

California State University, Chico



Division of Student Affairs  
Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) and  
Office of Accessible Technology and Services (OATS)  
Annual Report 2021 -2022

**I. Departmental Mission Statement**

Chico State believes in providing access to its diverse student, employee, and community populations. Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) 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: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Civic and Global Engagement; 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: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Civic and Global Engagement; 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: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Civic and Global Engagement; 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: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Civic and Global Engagement; Division of Student Affairs Goal 1; Academic Affairs Plan Goal 2)*

*(Reviewed June 2022)*

\*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.
- 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.
- Expanded Otter.ai usage (and training) for students, staff, and faculty.
- Continued to see academic performance improvements via the academic coaching program.
- Expanded coaching program by expanding access to students that are neurodiverse. Implemented the Chico Autism Spectrum Empowerment (CASE) program.
- Significant increase in content remediation improving services and accessibility to campus community.
- OATS team won the 2022 CSU Moving the Needle content accessibility challenge, completing nearly 30,000 files in one week. The Team also won the 2020 global content remediation challenge.
- Continued efforts to improve campus climate via disability awareness workshops.

### **Academic Coaching Program: Chico Autism Spectrum Empowerment (CASE) Program**

ARC is proud to announce the Chico Autism Spectrum Empowerment (CASE) program. Working in tandem with the ARC Academic Coaching program, CASE supports students on the autism spectrum – a group of students who have been historically underserved.

To ensure retention, continued support, and ultimate graduation of these diverse students, the CASE program offers informative and empowering sessions designed to provide an opportunity for community and exploring relevant topics pertaining to having an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

### **Significant Progress toward Campus-Wide Accessibility/OATS:**

OATS continues to collaborate with Information Technology to make all content accessible.

## III. Changes in Policies and Procedures

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) 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 OCR. 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 has allocated additional one-time dollars to provide required services. This year ARC/OATS will not have a surplus in its budget, but is projected to have a shortfall. This is mostly due to the expense of the three-year renewal for AIM (our department case management software) as well as a significant increase in student employee labor in OATS due to the increase in document remediation ticket requests campus wide.

#### **Human Resources:**

The following personnel transactions occurred this year:

- Retired SSP III – December 2021
- Hired (2) SSP III – December 2021
- Resignation of SSP III – February 2022
- Hired SSP III – March 2022
- Retired Interpreter – April 2022
- Resignation of SSP III – June 2022
- Hired SSP II – June 2022
- Hired additional hourly interpreters
- Hired ISA II – October 2020; Promoted to IT-C – February 2022

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 IM Committee
- AS Facilities Committee
- Butte College Advisory Board
- Campus Advising Collaborative
- Campus Assessment, Response and Evaluation (CARE) Team
- Campus Health and Safety Committee
- Commencement Committee
- CSU Office Innovation Committee
- CSU/DSS Directors Meetings

- Disability Access and Compliance Committee
- Emergency Management Operations Committee
- Event Production (campus event management)
- Foster Youth Committee
- Neurodiversity Task Force
- Student Affairs Office Coordinators
- Student Affairs Program Coordinator
- Sustainability
- University Police and Public Safety Advisory Committee
- University Technology Advisory Committee
- Veterans Education Support Team (VEST) (Suspended 21/22)
- VPSA Diversity Committee
- Wildcat Welcome

**Facilities/Equipment:**

- **Software:**

Accessible Information Management (AIM):

AIM is used 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. AIM was rolled out in Summer 2020. A three-year renewal was purchased this past year.

- **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. ARC staffing has increased creating a need for an additional office space.

**V. Program Evaluation of Past Year**

*The following addresses progress on program objectives established in the 2019-2020 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 17 Deaf or Hard of Hearing students. Of these, nine used one or more accommodations approved for students with this diagnosis and one was approved for “interpreting.” ARC does not plan to backfill full-time interpreter positions unless the need for service increases. This goal will be discontinued.

2. Redesign assessment process, including relevance of current student learning outcomes. This goal will be maintained. The current director will work closely with ARC Accessibility Advisors to refine assessment processes. Data provided from the AHEAD survey will drive this redesign. This will 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. This will continue to be part of our program efforts but discontinued as a goal.

### **Ongoing Assessment Efforts**

#### **Demographic Reporting – Students:**

- 1107 Students Served During Fall 2021
- 1278 Students Served During Spring 2022
- 19 Temporary Students Served During Fall 2021
- 37 Temporary Students Served During Spring 2022
- 9% of Chico State Students Registered with ARC (an increase from 5% in AY 2019/2020)

#### **Students Reporting the Following Disabilities:**

- 28% Mental Health diagnosis
- 25% Attention Deficit Disorder
- 17% Learning Disabilities
- 12% Chronic Health Conditions
- 5% Autism/Asperger's
- 3% Mobility
- 3% Other
- 2% Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- 2% Traumatic Brain Injury
- 1% Blind/Visual Impairment

Note: Some students report more than one disability.

