



**Demands for Universal Design, Accessibility,
and Inclusion for the Disabled Students,
Staff, and Faculty of the University of
California on the Thirtieth Anniversary of
the Americans with Disabilities Act
July 26, 2020**

Table of Contents

p. 2 Useful Terms & Concepts

p. 3 Fundamental Action Steps

p. 4 Summary of Themes

p. 8 Appendix of Demand Examples

Useful Terms & Concepts

While care was taken with the language, this document was not written in legal jargon but in vernacular English as a genuine expression of the concerns of disabled UC campus community members.

This is a cry from the heart. It is not all-inclusive.

As disabled advocates audit various UC locations, items may be changed or added.

Abled

For the purposes of this document, if you're not disabled, you're abled. There is some disagreement within the disability community as to preferred terms for this. Some prefer 'non-disabled'.

Ableism

Individual and systemic bias that centers abled people and considers disabled people inferior, less human, and less worthy of life and liberty. It has, but is not limited to, economic, social, political, mental and physical health impacts.

Lived Experience

Personal knowledge about the world gained through direct, first-hand involvement in everyday events rather than through representations constructed by other people. (Oxford Reference definition)

Social Model of Disability

The social model of disability identifies systemic barriers, derogatory attitudes, and social exclusion (intentional or inadvertent), which make it difficult or impossible for individuals with impairments to attain their valued functionings. The social model of disability diverges from the dominant medical model of disability, which is a functional analysis of the body as a machine to be fixed in order to conform with normative values. (Wikipedia definition)

Universal Design

The design of buildings, products or environments to make them accessible to all people regardless of age, disability, or other factors. (Wikipedia definition)

Fundamental Action Steps

- Set as University of California (UC) policy that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is not a ceiling but a floor. It is the minimum standard - the goal is beyond to universal design, accessibility & inclusion for all disabled people at UC.
- Set as UC policy that disability is a part of diversity. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs must feature disability and its intersections. UC DEI offices must hire diversely disabled people.
- UC has had 30 years to retrofit infrastructure that was grandfathered into ADA. Make a serious attempt to retrofit buildings still in use or take the opportunity to demolish them and build new ones that are not just up to ADA standard but beyond. That would offer the opportunity to bring them up to LEED Platinum standard as well.
- Build affordable accessible housing for undergraduate and graduate students. Disabled students should have priority in housing lotteries.
- Admit and hire diversely disabled students, staff, and faculty in the proportions that disabled people exist in the general population. (18.7% as of the 2010 US Census, likely higher in the wake of COVID19)
- Publish UC's statistics on the acceptance and hiring of disabled students, staff, and faculty on UC Infocenter so the public can hold UC accountable for the work yet to be done.
- Fund and compensate working groups with decision-making capabilities at each campus, medical facility, lab and field facility, and extension center composed of diversely disabled UC students, staff, and faculty to identify needs at each location.

- Ensure that universal design, accessibility, and inclusion must be in the planning and budget for any UC endeavor from the very beginning. Earmark funds sufficient to achieve these goals.
- Audit UC initiatives and construction projects that are already under way and correct for any lack of accessibility before it becomes literally set in stone.
- Make over the departments that have purview over disabled students and disabled employees so that they are majority led and staffed by diversely disabled people.
- Promote disabled people in the campus community as well as recruit disabled people into leadership so that every area of UC leadership has diversely disabled leaders in the proportions that disabled people exist in the general population.
- Fund scholarships and fellowships at each UC location specifically for disabled people as other scholarships and fellowships use an ableist yardstick when selecting who will receive the award.
- UC is an institute of higher education that trains people who will go on to lead in many fields. That training must dismantle ableism or it will reproduce it. All UC programs need to work with the diversely disabled campus community to learn how to dismantle their ableism and create an accessible world.

Please read the rest of the document for a fuller discussion of these steps, with concrete examples and why they represent a meaningful change for the entire UC campus community.

Summary of Themes

Preamble

The **University of California** (UC) is Californians' state research university, supported by the tax dollars of all Californians as well as by the federal tax dollars of all Americans. International students support it with their tuition and fees. Yet it only serves a small slice of the diversity in the public that funds it.

July 26, 2020 is the 30th anniversary of the signing of the **Americans with Disabilities Act** (ADA) into law. Thirty years after passage of ADA, most businesses and institutions in the US, including the University of California, are not yet fully compliant with the modest level of accessibility that ADA represents. Disabled people are paying for

university infrastructure and processes that are actively hostile to them. And abled people are paying for infrastructure and processes that harm and oppress their disabled family, friends, and colleagues....even themselves should they become disabled in future. This must change.

