

Accessible Education Day: October 16th (PM)

Session	Session Description
<p>Session 1A: Navigating Accommodations & UDL <i>Speakers: Jennifer O'Brien, David Vanderhorst, Haley Morrison, Michelle Meier, and Wanda White</i></p>	<p>Join staff members of the AccessAbility Services team in an open panel discussion focussed on the practical application of academic accommodations and how they can intersect with universal design for learning. Panelists will also share insights about actionable strategies that promote inclusivity for all students in an academic environment.</p>
<p>Session 1B: Conversation about legislation and what we are doing institutionally, and at the sector level <i>Speakers: Joyce Barlow</i></p>	<p>Join Joyce Barlow, Associate Director, Disability Inclusion, in a conversation on how current and upcoming accessibility legislation is influencing post-secondary education and what the University is doing about it. Learn how legislation is doing its part to make education more accessible, and what you, as an instructor or staff member can do to prepare. This session is an open dialogue to discuss what we can all do to support accessible education and collaborate meaningful across all levels of the institution – government, sector, institution, and individual.</p>
<p>Keynote: Academic Ableism and its Alternatives <i>Speakers: Jay Dolmage</i></p>	<p>We have a crisis of help-seeking around disability on our college and university campuses. The vast majority of disabled students will leave our campuses without ever seeking help.</p> <p>This could be because higher education has built and enforced definitions of disability that are primarily medical: we see disability all over our campuses, in all kinds of different departments, but it is understood as a series of unwanted symptoms, a problem to be solved – not as the positive identity and culture most disabled people understand it to be.</p> <p>Or it could be because In the history of disability in higher education, a rights-based approach has often meant that disabled students are invited in the door, they are counted and added to diversity statistics, but then the culture of the university makes no changes to account for their presence, participation, and thriving.</p> <p>On the other hand, we have had an opportunity, over the last three-four years, to redesign higher education in ways we never have before. We learned that there are accommodations that can really help students in the classroom, including asynchronous access to course materials, alternatives to outdated forms of assessment, and flexibility around forms of attendance and participation.</p> <p>Of course, if we planned for more disabled students in our classrooms, we could really change the shape of higher education.</p> <p>In this presentation and discussion, some of these possibilities for building a more accessible classroom and campus will be suggested and explored. Come and share your own experiences, ideas, challenges and questions.</p>

Accessible Education Day: October 17th (AM)

Session	Session Description
<p>Session 2A: Getting to Know Assistive Technologies that Students Use to Enable Learning <i>Speakers: David Vanderhorst</i></p>	<p>Students are using assistive technology (AT) to succeed in their classes. They might be living with a disability and/or using AT to learn better, in a way that suits their own needs. By better understanding AT, instructors will be able to design their course materials, assessments, and activities to enable students' use of AT and to support the creation of a teaching and learning environment in which innovative, accessible education practices are valued and supported. Let's rethink how we do things so that accessibility is part of the development process, rather than an 'add on' to practice." This workshop will include a presentation of information and demonstrations of assistive technologies with an Adaptive Educational Technologist from AccessAbility Services.</p>
<p>Session 2B: Advancing Accessibility in the Faculty of Mathematics <i>Speakers: Jeremy Steffler</i> <i>Panelists: Joyce Barlow, Benoit Charbonneau, Brian Ingalls</i></p>	<p>This informal presentation and mini-panel discussion will explore how the Faculty of Mathematics is supporting institutional responses to the proposed Post-Secondary Education Standards under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The session will start with an overview of the activities of a working group that has been exploring accessibility in Mathematics since 2022, including some insights, challenges, and progress to date. This overview will be followed by an open question and answer session with new and long-standing members or the working group and working group members internal and external to the Faculty, providing their unique perspectives.</p>
<p>Session 3: Resources, Tools, and Supports to Empower Accessible Teaching <i>Speakers: Christine Zaza, Michael Clark, Tim Ireland, and Erin Jobidon</i></p>	<p>Christine Zaza: This session introduces the new Postsecondary Course Accessibility Guide (PCAG) and highlights key preliminary findings from research that uses the Guide to measure students' perspectives of the importance of course accessibility.</p> <p>Michael Clark & Tim Ireland: Kurzweil 3000 is one of the most trusted pieces of text-to-speech assistive technology, and UW has a site license for it. In this lightning session, you will learn about the software, how it works, and the advantages of incorporating Kurzweil into your and your student's workflows</p> <p>Erin Jobidon: The Centre for Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) offers the Waterloo Experience Accelerate (WE) program to ensure all co-op students have access to meaningful Work-Integrated learning opportunities during their first Co-op term. The WE Accelerate program provides students with career readiness content and 100 hours of skills training in preparation for a 5-week, 120 hour, work experience where student teams work on an authentic work product for the employer they've been paired with. The Centre for WIL is currently developing a new stream, Creating Accessible Digital Learning Environments, which will provide intensive opportunities for students to create accessible online courses, digital learning assets and training materials within the Brightspace platform and beyond. Students will learn the basics of designing with universal design for learning as well as the foundational principles, legal requirements and accessibility skills required to design AODA compliant materials and interactions. During the project experience, students will work in groups alongside campus and community partners to prepare accessible digital learning materials.</p>