad and Grad University Calendar(s) should be reviewed in order to identify the necessary information.

19. There is an expectation that the student will engage in the accommodation process in partnership with faculty and specialized student services as appropriate. Accommodations can only succeed when part of mutual conversation(s).

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20. Once the accommodation has been provided, the student has the opportunity to meet the essential requirements of the course.

21. Academic accommodations extend to off-campus course work such as fieldwork, placement, internship and out-of-the-classroom learning experiences.

Interim Academic Accommodation

22. An interim academic accommodation can be enacted on behalf of a student requesting an academic accommodation and implemented 'in good faith' pending receipt of supporting documentation. (For more information refer to: Roles & Responsibilities, section 58)

Retroactive Academic Accommodation

23. An academic accommodation is considered a retroactive consideration after an academic deadline has passed. If an assignment, test or exam deadline for a program or course is missed, or completed but not performed well, because of issues related to a disability, then it may be possible to receive retroactive consideration. [Refer to Appendix D for Guidelines for Retroactive Academic Accommodation].

Temporary Disability/Condition

24. Although this policy primarily focuses on providing guidance for students with a permanent disability, the University also recognizes that students may experience a temporary disability/condition and may benefit from an academic accommodation in the interim.

25. Students may be accommodated informally within their Faculty; although documentation may be requested, it may not always be necessary and students may be accommodated in 'good faith' for a temporary disability occurring within one academic term or less. A temporary disability/condition is considered: short-term multiple weeks (e.g. injury); episodic (e.g. mental illness). In these circumstances, students must contact the Academic Program Head/Academic Advisor of their Program/Faculty to initiate appropriate accommodations in a timely manner.

26. Documentation may be requested by the Academic Program Head (or Designate) if necessary (without disclosing a medical diagnosis).
SECTION II: ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

27. Implementing an academic accommodation is a shared responsibility. It is a highly collaborative process requiring engagement and full participation of multiple stakeholders, each playing a vital role in shaping a student’s academic accommodation.

28. The provision of accommodations for students with disabilities will require that students, instructors and administrative staff all exercise creativity and flexibility in crafting solutions that both meet the needs of the students, and preserve the essential academic requirements of the University’s courses/programs.

29. Academic Accommodations Working Group (A²): Membership on the Academic Accommodations (A²) Working Group (WG) includes representation from all campus resources that are accountable and responsible for the provision of academic accommodations (see Appendix E for graphic representation of A² and the communication processes). Oversight is provided through the Office of the Provost, in collaboration with AVP Faculty, AVP Teaching and Learning, AVP Students & Learning, Dean of Students.

30. This WG is an inter-departmental, multidisciplinary committee that will provide guidance and recommendations about the overall academic accommodations process to the leadership of McMaster University, as well as to focus on matters related to accommodations trends and needs for accommodation requests, provide guidance on the development of services, resource allocation and support for the implementation of the academic accommodations process across the campus.

31. Campus Accommodation Teams/Resources [CAT]: The Campus Accommodation Teams/Resources are individuals or small working groups across the campus composed of educators and other professionals with differing areas of expertise who are accountable and responsible for coordinating and enabling accommodations within each individual program, school or Faculty (Refer to Appendix E). The collective of these groups will: provide mutual support and expertise; plan, develop and operationalize strategies for successful accommodations; review outlined course/program essential requirements and, engage with the oversight committee, A² as required.

32. The faculty/college/school resources shall consist of: the staff appointed by the Dean/Director or designate; one or more representative from the faculty/college/school who have expertise and responsibilities in the area of student academic progress; a faculty/college/school academic staff person who can offer insight into the essential requirements of a course/program; and the SAS staff person assigned to faculty/college/school as member of the team. The local resource group/person may consult with or add individuals to meetings as needed e.g., an academic staff member with content or assessment expertise in a particular field of knowledge.

33. Faculties, colleges and schools are encouraged to develop documents according to these guidelines so that internal processes are established regarding their respective accommodation resource group. These internal documents should be reviewed and approved by faculty/college/school council and are not required to be approved by Senate.

34. Roles and Responsibilities of the Campus-wide CAT include:
(a) meet monthly and/or as required
(b) work on the provision of non-standard or complex accommodations
(c) review non-standard accommodation recommendations made by Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to facilitate the implementation of non-standard accommodations;
(d) ensure that established processes and procedures are understood and are being followed;
(e) review student academic accommodations plans that are not agreeable to students or accepted by the instructor;
(f) at least annually, provide a report to the A².

35. The CAT and A² work in close collaboration to ensure this policy is applied appropriately, evaluated, reviewed and supported across campus. These two groups are responsible for ensuring the dissemination of information and education across campus about accommodations.

Administration

36. The term “Administration”, as used in this Policy, refers to individuals and groups responsible for the University’s academic programs. They include: Department Chairs, Directors of Schools and Programs, Associate and Assistant Deans, Deans, the Associate Vice-President (Student), the Associate Vice-President (Faculty), the Provost and the Senate.

37. Roles and Responsibilities of Administrators include:
   (a) Ensuring all instructors are made aware of this policy,
   (b) Ensuring the delivery of academic accommodations are implemented and consistent with this policy,
   (c) Ensuring departments and instructors receive the University resources necessary to implement any academic accommodation plan.

Faculties

38. There is a mutually collaborative relationship expected by all Faculties within the University, including Schools and Programs with the appropriate student support services (e.g. Student Accessibility Services) for the purpose of creating an accessible learning environment and to accommodate a student with a disability. Faculty and sessional instructors will consider the essential requirements for their course and, if applicable, their program, and will identify and outline their unique essential requirements in a manner that is easily accessed by students. The essential requirements need to be customized and added to the course calendar as each course and/or program is unique.