Nothing About Us Without Us

The systems that create policy around accessibility are largely led, designed, and run by abled people. These systems ration accessibility and police disabled people. Abled people - no matter how well they train up on accessibility - will never be able to make decisions informed by the lived experience and knowledge of disabled people. Disabled people absolutely should majority lead the offices that cater to the disabled campus community and visitors. Disabled people must share in leadership positions throughout UC and not in a tokenizing way. The expectation that disabled people cannot lead results in ableist infrastructure & policing that makes it nearly impossible for us to access the spaces devoted to leadership. For instance, it took the Danish Parliament (*Folketing*) 'til 2018 to install a lift so that disabled representatives could get on the dais and up to the lectern. And Wisconsin Rep. Jimmy Anderson had to sue to be allowed to call in to meetings on days his home healthcare worker was not available to enable him to travel to meet in person. It took over a year to be granted permission only to see abled people get the permission to call in to meetings with much less fuss when the COVID19 pandemic arrived. Access must extend to leadership spaces.

Embrace a Social Model of Disability

As Western societies secularized, disabled people went from being viewed as punishments for sins to being viewed as problems to be cured. While the social model of disability is not a perfect fit for all disabled people, it is true that much of what worsens health and quality of life for disabled people has little to do with our medical conditions and a lot to do with barriers an ableist society puts in our way. Current policing of disabled people is very much embedded in the medical model of disability. This surfaces in the bureaucracy built around disability in which abled people who have never experienced disability stand in judgment of disabled people and ration access to what we need. This not only worsens quality of life and health, but also fences out those least able to afford the repeated medical appointments and tests required by abled people as proof that we deserve these rations. It is particularly harmful because the medical profession has documented problems with ableism, sexism, racism, classism, sizeism, homophobia, and transphobia so the emphasis not just on medical proofs, but repeated recent medical proofs, requires disabled people marginalized in more than one way to subject themselves to being traumatized over and over.

Disabilities Are Diverse. The Disabled Community Is Diverse

Every single group of people except the group “abled people” has disabled members. You cannot be welcoming to Black people without being welcoming to Black disabled people. You cannot be welcoming to LGBTQIA people without being welcoming to LGBTQIA disabled people. You cannot be welcoming to First Generation students

without being welcoming to First Generation disabled students, and so on. Disabled people can have more than one kind of disability. Disabled people can be marginalized in more than one way. We should not be made to favor one identity over the other/s. We should be able to be our full selves.

No More Abandoning Disabled Lives

All health & safety and emergency plans must have input from disabled people to be designed to successfully preserve disabled lives. Some UC Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) don't even mention disability. Those that do talk about disabled people from a dehumanizing ableist perspective as burdens to be acted upon rather than colleagues to be consulted and cared about. All students, faculty, and other UC personnel must be trained in these procedures. Part of classroom accommodation for disabled students should include discussion about any wrinkles in the procedure that must be introduced to accommodate the student and successfully help them keep safe and healthy, and to evacuate when necessary.

ADA Is a Floor Not a Ceiling

“Do you know what it means when someone pays you minimum wage? You know what your boss is trying to say? It's like ‘Hey, if I could pay you less, I **would**, but it's against the law.’ “ - Chris Rock

Attempting to meet ADA and no further is admitting that you'd do less if you could get away with it. In 30 years of ADA, UC still hasn't fully met ADA conditions. But meeting ADA isn't enough. For example, accessible cycle racks & lockers are important for transportation to those disabled people that can cycle, especially on a majority cycle campus like UC Davis. But when asked, abled transportation & parking services workers say “Bike racks aren't covered under ADA”. This is not likely true, but even if it were ruled so, it's just another argument for exceeding ADA to achieve an inclusive and accessible campus environment.

Accessibility & Inclusion Goes Beyond the Classroom

Accessibility isn't just classroom accommodations. Abled students are enticed to choose UC based on its thriving cultural and sports programs, and amenities in housing. Yet accessible housing is scarce for both grads and undergrads. At some campuses, disabled grad students who have a disability-related reason to need to live close to campus are not given priority in lotteries for campus housing while students who choose to parent are. Transit for disabled students often has limited hours and absurd requirements for advanced notice. On some campuses wheelchair-accessible transport is operated by campus police which puts Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) disabled people in further danger. Gyms are renovated and new student athlete facilities are constructed, yet these facilities are largely inaccessible and there are few adaptive sports, intramural or extramural. The disabled campus community deserves to participate in just as active and rich a campus life as abled members of the campus community.

Disabled People's Needs Are Not "Special"

All people have diverse needs. Framing the needs of disabled people as "special needs" allows abled people to compartmentalize and treat disabled people's needs as extra, as if we are not part of the human race. Calling our needs "special" means they are rarely budgeted for in the beginning of any endeavor, as they should be. Sometimes they're not budgeted for at all. Then when accessibility is asked for, we're told it's too expensive. Approximately 1 in 5 people in the US have at least one disability. Given the initial reports about conditions in COVID19 survivors, that percentage may increase.

