

California State University, Chico



Division of Student Affairs Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) and Office of Accessible Technology and Services (OATS) Annual Report 2019 - 2020

I. Departmental Mission Statement

Chico State believes in providing access to its diverse student, employee, and community populations. The Accessibility Resource Center works with staff, faculty, students, administrators, and community members to ensure that all aspects of campus life – learning, working, and living – are universally accessible. We promote and facilitate awareness and access through accommodations, training, and partnerships.

Department Goals*:

- **University Access:** Advocate responsibly for an accessible learning and working environment by coordinating reasonable accommodations, promoting universal design for learning, and by removing informational, physical, and attitudinal barriers. (*CSU, Chico Strategic Priorities 1 and 2; Division of Student Affairs Goal 1; Academic Affairs Plan Goal 2*)
- **Disability Management:** Promote self-advocacy and self-determination, while reinforcing personal responsibility necessary for students and employees with disabilities to fully participate in an inclusive campus and attain their educational and employment goals. (*CSU, Chico Strategic Priorities 1 and 2; Division of Student Affairs Goal 1; Academic Affairs Plan Goal 1*)
- **Education and Outreach:** Provide leadership to the University community, including students, staff, and faculty, to enhance awareness of the needs and capabilities of students and employees with disabilities. (*CSU, Chico Strategic Priorities 2 and 4; Division of Student Affairs Goal 1; Academic Affairs Plan Goal 2*)
- **Program Evaluation:** Engage in systematic program assessment strategies designed to support, enhance, and improve services to students and employees with disabilities. (*CSU, Chico Strategic Priorities 1 and 2; Division of Student Affairs Goal 1; Academic Affairs Plan Goal 2*)

(Reviewed date July 2019)

*Recruitment, Retention, Satisfaction, and Graduation: Students with disabilities face multiple barriers to academic access, which impacts retention, satisfaction, and graduation. These goals are developed to enable ARC to reduce barriers to services and student success, promote academic partnerships to further enhance student learning and retention, and promote universal design for learning and ensure equal access and accommodation.

II. Departmental Accomplishments – A Highlight

- Continued to successfully manage a significant increase in students and associated service delivery.
- Continued to expand the scope of service and responsibility of OATS.
- Significant State and National attention/awards for innovations in accessibility (OATS).
- Improved four- and six-year graduation rates for students with disabilities.
- Leveraged new technology to reduce barriers and improve accessibility.
- Expanded Kurzweil software usage (and training) for students in other underrepresented minority groups to contribute to graduation initiative.
- Continued to see academic performance improvements via the academic coaching program.
- Significant increase in content remediation improving services and accessibility to campus community.
- Continued efforts to improve campus climate via disability awareness workshops.

Academic Coaching Program:

ARC is proud to be the first CSU that offers a unique and successful academic coaching program for students with disabilities. From the start of the program seven years ago, it has proven notable success in retention, increasing GPA, and providing students the tools for achievement as well a rewarding experience of empowerment and confidence. These students are coached by graduate students who are also given the opportunity to increase their counseling, communication, and teaching skills while learning how to best work with this diverse population. It is a win-win program!

This year, eight coaches provided services to as many as 48 ARC students, with 78% of students reporting a greater “ability to organize their personal and school responsibilities to be successful.” Initially this appears to be a large decrease in greater ability to organize; however, the response rate this year was significantly higher than last year. This will be discussed further later in the report. As a follow-up to the coaching program being recognized by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) during its annual NASPA Excellence Awards, this year the program was awarded SLF funds for “A Cross-Sectional Academic Coaching Program” proposal and selected to present at the annual

Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) conference. The Cross-Sectional program will allow ARC to train “coaches” from Academic Advising and the STAR center to provide academic coaching services during the Academic Year 20-21.

Significant Progress toward Campus-Wide Accessibility/OATS:

The Office of Accessible Technology and Services continues to collaborate with Information Resources to make all content accessible. OATS spearheaded the “Keep Learning” page and worked closely with TLP to offer the “Go Virtual Summer Institutes” for faculty.

III. Changes in Policies and Procedures

The Office of Civil Rights recommends clearly written and communicated policies regarding how to access academic adjustments and services for students with disabilities and suggests that the lack of clear policies is the most common cause for complaints with the Office of Civil Rights. Therefore, ARC continues to audit its policies, procedures, and guidelines as new guidance regarding the implementation of Section 504 and the ADA emerges. There were no significant revisions to ARC procedures or practices.