39. Deans will
   (a) ensure that Departments receive the University resources necessary to implement any accommodation plan.
   (b) support the identification of member(s) within their Faculty that will participate on the Campus Accommodation Team (CAT) and (A²).

40. Academic Program Head
    [Member of the Campus Accommodation Team, CAT - or delegate assigned]
(a) support the department Chairs or equivalent to ensure that all instructors are made aware of this policy and that the practices associated with the delivery of accommodation services are consistent with this policy;
(b) consult with students and Student Accessibility Services (SAS), upon request, when students have first identified their need for accommodation.
(c) participate, as appropriate, in structuring a suitable accommodation plan that meets the needs of the student and satisfies the essential requirements of the respective course/program;

Instructors

41. The essential requirements and the acceptance of the school’s (programs’) overall pedagogical approach to teaching, as well as the university’s approach to universal design (UDI) and academic accommodation must be accepted by the instructor engaged in a teaching role within the campus.

42. When teaching a course, the instructor must consider instructional elements of the program (e.g. lecture, independent inquiry, etc.) in order to ensure fit with learner needs.

43. Evaluation is an integral part of the learning experience; various methods of evaluation need to be included in the overall appraisal of program/course fit that are congruent with the pedagogical delivery methods utilized.

44. Instructors will consider the essential requirements for their course and, as applicable their program, will identify and outline unique essential requirements in a manner easily accessed by students. The essential requirements need to be customized as each course and/or program is unique (Refer to Appendix A for Guidelines for Essential Requirements).

45. Once a student identifies the need (or the need is identified elsewhere) for academic accommodation, the onus is upon the student to contact the appropriate student support services. It is the SAS and Program of Study’s responsibility to work with the student to provide necessary information and resources concerning the program, courses, and essential requirements being undertaken.

46. To help facilitate a student’s academic success and maintain the University’s academic standards for the benefit of all students, the university programs and their faculty. Academic Programs must accept academic accommodation requests from SAS.

Instructors shall:
(a) refer to SAS all students who identify a disability and requests for accommodation to the Instructor; any requests that are unclear, the instructor shall notify the Assistant Dean or Chair. Instructors cannot ask about the nature of the disability (e.g. diagnosis).
(b) identify, upon request, and with the assistance of the academic department, the essential requirements of a course;
(c) assist students and SAS in determining the manner and extent to which a student’s needs can and should be accommodated;
(d) participate, as appropriate, in structuring a suitable accommodation plan that meets the needs of the student and satisfies the essential requirements of the respective course/program;
(e) notify the student and SAS if a proposed accommodation plan is not acceptable on the basis that the student, even if reasonably accommodated, as proposed, will not be able to fulfill the essential requirements of the course/program; continue to work with the student and SAS to explore alternative forms of accommodation which might be acceptable; if unsuccessful, involve the Program Academic Head (e.g. Associate/Assistant Dean, or equivalent) in the situation to facilitate a resolution.

(f) implement the terms of any agreed accommodation plan relying, as required, on the support and resources within the university community (e.g. SAS, Faculty members; Student Financial Aid, MacPherson Institute).

(g) seek resources from the University, e.g. SAS, MacPherson Institute, and the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships Office to support necessary accommodations;

**Equity and Inclusion Office (EIO)**

[Member of the Campus Accommodation Team, CAT]

47. EIO is responsible for the Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Harassment: Prevention and Response Policy. This policy protects all University members from discrimination on the basis of disability. EIO is one of three Intake Offices responsible for receiving concerns and complaints related to the McMaster Policy on Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Harassment: Prevention and Response Policy. This policy provides resources for staff, students and faculty, who have experienced discrimination or harassment of disability and other prohibited grounds. EIO is responsible for the Accessibility Policy and provides subject matter expertise to the McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC) on the implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) (2005).

48. EIO receives complaints from staff, students and faculty related to harassment and discrimination based on one or more of the prohibited grounds of discrimination including disability. When there has been a failure to accommodate, a failure to accommodate reasonably, or a failure to consider a retroactive accommodation, staff work with complainants to identify appropriate avenues of recourse as per the guidelines in the Policy: [http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/General/HR/Discrimination_Harassment_Sexual_Harassment-Prevention&Response.pdf](http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/General/HR/Discrimination_Harassment_Sexual_Harassment-Prevention&Response.pdf)

49. Accessibility consultations are provided to staff, students and faculty on how to proactively eliminate barriers to the full participation of persons with disabilities on campus. Systemic barriers are addressed through its work with MAC.

50. Provide education and training on the duty to accommodate, accessibility and broader human rights, equity and inclusion matters for staff, students and faculty.

**Library & Campus Store**

51. The Library and the Bookstore are responsible for accessing required learning resources in formats appropriate to individual student need. The Library and Bookstore shall make every reasonable effort to provide students registered through Student Accessibility Services equal access to information,
Academic Accommodations of Students with Disabilities

52. **Library**

(a) Obtain e-versions of required texts directly from publishers, which are then converted to the format of a student's choosing, including but not limited to ePub, pdf, word, MP3, Braille
(b) Convert course pack materials into the format of a student's learning needs.
(c) Arrange for supplementary materials (non-required texts, library holdings, journal articles) used to support a student's coursework to be converted into the format of a student's choosing
(d) Convert content posted to course websites, A2L, handouts, etc. which are not made available in an accessible format
(e) Facilitate the captioning of media being used in both in-person classrooms and online courses
(f) Assist students with navigating through the various services offered by the library, including retrieval of materials from the stacks, photocopying of materials for students who cannot use self-service devices, assisting with the renewal of library materials, providing help with developing research strategies related to coursework, and the training and use of assistive technology available through the library

53. **Campus Store**

(a) Provides publisher information to SAS for students who may require textbooks in a different format (e.g. audio, braille, large print etc.).