Universal Design for Accessibility

Many of the things that work best for disabled people are also preferred by abled people. Instead of having a poor inaccessible design be the default, with special permission needed for rationed accommodation, make the accessible design the default. This minimizes bureaucracy and policing involved in securing accommodations, reduces the incidence of abled people commandeering artificially rare accessible items, and generally makes for a happier, more productive campus because even abled people aren't hurting from poor ergonomic design.

There's No Time To Waste

There are numerous construction projects and new initiatives being planned and launched at this very moment across UC. The disabled campus community and select outside disabled accessibility consultants should audit these projects to make sure they don't just meet ADA standards, but exceed them. People who survive COVID19 are coming away with life-altering disabilities that are sure to further affect the campus community. The UC system has had at least 30 years to become truly accessible and inclusive. UC would have been more resilient to the enormous stressors of a global pandemic if it had already been ADA-compliant. Make amends for that scofflaw policy now by preparing not just to meet ADA but go beyond it to universal design, full accessibility, and inclusion.

Appended are example benchmarks the UC system needs to meet to get closer to the goals of universal design, accessibility, and full inclusion. Disabled student/staff/faculty representatives from each campus should be paid to consult on precisely how changes should look at each given campus (not excluding extension programs, medical facilities, off-campus facilities, labs, and field stations). Disabled students have already done many hours of equity and justice work (on top of their coursework and research) that the university officials responsible for ADA compliance and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) should have been doing as part of **their paid work**. Disabled students need to be paid for their time and expertise. Disabled faculty and staff outside of DEI and ADA compliance who do this work must be meaningfully recognized and recompensed for it. Where needed, outside disabled consultants should be brought in to supplement disabled campus community expertise.

Justice Delayed is Justice Denied

Thirty years have gone by since ADA became the law of the land. The disabled campus community and relevant campus staff should determine a timeline for each benchmark and a public accountability procedure involving the press and outside disability rights organization monitors in addition to the disabled campus community should be agreed to in a transparent and legally binding agreement.

Appendix of Demand Examples

Benchmarks

This is a list of example benchmarks to be met.

When a specific campus or facility is mentioned, it does not mean a similar situation does not exist at other campuses and facilities. Disabled campus community-led groups for each UC campus and facility will draw up institution-specific lists. Associated Students and any other group or corporation (e.g. food vendors, bikeshare) allowed to be or operate on UC property must also be accessible and inclusive not just to ADA level but beyond.

At every mention of training and service done by disabled students, staff, faculty or outside consultants, keep in mind that this work should be paid or otherwise ethically recompensed, at the discretion of the disabled person in question.

It should also be kept in mind at all times that disabled leaders and consultants should be from the relevant disability subculture (e.g. Deaf on Deaf issues, mobility aid user on mobility aid issues, learning disabled on learning disability issues) when consulting on a specific issue, but that committees and groups should represent a spectrum of disability subcultures and other marginalizations. The disabled community includes people of all races, ethnicities, genders, sexualities, and classes and this diversity should be represented in those selected, particularly for leadership positions.

Public Health

Universal design and accessibility would have made UC better prepared for pandemic (having long before made classes available online for accessibility reasons, having hands-free ways of getting into buildings, having established work-from-home flexibility,

having well-developed humane processes to support students and staff during medical leave, etc.).

Now disabled people at high risk of death should they get COVID19 are being pressured to go back to in-person activities before an affordable vaccine is available and well-distributed. There are economic reasons for such high pressure and UC's most vulnerable members are made to pay the price. But if economic reasons are so pressing, why did UC's highest-paid office holders not take significant and lasting pay cuts? Why did some positions get a couple hundred thousand dollar per year pay bump? You cannot kill people for the economy, especially when it's clear to the public that those who already have the most are sacrificing the least.

UC Davis Women's Resource Center checked on how students who choose to parent were doing as the pandemic created shortages while the Student Disability Center didn't check in with disabled students through an email blast at all. (March 20, 2020 email & [Google Doc](#)) That silence at an extraordinarily stressful time when even abled people were being inquired after spoke volumes about what the university thinks of disabled students. Aggie Compass distributed groceries via pickup on central campus, but there was no grocery delivery available for the most vulnerable members of our campus community, those whose disabilities and/or age put them at highest risk of dying of COVID19.

Worldwide news has been full of reports of prioritization of ventilators other than first come-first served, with abled medical personnel deciding that a disabled person's quality of life isn't good enough for them to deserve a chance at the ventilator that could help them survive COVID19. UC medical facilities must not participate in this sort of deeply unethical dismissal of disabled lives.

