



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO
SCARBOROUGH

Students with Disabilities in the Educational Environment

Tina Doyle, Director &
Special Advisor to the Dean of Student Affairs on Campus-Wide Accessibility

AccessAbility Services

December 2018 DPES



AccessAbility Services Team

Consultant Services

- Disability Consulting (Consulting, Workshops, Learning Strategies, Referrals)
- Assistive Technologist

Front Line Services

- Administrative Support
- Volunteer Resources (e.g. Note Taking Services)

Exam Office

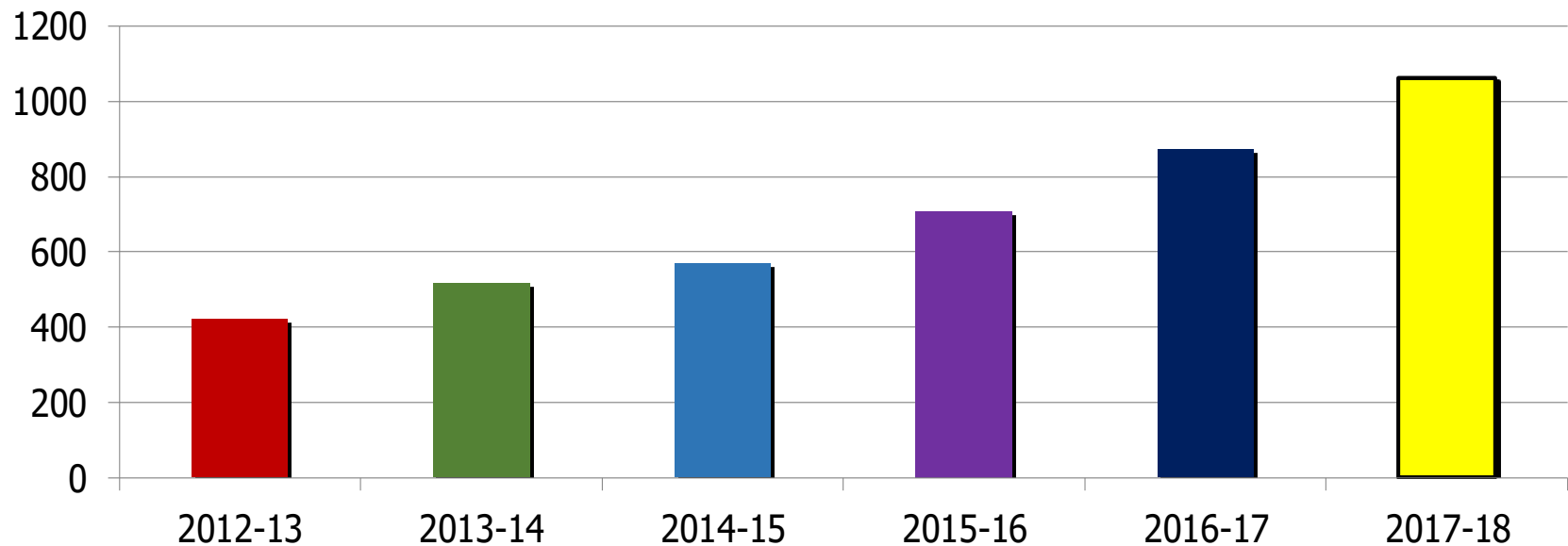
- Coordination of tests/exams written under the supervision of *AccessAbility Services*

Outreach Services

- Outreach and education initiatives relating to the service and disability issues (internal and external communities)