#### **Students Registered with ARC Report the Following Majors:**

- 4% College of Agriculture
- 28% College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
- 12% College of Business
- 17% College of Communication and Education

## ARC Annual Report 2021 - 2022

- 12% College of Engineering/Computer Science and Construction Management
- 10% College of Humanities and Fine Arts
- 9% College of Natural Sciences
- .4% Graduate Studies
- 7% 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).

- 5% of ARC students report being African American (compared to 3% of Chico State population). This is an increase since the last annual report.
- 25% of ARC students report being Hispanic (compared to 36% of Chico State population). This is an increase since the last annual report.
- 5% of ARC students report being Asian (compared to 6% of Chico State population). This is an increase since the last annual report.
- 3% of ARC students report being American Indian (compared to .4% of Chico State population). This is an increase since the last annual report.
- 9% of ARC students report more than one ethnicity (compared to 5% of Chico State population). This is the same as the previous report.

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.

### **2021 - 2022 Diversity Goal(s) Reporting:**

1. Reduce existing achievement gaps between underrepresented and non-represented students.
  - AY 2021-2022: 57% of ARC students earned greater than 3.0 GPA.
  - 4-year graduation rate for first time freshmen registered in ARC (FTF) (admitted fall 2017) – 27% compared to 33% for all FTF.
  - Year One persistence rate (for first time students admitted fall 2020) – 85% for ARC students and 80% overall student body.
  - 4-year graduation rate for transfer students registered in ARC (admitted fall 2017) – 80% compared to 81% for all transfer students.
  - Year One persistence rate (for transfer students admitted fall 2020) – 90% for ARC students and 88% overall student body.
  - ARC has had 1,242 graduates since 2017.

ARC Annual Report 2021 - 2022

- AY 2021-2022, 243 ARC students graduated.

**Services Usage Summary:**

<b>Accommodations</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2019-2020 (Until 3/13/20)</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>
# of Tests Administered (final exams)	5,490	5,888 (1,536)	5,402	3,333	2,129
# of Instructional Materials Converted into Alternate Format (Students Fall/Spring)	1,980 (110/112)	2,000 (116/105)	1,295 (157/141)	1,025 (159/128)	953 (118/113)
# of Educational Assistant Hours in Classroom*	1,851.3	2,532	1,401	718	160
# of Hours of in person ASL Interpreting	2,208	1,683	2,262	1,762	530
# of Cart Rides Requested	2,378 (15/day on avg.)	2,348	3,284	395	233
# of Remote Captioning Hours/# of Video Interpreting Services	215/580	194/742	389/346	272/268	0/82
# of Housing Accommodations (Emotional Support Animals)	34 (8)	37	60	54	32 (4)
		ESA:	ESA:	ESA:	
		Meetings 17	Requests 10	Requests	
		Requests 8	Approvals 2	4	
		Approvals 1		Approvals	
				3	
# of Requests for Furniture Placement (students and faculty) (# does not include furniture purchased for individuals as reasonable accommodation)	56	81	47	93	65





## **OATS/Alternate Media Usage Summary:**

### **Alternative Media**

#### **Numbers:**

It was an interesting year for the alternative media area of OATS. Students were starting to return to some in-person learning and others remained online. Some faculty continued with online materials and others reverted to a traditional textbook. AY 2020-2021 was the biggest year for this service. Fall 2021 and spring 2022 saw us return to numbers more in line with where they normally are. Fall 2021 saw the OATS office service 118 ARC students with alternative media, and there were 111 students spring 2022. There is a transition happening with materials right now and the OATS office is adapting with it. The traditional textbook is now following the trajectory of the course reader. Proactive content remediation in our learning management system is very important for the students of our campus community.

### **Inclusive Technology:**

#### **Kurzweil:**

Kurzweil continues to be the largest software pushed out by OATS and has evolved since being implemented on campus. It is now single sign on and will soon be moving to an online cloud-based version. This change will allow more users to use the software and allow the office to link it to our most popular software platforms on campus.

#### **Otter.ai:**

Otter.ai is our fastest-growing technology. ARC students now use this tool as their primary source for notetaking. The vendor continues to add notetaking and innovative tools to the base package. This change allows faculty and students to be creative with their material.

#### **The Future is Accessible:**

OATS tested other inclusive software tools in 2021-2022 for future use on campus.

#### **Captioning:**

Captioning is the second-largest service OATS provides. In 2021-2022 OATS closed 497 captioning tickets for the university and began providing translated transcripts for videos. These services provided a substantial savings to the university. For example, the commencement ceremonies; a vendor quoted one of our offices \$3,000 to do the captioning and translation work. OATS was able to do the work for \$500 in staff and student assistant hours. Another example, for class lectures; our vendor charges \$100 per video. However, the OATS' team of student assistants completed the same amount of work at a cost of \$45. This saved the university \$110 per week for just that case.

OATS has partnered with CMT, which has also led to an increase in tickets. All videos produced by central campus are routed through OATS before distribution to the campus community and public. This is beneficial for inclusivity on our campus.

