Accessible Events Checklist
Planning an event using Universal Design principals.
The Disability Programs & Resource Center (DPRC) recommends these best practices for planning accessible university-sponsored events for students, staff, faculty, and guests with disabilities. SF State endorses providing accessibility for all events, including, but not limited to: professional meetings, seminars, workshops, conferences, social and recreational programs, convocations, and graduation ceremonies.

To help you prioritize your planning, this checklist is divided into six sections:

- Understanding Universal Design
- Event Planning Stage
- Examples of accommodations that may be provided upon request
- Recommended Actions
- DPRC Contact
- Definitions and Resources

Please contact the DPRC at (415) 338-2472 or dprc@sfsu.edu if you have questions about these recommendations. The DPRC is here to assist you in arranging reasonable accommodations as needed. Thank you for your efforts in planning an accessible event for individuals with disabilities, and all constituents, at SF State.

UNDERSTANDING UNIVERSAL DESIGN

“Universal Design is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability. An environment (or any building, product, or service in that environment) should be designed to meet the needs of all people who wish to use it. This is not a special requirement, for the benefit of only a minority of the population. It is a fundamental condition of good design. If an environment is accessible, usable, convenient and a pleasure to use, everyone benefits. By considering the diverse needs and abilities of all throughout the design process, universal design creates products, services and environments that meet peoples' needs. Simply put, universal design is good design.” (NDA)

The case for making our campus more universally accessible and usable to all is compelling. Universal Design proposes a progressive and evolving approach to the development of inclusive environments that can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent
possible. Not only does Universal Design make good sense, it also has many compelling social and legal drivers.

The human-centered approach to design that Universal Design supports is user-friendly and convenient, but is also respectful of user dignity, rights and privacy.

*Universal Design assumes that the range of human ability is ordinary, not special.*
--Elaine Ostroff, 2001

A Universal Design approach therefore requires an appreciation of the varied abilities of every person, and to design in such a way that the resulting product, service or environment can be used by everyone regardless of age, size, ability or disability.

**EVENT PLANNING STAGE**

- Include the following DPRC-endorsed Event Access Statement on all websites and in meeting notices and event announcements:

  “[Name of your organization/organization sponsoring event] welcomes persons with disabilities and will provide reasonable accommodations upon request. If you would like reasonable accommodations for this event, please contact [person in your organization at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or person@sfsu.edu] as soon as possible so your request may be reviewed...”

- Use captioned multimedia

  Please work with the DPRC if your media is not captioned, as not all media has captions imbedded. You can request your media captioning at http://access.sfsu.edu/node/180. Please be aware it may take several weeks for the media to be captioned, therefore, please allow as much time as possible. If the media is already captioned, be sure to display the captions, as they do not always appear automatically. It is beneficial to test the media using the same playback equipment that will be used for the event to ensure captioning will work during the event.

- Maintain a fragrance-free event
- Hold events in wheelchair accessible rooms/venues with accessible primary entrances.
- Check for accessibility of art displays or exhibits
- Ensure that microphones and presentation spaces are wheelchair accessible
- Cover electrical cable or cords
Ensure food items and beverages are in wheelchair-accessible locations
Provide accessible seating in multiple locations

Please apply principles of Universal Design for access to your room set-up for receptions by offering tables at various heights and seating in various locations to ensure full integration of individuals with disabilities at your events.

Identify accessible restrooms near the site of your event
Identify an accessible path of travel to the site of your event
Reserve seating for participants with disabilities
Make available electronic format of printed materials (e.g., event program, agenda, PowerPoints, etc.)

EXAMPLES OF ACCOMMODATIONS THAT MAY BE PROVIDED UPON REQUEST

- Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs)
- Sign Language Interpreting & Real-Time Captioning Services
- Audio or Aural Description
- On-Campus Shuttle Service with Wheelchair Access
- Check automatic door openers and elevators for functionality
- Check for wheelchair path clearance/turn-around space
- Add “Reserved Seating” signs
- Provide advance copies of printed materials or electronic text (to participants, sign language interpreters, Real-Time Captioners, etc.)
- Lapel microphone

If Sign Language Interpreters and/or Real-time Captioners are provided

Determine seating location of sign language interpreters and Real-time Captioners, and the people with disabilities using these services

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS PRIOR TO THE EVENT

Conduct a site walk-through
Post signage for your event. Include signs to the accessible path and doors
Confirm all requested accommodations will be met
For additional information or to request training on how to effectively include aspects of Universal Design in your event please contact:

Disability Programs & Resource Center (DPRC)
Student Services Building (SSB) 110
1600 Holloway Avenue, SF, CA 94132
Telephone: (415) 338-2472
Video Phone: (415) 335-7210
Fax: (415) 338-1041
E-mail: dprc@sfsu.edu
Web: http://access.sfsu.edu
DEFINITION AND RESOURCES

