**I. The Americans with Disabilities Act**

On July 26, 1990, President Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, State and local government services and transportation, public accommodations, and telecommunications.

The ADA required that the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) issue guidelines to ensure that buildings, facilities, and vehicles covered by the law are accessible, in terms of architecture and design, transportation, and communication, to individuals with disabilities.

The University of Montana is committed to compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act to the maximum extent possible. In December 1993, UM President Dennison created a University policy called **“Universal Access in Facility Design”** to insure programs at The University of Montana campus are accessible to all students, employees and the general public. The President has the final decision concerning accessibility and ADA related design issues. The Facilities Services Planning and Construction Office will coordinate all issues with the Consultant and the ADA-504 Team.

1. **Universal Design**

The purpose of universal design is to design projects that accommodate all people to the greatest extent possible without the need for individual adaptation. When designing projects at the University, the architect shall strive to design facilities that serve the same means of use for all users, identical whenever possible, equivalent when not. Avoid segregating or stigmatizing any users. Make provisions for privacy, security and safety equally available to all users. Make the design appealing to all users. The architect shall use AADAG Standards as a reference during the project design phase. Building codes refer to ICC/ANSI A117.1 for accessibility. The Architect shall use the stricter of ADAAG and/or ANSI A117.1 when the two codes differ on any given issue.

**III. Design**

As outlined in the President’s “Universal Access” policy, all proposed facility designs must include a list of barriers which do not meet the standard of universal access prior to the acceptance of the design. For example, any pathway, entry, restroom, class room, office, seating area , lobby, or any other facility feature which is not universally accessible, must be identified by the designers of the facility, and by either University Facilities Services or an accessibility consultant. Identified barriers must be submitted to the ADA-504 Team for review. Recommendations of the Team must be considered in the final approval of facility design and before the project moves on from the schematic stage. In the event universal accessibility must be compromised at any time during the three stages of the construction or remodeling process—design, schematic, and construction—the ADA-504 Team will be consulted before the compromise is approved

It is far more effective to include universal access as a goal of the design than it is to correct a design which does not comply with the universal access standard. ADAAG is considered as a minimum for university public buildings and shall be incorporated in the early design phase and project budget for any construction/renovation project. University designers, whether employees, contractors, or bid applicants, must be given a copy of this statement prior to the initiation of design work. Designers must be notified of their obligation to insure universal access in design, and to be prepared to justify why barriers to universal access are included in design submissions. In addition to ADAAG standards the following elements should be included in the design of facilities.

**IV. Guidelines**

The following Accessibility Guidelines are to be followed in addition to the ADAAG as outlined above. These guidelines shall be incorporated in the early design phase and project budget for any construction/renovation project:

**A. General**

* + - 1. Fixed seating plans in classrooms and auditoria should accommodate persons with disabilities and shall not be segregated. Designated spaces shall be set aside for wheelchairs throughout the rooms. Ramps shall be incorporated into the design such that people with & without disabilities can use the same path of travel. Any tiered classrooms should incorporate two ramps to facilitate traffic flow for various events. Any emergency escape routes required by code shall also be made accessible to wheelchair users. Where stages are provided, the designer must provide a spot on stage with appropriate controlled lighting for a sign language interpreter. (ADAAG 4.32)
      2. Laboratories shall have accessible counter space. The appropriate sinks, showers, fume hoods etc., must be accessible. The minimum amount of accessible counter space, fume hoods & other equipment required shall be agreed upon with the ADA-504 Team on a project by project basis. (ADAAG 4.32)
      3. Stages, platforms and other raised areas, in classrooms or auditoria, shall have accessibility for users with mobility impairments. (ADAAG 4.33)
      4. Sound systems in classrooms and auditoria should be designed for individuals with hearing impairments. (ADAAG 4.33.6, 4.33.7)
      5. Public telephones need to be mounted at the proper height for persons with mobility impairments. (ADAAG 4.31)
      6. Workstations in computer laboratories need to accommodate persons with mobility impairments. (ADAAG 4.32)
      7. Classrooms, study rooms, offices, dormitory rooms, libraries etc. need to provide areas set aside for individuals with disabilities with adjustable furniture. (ADAAG 4.2, 4.32, 8)
      8. Reception desks/counters must accommodate wheelchair users. At least some counter space less than 34” high must be provided. (ADAAG 7)
      9. Lever door handles shall be used instead of round doorknobs in all public-use areas. (ADAAG 4.13)
      10. Parking: accessible stalls must be provided as close to the main entrance of new buildings as possible. At least one of the required parking stalls shall be van-accessible. Refer to the overall campus parking map for locating accessible parking. Refer to Public Safety Director & the ADA-504 Team for parking locations & number of stalls required.