IV. Resources Summary

The VPSA provides sufficient allocation for the operational administration of ARC and OATS. Due to the inability to predict all requests for services, ARC remains nimble with budgeting and if shortfalls occur, the VPSA office allocates additional one-time dollars to provide required services. This year, ARC ended the year with a surplus due to open positions that will be backfilled next academic year, and a dramatic reduction in student employee wages due to the campus closure in March 2020.

Human Resources:

The following personnel transactions occurred this year:

- Hired Accessible Content Specialist for OATS in December 2019
- Resignation of an advisor in March 2020
- Hired an “emergency” ISA II position for OATS in April 2020

As the number of students and employees seeking services continues to increase, ARC continues to work on developing a staffing plan to help sustain the ability to continue providing excellent services to student and the campus community.

ARC Committee Representation:

- ATI Steering Committee
- ATI Team Leaders Group
- Butte College Advisory Board
- Campus Advising Collaborative

- Campus Assessment, Response and Education (CARE) Team
- Campus Health and Safety Committee
- Commencement Committee
- CSU/DSS Directors Meetings
- Disability Access and Compliance Committee
- Emergency Management Operations Committee
- Event Production (campus event management)
- Foster Youth Committee
- Student Affairs Office Coordinators
- Student Affairs Program Coordinator
- Sustainability
- University Technology Advisory Committee
- Veterans Education Support Team (VEST)
- VPSA Diversity Committee
- Wildcat Welcome

Facilities/Equipment:

- **Software:**

Accessible Information Management (AIM)

ARC purchased AIM to manage case recording and accommodation requests. AIM provides data for allocation of resources, paperless case management, synchronization with PeopleSoft, and streamline access for students, staff, and faculty. OATS has been customizing AIM for ARC with a targeted rollout in Spring 2020, full rollout in Summer 2020.

- **Space Issues:**

Administering exams continues to be challenging with ongoing space restrictions. This past year, ARC utilized SSC 336 for testing needs throughout the year, but predominantly during midterms and finals. This has been helpful; however, ARC is limited by the capacity of students currently allowed in this space at one time. ARC has been working with Facilities Utilization to update the space for more efficient utilization. Remodel of SSC 336 has been postponed at this time.

V. Program Evaluation of Past Year

The following addresses progress on program objectives established in the 2018-2019 Annual Report:

1. Continue to assess usage and service providers for students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. The past academic year ARC provided services to 35 Deaf or Hard of Hearing students. Of these, 15 used one or more accommodations approved for students with

this diagnosis and five approved for “interpreting.” This will be continued due to the retirement of one on-staff ASL interpreters. ARC does not plan to backfill unless the need for service increases.

2. Redesign assessment process, including relevance of current student learning outcomes. This goal will be maintained. The current director will work closely with ARC advisors to refine assessment processes. Chico State has access to a new system that will improve analytics from surveys sent to students. This will also be continued.
3. Develop a recruitment plan for students with disabilities who are Hispanic. This year, ARC staff worked with programs and services to build outreach efforts for students who are Hispanic, which contributed to an increase in the number of students ARC served.

Office of Accessible Technology and Services:

OATS has continued to introduce technology to the campus community and will assess the effectiveness and usage of technology introduced to campus (Kurzweil, Otter.ai, etc.).

Ongoing Assessment Efforts

Demographic Reporting – Students:

- 1066 Students Served During Fall 2019
- 1070 Students Served During Spring 2020
- 60 Temporary Students Served During Fall 2019
- 80 Temporary Students Served During Spring 2020
- 5% of Chico State Students Registered With ARC

Students Reporting the Following Disabilities:

- 24% Learning Disabilities
- 18% Chronic Health Conditions
- 31% Mental Health diagnosis
- 3% Traumatic Brain Injury
- 30% Attention Deficit Disorder
- 5% Autism/Asperger’s
- 3% Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- 11% Mobility
- 3% Blind/Visual Impairment

Note: Some students report more than one disability.

Students Registered with ARC Report the Following Majors:

- 3% College of Agriculture
- 25% College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
- 13% College of Business
- 17% College of Communication and Education
- 13% College of Engineering/Computer Science and Construction Management
- 10% College of Humanities and Fine Arts
- 11% College of Natural Sciences
- .2% Graduate Studies
- 6% Undergraduate/Undeclared

Note: Some students report more than one major; distribution across colleges remains similar year to year.

Diversity Efforts:

Understanding there are cultural values and beliefs with respect to disability, ARC will continue to commit to conducting intentional outreach to groups on campus that traditionally serve underserved students (EOP, CCLC, SSS).

- 3% of ARC students report being African American (compared to 3% of Chico State population).
- 20% of ARC students report being Hispanic (compared to 34% of Chico State population).
- 3% of ARC students report being Asian (compared to 5% of Chico State population).
- 1% of ARC students report being American Indian (compared to .5% of Chico State population).
- 9% of ARC students report more than one ethnicity (compared to 5% of Chico State population).