**MacPherson Institute**

54. MacPherson Institute is a service that can provide assistance and advice to faculty members related to universal instructional design, delivery and evaluation methods that may facilitate the academic success of students with disabilities.

(a) MacPherson Institute is responsible for providing educational opportunities, resources and support for instructors that encourage application of pedagogical methods that are responsive to defined accommodations and encourage overall accessibility, e.g. universal design as an institutional mandate.
(b) identifies and circulates teaching and learning information/resources related to the provision of academic accommodation for students with disabilities
(c) plans and coordinates disability/accommodation orientation and education offerings for the university community;

**Registrar's Office**

55. The Office of the Registrar provides information on enrolment, convocation ceremonies and schedules important dates and events throughout the year, including scheduling final exams and assists with the coordination of accommodated examinations.
(a) provides a standard for all university admissions policies and procedures, using inclusive language
to facilitate equal access opportunities for students with disabilities.
(b) with student’s consent, the Registrar’s Office will forward any accommodation requests and
documentation provided by a student, before or at the time of registration, to Student Accessibility
Services (SAS).
(c) co-ordinate, with support from Student Accessibility Services, all aspects of accommodations
required for individual students with disabilities scheduled to write Registrar administered
examinations. These include, but are not restricted to, such accommodations as: extra time on
exams, separate locations for writing, enlarged exams, provision of a scribe, etc. Ensure that
measures taken to ensure Academic Integrity standards are met for such examinations and are
equivalent to those provided for all other Registrar administered exams; these responsibilities are
predicated on the availability of resources to achieve these demands: space, invigilators, mutual
commitment to respecting accommodations provided between students and SAS.
(d) provide assistance, in consultation with SAS, implementing other accommodations where the
requirements fall within the jurisdiction of the Registrar’s Office, for example the provision of special
timetabling or classroom use.
(e) respond (with advanced notice) from the student and SAS, in making special arrangements for
convocation ceremonies.

Shared Institutional Programs (e.g. Mohawk-McMaster combined programs)

56. If the student is registered as a McMaster student, within combined programs (e.g. Mohawk or
Conestoga Colleges), the student and the Instructors of the Program, are obliged to uphold the
expectations for providing Academic Accommodations for students with a disability as outlined in this
policy.

Student Accessibility Services (SAS)
[Member of Campus Accommodation Team and A²]

57. Student Accessibility Services is a supportive service that is dedicated to providing academic
accommodations for students with disabilities. It is the responsibility of SAS to gather information about
the student’s functional limitation for the purpose of assessing whether the university has a duty to
accommodate within the learning environment. It is the responsibility of SAS to: work in partnership
with the Faculty to learn about the essential requirements of course(s) in order to determine an
appropriate accommodation; and, participate as a key player in developing resources to educate about
academic accommodations.

58. The purpose of this office is to assist students, instructors, administrators and the McMaster University
community with student accommodation issues. Responsibilities include the following:

(a) Coordinate the requests for, and assist in the provision of, accommodations. While documentation
by a health professional is being gathered in relation to a student with a disability, SAS will create
an academic accommodation plan ‘in good faith’ based upon the description of the functional
limitation, in the interim (typically for one semester only).
(b) Receive and verify a student’s supporting documentation. Documentation to be provided by an
approved regulated health professional and to be recent and relevant. SAS may inquire about
Academic Accommodations of Students with Disabilities

additional documentation from a health professional if more details are required;
(c) Consult with each individual student to determine if they qualify for services;
(d) Store all documentation relating to student accommodations in an appropriate and confidential manner;
(e) Coordinate requests for accommodations and assist in their provision;
(f) Be a member of the Accommodations Team (CAT and/or individual academic program resources), including providing consultation as requested and appropriate;
(g) Review documentation and consult with each individual student to determine if they qualify for services;
(h) Inform and consult with other individuals and services, as required, and in accordance with the process provisions of this policy;
(i) Provide information to instructors and program administrators as needed, to enable the successful application of accommodations;
(j) Develop and advocate for proposed accommodation plans based on qualified student's needs (as determined by SAS after consultation with the student), and any available course/program information and requirements;
(k) Provide the proposed accommodation plan to the faculty within which the student is enrolled, to enable the plan to be put into place;
(l) Co-ordinate and enable through collaboration with the Registrar’s Office all aspects of accommodations required for individual students with disabilities scheduled to write Registrar administered examinations.

59. Privacy: All personal information, including supporting documentation (e.g. personal health information) requested by the university to facilitate the academic accommodation process, shall be kept confidential in accordance with The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (Ontario) and The Personal Health Information Act (Ontario) and shall be maintained within the Student Accessibility Services Office.

Students

60. The University recognizes the importance of a student's experience and knowledge with respect to their disability and its impact on learning. It is imperative that the student with the disability participates fully in determining the appropriate accommodations. At times, students may not fully understand what is necessary to engage successfully in a course or program and in such instances it is appropriate for the university (instructor, academic advisor, or other university representative) to outline expectations and resources available to students on/off campus.

61. The student will work in collaboration with health professionals and university offices (e.g. Student Accessibility Services) (see Appendix C) to demonstrate that there is a barrier preventing them from benefiting equally from their education.