**Content Remediation:**

The largest service provided by OATS was content remediation. In 2021-2022, OATS closed 505 content remediation tickets. Tickets averaged approximately nine items each, with a completion of over 4,500 campus remediation jobs. This service helps protect the campus LMS, Web, and auxiliary areas. This service is not slowing down, but is only getting bigger.

In 2022-2023 OATS and Web Services will be collaborating on a project to improve the equity and inclusiveness of our web space. Site maintainers will no longer be able to upload a PDF to the campus web without it first going through OATS for remediation. We anticipate this will add nearly 2,000 PDFs to the OATS workload.

**Live Chat**

2021-2022 saw a new service come to the OATS team. While remediating content, our team was also running the campus' live and text chat systems. During 2021-2022 the team received 1,354 chat messages and texts. This service also continues to grow.

**Awards:**

The OATS team participated in the inaugural [CSU moving the needle challenge](#). The team not only won the challenge but did nearly 15,000 more fixes than the next campus. The OATS team was the runaway winner.

**Goals:**

The team has big goals for 2022-2023.

The first thing we need to do is get creative with expanding student staff without expanding our funding. The services provided will continue to grow and we must grow with them. The plan is to replace graduating student assistants with Federal Work Study approved student assistants, which will significantly reduce student labor costs. The team will remain at approximately 16 student assistants, but most will now be on Federal Work Study.

We have a plan in place to assist other universities in a shared service model. The plan is to test scale with one to two campuses late this fall. The revenue generated will help cover the expense of the OATS student workforce. The goal would be to be a low-cost shop by 2025.

OATS plans to continue bringing amazing inclusivity tools to campus in 2022-2023. With that, we have plans to bring in an inclusive name pronunciation software in partnership with UDC and others in our campus community. Research has shown that inclusivity often starts with someone's name. Getting it right can make people feel welcome and part of the community. Planning for this tool is in its infancy, but looks promising.

Lastly, our goal is to have a great year in 2022-2023 with our new web services project. This will be the first of its kind in the CSU, and we will be able to ensure that no inaccessible PDF touches our web space. Not only will it provide users with an inclusive web experience, but will also protect us legally.

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

During the 2021-2022 academic 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 service 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 10% of ARC registered students participated in the survey. Student ratings of interactions with ARC averaged an 84% positive experience. The raw data will be further refined by AHEAD and available fall 2022.

### **Academic Coaching**

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

- **85%** of the participating **40** students in **spring 2022** met the success criteria, which is indicative of meeting a 2.0 GPA or higher when compared to their fall 2021 outcomes.
- **69.7%** of the participating **33** students in **fall 2021** 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 2021 outcomes.
- **34** students who participated in the spring 2022 coaching program responded to the post survey evaluation. (NOTE: 4 students were drop-in students)

Based on Results:

- **74%** of students report a greater ability to organize their personal and school responsibilities to be successful.
- **50%** of students are First Generation students.
- **63%** 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.
- **60%** of students report an improvement in their planning and studying for upcoming exams.
- **70%** of students report they have increased their awareness of available campus resources and services.
- **66%** of students report an increase in awareness of self-care and wellness strategies.
- **77%** of students report an increase in overall skills since joining academic coaching.
- **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 the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for improvement, and threats (SWOT) was conducted for our department.

Based on our self-assessment and the assessment conducted by AHEAD, ARC's "strengths" are the services and interactions we have for and with our students. The AHEAD assessment indicated students are very satisfied and positive about our services and their interactions with the staff at ARC.

Our self-assessment indicated "weakness" in the area of "marketing" ARC. This was supported by the AHEAD survey in the form of comments from faculty. Faculty, staff, and students would benefit from trainings about ARC processes and services, as well as trainings in general about disabilities and the ADA. This weakness is an opportunity to improve communication with campus.

The "threat" associated with ARC is the requirement to provide an accessible campus per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All aspects of campus (course work, websites, architecture, activities) must be accessible to people with disabilities. If our campus is not accessible, federal funding could be impacted.

### **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 and 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 5%. Of registered ARC students, 25% identify as Hispanic. ARC will continue its 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 many courses continuing to be online and an increase in in-person courses, ARC has continued to provide services to students, staff, and faculty with disabilities. ARC's number of registered students continues to grow. ARC is providing access to 9% of the student population.

### **Program Objectives for Next Academic Year**

#### **Accessibility Resource Center**

1. Increase the number of students who identify as Hispanic who are eligible for ARC services.
2. Redesign and implement assessment strategies.
3. Create a marketing plan and implement outreach.
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. Reduce student labor costs.
3. Research and test a shared service model with other campuses.
4. Implement use of pronunciation software.
5. Remediate all PDFs prior to publication on campus websites.

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

This report was prepared by Holly Hunt, Director of ARC with contributions from Jeremy Olguin, SA Technology Services Director/OATS Manger.