



CURL Accessibility Guidelines

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this document is to clearly, concisely, and publicly identify support for accessibility in the programming, opportunities, and operations of the Centre for Undergraduate Research Learning (CURL) at Huron.

This document is also intended to offer a set of guidelines that identify and fill gaps between existing institutional policies guiding accessibility in CURL, and specific accessibility issues arising in CURL programming and operations. The information in this document should not be considered a replacement for other relevant institutional policies.

CURL recognizes that people and the barriers they face are dynamic and shifting. CURL is therefore committed to updating accessibility policies, procedures, and communications regularly, and to seeking input and responding to feedback.

Accessibility Statement

CURL values all students. CURL exists to serve students and foster their academic growth; this can only be successful if every student has an equitable and enjoyable opportunity to learn.

CURL acknowledges that educational institutions and their contained programs can perpetuate and renew the marginalization faced by the disabled community and people with non-normative access needs. CURL is committed to identifying and dismantling barriers and working to build a program that is logistically, financially, and academically accessible to as many students as possible.

In order to welcome, encourage, and support all students, CURL will strive to ensure that students:

- Have equal opportunity to access, engage with, and enjoy CURL programming every step of the way—from web content to funding opportunities and events



- Are offered whatever accessibility-related accommodations CURL can provide—without the validity of their needs being undermined,
- Are treated in a manner that respects their intelligence, independence, and dignity
- Can feel welcomed, trusted, and valued by the CURL community.

Responsibility & Accountability:

CURL is made up of faculty, staff, and students at Huron who have a shared interest in participating in and supporting undergraduate research learning opportunities. Responsibility and accountability for CURL’s commitment to accessibility is shared by all participants in CURL, but with different roles as follows.

The CURL Faculty Director and Steering Committee Members are responsible for setting policy and ensuring adherence to it. This role may include supporting faculty, staff, and students in applying accessibility policies, developing a community of practice around accessibility in academic life at Huron, and seeking and responding to feedback relating to accessibility in CURL. The Steering Committee is ultimately accountable for upholding and advancing this policy.

Huron staff and student interns supporting CURL are responsible for proposing and implementing solutions to increase accessibility in CURL programming, events, and opportunities, as well as providing ongoing support and education around elements of accessibility for the CURL community.

Faculty mentors in CURL are responsible for discussing and implementing individual accommodations with students they are mentoring, for seeking support from the CURL Faculty Director as appropriate, and for participating in and contributing to the larger community of practice around accessibility at Huron.

Student participants in CURL are responsible for discussing individual accommodations with faculty mentors and staff, as appropriate, for providing feedback on accessibility in CURL, and for abiding by CURL’s accessibility guidelines when producing content for CURL conferences.



Accessibility in Practice

Programming

1. CURL programming will utilize Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices wherever possible. CURL will intentionally develop multiple access points for students.
2. Programming and opportunities will incorporate a broad and inclusive understanding of undergraduate research, as per the Definition of Undergraduate Research Learning (see document below).
3. Students seeking individual accommodations in order to benefit from CURL programming will be supported by CURL staff and faculty. CURL will not require formal documentation of a disability in order to develop individual accommodations.
4. When accommodations are required, CURL will follow the Senate Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (see link below).
5. CURL respects the privacy of its students. Staff and faculty will only disclose an accommodated student's identity and disability amongst each other if disclosure is required to ensure the accommodation request can be met or is otherwise used to improve CURL's accessibility-related resources.

Communications

Accessibility-related efforts relating to CURL communications (emails, websites, ads, etc.) will include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. CURL's written content will be composed in plain language with minimal jargon.
2. Accessibility features such as video subtitles, alt tags, and screen-reader-appropriate coding structure will, to the best of our ability, be used on website and social media content. We regret that due to the limitations of our website builder, coding-related accessibility issues may still occur; we welcome students to contact sliska@uwo.ca to receive screen-reader-accessible .doc versions of any page on our website.
3. Print communications will be produced and distributed with attention to accessible formatting (e.g., high contrast, low density designs.)



Events

Accessibility-related efforts relating to CURL events (conferences, workshops, etc.) will include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. At least 25% of event programs, registration packages, schedule posters, etc. will be located at heights that are appropriate for accessing from a wheelchair.
2. Event registration forms will include an optional space within which applicants can describe their personal accessibility needs.
3. Prior to conferences, CURL will provide student presenters with guidelines for creating accessible presentations.

Funding

Accessibility-related efforts relating to CURL funding opportunities, including awards, bursaries, fellowships, etc., will include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Application processes will, as much as possible, be transparent and open to ongoing revision in response to feedback.
2. CURL student funding will include both competitive and non-competitive opportunities.
3. Student funding opportunities will be open to all current Huron students. They will not include specific grades or course loads as part of their eligibility requirements.
4. Individual requests for accommodation in an application process, such as alternate formats for application materials, will be accommodated as staffing resources allow.
5. Application forms will, as much as possible, be composed in plain language with minimal jargon. They will be regularly updated in response to feedback.
6. Where staffing resources allow, feedback will be offered to unsuccessful applicants.
7. Individual requests for accommodation, such as revised timelines once an award has been received, will be agreed on in an ongoing way between a student and faculty mentor.
8. CURL-funded student research outputs will be conceived broadly, as per the Definition of Undergraduate Research Learning. For example, Fellowship research may culminate in community-oriented projects, not only in papers for scholarly journals.

Huron



CENTRE FOR UNDERGRADUATE
RESEARCH LEARNING

Related Policies and Guidelines

[Definition of Undergraduate Research Learning](#)

[Huron's Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation - Statement and Policy](#)

[Western Senate Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#)