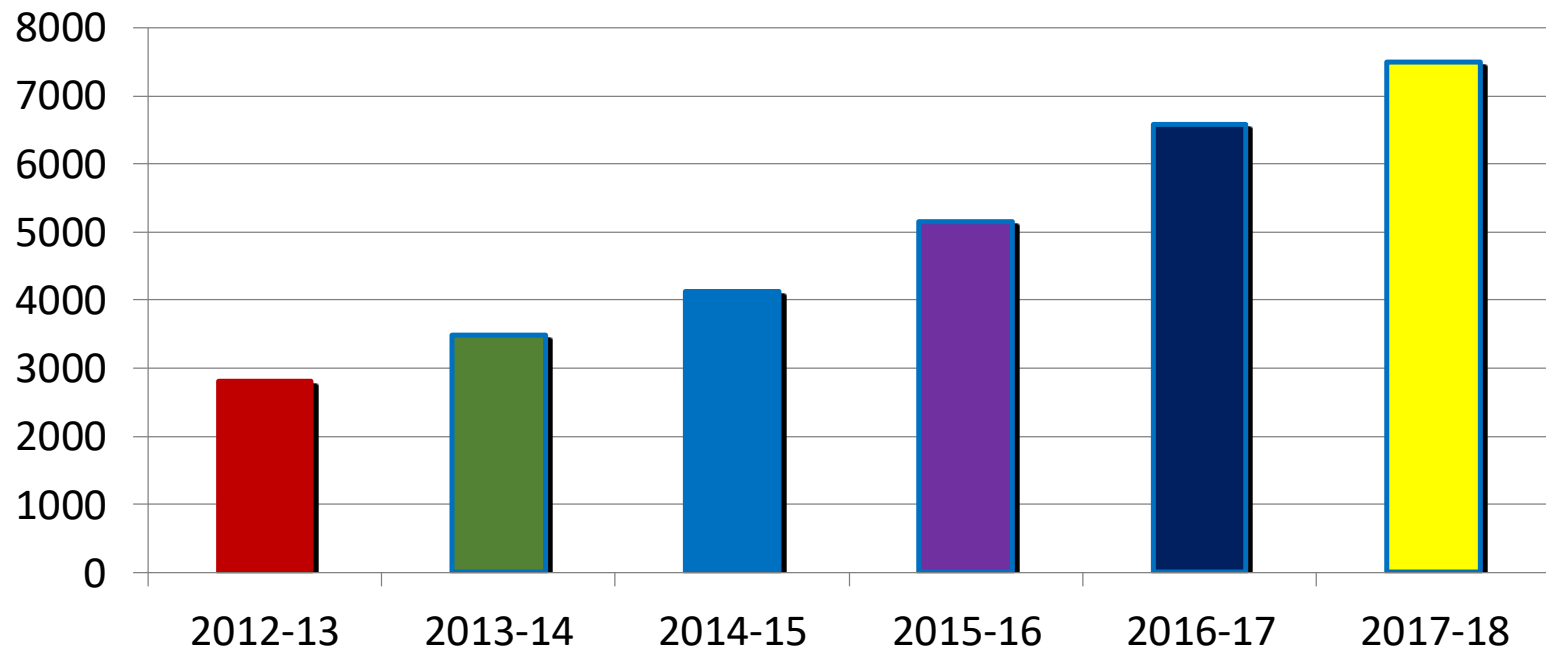
Growth – Students Registering with *AccessAbility* Services

Total # of Students Registered



Growth – Accommodated Tests/Exams

Total Number of Tests/Exams Accommodated



Duties in Accommodation Process

Access*Ability* Role – Academic Accommodations

- Receive and review the student's documentation (by a practitioner licensed to diagnose) on a confidential basis;
- Verify the student's disability on behalf of the University;
- Determine, with the student, the faculty member and the academic department whether accommodations are appropriate and, if so, what accommodations would be effective;
- Adjust accommodations as needed;
- Collaborate with faculty and academic staff to implement accommodations in the classroom, for practicums, labs, graduate programs, and with respect to multiple forms of assessment.

- Receive and review student documentation (by a practitioner licensed to diagnose) on a confidential