1. **Entrances**
   * + 1. At least one entrance door shall be electrically operated, with the International Symbol of Accessibility. Large push devices shall be used in lieu of the smaller button type. The operating buttons shall be a minimum of five inches square or round in diameter.
       2. Installation of power-operated doors shall be coordinated with security hardware requirements, including Griz card readers. Design the installation to allow for future modification of controls. Minimum requirements include conduit to the doorjamb and a weatherproof, blank junction box near the operating button for installing card/keyed controls.
       3. Push buttons may be wall or bollard mounted, depending on site conditions. Locate ADA buttons clearly ahead of door swings, allowing wheelchair user’s sufficient clearance between the push button & door to swing open. Avoid locating push-buttons immediately beside doors to be activated by the button.
       4. In a vestibule where the depth between two sets of doors is seven feet, both sets of doors shall open and close at the same time to ensure efficient movement of people in wheelchairs. Where the distance between doors is larger than seven feet, doors shall open on time-delay to save energy (loss of building conditioned air).
       5. Timing for power doors shall be five seconds to open, ten seconds to remain open, and five seconds to close.
       6. Exterior and interior doors shall meet code for opening force.
       7. The designer shall attempt to shield any access ramps from the weather to the greatest extent possible.
2. **Elevators**
   * + 1. Elevators should be centrally located within the building. Elevator call buttons shall be installed so that mobility-impaired persons can have a clear approach from all sides.
       2. Areas of Rescue Assistance shall be incorporated into the design even if not required by the Building Code. This shall apply for new construction as well as renovations where ADA elevators are part of the scope of work.
       3. The minimum size for ADA elevators is 51” x 68” internal with side opening door. However, campus policy is to provide larger elevators to accommodate moving of furniture, heavy equipment etc. to improve safety of workers. As such, the minimum size of elevators in renovation projects of classroom/office function is 51” x 81” (clear inside) and 2,500 pound capacity. For all new construction and renovations of science/lab buildings, the minimum elevator size shall be 56” x 81” (clear inside) and 3,000 pound capacity. The preferred elevator size for science/lab buildings is 68” x 94” (clear inside) and 4,500 pound capacity. These dimensions assume that a passenger elevator will double as a freight elevator for a building. However, if a separate freight elevator is planned, then an ADA passenger elevator of 51” x 81” shall be the minimum size planned.
3. **Lifts**
   * + 1. Wheelchair platform lifts for accessible routes to primary areas in new construction are prohibited. In renovation projects, the use of platform lifts must be discussed & approved by the ADA-504 Team during schematic design stage.
4. **Noise Criteria**
   * + 1. Quiet space is a necessary condition for a person to comfortably rest, study or do research. Unwanted periodic noise or loud noise and reverberation interfere with these activities. Poor acoustics are a barrier to those with mild to moderate hearing loss, speech impairments and learning disabilities. Poor acoustics also interfere with communication for individuals who use English as a second language. HVAC systems, water circulation pumps and other mechanical systems can be the source of intolerable acoustical stimuli. The designer shall determine appropriate noise criteria for a project, and design systems and select equipment that achieve the criteria.
       2. The following background noise criteria are suggested: concert halls NC 20; sleeping rooms NC30; classrooms and lecture halls NC 30; libraries NC 30; open office areas NC 40; and laboratories with fume hoods NC 45.
       3. The following reverberation times for unoccupied rooms are suggested: Classrooms and lecture halls 0.6 to 0.7 seconds maximum.
       4. Outside of buildings, noise must be less than 50dBA at night when measured at the Campus boundary with residential areas and must meet City Ordinances for Noise Pollution Control.
5. **Construction Site**
   * + 1. The designer shall address the rights of individuals with disabilities both in the building design and within the construction limits. Indicate on the drawings, circulation patterns and disability parking that may be affected by the construction and make provisions for disabled users to access places of work/study and parking/sidewalk systems without undue inconvenience or hardship.
       2. The designer shall refer to the Accessibility Guide and Map included with these documents. Site planning shall include consideration for accessibility for people with disabilities. Areas adjacent to the construction project shall remain accessible to individuals with disabilities. Conduct construction activities in such a way that potential hazards to individuals with disabilities are minimized.
6. **Links**
   * + 1. The Consultant should visit the University of Montana’s website at <http://www.umt.edu/dss/access/default.htm> for specific policy and related ADA-504 documents.