



# The Office of Accessibility Newsletter

## Nearing the End

Can you believe we are coming to the end of the Fall 2014 Semester? It's hard to believe it's time to get ready for the Spring 2015 Semester. Before we begin to close the door on Fall, I want to remind you about a few things. First, if you are reading this and don't have your Spring 2015 schedule in place, you will want to meet with your academic adviser as soon as possible. The longer you wait, the less likely you will get the days and times you want for your classes. Once you have your Spring 2015 schedule in place, don't forget to send out your Letters of Accommodation in STARS. Remember; even if you click on the link that allows you to send out your Letters of Accommodation, we won't send them to your professors' email until 1 week prior to the start of the semester. If you forget how to get into your STARS account or would like a quick refresher on how to send out your letters, please contact your Disability Specialist. We are happy to help walk you through the process! If you receive Testing Accommodations and would like to utilize them for finals, make sure you request your accommodations with the date and time you will be taking your finals in STARS. If your syllabus does not list the date and time of your finals, make sure to talk to your professor. Due to the large volume of tests during finals week, it is important to put your test requests in as soon as possible to help make finals week go smoothly. I hope this information will help you to organize yourself for the last few weeks of the Fall 2014 Semester. I wish each of you the best as you continue in your Fall 2014 classes and remember that the Office of Accessibility is here to assist you every step of the way!

Best Wishes,  
Kelly Kulick, Director of the Office of Accessibility

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## Disabilities Awareness Week 2014



We hope you were able to attend an event during Disabilities Awareness Week November 3-7, 2014. Our office, in collaboration with several other offices on campus, helped raise awareness about disability-related issues to the campus community. Events included distributing bracelets to support people with disabilities, creating a puzzle piece to express how disability is perceived, a guest speaker presentation, demonstrations at the Student Recreation and Wellness Center, and interactive displays and resource guides at Bierce Library.

If you were unable to stop by our table in the Student Union to create a puzzle piece, you can still do so in the Office of Accessibility. Please stop in during office hours to create a puzzle piece to express how you perceive disability.

Stay tuned for information about next year's Disabilities Awareness Week. We hope to see you there!

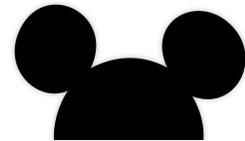
## Tips for Finals Week

It's that time of the semester for final exams. You certainly do not want to go into this part of the semester unprepared! Here are a few tips we put together to help you prepare for these exams.

- 1. Study for the most difficult exams the most.** You should avoid devoting equal time to each class, as not all your classes are going to be the most difficult for you. Divide your time up so that you're expending the most effort on the most difficult classes.
- 2. Study early and often.** You want to avoid just studying for your exam the night before. It will not only overload you, but you also won't retain as much information. It is best to start now (if you haven't already) and to take some time each day to devote to studying for your finals.
- 3. Alternate quiet study spots.** You should switch the locations where you study to increase retention. Instead of studying in the same coffee shop or in the library every day, try alternating between a few different study spots, but make sure these spots are quiet and distraction free.
- 4. Get a good night's sleep before the exam.** Avoid staying up the night of the exam to cram. It isn't going to help you, and it is really just going to stress you out more. It is best to get some sleep so that you'll be bright-eyed and bushy-tailed in the morning.
- 5. Take your time on the test.** It's best to pace yourself while you're working on your exam. Try taking a break between sections of the exam so that you don't get too stressed or overwhelmed. It's also a good idea to stay as long as you have to, and you can. Most people will tend to leave as soon as they have finished answering the last question, however, it is best to finish and then review your answers before turning in the exam.

IF YOU CAN  
DREAM IT,  
YOU CAN  
DO IT.

- WALT DISNEY



*Remember! Take deep breaths, relax, and eat a healthy breakfast.  
Goodluck on your finals!*

## Flannery Endowed Scholarships

The Michael James Flannery and Thomas Edward Flannery Endowed Scholarships were established in 2013 through a gift from the estate of the late Sally Flannery Orrok. It was Mrs. Orrok's intention to establish these scholarships in memory of her sons, Michael and Thomas. Michael and his brother, Thomas, both lived with muscular dystrophy. They both attended The University of Akron in the late 1970s before passing away from complications related to their illness. Mrs. Orrok was grateful to the faculty, staff, and students who assisted her sons during their time at The University of Akron. The Michael James Flannery and Thomas Edward Flannery Endowed Scholarships are available to an undergraduate student at The University of Akron who is pursuing a degree while facing a disability. Selection of recipients will be made by the Office of Accessibility. Recipients will be selected for a one time award, based on the following eligibility criteria: at least half-time undergraduate enrollment status, a 2.5 cumulative grade point average, and permanent Office of Accessibility registration status. Funds may be used for tuition and fees.



Interested students should contact their disability specialist.

## Important Reminders

### STARS Updates:

- ◆ You are now able to log into STARS using your University of Akron username and password. You will be directed to the MyAkron logon page from STARS. Once you log in, you should see your dashboard. After you are finished in STARS, it is imperative you logout and close your browser. If you have any problems accessing STARS, please contact our office at [access@uakron.edu](mailto:access@uakron.edu) or (330) 972-7928.