62. When a student is engaged in the Academic Accommodation process, it is the student's responsibility to participate fully, including meeting with the appropriate student support service to determine appropriate Academic Accommodations, and to communicate if there are any changes that may impact the accommodation once implemented.
63. It is the responsibility of the student to reflect upon the fit between what they know about themselves, to reflect upon their own unique capacity and their commitment to engage fully in the program of choice. In order to engage fully in the program of choice, requires that the student understands fully the expectations outlined within the course description and appreciates the different ways of teaching that are used within the program.

Roles and Responsibilities of Students

64. All students are expected to meet the university and program/degree requirements, including participation in classes, labs, clinical or practicum placements, tutorials, etc.

65. In addition to the abovementioned responsibility, students needing an accommodation shall:

(a) access SAS regarding accommodations which may need to be put in place before the start of classes and academic work;
(b) recognize their responsibility to provide information to support the request for accommodation, that is sufficient to enable the University to determine appropriate accommodation measures (and explore reasonable alternatives);
(c) Students are responsible for being aware of and demonstrating behaviour that is honest and ethical in their academic work;

SECTION III: PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

Procedures for University Applicants

66. In accordance with general admission procedures, McMaster will accept academically qualified candidates for admission to undergraduate and graduate programs by examining each applicant's academic record and the impact of any extenuating circumstances. All applicants are encouraged to select programs that are appropriate for their skills, abilities, and career goals.

67. In the event questions arise during the application process pertaining to the applicant's ability to fulfill the essential requirements of a program even if reasonably accommodated, the issue will be discussed with SAS. The Academic Program Head shall review the essential requirements of the program and work with the applicant and SAS to determine what, if any accommodation might be reasonable to enable the applicant to meet the requirements. In the event the Associate Dean determines accommodation is not possible, the applicant shall be so informed and other options shall be discussed. Failure of the Associate Dean to raise any objection, should not be interpreted as a guarantee of success in any way, that the applicant will, in fact, be able to meet the essential requirements of the program or any specific course at any time in the future.

68. In the event questions arise during the application process pertaining to the University's ability to reasonably accommodate the applicant, the issue will be discussed with the Provost. In the event that the Provost determines that reasonable accommodation is not possible the applicant shall be so informed.

69. All personal supporting documentation shall be forwarded to SAS, and kept confidential.
administration may request information to make decisions relating to admission.

70. SAS and EIO are available throughout the admission process to assist, support and counsel students with disabilities, as well as faculty and administrative staff.

71. Future students (applicants who have been accepted) are strongly encouraged to request accommodations and seek assistance in selecting their courses/programs from SAS and their prospective Department or Faculty as soon as possible.

Procedures for Students

72. Students who need academic accommodations for a long term disability should contact SAS. Those students who require accommodation for temporary, interim or short-term disabilities should contact the Academic Program Head.

73. Essential Requirements: Prior to registering in a course/program, the student should consider discussing concerns they may have whether or not they would be able to meet the essential requirements. Resources to approach are: Student Accessibility Service (SAS), and/or the student’s Academic Program Head (Director, Graduate Chair, Assistant Dean or equivalent).

74. Provision of Documentation to Support the Request for an Academic Accommodation: Students have a responsibility to provide information to support the request for academic accommodation, and the information must be sufficient to allow the University to determine appropriate accommodation measures (and explore reasonable alternatives). The student is required to produce only relevant documentation related to the nature of their disability or medical condition, functional limitations and types of accommodation being requested to their academic limitations. [For example, supporting medical documentation could include identified functional limitations as they relate to their learning environment, medical restrictions, and prognosis; but should not include information about an individual’s specific diagnosis].

75. Documentation: will only be considered if completed and signed by a registered and regulated health professional (e.g. medical doctor, registered psychologist, registered occupational therapist, registered speech and language pathologist, etc.) or a recognized and credible expert (e.g. Sexual Assault Response Coordinator). Students should communicate the needs and resultant restrictions in sufficient detail in order for the University to determine the appropriate accommodations;

76. Students are not required to provide private medical information (e.g. diagnosis) or seek accommodation directly from, their professors, instructors, teaching assistants, etc.

77. The University has a reciprocal responsibility to make inquiries to obtain any degree of documentation, as may be determined, to confirm need for and/or type of academic accommodation required for the student. The University could initiate a detailed request for supportive documented information, tailored to the particular accommodation request. Relevant documentation must be requested, if not already provided, before the University determines how to respond to a particular accommodation request. In some cases, it may be advisable to ask the student to provide additional information or clarification from his/her regulated health professional.
78. The University assumes all costs for reserving the right to seek an additional assessment or opinion about the nature of the academic impairment as it relates to the student's disability.

79. **Duty to Participate:** the student has a reciprocal duty to participate in the process and to support required accommodation with supportive documentation provided by a regulated health profession, as deemed necessary by the University. For example, the student will be expected to work with SAS and others (e.g. Academic Advisors, Academic Program Heads, Library staff etc.) to develop an appropriate accommodation plan and will be expected to follow the procedures outlined in this policy when an accommodation is implemented, plus comply with SAS’s instructions relating to the implementation of any specific accommodation;

If the student does not participate or denies any need for accommodation, the University reserves the right to document the conversation with the student and/or be asked to sign a written record as an acknowledgement from the student that the question was asked re: accommodation plus a statement of his/her rejection. Failure to follow through with organized accommodations without advising SAS and/or the Faculty/school in a timely manner may result in the university being unable to fulfill the academic accommodation requirement for that particular situation.