COVID19 remains a presence in all our lives, endangering people who are already disabled and disabling many people who survive it. University plans for pandemic absolutely must be made with disabled people as part of the decision-making and with disabled people in mind.

Leadership & Inclusion

- Disabled people need to be represented in decision-making positions in order to forestall ableism and spot inaccessibility that abled people are missing. This should be disabled stakeholders wherever possible. When not possible, outside disabled consultants should be hired.

- The Student Disability Center should be majority staffed with disabled employees in leadership positions. Advocating for disabled students should be an explicit part of its mission.

- The Student Disability Center should have at least one full-time employee that is a Benefits Counselor - many disabled students are on SSI, SSDI, Medicare, Medicaid, SNAP and other programs that harass through constant means testing and ableist policing of disability. This is stressful and expensive, and the bureaucracy around it is purposely byzantine. Especially because grad school gets treated as a job rather than an education, this can endanger SSDI and Medicare benefits. Abled university personnel in the Student Disability Center often know little about the rules of these programs and how university policies can actually threaten a disabled student's ability to survive. A full-time Benefits Counselor would reduce stress on students, freeing them up to focus more on their education.

- Disabled students need a disability cultural center, preferably in or near the buildings that house other cultural centers for marginalized students. We need a space that isn't focused on minimum accommodation like the Student Disability Center and a space that isn't medicalized. Disabled people have our own culture and subcultures and need a space where we can find community and mutual support.

- There must be public-facing statistics about how many disabled students are admitted to undergrad and grad schools as well as how many staff, admin, and faculty self-identify as disabled. UC cannot improve representation of disabled people if the public cannot see what % of various campus communities identify as disabled.

- Disabled students, with consent and pay, should be engaged as models for photographs & videos used in university websites, banners, and catalogs so that disabled people who aspire to go to university can "see it and be it".

- Dispense with performative DEI statements. If UC Davis & other campuses have documents like "The Principles of Community" that they talk about in orientations and trumpet as evidence of their values, they cannot undercut them with fine print like "The Principles of Community are not official University of California, Davis policy; nor do they replace existing policies, procedures or codes of conduct." Make actually enforceable policies for diversity, equity, and inclusion that have real repercussions for those that violate them, up to and including the highest UC officials.

Training

- Any abled workers who work with disabled students as clients need training to dismantle their ableism. This is to ensure the safety of disabled students and cut down on macro- and microaggressions. This especially includes student workers driving accessibility shuttles and working in offices that are supposed to be supporting disabled students.

- All students, faculty, staff orientations must have disability accessibility & inclusion components, preferably presented by disabled students, staff and/or faculty.

- UC medical and Student Health & Counseling facilities must receive training from disabled medical and psychological professionals on accessibility, inclusion, and dismantling ableism.
- Current UC faculty, adjuncts, graduate student instructors, TAs, Readers and Tutors should receive disability accessibility and inclusion trainings presented with participation from disabled students, staff, or faculty. All UC instruction - online or offline - should be accessible and those delivering instruction must be trained and given the resources they need to make it so. This should be done in a way and at a pace that respects their time and does not create stress for the instructor or it is likely to be resented and that resentment is likely to be passed onto disabled students in the form of macro- and microaggressions.
- Campus emergency planning and procedures must include disabled people in decision-making and in consideration. Faculty, TAs, Lab Managers, Field Managers and Resident Assistants must be trained in these procedures, to be able to respond appropriately in times of crises.
- For as long as UCPD exists, It is crucial that UCPD officers and support staff be trained to dismantle their ableism because it can literally be deadly to disabled people, particularly BIPOC disabled people. UCPD needs at least some officers and staff at each station trained to read and sign ASL. There are cases where police have misinterpreted ASL as “gang signs”, which has made targets of innocent Deaf people. Campus libraries, medical facilities, and other major spots of public interaction that sometimes generate police calls should also have staff fluent in ASL. Training is also needed to recognize mental health conditions, non-speaking autistics, and others who can experience violence unto death from police forces due to mistaken assumptions about their movements and vocalizations.
- Welfare checks should not be conducted by UCPD.

Processes

- Every University of California endeavor should budget in accessibility and inclusion needs from the very beginning. Human rights should not be subject to cost/benefit analysis, but budgeting universal design, accessibility and inclusion from the beginning will cut down on court fines, legal settlements, worker injuries, and health insurance costs as well as the cost of retrofitting what should have been accessible from the start.
- SSI and SSDI documentation should be sufficient to prove disability as both have already put the person through a rigorous federal process of proof. The practice of forcing people with already documented disabilities to pay to see a doctor yet again pushes them further into debt and can also traumatize them due to the ableism, racism, sexism, sizeism, homophobia, and transphobia institutionalized in medicine.