ARC has also focused on the intentional recruitment of student employees with diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

ARC presents at the Student Employment Diversity Training each year.

2019-2020 Diversity Goal(s) Reporting:

1. Reduce the existing achievement gaps between underrepresented and non-represented students.
 - AY 2019-2020: 62% of ARC students earned greater than 3.0 GPA.
 - 4-year graduation rate for first time freshmen who are registered in ARC (FTF) (admitted fall 2016) - 38% compared to 33% for all FTF.

- Year One persistence rate (for students admitted fall 2018) - 87% for ARC students and 83% overall student body.

Services Usage Summary:

Accommodations	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2018-2019	2018-2019	2019-2020 (Until 3/13/20)
# of Tests Administered (final exams)	4823	5573	5490	5888 (1536)	5402	3333
# of Instructional Materials Converted into Alternate Format (Students Fall/Spring) See graph below	1481 (100/94)	1900 (120/115)	1980 (110/112)	2000 (116/105)	1295 (157/141)	1025 (159/128)
# of Educational Assistant Hours in Classroom*	3063	4385	1851.30	2532	1401	718
# of Hours of in person ASL Interpreting	540	690	2208	1683	2262	1762
# of Cart Rides Requested	2737	3505	2378 (15/day on avg.)	2348	3284	2395
# of Remote Captioning Hours/# of Video Interpreting Services	184/0	260/157.25	215/580	194/742	389/346	272/268
# of Housing Accommodations	31 (5)	39 (6)	34 (8)	37 ESA:	60 ESA:	54

(Emotional Support Animals)				Meetings 17 Requests 8 Approvals 1	Requests 10 Approvals 2	ESA: Requests 4 Approvals 3
# of Requests for Furniture Placement (students and faculty) (# does not include furniture purchased for individuals as reasonable accommodation)	57	82	56	81	47	93

*Includes EA hours worked during Finals Week

OATS/Alternate Media Usage Summary – Services:

Alternative Media

Numbers:

There were 159 students in fall 2019 with 605 books loaded; and 128 students in spring 2020 with 420 books loaded. Alternative media numbers continue to increase year over year. The trend of higher numbers in the fall vs. spring continues, and this year was the closest that gap has ever been. This year’s numbers are encouraging. The shift to a high-touch communication model by OATS’ digital content specialist has led to the closure of the gap. The number has stayed consistently over 100 students in the past four years, and the projection is that these numbers will stay relatively the same. OATS will continue to tweak the model to ensure students continue to have their materials on time even though the number of students is increasing.

Summary for fall 2019:

- 605 books loaded
- 159 students
- 145 conversions
- Turnaround 3-5 days

Summary for spring 2020:

- 420 books
- 128 students
- 95 conversions
- Turnaround 3-4 days

Tools/Products:

Kurzweil

Kurzweil was thrown into the spotlight once again due to the move to online education. The benefits of Kurzweil have long been known to students with disabilities, but it is encouraging that Kurzweil is being adopted throughout the university. Having Kurzweil connected to the campus single sign on system has been a huge help in spreading this to the campus community. OATS will continue to push this software to the university in 2020-2021.

Otter.ai

Over this last year Otter.ai was introduced. Otter.ai provides captioning, transcription, and notetaking services. The University recently approved purchase of a full campus license to roll it out to all faculty. OATS has received national attention for this work and will continue to lead the charge on the use of this tool.

Adobe Sign

The most recent addition is Adobe Sign. Moving online has precipitated the need to have digital signatures and OATS stepped up to help and will continue to assist the university with the creation of accessible forms.

Captioning

Captioning has become the second largest service provided by OATS, and 2019-2020 saw an explosion of captioning requests, receiving requests from every part of the campus community. As with all OATS services, requests are accepted from everyone and OATS continues to meet the demand.

Six student assistants were trained to properly caption. However, there are a combination of tools used to caption with more reliance on Otter.ai, which produces a better original transcript leading to decreased remediation time.

Content Remediation and ALLY

Content remediation remains the most popular service with an average of 15-22 content items received per week, although over 50 content items were received during a two-week period in 2019-2020. Weekly turnaround continues for most requests unless it is an exceptionally large amount of content items. Growth continues in this service, but there are concerns about

capacity without increased funding. PDF content is difficult, and it takes time to learn the skill. Having a centralized remediation office has benefited the campus in remaining compliant, but capacity may be reached with increased requests.

Keep Learning and Student Affairs Tech Support

The latest endeavor was incorporating Keep Learning for the campus community. Keep Learning assists remote learning and offers tech support for online students. The Keep Learning team is supported by OATS staff who are now pulling double duty.