- Verify the student

- **Determine, with student, what accommodations**

- Adjust accommodations

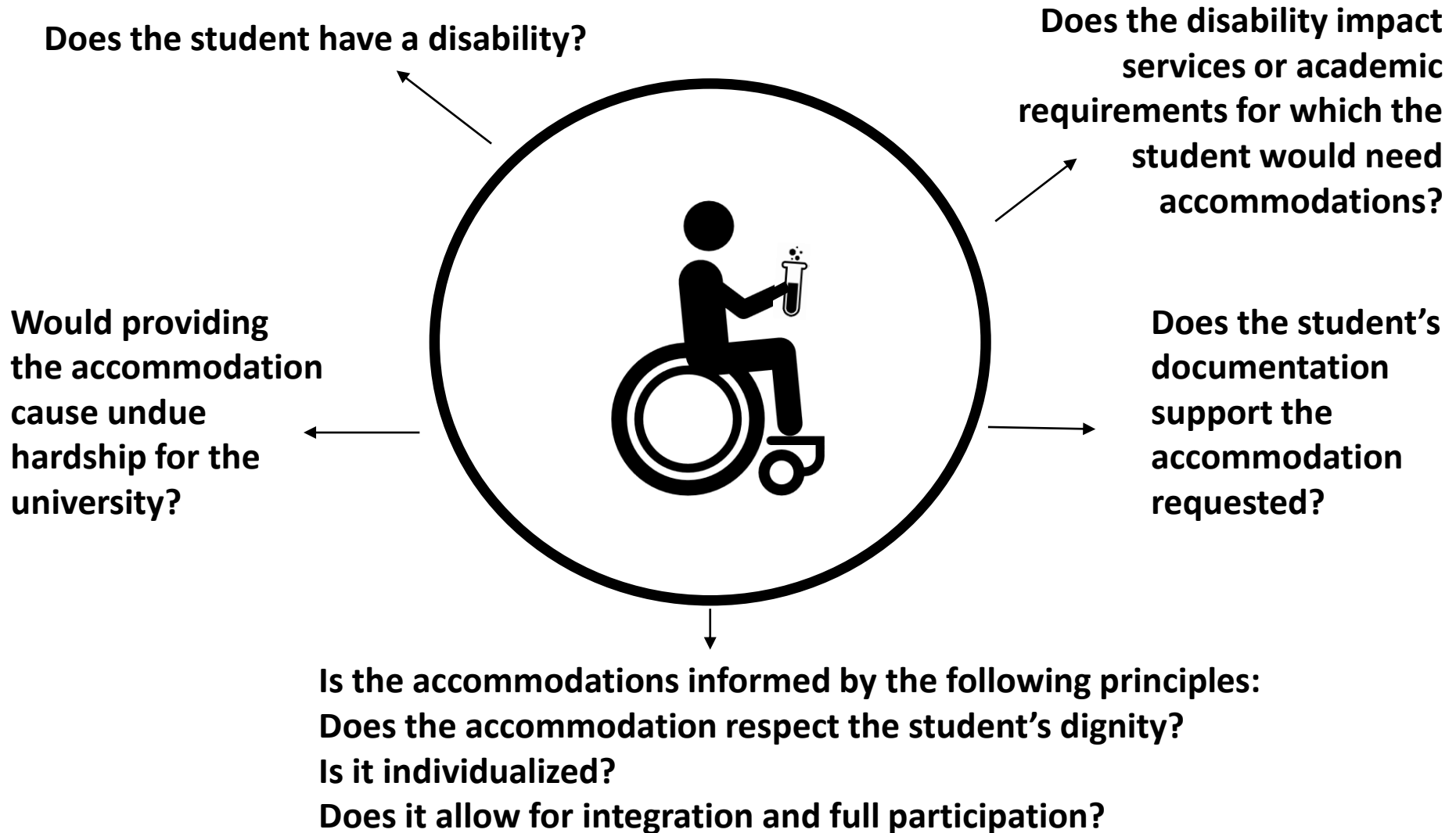
- Collaborate with faculty

Accommodation Appropriate & Effective?

- Health & Safety problem? **Let's talk**
- Accommodation jeopardizes *Bona fide* academic requirements (essential criterion of the course)? **Let's talk**

classroom, for practicums, labs, graduate programs, and with respect to multiple forms of assessment.

Eligibility: Assessment



What is an appropriate accommodation?