- Disabled students are made to shoulder the costs of our own proofs to the Student Disability Center. There is a childcare stipend available to those who choose to have children yet disability is rarely a choice and we are forced to shoulder the financial burden of proving to a disbelieving ableist university that we are disabled. The university should pay for the proofs it's asking for, including any new appointments and tests, associated transportation and lodging.

- Some people come from communities where they were never tested for learning disabilities. Such tests are expensive and hard to obtain. Campuses should retain experts who will diagnose students who suspect they have dyslexia, dyscalculia, or other learning disabilities at no expense to the student.

- Many disabilities make it deleterious or impossible to pursue education on what is considered a full-time schedule by abled people. Yet scholarships, fellowships, and various policies are predicated on the student being enrolled full-time. Policies need to be changed to accommodate what disabled people can sustainably handle. They are literally endangering people's lives otherwise.

- Part of "reasonable accommodation" is believing a disabled student when we say we can't make it to class due to something related to our disability. Many disability symptoms are not going to show up in a doctor's exam. It's just the doctor writing a note that they believe what the disabled student says. So cut out the expense of a doctor's appointment by going straight to believing the disabled student.

- Closed Judicial Affairs proceedings can be intimidating and difficult to understand for any student, particularly a student with a disability. The regular legal system has established the right for any person accused of a crime to have legal counsel. An equivalent right to a professional advocate or counsel at the university's expense should be required for a Judicial Affairs proceeding involving a disabled student.

- Student Health and Counseling Services at UC Davis currently has a contract that requires students to agree to not record appointments and interactions unless we've received permission from the Executive Director of SHCS. This is not only anti-consumer, but anti-disabled. CA law currently requires the person being recorded in a non-public place to give permission. Disabled people sometimes need to record because we cannot remember or understand everything that's said at the time. Furthermore, disabled people are subjected to a lot of policing bureaucracy as well as gaslighting due to institutionalized ableism, sexism, racism, homophobia and transphobia in Medicine. As a result, we're subjected to many "he said, she said" situations and will need to record to be believed. UC should not have any such contract clauses. CA law is sufficient and UC medical personnel should allow patients to record interactions.

- There are at least two ways dogs are an accommodation issue. Disabled people are entitled to bring genuine service animals with them and these should be

accommodated, including the availability of designated places for service animal toileting and exercise. But some disabled people have dogs as PTSD triggers or have dog allergies and we have a right to not be around pet dogs at school, in student housing, and in the workplace. We should not be made to feel like killjoys because of this. There are times when one disabled person's needs may conflict with another's and this will require mediation if the disabled people in question are unable to work it out informally.

- Facilities and any contractors should adopt low VOC paints, carpeting, and other materials. Routine cleaning solutions and detergent brands chosen should have no added scents.

- UC Davis' student population is larger than what is currently permitted by the physical size of campus classrooms, which contributes to inaccessibility by exacerbating the sensory demands of these crowded spaces for disabled students and creating a serious risk of sensory overload. Overcrowding narrows aisles and makes it impossible or dangerous to use a wheelchair or other mobility aid. During the initial periods of the quarter, before students on waitlists are excluded, these class sizes may even pose a serious fire and safety hazard to all students and especially those with disabilities. For Fall 2020, UC Davis admitted a record number of undergrads. <https://www.ucdavis.edu/news/uc-davis-admits-record-number-new-undergraduates-fall-2020> UC Davis must develop a clear plan to construct additional classroom facilities to meet the demands of its student population.

- Campus offices and businesses need to provide status updates. It is not trivial for a person with a mobility disability to travel to campus and get from the nearest disabled auto parking, bus stop, or inaccessible cycle rack to an office deep within campus. So if that office closes suddenly, or decides to stop taking computer repairs temporarily, or if an entire parking lot gets closed off at LaRue as happens for the lot nearest ARC, the disabled person undergoes stress and expends some of their limited energy (and gas money) for no reason at all. Better communication can forestall this with timely updates to telephone answering machines and to websites.

Infrastructure

Buildings

- All buildings at UC that are not in ADA compliance need to be brought up to compliance (ADA compliance is a minimum goal, not a maximum one) even if they are grandfathered in to ADA. Wheelchair-accessible entrances should not be a rear entrance where the freight & trash are, which immediately communicates to disabled people that they are not welcome at their own public university.

