



# DRAFT

## Proposal to Establish a Standing Committee for Disability Awareness

within the  
American College Personnel Association (ACPA)

Latest Draft Date: March 8, 1998

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### History

Disability awareness has been part of the informal structure and substance of the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) for at least fifteen years. Though clearly a concern of the ACPA membership, an administrative 'home' has never existed for this body of concern. This proposal seeks to establish an administrative home within the Standing Committee structure of the Association.

The 1981 ACPA National Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio included no less than six programs concerning disability, the same number of programs currently afforded to Standing Committees and Commission. Presenters in 1981 included ACPA leaders William Bryan, Greig Stewart, Jeanne Likens, and Ron Speier. Co-sponsoring Commissions included Commission IV (Students, Their Activities, and Their Community), Commission XI (Student Development in the Two-Year College) and Commission XVI (Academic Support in Higher Education).

Two years later in 1983, the Convention again offered programs on disability, including a "Task Force for Handicapped Services," chaired by Kathy Hamilton of Southern Illinois University. The meeting of this task force was co-sponsored by Commissions I (Administrative Leadership) and VIII (Counseling and Psychological Services). Though subsequent years showed additional programs and work of the Task Force, even by 1983, no less than five Commissions had been involved with disability issues within only three Convention years, an impressive broad base of support within the Association.

Subsequent Convention years included more programs and more meetings of the Task Force. Eventually, the Task Force was lodged under the aegis of Commission I and from there it gained focus and momentum.

The Convention years 1994 and 1995 saw the growing interest of ACPA members in disability concerns and the growing urgency of their need for information, focus, and advocacy. While some members showed interest on the basis of providing services to students with disabilities, an initially small but growing group of ACPA members identified as those with disabilities themselves and sought a focus for the needs and interests they shared as a constituency within the Association.

During 1994-1995, the Task Force met and a mailing list established regular communication among members occurred. In 1995, an electronic list was added to speed communication among the growing number of members of the Task Force.

In 1995, the Task Force was pleased to submit an ACPA mini-grant application to enable it to lead in the Affirmative Action goals concerning members with disabilities. The application was successful. Through the assistance of the

grant, a consulting group of professionals from inside and outside ACPA was established to review the disability related services and programs available at the 1996 Baltimore convention. The resulting report, the final copy of which was issued in May of 1997, provided the first informed overview of this aspect of our convention and association. The report was shared with several members of the Association, among them the professional who would lead the provision of disability-related services at the 1998 convention. Subsequently, this 1998 Access Coordinator used the report as a valuable training tool for the 1998 convention planning team. Discussion ensued as to how to make the convention even more accessible and welcoming to ACPA members and convention visitors with disabilities as well as to assist able-bodied ACPA members in increasing their professional knowledge concerning disability-related topics.

While 1998 Convention planning was assisted by the consulting report, it was also informed by the Access Coordinator, the third person to fill position of coordinator of disability services as part of the convention planning team. The first such position was established as part of the 1996 Convention planning team, in response to a growing need to provide informed, coordinated services to ACPA members with disabilities. The ACPA member who served in this 1996 role was a disability services professional, who coordinated accommodations for all convention attendees who required assistance. This position was continued for the 1997 joint convention held with NASPA and continues to the present 1998 convention. The 1998 coordinator is an ACPA member with a disability who has professional experience in providing disability-related support to others.

### **Proposed Purposes of the Standing Committee for Disability Awareness**

We can be pretty broad in this part, methinks. I think the really broad piece is to provide a vehicle to ACPA members with disabilities and those with disability related interests to learn, share and advocate. I'll put that in better language LATER, after I hear more from YOU folks (grin).

### **Goals**

The goals to be stated here must be compatible with and enhance the achievement of the general objectives for standing committees and the mission of ACPA. I'll be thumbing through my ACPA Member Resource Directory for these pieces but I welcome thoughts too!

### **Involvement in presenting programs/workshops at ACPA conventions**

Comment here on programs presented as part of ACPA/NASPA convention, joint planning and meetings with the similar NASPA group, first ever Deaf Culture training and subsequent Signed Supper held last year (yea, Denise and others!).....

Also draw from opening "history" part, maybe moving some of THAT section to THIS section.

### **Task Force membership: A history**

This section must demonstrate that we have achieved sufficient active and potential membership to make us a viable SC

### **Objectives**

### **Proposed Activities**

Get those creative juices flowing here folks. I'm thinking of the sorts of things that will better inform able bodied folks as well as those things that folks with disabilities would want. What we want to emphasize is that folks with disabilities will lead the able-bodied among us to better understand some stuff. Kind of like able-bodied folks are in a "ally" role, similar to "straight" folks being allies with gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered folks, White folks being informed allies in issues of concern to folks of color, etc.

### **Proposed relationship of the SC to other structures and professional organizations**

Here's where we get to wail away on how cool it would be to have affiliations with AHEAD, HEATH, etc. Other organizations? How about that Deaf Professionals in Higher Ed group you mentioned, Donna Martin.....can you zap me a few details?

### **Proposed target population within the general ACPA membership**

Here the target population is ACPA members with disabilities and, as allies, folks who are interested in disability related issues. Both groups (those WITH disabilities and those WITHOUT) could, of course, included those who provide disability related services in higher education.

Probably need something here to close/wrap up, etc. Will craft THAT after getting more done above.

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<http://pilot.msu.edu/user/corcora1/acpa/assist/dftdraft1.html>

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