- Accessible Entrance
- Accessible Exhibit Materials
- Accessible Paths of Travel
- Accessible Restrooms
- Accessible Seating location
- Assistive Listening Device
- Audio-Described/Aural-Description
- Captioned Multimedia
- Electronic Format
- Fragrance Free Event
- Event Access Statement
- Hazards to Blind or Low Vision Participants
- On-Campus Shuttle Service with Wheelchair Access
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Real-Time Captioner
- Seating Ratio and wheelchair space
- Wheelchair and Companion Seating
- Wheelchair Turn-Around Space

Accessible Entrance

An entry door or gate is a minimum 32 inches clear when opened 90 degrees; threshold is no higher than ½ inch (¾ inch may be permitted in existing conditions if beveled), and door is easily opened, or has automatic door opener. If the automatic door opener is malfunctioning, please contact the DPRC at (415) 338-2472, or Facilities & Service Enterprises

Accessible Exhibit Materials

Alternative formats or services that provide equivalent exhibit information for people with sensory disabilities in a manner appropriate to the program material. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Titles of work and narrative using large 14 point san serif fonts on a high contrast background
- Taped audio descriptions of photographs/artwork
- Tactile replicas of art objects
• Captioning of video or film presentations
• Trained staff available to provide descriptions or tours

Accessible Paths of Travel

A path of travel includes a continuous, unobstructed way of pedestrian passage by means of which the area may be approached, entered, and exited, and which connects the area with an exterior approach (including sidewalks, streets, and parking areas), an entrance to the facility, and other parts of the facility. An accessible path of travel may consist of walks and sidewalks, curb ramps and other interior or exterior pedestrian ramps; clear floor paths through lobbies, corridors, rooms, and other improved areas; parking access aisles; elevators and lifts; or a combination of these elements.

Some general recommendations for creating an accessible path of travel:

• Accessible paths of travel need to be pointed out with signage;
• At least one of each type of good or service must be located on the path of travel for equal access. . Example: a literature table upstairs doesn’t need to be accessible if there is an identical literature table on the first floor (AND if all the amenities are the same);
• At least 48 inches of width along external paths of travel with a recommendation of 60 inches. For existing buildings, this can be lowered to 36 inches; and
• Objects which protrude into the pedestrian zone greater than 4 inches for wall mounted objects (12 inches for post mounted) are considered hazards in the path of travel. A path of travel should be devoid of these objects. The area of projection is in general, between 27 and 80 inches above the finished floor. Common protruding objects include fire extinguishers, signs, and counters.

Accessible Restrooms

Doors to restrooms must be a minimum of 36 inches wide, outfitted with lever-type hardware, and not swing into required clear areas in the restroom. Each accessible fixture in the restroom must have a clear area in front of it to allow wheelchair access. A clear path of travel must be provided to approach each of these fixtures. A typical clear area required is a space 30 inches wide and 48 inches deep. In addition, a clear floor space in the restroom must be provided that allows someone in a wheelchair to turn around (e.g., a 5-foot diameter circle). Also, accessible stalls should be a minimum of 60 inches wide and allow a 60-inch turning radius inside the stall.
### Accessible Seating location

Accessible seating must be situated so those individuals who cannot stand can view the meeting or event over seated or standing participants. Seating for persons who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing must be provided in a location near the stage/presentation area with direct view of the sign language interpreters and/or the Real-Time Captioning screen.

### Assistive Listening Device

A device that takes a signal from a microphone or public address system and sends it to a personal amplification system worn by hard-of-hearing individuals. Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) are available at some venues on campus, and can be found in: the Cesar Chavez Student Center, J. Paul Leonard Library, Downtown Campus, Seven Hills & Towers Conference Centers, and McKenna Theatre in the Creative Arts building. For other venues and meeting rooms, please contact the DPRC at (415) 338-2472.

### Audio-Described/Aural-Description

A narrative technique that describes visual images. Audio Description of visual images in theater, media and museum exhibitions can be rendered to provide greater accessibility for Blind or low vision participants.

### Captioned Multimedia

A video or film with captions reflecting the content of the spoken or descriptive material as well as other auditory elements. Not all videos or films have captions imbedded. Please contact the DPRC at (415) 338-2472 3-4 weeks in advance for medial captioning., or for assistance in displaying the captions on screen.

### Electronic Format

Print materials that are e-mailed to blind or low vision participants in advance or saved on a thumb drive or CD to be distributed at the event, so they can access such materials on their computer using text-to-speech software.