80. **Request for Retroactive Accommodation:** An academic accommodation is considered retroactive accommodation after a deadline has passed. If an assignment, test or exam deadline for a program or course was missed or was not completed because of issues related to a disability, it may be possible to receive a retroactive accommodation. See Appendix D: Guidelines for a Retroactive Accommodation.

**Faculty**

The role of each Faculty is to facilitate a student's academic success and maintain the University's academic standards for the benefit of all students.

81. **Essential Requirements:** In a university setting, the essential requirements of a course/program may include, but are not limited to, the knowledge and skills that must be acquired or demonstrated in order for a student to meet the learning objectives of the course/program successfully.

Essential requirements are the expected learning outcomes of a program or course and involve the successful demonstration of specific knowledge, skills and abilities. Although there may be variations in the language used to describe an essential requirement within each program or course, the objective of outlining the essential requirements is to help students understand what they must be able to demonstrate at the end of the course or program. Professional programs have distinct essential requirements outlined for undertaking the educational programs or curricula that will include expectations for functioning as a practicing professional in the career that is the planned outcome for students in that program. Students may elect to complete the program if feasible but not to sit any

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certification examinations offered by the profession or to seek registration in regulatory bodies such as regulatory colleges.

82. **Academic Program Head (or Delegate)**

(a) refer all students requesting an academic accommodation due to a disability to SAS; for disabilities that are temporary, short-term or unclear, the Academic Program Head (or Delegate) should collaborate to develop academic accommodation;
(b) identify, upon request, and with the assistance of their academic department, the essential requirements of a course;
(c) participate, as appropriate, in structuring a suitable accommodation plan that meets the needs of the student and satisfies the essential requirements of the respective course/program;
(d) refer any proposed accommodation plan that has substantial financial implications to the Dean of the Faculty, who will review the request with the Provost;
(e) discuss with Academic Program Head if difficulty is noted in meeting accommodation needs and/or if there are concerns that the student will not be able to fulfill the essential requirements of the course/program; continue to work with the faculty lead (or Accommodation Team), student and SAS to explore alternative forms of accommodation which might be acceptable;
(f) implement the terms of any agreed accommodation plan relying, as required, on the support and resources available from the Department Chair, SAS, and others, as appropriate;
(g) an accommodation plan approved by the Campus Accommodation Team (CAT) may not be rejected.

**Assessment of Academic Accommodation Requests and Preparation of an Accommodation Plan**

83. The following process for determination and activation of academic accommodations as described herein are basic.

84. The vastness of academic programs, degrees of study and post-graduate programs is too extensive to easily detail in one procedure. Therefore, specific program or degree procedures are subject to change from time to time and are then appended to this policy so this may be updated from time to time.

85. Regardless of the nature of the program or degree the following process will apply to all students and all requests for accommodations:

(a) students meet with an SAS program coordinator to review documentation, academic program information, need for accommodation and other supports and review process for activation of academic accommodations
(b) ‘in good faith’ and/or where appropriate SAS may implement academic accommodations immediately
(c) where necessary SAS may need to consult with the Faculty, academic program and/or the Accommodation Team prior to the implementation of an accommodation
(d) where necessary, SAS may request additional documentation or the ability to consult with a student's health care provider to seek further information in order to make a determination as to the most appropriate academic accommodation.
(e) in some cases, SAS may need to seek independent consultation prior to activation of an academic accommodation

(f) notice to instructors of program is then facilitated by or provided directly from SAS to a course instructor or academic department dependent upon the student’s program or degree of study (it is noted that there may be variations to the specific procedures for some programs – see appendices);

(g) Where need for accommodation review is warranted a review can occur at any time. Any such review may require a review of documentation and request for an updated assessment. Where no review of accommodation is warranted academic accommodations shall be deemed as applicable for the entirety of a student’s degree or program;

(h) where academic accommodations relate to a course of study and notice to an instructor has been facilitated by either SAS or the academic program or department, the student is encouraged to consult with the instructor (or designate) on the specific components related to the full implementation or activation of an accommodation;

(i) all other supports related to facilitating the details of the academic accommodation, for example: library text book assistance, housing, time table assistance, text/exam administration, etc. must be initiated by the student with the appropriate department resource.

Delivery and Acceptance of Proposed Accommodation Plan

86. The letter outlining the accommodation plan will be sent by SAS (copy to the student) to the course Instructors (alternately, in Graduate Studies, the Academic Program Head will be sent the accommodation plan and will ensure the dissemination of the accommodation plan or commencement of the academic work).

Timing of Accommodation Requests

87. Required timelines must be followed to ensure that SAS has adequate time to review requests and coordinate needed arrangements. Some accommodations take longer to arrange than others (e.g. sign language interpreters and transcriptions), and students with these types of requests should be particularly cognizant of the timing of their requests. Failure to make a request or supply the required medical/health documentation in a timely manner may delay or prevent the implementation of the requested accommodation.

88. Once an accommodation has been approved, the accommodation plan remains active and does not need to be renewed during the student’s university stay. However, if circumstances change requiring more or less accommodations while the student is still at McMaster University, the approval process is repeated and an accommodation plan is developed to meet the changed situation and current needs.

The following guidelines may be used by students in submitting any required materials:

89. New students and transfer students are encouraged to contact SAS and provide the required information as soon as possible after they receive their offers of admission, or by August 1st of the academic year, whichever comes first.
90. Returning students are encouraged to contact SAS and provide any new information as soon as possible following completion of registration.

91. Students whose circumstances change or who develop difficulties after the aforementioned dates should contact SAS and their program’s office immediately.

92. Notification for in-class tests: All special arrangements for in-class tests should be confirmed with the instructor.