“An appropriate accommodation at the post-secondary level would **enable a student to successfully meet the essential requirements of the program, with no alteration in standards or outcomes, although the manner in which the student demonstrates mastery, knowledge and skills may be altered.**

In this way, education providers are able to provide all students with equal opportunities to enjoy the same level of benefits and privileges and meet the requirements for acquiring an education without the risk of compromising academic integrity”

Core Role - Accommodations

Extensions
Make-ups

Academic
Adjustment

Accessibility

Advanced
Preparation for
Courses

Alternate
Communication

Alternate
Testing

Multiple
Format
Materials

Note Taking



Ontario
Human Rights Commission
Commission ontarienne des
droits de la personne

In its own consultations with people with disabilities, the Law Commission of Ontario reported:

...many participants talked about the **suspicion and often contempt** with which persons with disabilities are treated when seeking services and supports. Services which are designed to assist persons with disabilities in meeting their basic needs or improving their autonomy, independence and participation may in practice be implemented through an **adversarial mindset, which assumes that those seeking services are attempting “to game” the system**, or obtain benefits to which they are not entitled. This is particularly the case for persons with disabilities who are also poor.^[66]



'Hidden' or 'Non-evident' disabilities

Some types of disabilities are not apparent to the average onlooker. This can be because of the nature of the specific disability in question: it may be episodic, its effects may not be visible, or it may not manifest consistently in all environments.

through an **adversarial mindset, which assumes that those seeking services are attempting "to game" the system**, or obtain benefits to which they are not entitled. This is particularly the case for persons with disabilities who are also poor. [\[66\]](#)

“It may likely be an essential requirement that a student master core aspects of a course 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 (e.g., oral communication) is also a vital requirement of the program” (OHRC, 2004)

Retroactive Accommodations

Retroactive: requesting an academic accommodation after a deadline has passed (missed exam, assignment)



Ontario
Human Rights Commission
Commission ontarienne des
droits de la personne

8.3.4 Accommodation after a deadline, test or course has been completed

Policy on accessible education for students with disabilities, August 2018

Retroactive Accommodations

“do not state or imply that requests for accommodation after a deadline, test or course completion (i.e. retroactive accommodation) will not be considered. In some cases, the nature of a mental health disability may leave a student unable to identify that they have a disability or that they have accommodation needs. In these cases, institutions should not refuse to consider accommodation requests retroactively. **All requests for accommodation should be meaningfully considered on an individualized basis”**

Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2016

Timeliness - University Responsibility

- “Accommodations must be provided in a timely manner.
- Delays in providing accommodation have the potential to directly impede a student’s ability to access and take part in the curriculum.
- Delayed accommodations may also contribute to disability-related behavioural issues and the challenges faced by front-line educators in dealing with these issues.
- Unreasonable delays may be found to violate the procedural duty to accommodate, and thus constitute a breach of the *Code*”

(OHRC, 2018)

Timeliness - Student Responsibility

- Advise the university of the need for accommodation related to my disability
- Give the university (*AccessAbility* Services, Faculty, Staff) ample time to ensure that accommodations will be available when needed, unless the student's disability impacts their ability to do so
- Participate in accommodation discussion and provide documentation outlining restrictions and limitations to *AccessAbility* Services
- meet *bona fide* academic requirements, once accommodation is provided

Undue Hardship: Denying Accommodations

It is ***essential*** that faculty not deny accommodations identified by *AccessAbility* Services, or requested by a student, without first consulting with *AccessAbility* Services.

Standard of *(undue hardship)* or *violating essential criterion of the course* requires consultation with *AccessAbility* Services, and other university personnel (e.g., other professors in the field, program coordinator, Chair, Deans)

Confidentiality of information is the foundation of an effective service for students with disabilities. *AccessAbility* Services believes that this practice generates a students trust and confidence; it is also the **legal responsibility of all staff and faculty at the university.**

“Maintaining confidentiality for students with disabilities is an important procedural component of the duty to accommodate”

(OHRC, 2004)

- Faculty Advisory Committee

Tina Doyle, Maydianne Andrade (VDFAE), Karima Hashmani (Senior Advisor on Equity and Diversity), Connie Guberman (HCS)

- Will recruit more members
- Ongoing conversation regarding faculty workload
- Reviewing processes to ensure consistent message from all staff in *AccessAbility*
- Student support services – proactive response



Room SW302



ability@utsc.utoronto.ca



utsc.utoronto.ca/ability



416-287-7560 (tel/TTY)



**WE ARE
MOVING**

Spring 2018
Arts & Administration
Building, Room AA142

Council of Ontario Universities Accessibility Resources Website:

<http://www.accessiblecampus.ca/tools-resources/educators-tool-kit/>