### Requesting accommodations:

- ◆ Once you have finalized your class schedule for the spring, make sure to also request your accommodations on STARS.
  1. Log into STARS
  2. Scroll down to "Select Accommodations for Your Class"
  3. Select classes you are requesting accommodations and click "Step 2-Continue to Customize your Accommodations"
  4. Select the accommodations you would like to request for each class and the checkbox to email the accommodation letter to your instructor
  5. Select "Submit your Accommodation Request"
- ◆ Transcribers/CART or interpreter accommodation requests should be submitted at least **six weeks prior** to the beginning of the semester.
- ◆ If you are requesting notetakers, please remember to only request the notetaking accommodation for classes in which you will need notetakers. This does not include classes like labs, recitations, gym classes, or online classes. If you have any questions about which classes to request notetakers, please contact your Disability Specialist.

### Testing in the Office of Accessibility and Counseling Center:

- ◆ If you have an alternative testing accommodation, please remember to schedule your test at least **4 business days** prior to the day you would like to take the test. Tests can be scheduled through the STARS website, <https://andes.accessiblelearning.com/Akron/> under the Alternative Testing tab. Bring your Student ID with you for each test. Remember to schedule early due to the high volume of testing requests during finals week!

## Important Dates

**December 7, 2014**  
Final Instructional Day for Fall 2014 classes

**December 8-14, 2014**  
Finals Week

**December 12-13, 2014**  
Fall 2014 Commencement

**December 25-January 2, 2015**  
OA closed

**January 13, 2015**  
Spring 2015 classes begin

## Meet our new Disability Specialist!

Please join us in welcoming The Office of Accessibility's new Disability Specialist, **Melissa Simmons!**

Melissa is the new Disability Specialist and Service Coordinator at The Office of Accessibility. Melissa received a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Development and Family Studies from Kent State University and a Masters of Education degree in School Counseling from The University of Cincinnati. Melissa has 4 years of experience working with students with disabilities and feels passionate and dedicated to partner with students in helping them reach academic success.

## Self-Advocacy Tips

Self-Advocacy is about representing yourself or your own views and interests. It is extremely important for you as a student to learn to self-advocate so you have the knowledge needed to succeed and are given the chance to participate in decisions that are being made about your life. Here are some helpful tips to keep in mind when thinking about self-advocacy.

- 1. Promote Self-Knowledge**—Take the opportunity to really get to know yourself, including your mental state, beliefs, desires, how you learn, and your strengths and weaknesses. You have many opportunities in college to give your own opinion or feedback and set goals about your future. The more you know about yourself, the easier this will be.
- 2. Identify Needs**—Be aware of your needs and bring them to the attention of your Disability Specialist in a timely manner. Consider what needs you have; e.g. health, school work, recreation, and daily living.
- 3. Be Resourceful**—Check out services available on and off campus. Utilize these resources whenever possible. Some really helpful resources are the Counseling Center, Student Recreation and Wellness Center, Student Health Services, Tutoring Services, Writing Labs, and many more. You can access these resources at [www.uakron.edu](http://www.uakron.edu).
- 4. Communicate**—Talk with your Disability Specialist, professors, roommates, friends, etc., about any help you may need. The sooner you are able to speak up, the sooner your needs can be met. Remember, we are here to help, but communication is a two-way street.
- 5. Problem Solve**—Always use good problem solving skills whenever faced with a dilemma. Never act on instinct. If you encounter a problem, ask yourself questions that will enable you think about the most appropriate way to solve a situation.
- 6. Prepare for Difficulties**—Everybody makes mistakes. Learn from your mistakes. Talk with your professors or Disability Specialist when it comes to preparing for possible difficulties, like missing class because you slept in, or you forgot to schedule a test when utilizing testing accommodations.
- 7. Build Natural Supports**—Having a support system is one of the most beneficial aspects of life. Whether your support system consists of your friends, family, student organizations, campus services, etc., your support system is there to help you in times of need.
- 8. Be Independent**—College is all about learning to be independent. Take the initiative to learn how to talk to people and where to go for help. There are a lot of extra responsibilities when you no longer live at home. Use a planner to schedule times to study, clean, go grocery shopping, meet with your advisers, etc.
- 9. Set Realistic Goals**—Develop and accomplish achievable goals. These goals can be small ones, like getting a certain grade on a test, or larger goals, like achieving a specific GPA, or start a new workout routine. Completing goals can be an extremely accomplishing thing, and is good practice for work ethics in the future!

## Notetaker Appreciation Week

Attention all notetakers! The Office of Accessibility is hosting a Notetaker Appreciation Week for all notetakers given assignments during the Fall 2014 semester. The purpose of this event is to extend our gratitude for the hard work and dedication you put in this semester and to promote notetaker registration for future semesters.

Stop in our office located in **Simmons Hall 105** during our office hours any day throughout the week of **December 1-5** to receive a *special gift* and to register your Spring 2015 class schedule in STARS. If you have any questions, please contact the Notetaker Coordinator at (330) 972-7928 or at [ooaga1@uakron.edu](mailto:ooaga1@uakron.edu).

We hope to see you here!

## Suggestion Box

We want your feedback!

Email [ooaga1@uakron.edu](mailto:ooaga1@uakron.edu) with comments about the current newsletter or ideas you would like to see in future newsletters.

Office of Accessibility Phone: 330-972-7928  
Simmons Hall 105 TDD: 330-972-5764  
The University of Akron Fax: 330-972-5422  
Akron, Ohio 44325-6213 E-mail: [access@uakron.edu](mailto:access@uakron.edu)

Fall & Spring Office Hours:  
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Wednesday: 8 a.m.-7 p.m.



Simmons Hall at The University of Akron