OATS has also become the hub for Student Affairs Technology Support. The team assists in software training and best practices for the division. Members of the team follow Student Affairs major projects, assisting with coordination and project management.

These services were implemented in late spring 2020 and will continue to grow in scope. The plan is to continue to reach as far as possible to assist the Division with all technology and learning goals.

Student Assessment of Satisfaction, Quality, Climate and Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

During the 2016-17 school year, online surveys created by AHEAD were deployed to four key stakeholder groups across all CSU campuses: students with documented disabilities, faculty, administrators, and directors of campus student disability services centers. The intention of these surveys was to get feedback on the utility, quality, and effectiveness of services on campus to support students with disabilities. Approximately 15% of ARC registered students participated in the survey. Student ratings of interactions with ARC averaged 89% positive experience.

Academic Coaching

A quantitative and qualitative assessment of student learning outcomes was calculated for the students engaged with the academic coaching program, pre- and post-semester. A summary of results follows:

- **69%** of the participating 39 students in **fall 2019** met the success criteria, which is indicative of meeting a 2.0 GPA or higher with either maintaining units or increasing units when compared to their spring 2019 outcomes.
- **93%** of the participating 46 students in **spring 2020** met the success criteria, which is indicative of meeting a 2.0 GPA or higher with either maintaining units or increasing units when compared to their fall 2019 outcomes.
- **18** students who participated in the spring 2020 coaching program responded to the post survey evaluation.

Based on Results:

- **78%** of students report a greater ability to organize their personal and school responsibilities to be successful.
- **78%** of students report an improved ability to review their course syllabi and develop a semester plan of action, and the ability to complete assignments on time as well as prepare and follow a daily schedule.
- **70%** of students report an improvement in their planning and studying for upcoming exams.
- **82%** of students report they have increased their awareness of available campus resources and services.
- **65%** of students report an increase in awareness of self-care and wellness strategies.
- **All** yielded a positive change in academic behavior identified as potential barriers to retention and graduation.

Internal Audit

Each year, ARC staff conducts a self-study of a particular area to evaluate effectiveness and explore unmet needs, and to consider if there are services or activities that are obsolete. This

year a self-assessment of cart services was conducted. ARC recently purchased a new cart and operates two carts to provide mobility (transportation) services on campus. One area of concern is the security of carts. Last year ARC paid \$2,700 to repair damage and vandalism. ARC was discussing a secure storage area with FMS prior to campus closure. This will continue to be researched.

VI. Analysis

After considering assessment opportunities, as well as demographic trends, the following is offered as discussion and analysis of issues and services that require strategic and intentional consideration in the next academic/fiscal year.

Usage data shows a continued incline in the number of students registered with ARC, as well as the level of services offered. At the same time, the role of OATS in the overall campus response to improving accessibility and ARC's role in the provision of reasonable accommodation services to staff and faculty are significantly increasing. Among the CSU campuses with medium enrollment numbers, ARC maintains the highest registration percentage of students with disabilities. ARC has an exceptional reputation based on personal referrals from current students and graduates.

ARC made efforts to outreach services to students who identify as Hispanic, and demographic information reflects those efforts with an increase of 6%. Of registered ARC students, 20% identify as Hispanic. ARC will continue outreach to underserved students. The inability of students to obtain appropriate documentation of a disability continues to be a barrier. While it is not a service that disability programs are required to provide, ARC has elected to provide learning disability assessments on a limited basis. ARC has also invested in assessment material to assess students whose first language may not be English. The goal is for the students receiving ARC services to align with the overall population.

Despite the campus closure in March 2020, ARC continued to provide services to students, staff, and faculty with disabilities. ARC worked with the Emergency Operations Center to ensure that reasonable accommodations were instituted to ensure access. ARC and OATS provided on-going support for students and faculty throughout the transition to virtual learning.

Program Objectives for Next Academic Year

Accessibility Resource Center

1. Continue to assess usage and service providers for students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

ARC Annual Report 2019 - 2020

2. Increase the number of students who identify as Hispanic who are eligible for ARC services.
3. Redesign and implement assessment strategies.
4. Continue to assess workload and staffing levels for sustainability.

Office of Accessible Technology and Services

1. Continue to assess workload and staffing levels for sustainability.
2. Conduct assessment of note taking technology tools for use campus wide.

Final Notes: The accomplishments and success of the ARC program and the provision of consistent, exceptional services to students and families is directly attributed to ARC staff.

This report was prepared by Holly Hunt, Director of ARC with contributions from Jeremy Olguin, OATS Manager/Campus 508 Coordinator.