- There's a tendency to economize on space by making the wheelchair-accessible restroom stall be the place the baby-changing station is installed. This encourages abled parents to linger in the one wheelchair-accessible stall that's there. Install baby-changing stations outside any stalls. Baby changing stations should be adjustable or be installed several at more than one height so that wheelchair users and/or Little People can also use them.
- Each campus, extension campus, and medical center must have a number of Changing Places restrooms in proportion to the square footage and population density of the campus or med center. Adults with disabilities severe enough that they need the assistance of an attendant to accomplish toileting tasks are left out of the usual wheelchair-accessible restroom designs. There must be restrooms that can accommodate these members of our disabled community. They should be made available to not just to students and UC workers, but to disabled members of the public who are visiting. <http://www.changing-places.org/>
- There should be secure locker areas for disabled students who have extra medical equipment they have to haul with them or who have mobility disabilities that tire them out enough that they might have to leave some extra books/bags/equipment behind while they go from class to class or workplace on a campus that can seem very farflung to people with mobility disabilities. The Mobility Assistance Shuttle is very limited, and disabled parking is also limited so other accommodations/solutions are needed to help people shepherd their energy. The locations of such lockers will be determined by the disabled campus community.
- For autistic students, students with PTSD, or other students who may require a quiet respite area to recover or take breaks from a crowded campus environment, the university should construct sensory respite areas in different areas of campus. These areas should include capacity for multiple students with different sensory needs (i.e., separate soundproofed spaces where lighting levels and background noise can be manipulated to meet any particular student's requirements).
- Strong scents, especially synthetic perfumes used in soaps, shampoos, detergents and cleaning products, should be avoided as much as possible. Cleaner Air rooms should be provided as places of refuge for those affected by MCS and/or migraines. <http://ehnca.org/www/events/clnerair.htm>

Housing

The ability of disabled people to attend and/or work at UC is dependent on being able to afford housing nearby. Grad students with certain conditions, including some mobility disabilities, desperately need housing on or very close to campus in order to conserve their limited energy & stamina. Yet much campus housing is not accessible nor affordable.

Currently, UC Davis grad housing prioritizes being a parent and/or having a partner, but not disabled students who need accessible campus housing. This needs to change. A lot of disabled grad students are likely to be childfree and partner-free because SSI penalizes disabled people who marry and because most disabled people are low income and/or forced to limit their assets and income. Even projects that are currently in the works such as the Orchard Park grad housing at UC Davis are not affordable nor fully accessible. Orchard Park and other housing projects need to be audited by disabled people for their accessibility and the plans changed in time to make a difference.

- Graduate and undergraduate students with disabilities should have a right to a single room at no increased cost.
- Students with further sensory accessibility needs should have these met through separate quiet residence halls with clear noise limits.
- Students with sensory sensitivities and/or PTSD who receive meals from residence dining commons need to have a procedure in place that would allow them to pick up meals without the sensory challenge of entering the dining hall environment.
- Campus dining halls should have Braille menus available.
- Instead of providing accessible affordable housing for students, UC seems to have embraced being a for-profit landlord. This is contrary to UC's obligation as a public good. Housing experts recommend that one's rent burden be no greater than 30% of one's income. The proposed cost of Orchard Park rent for a one bedroom is greater than the entire income one would make in a 25% TA appointment. Given that disabled people have greater uncovered medical and equipment costs than abled people, they should have an even lower rent burden than 30%.
- Disabled people with disabilities that require living in close proximity to campus or who have accessibility needs that most rental housing does not offer must be given first priority in campus housing lotteries.
- Some accessible housing should be reserved for quiet childfree living for those who have PTSD or autism or other disability-related sensitivities that require tranquility. There should be as many shared amenities like gardens and outdoor tables here as are available at other types of housing.
- Hoists should be made available to disabled people who need them in campus housing. Disabled people should be involved in deciding whether they should be permanently installed in a percentage of accessible affordable housing or whether UC should have a central supply of hoists that can be installed as needed.

Furniture

- Student Health and University Medical Centers must have wheelchair-accessible exam rooms and must have exam tables that are wide enough to accommodate fat people. There must also be enough room and flexibility for a wheelchair user to comfortably be in the waiting room space and choose to wait with friends or family who aren't wheelchair users.

- Some campuses have public furniture that is bolted into the ground or floor. It is arranged for thin abled people so it has no flexibility for use by fat people and/or people who need to use a wheelchair or mobility aid. They contribute to the isolation of disabled people as a mixed interabled group could sit down outside Davis' CoHo and only the abled people would be able to sit at the table, forcing a wheelchair-using person to sit a ways away with no table to use or forcing them to give up on continuing a conversation with the rest of the group or force the entire group to go on a long hunt for public furniture that accommodates all of them.

- Kiddie-style desks are a particular problem in classrooms. They are not only all right-handed, but they have no flexibility for disabled and/or fat students. Bolted-down classroom furniture, even when it leaves cut-outs for wheelchairs, is ableist. It leaves no flexibility for the disabled student to choose their own position in the classroom according to their needs and preferences. It robs them of the independence given to abled students.