93. Notification for examinations: a minimum of 10 working days is necessary to make special arrangements for examinations;

SECTION IV: APPEALS AND REMEDIES

Informal Resolution: Review of Accommodation Plan if Not Accepted

94. Throughout the development process of an accommodation plan, all parties should review the accommodation plan and are encouraged to discuss openly the needs and special considerations necessary in order to prepare for and implement a plan. Should, through the review process, there be questions/concerns raised about the academic accommodation plan, all efforts will be made to resolve the matter informally.

95. **Academic Program Lead:** If, at any time during the review of an academic accommodation plan, the Chair, the Associate Dean/Faculty Dean decide that there are substantial financial implications to granting the requested accommodation, the accommodation plan should be forwarded directly to the Provost. The Provost shall review the plan and if, upon review of the matter, the Provost determines that the plan will not result in undue hardship to the University, the matter shall be returned to the appropriate Faculty. If the Provost (or delegate) determines that the plan cannot be implemented without undue hardship to the University, the Provost (or delegate) will notify SAS in writing, that the accommodation shall not be granted. The student may appeal the decision of the Provost (or delegate) through the Appeals Procedures [http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/StudentAppeal.pdf] and/or the Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy [http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/General/HR/Discrimination_Harassment_Sexual_Harassment-Prevention&Response.pdf]

96. If there are concerns about the implementation of the accommodation plan, outside of financial hardship (as outlined above), the person with the concerns shall notify the Chair of the department. The Chair shall advise SAS and the student of the concerns raised and will convene the Campus Accommodation Team. The Campus Accommodation Team will convene to review the academic accommodation plan for the purpose of review and to recommend a resolution. If all parties agree with the proposed or revised accommodation plan, the accommodation will be granted and the coordination for the implementation of the plan commence as quickly as possible.

97. **Student:** The student may appeal the academic accommodation plan created by submitting, in writing,
an explanation as to why the plan is not adequate to the Director of SAS. The Director of SAS, upon receipt of the document, will notify the Campus Accommodation Team. CAT will convene after being notified with the purpose of reviewing the academic accommodation plan; the explanation submitted by the student; and, a review of the essential requirements of the course and/or program to make a recommendation for next steps related to an accommodation plan.

98. If the proposed resolution is not agreed upon by the Academic Program Head, they will notify SAS in writing that the accommodation shall not be granted with reasoning for the decisions. A copy of this letter shall be sent to the student, appropriate instructor(s), and the Chair of the student’s Faculty.

99. The student may appeal the revised accommodation plan and/or the decision made by the Associate Dean within 3 weeks of receipt thereof, to either the Senate Board (policy).

Formal Resolution: Appeal, Refusal of the Accommodation Plan

100. The student may appeal the decision of the Campus Accommodation Team, the Student Accessibility Services, Associate Dean, the Dean (including Dean of Graduate Studies), or the Provost to either: a) the Senate Board for Student Appeals as outlined in the Student Appeal Procedures[ http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/StudentAppeal.pdf ] and/or b) the Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy [http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/General/HR/Discrimination_Harassment_Sexual_Harassment-Prevention&Response.pdf]

Accommodation Pending Review or Appeal

101. The university recognizes that decisions involving accommodations must be made expeditiously to assist students in their ongoing courses. Once an accommodation plan is approved, it shall be implemented promptly. In the event that a request for an accommodation is denied and an appeal is pending, the instructor, the Academic Program Head, SAS and the CAT (if deemed appropriate) shall determine what portion, if any, of the plan is reasonable to implement immediately. Any such accommodations shall remain in place until there is a final disposition of all appeals.

102. Where a student has been accommodated pending the final disposition of all appeals, and such disposition is that the accommodation should not be granted, an alternative means of fairly determining the student’s course mark(s) shall be determined and communicated to the student.
APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Academic Accommodation: An individual arrangement that reduces or removes barriers that limit the ability of students with disabilities to participate in formal post-secondary education. Academic accommodations are developed based on the functional limitation of the student as it relates to the academic environment. For example, a student may have a functional limitation that affects their ability to maintain focused attention for prolonged periods.

Academic Program Head: A person who leads the educational program; the role may be described in other ways, depending on undergraduate or graduate programs (e.g. Assistant Dean FHS, Associate Dean Academic, Director, Chair)

Accessibility: The degree to which individuals with and without disabilities, can access goods, services, programs, and the environment without incurring barriers. Accessibility requires proactive measures to identify, remove and prevent barriers that prohibit full participation.

Disability: a concept that includes varied definitions including medical, socio-cultural and social definitions. Up to the present, the system at large including McMaster University, has relied on the definition of disability provided in the Policy and Guidelines on Disability and the Duty to Accommodate (2000), from the Ontario Human Rights Commission’s [OHRC]. According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, disability includes:

- any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- a mental disorder (illness), or an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Essential Requirements: In a university setting, the essential requirements of a course/program may include, but are not limited to, the knowledge, skills and abilities which must be acquired or demonstrated in order for a student to successfully meet the learning objectives of the course/program.

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Interim Academic Accommodation: An interim academic accommodation can be enacted on behalf of a student requesting an academic accommodation and implemented ‘in good faith’ pending receipt of supporting documentation.

In-Good Faith: An interim academic accommodation can be enacted on behalf of a student requesting an academic accommodation and implemented ‘in good faith’ pending receipt of supporting documentation.

Retroactive Academic Accommodation An academic accommodation is considered a retroactive consideration after an academic deadline has passed. If an assignment, test or exam deadline for a program or course is missed, or completed but not performed well, because of issues related to an undiagnosed disability (which is subsequently diagnosed) it may be possible to receive a retroactive consideration.