### Fragrance Free Event

Some individuals experience multiple chemical sensitivity/environmental illness (MCS/EI) in the presence of scented products. MCS/EI often results from overexposure to chemicals over a long period of time. A person with MCS can become extremely ill by chemicals...
found in everyday environments. Reactions can be caused from ordinary things such as perfumes, dry erase and permanent markers, cleaning products, pesticides, vehicle exhaust, tobacco smoke, room deodorizers, and other scented products. Though reactions vary from person to person, the most common reactions are nausea, rashes, light-headedness, headaches, and respiratory distress. Therefore, while attending events, individuals are encouraged to:

- Use low odor dry erase and permanent markers;
- Use non-scented body products (e.g., lotion, hair spray, etc.);
- Refrain from using items in the room that give off chemical-based scents (e.g. air fresheners, potpourri, etc.);
- Allow recently dry-cleaned clothing to air out before wearing; and
- Use the least toxic cleaning products, disinfectants, and paints.

**Event Access Statement**

Meeting or event notice shall include information on how to request disability accommodations and information on whom to contact to make accommodation requests.

**Hazards to Blind or Low Vision Participants**

Pedestrian and participant areas shall be clear of objects (including plant branches and public art) which overhang less than 80 inches from the floor surface, or wall, and post mounted or freestanding objects that protrude 4 inches or more between 27 and 80 inches above the floor or ground into circulation areas.

**On-Campus Shuttle Service with Wheelchair Access**

The DPRC's on-campus cart service is available Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. during the Fall and Spring semesters. Cart service may be scheduled in advance or by phone on a call-in basis by calling the DPRC at (415) 338-2472. For morning and evening transportation, the University Police Department (UPD) provides on-campus transportation. The SF State street-service shuttle bus loop operates on a regular schedule while classes are in session, but passengers may also request a drop off at any of the stops listed, during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday, by informing the driver at the Daly City BART Station or by calling (415) 338-1441. A schedule and list of stops is available at [http://parking.sfsu.edu/transit/shuttle-service](http://parking.sfsu.edu/transit/shuttle-service). Evening rides can be scheduled in advance through the Parking and Transportation Office’s C.A.R.E. Program at [http://parking.sfsu.edu/care-escort-program](http://parking.sfsu.edu/care-escort-program) or by calling (415) 338-1441, Monday -
Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. After 5:00 p.m., same-day requests can be made directly through the Department of Public Safety at (415) 338-7200. Requests are dispatched in the order that they are received and may be subject to delays depending on volume.

**Sign Language Interpreter**

A highly skilled professional who facilitates communication between hearing individuals and Deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals. Interpreters are trained to listen to another person’s words, inflections and intent and simultaneously render them into the visual language of signs using the mode of communication preferred by the Deaf or hard-of-hearing individual. The interpreter must also be able to comprehend the signs, inflections and intent of the Deaf or hard-of-hearing individual and simultaneously “voice” them in articulate, appropriate English. To secure a sign language interpreter for your event, please complete the DPRC’s interpreting request form online at: [http://access.sfsu.edu/content/request-interpreting](http://access.sfsu.edu/content/request-interpreting) at least two weeks prior to the event when possible to facilitate scheduling.

**Real-Time Captioner**

A professional who transcribes, using specialized equipment and software, spoken communication, into conventional written English verbatim. The Deaf or hard-of-hearing individual is able to follow the meeting or event and other spoken communication that are displayed in text format on a laptop computer screen or other display device. To secure a Real-Time Captioner for your event, please complete the DPRC’s real-time captioning request form online at: [http://access.sfsu.edu/content/request-interpreting](http://access.sfsu.edu/content/request-interpreting) at least two weeks prior to the event when possible to facilitate scheduling.
Seating Ratio and wheelchair space

The number of accessible seats in relation to the number of seats provided as follows:

- **1 to 25 = 1 seat** (space width = 36 inches wide)
- **26 to 50 = 2 seats** (space width for each chair = 33 inches wide at a minimum 48 inches long minimum)
- **51 to 300 = 4 seats** (space width for each chair = 33 inches wide at a minimum 48 inches long minimum)
- **301 to 500 = 6 seats** (space width for each chair = 33 inches wide at a minimum 48 inches long minimum)
- **Over 500 = 6 plus** one additional space for each increase of 100 (space width for each chair = 33 inches wide at a minimum, 48 inches long minimum)

Wheelchair and Companion Seating

Seating for wheelchair users and adjacent seating for individuals accompanying wheelchair users that is located on the same level as that of the wheelchair user.

**Wheelchair Space Width** -- where a wheelchair space can be entered from the front or rear, the wheelchair space shall be 48 inches (1220 mm) deep minimum. Where a wheelchair space can be entered only from the side, the wheelchair space shall be 60 inches (1525 mm) deep minimum.
Wheelchair Turn-Around Space

Allow for a minimum of 78 inches deep by 60 inches wide turnaround space for wheelchair users.

WORKS CITED