- Not everyone is the same size. Chairs with arms dictate how wide someone can be and can hurt disabled people with neuropathy in their arms. While some disabled people may need arms for support getting into and out of chairs, many more need chairs with no arms. All conference rooms, medical waiting rooms, departmental waiting areas, event halls and the like should mostly have chairs without arms, with some chairs with arms available for those who need them.

- Not everyone is the same size II - provide tables and chairs at a variety of heights. Little People cannot reach high top tables that are currently in vogue at conference venues. Even abled short people have difficulty with those. Providing adjustable furniture or a variety of furniture heights and widths allows the public that is funding this infrastructure to be able to comfortably use it.

Signage

- Braille signage & embossed exhibit placards should be at wheelchair-accessible heights as disabled people can have more than one disability

- Many existing buildings have inadequate signage directing wheelchair users to where the elevators are located. All buildings must have clear signage, including in Braille, directing wheelchair users to elevator locations as well as to wheelchair-accessible

restrooms and any other special routes in buildings that are still not universally accessible.

- Banners and other signs, whether directional or not, should have Braille placards at wheelchair height. Accessible signage shouldn't only be limited to mission critical wayfinding, but should include the same content as is being directed towards sighted people, including cultural content.

Digital

- All UC websites, internal and external, must be accessible.
- Anyone answering a phone at UC should be trained to recognize a call from a relay service (used by Deaf people to communicate over the phone to hearing people) so they don't hang up on the Deaf caller.
- All software UC requires must be accessible. Any bids by vendors or developers for software and/or web products must satisfy robust accessibility requirements.
- Any databases must be accessible. They must also be designed for name variations that take into account different naming practices and cultures. They must be designed for privacy and flexibility for those who are highly at risk of being targeted, including disabled BIPOC and trans people.

Cultural

- Arboretums and gardens should not only have accessible paths and signage, but should have olfactory and tactile sections so that those with visual impairments can enjoy the other senses a garden delights.

- Museums and sculpture gardens should have exhibits that permit touch and interaction as well as offer sensory friendly hours that accommodate the needs of those with autism and/or PTSD for tranquility.

- Museum exhibits with strobing lights or video should be avoided as much as possible due to the likelihood of triggering an epileptic seizure, but if an artist's work contains strobing, there must be a public warning not just at the exhibit, but before someone has paid admission.

- While there are museum and event admission discounts for families and/or seniors, discounts for disabled people are rare despite the majority of disabled people being low income. Not everyone who is disabled is a senior or has a family. Yet the education and enjoyment offered by museums, botanical gardens, films and other events are important to mental health and enrichment. There should be a discount for disabled people at UC events and attractions.

- Campus recreation and arts programs must be held in accessible spaces. Adaptive equipment must be obtained to make welding, ceramics, and other classes as accessible as possible. Disabled athletes, musicians, dancers, artists and craftspeople should be consulted so that the conception of what is possible is not limited by ableism.
- Every campus should have adaptive sports team options. If there are too few disabled students for a team, that's an indication of how poorly the university is doing at admitting disabled people in the proportions they exist in the general population. Disabled members of the community should be able to join with university students, staff, and faculty if needed to have enough players to field an adaptive sports team. Specialized adaptive sports team equipment should be provided by the university unless the student prefers to use their own (e.g. competition wheelchairs or cycles).

Transportation

- Cycling racks & cycling lockers must be U-racks that will accommodate the types of cycles disabled people are more likely to ride such as handcycles, tricycles and quadracycles (both upright and recumbent). Racks must be far enough away from each other and from obstacles like curbs, hedges, and walls for a large cycle (including cargo cycles) to fit and for a large person to be alongside the cycle locking it without being too close to the next person over also locking their cycle at a rack.
- The Mobility Assistance Shuttle needs to be wheelchair-accessible. The shuttle should run as late as it takes to be available to disabled people attending night events on campus or working late. It needs to run on evenings and weekends because if abled people get to attend campus extracurriculars, so do we. Onerous requirements for advanced notice must go. People with mobility disabilities already have their ability to be spontaneous limited enough. A feeder service should be explored since MAS only operates on campus and sometimes students can't even get to campus due to the bus stop being too far away for them to access or other transportation desert and/or disability issues.
- Each campus should have a hub for wheelchair and mobility aid repair. In addition to carrying parts and executing repairs, specialized wheelchairs for outdoor recreation on trails and at the beach should be available to rent by disabled students who use wheelchairs.
- Campus cycling facilities should have staff trained in the maintenance and repair of cycle frames disabled cyclists use like handcycles, recumbents, tricycles, quadracycles, and e-assist cycles of all types.

Communication

- Campus style guides should incorporate the National Center on Disability and Journalism's Disability Language Style Guide. All departments, not just the

communications departments, should be trained on this style guide and why word choice matters.