Student: A student is any individual recorded by the University Registrar as enrolled in an educational course of study recognized by the Senate and for whom the University maintains education records (graduate, undergraduate, post-doctoral fellows and continuing education students).

University Applicants: University applicants are those who have submitted paperwork requesting consideration for admission to a program of study offered through McMaster University. McMaster encourages applications from students with disabilities.
APPENDIX B: GUIDELINES FOR ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

In their report, "The Opportunity To Succeed: Achieving a Barrier-Free Education for Students with Disabilities", the Ontario Human Rights Commission has noted that while courts and tribunals have provided little guidance on the definition or nature of essential requirements, terms that have been used include indispensable, vital and very important. "For example, it may likely be an essential requirement that a student master core aspects of a course or curriculum. It is much less likely that it will be an essential requirement to demonstrate that mastery in a particular format, unless mastery of that format (for example oral communication) is also a vital requirement of the program. Educators must provide accommodation, up to the point of undue hardship, to enable students to meet these essential requirements." 

As Oakley et al have reported, essential requirements can be defined by 2 factors: 1) a skill that must be necessarily demonstrated in order to meet the objectives of the course and 2) a skill that must be demonstrated in a prescribed manner. The Ontario Human Rights Commission has noted, however “that the onus is on the education provider to show that a student is incapable of performing the essential requirements for the educational services even with accommodation. Conclusions about inability to perform essential requirements must not be reached without actually testing the ability of the student. It is not enough for an education provider to assume that a student cannot perform an essential requirement, rather there must be an objective determination of that fact.”

A particular challenge arises with managing accommodations for students in professional programs because of the need to separate the educational elements of the university curriculum from the perceived professional competencies of the practicing clinician. Again, as Oakley et al. have reported, education is deemed a service under Human Rights Legislation even when students are participating in off-campus training programs in the clinical setting or in field placements. In these settings, students are entitled to the same type of accommodations as they would receive in the classroom.

Clearly, however, some accommodations that are appropriate for the classroom will be inappropriate or inadequate in the clinical or practicum situation. In this situation, SAS would liaise with the relevant faculty campus accommodation team to consider how the particular profession would normally accommodate individuals with such disabilities. In this way, the essential requirements related to the clinical tasks in the placement can be considered along with the academic requirements. While the threshold for undue hardship is high for denying accommodation for an essential requirement, there may be occasions, particularly in a professional program where an accommodation contradicts an essential requirement. For example, providing extra time for a learner in a particular clinical setting might in fact impact on patient/client safety. However, it is incumbent upon the university to conduct a thorough task analysis of an essential requirement before developing an accommodation plan or denying an accommodation on the basis that the accommodation breaches the academic integrity of the education program.

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10 Ibid
13 Oakley et al.
Increasing application of the principles of universal design in educational programs may allow more students to meet the essential requirements of the learning environment without accommodation, although for some students differential treatment may still be required to allow equal opportunity to enjoy the same level of benefits and privileges of success in the educational program.

Summary:
Continuing advances in technology both in the classroom and in the clinical and practicum setting in professional programs necessitate close cooperation and liaison between SAS and faculty campus accommodation teams and resources in order to optimize accessibility of students to meet the essential requirements of courses and educational programs.
APPENDIX C: PROCESS AND GUIDELINES FOR OFF-SITE PLACEMENT

In order to engage in the academic accommodation process as it applies to the experiential learning setting, multiple stakeholders may need to be involved, including the fieldwork coordinator (the faculty member who organizes fieldwork), the on-site supervisor, the preceptor (University or clinical supervisor who oversees individual fieldwork experiences) and Student Accessibility Services.

The University's duty to accommodate exists independently from the placement entity. Ideally, all parties would collaborate on the development of an appropriate accommodation plan that meets the student's needs - but in the event of a disagreement or misalignment of expectations (or where there is some conflicting third party policy etc.), we could not force or impose a particular accommodation measure on a third party, without some contractual mechanism. Ultimately, in the circumstance where all parties cannot agree, the only appropriate accommodation that satisfies McMaster's duty may be to explore another placement. Academic accommodation extends to off-campus coursework such as fieldwork, placement, internship and out of the classroom learning experiences.

Notification for placement, fieldwork and practicum: is flexible according to individual student circumstances.

The following procedures apply when arranging an accommodation for a placement:

103. The following process for determination and activation of academic accommodations as described herein are basic. The vastness of placement/fieldwork and practicum settings and academic requirements for such activities is too extensive to easily detail in one procedure.

104. a) Regardless of the nature of the program or degree the following process will apply to all students and all request for academic accommodations within a placement/fieldwork or practicum setting:

   (a) students meet with an SAS program coordinator to review documentation, academic program information, placement evaluation criteria, need for accommodation and other supports for the learning environment and review process for activation of academic accommodations
   (b) SAS may need to consult with the Faculty, academic program and/or the Campus Accommodation Team prior to the implementation of an accommodation
   (c) where necessary SAS may request additional documentation or the ability to consult with a student's health care provider to seek further information in order to make a determination as to the most appropriate academic accommodation.
   (d) in some cases, SAS may need to seek independent consultation prior to activation of an academic accommodation
   (e) notice to Academic Program Head (or designate of Program) is then facilitated by or provided directly from SAS outlining the accommodation for the off-site learning environment;
   (f) the accommodation request is shared with the off-site learning placement location. The placement may or may not be able to accept the accommodation request on their site. If the accommodation plan is not accepted, the University will explore other off-site learning opportunities, within reason.
   (g) Where need for accommodation review is warranted a review can occur at any time. Any such review may require a review of documentation and request for an updated assessment.
Where no review of accommodation is warranted academic accommodations shall be deemed as applicable for the entirety of a student’s degree or program;
APENDIX D: GUIDELINES FOR RETROACTIVE ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

An academic accommodation is considered retroactive accommodation after a deadline has passed. If an assignment, test or exam deadline for a program or course is missed or incomplete because of issues related to a health disability, it may be possible to receive a retroactive accommodation.