- Deaf students have asked that American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters be certified by Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), Board of Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI), and Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA). At the very minimum, they must be RID-certified and must follow the RID code of ethics.

- All websites (internal and external) and all social media communications must be accessible. If a given social network has not implemented alt text or other accessible interfaces, that is not reason to dispense with alt text and image description. Workarounds must be invented and used such as image descriptions/alt text written in the body of the post and/or linking to an accessible website with the exact same textual and visual information that's being given to the abled public.

- Any videos that UC posts on any platform must be captioned and have audio descriptions available for the blind. Transcripts should be available for the Deaf and those with learning disabilities (it also helps even non-native speakers of the language in question). A separate Plain Language transcript should be available for those with intellectual disabilities. This includes any course material that's posted, or any PR videos. ASL interpretation should be readily available and also used in video content, upon request, with at least 25% of the screen area dedicated to the ASL interpreter.

- Charts & infographics where color is used in a way that carries meaning must use palettes that accommodate forms of colorblindness.

- Campus printing bureaus should have Braille printers and embossers. This equipment is priced out of reach of most individuals. To enable departments, offices, and individual researchers and students to communicate accessibly, this equipment should be available in all campus printing offices.

- Experts on accessible graphic design should be brought in to train all UC graphic and web designers on the best Goldilocks format to be accessible to as many as possible.

- Dyslexic designers should be consulted to select which fonts are more readable for dyslexics and group them as a font set for accessible graphic design at UC.

- Autocaptions or “craptions” are inaccurate and sometimes substitute words that are inadvertently insulting or graphic. Zoom was deployed during the pandemic without paying for an integrated live captioning solution licensed to all UC. Any software or service adopted for online instruction or meetings must have high quality ASL interpretation or captioning as an integrated and paid-for solution.

Events

- Events, trainings, orientations and the like must include accessibility information up front, not forcing the disabled attendee to make “special arrangements”. Information for in-person events should include but is not limited to: how far disabled parking is from venue, where disabled-accessible restrooms are in relation to event venues, exactly how the venue defines accessibility (Wheelchair accessible? Accessible to those who need adult-sized changing tables?), whether there are room changes, venue changes, when and how long rest breaks are, whether there are freezers/coolers for storing ice packs & medical equipment, whether there are quiet areas for autistic and/or people who have PTSD who need a tranquil place to recover from overstimulation/triggers (and whether those quiet areas include places to lie down if needed), what types of food will be there and whether the gluten free and other special diet food will be kept separate to avoid cross-contamination, and facilities for relief of service animals. The contact phone and email of an event accessibility professional should also be published on every website and communication about the event so that disabled attendees can notify of any less usual need they need accommodated.

Education

- It is difficult for disabled people to be selected for scholarships and fellowships using ableist standards like GRE scores, publishing, and lab placements because ableism reduces opportunities from the very beginning of one’s disability. Everyone has the Catch-22 of “can’t get the job without experience but can’t get experience without the job”, however it is so much more intense for many people with disabilities, who are actively discriminated against not just in an application or interview, but in the very construction of the school/lab/field station. UC needs to have departmental disability scholarships available for both undergrads and grads at each campus.

- Dismantle ableism in the curriculum. UC is an institution of higher education training people who will go on to lead in many fields. That training must dismantle ableism or it will reproduce it. Accessible communication and accessible design should be part of courses on communication and design. Accessible architectural design, accessible engineering... there are so many ways that UC not just finally complying with the law but exceeding it could benefit the educational programs here by giving students the opportunity to be on the cutting edge of accessible design and disability-informed studies. Many of the benchmarks mentioned herein have components that both disabled and abled students can bring into being.

- Accommodation has traditionally focused on infrastructure, communication, and testing conditions. However, it has nearly completely overlooked pace outside of testing situations. The pace of some courses is devilishly challenging even for abled students. When there is no accommodation for pace, it stresses the disabled student, making it

appear they cannot understand or master the material when proper pace accommodation would address that. Departments need to work with disabled students, faculty, and relevant pedagogical researchers to develop frameworks that will allow disabled students to take courses at a pace that does not endanger their health

- Abolish the SAT and the GRE requirements for the entire UC system. Not only are these racist, classist, and ableist, they are administered by for-profit testing corporations that take advantage of that monopoly to offer anti-consumer policies such as collecting biodata without notice or robust privacy protection, as well as not giving consumers copies of contracts Educational Testing Service (ETS) requires they sign to take the GRE, claiming the contract is “an internal document”. These alone are strong enough reasons to dump these tests, but research doesn’t even corroborate the assumption that these are good assessments of how a student is likely to do in college.



Twitter: @AccessUC



Facebook: www.facebook.com/UCAccessNow



Instagram: @UCAccessNow