Requests for a retroactive consideration (‘Petition for Special Consideration’ - refer to the Faculty for a petition for special consideration) can be requested through the Faculty Office, and/or SAS office. The Faculty Office receive a student’s request for a retroactive consideration and facilitate the process of review of the application.

The student has a duty to provide supporting documentation from a regulated health professional to support the request for retroactive academic accommodation, and the information must be sufficient to allow the university to determine appropriate accommodation measures (and explore reasonable alternatives). The student is required to produce only relevant medical information (e.g. functional limitations at the time of assignment, test, or other related coursework) and is not required to, for example, provide a diagnosis.

Decisions will be made on a case by case basis. Factors such as timeliness of the request, validity of the reason provided, and amount of course work completed during the term will all be considered (in consultation with SAS and/or the Campus Accommodation Team) when considering the request.

If a retroactive accommodation request is granted, the Faculty, Program or School may request further supporting documentation that enables them to determine the student’s readiness to return as a student and/or if academic accommodations would be necessary in order to assist with return to studies. There may be circumstances when the University has a reciprocal duty to make inquiries to obtain medical documents if adequate medical information is not provided by the student on their own initiative, including situations where the University has reason to believe that a medical accommodation may be required. The university should initiate a detailed request for the supporting information, tailored to the particular retroactive accommodation request. Relevant supporting information should be requested, if not already provided, before the university determines how to respond to a particular retroactive accommodation request. In some cases, it is advisable to ask the student to provide additional supporting information or clarification from his/her health professional. In the event a retroactive accommodation fails to ameliorate the situation, a determination is needed regarding the students current capacity to resume studies and other strategies may be employed, such as an independent medical examination.
Student Self Reports Need for Retroactive Academic Accommodation
(Petition for Special Consideration)

SAS

Academic Program Head (or Designate)

Legend
AX – documentation from Regulated Health Professional
RHP* – Regulated Health Professional, including University Officials, e.g. Sexual Assault Response Coordinator
SAS - Student Accessibility Services

Request Formal AX from RHP*, if required

Report Received

Permission to contact provider, if needed

Retroactive Request Accepted

Special Considerations May be Applied (e.g. readiness to resume studies; reduced course load)

Review of request: CAT, Faculty Program Head (or designate) and SAS

Retroactive Request Denied

Student makes decision about Appeal (refer to Formal Appeal Section)
APPENDIX E: A² AND CAMPUS ACCOMMODATION TEAM (CAT)

McMaster University

Overall Communication Structure: Accommodations Policy

This particular graphic represents the structures to be developed plus the relationships between them. Details of the roles and responsibilities of any of the structures delineated within this graphic will be determined by the Chair (A²) in consultation with selected others.

The Academic Accommodations Resource Group (A²) comprise the oversight committee responsible for the management of the Academic Accommodations policy, together with attendance to problems arising and decision making relative to complex accommodation situations. Membership includes: EIO, SAS, Ombuds, faculty educators, Student Wellness, health professionals and others as deemed appropriate by the Chair and to ensure the academic integrity of the program is not compromised.

This policy has been written to provide an overarching context that can be generalized across campus. The content is designed to link with specific procedures and processes that individual educational units have in place that reflect their own specific cultures and systems. Therefore, it will be essential that each educational unit (faculty, school, program) identify their own resource to manage the accommodations at a local level. How this is achieved will depend upon many indicators. For example, several smaller units may choose to work together to enable a combined management approach; larger units may determine a need for a specific resource person or a small group of people to be accountable for accommodations. There is no specific expectation of how much time is required; this is yet another indicator that will need to be
decided locally given what is known about the demands on time related to managing accommodations in a specific program over the recent past. Those accommodations resource people from across the overall University will be part of the Campus Accommodation Team (CAT). Chairmanship of this group will be determined between the A2 Chair and members, and CAT membership. This Team will provide support to each other, advise members where requested and act as a repository of knowledge, skill and understanding that relates to accommodations. Their role will include being the bridge between the individual education units and the overall campus; Smooth transitions will be assisted and supported by this collective group between where the University Policy ends and where the separate educational units assume the responsibilities for accommodations management.

The third structure in this graphic is entitled the Student Circle of Care (SCOC) and is representative and respectful of the personal system with which the student enters the university. The student him/herself is central to this group, with its other members determined by each student’s unique circumstance. Certain categories of a support system have been named specifically and include: family members, friends, specialists within the health services of which the student is part, the family physician and others as appropriate. Communication between the three structures go both ways between all elements, although the form of communication between each will differ depending on the question, task or decision at hand.
APPENDIX F: COMMUNICATION AND POLICY MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

Within this complex system, the leadership of $A^2$ in managing the policy itself is not in question. However, as with any high level committee, delegation will remain within the purview of the Chair. $A^2$ will facilitate policy interpretation to everyone involved in the overall system within the SCOC and CAT. Other members of $A^2$ in these situations will include representation from the Secretariat and Registrar. The manner in which the Academic Accommodations policy is embedded within a suite of other policies should remain a first consideration.