NEW UAP 5320: Universal Design

Authorized by: Regents’ Policy 2.3 (“Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, Anti-Harassment, and Anti-Retaliation”)
Process Owner: Director, Office of Equal Opportunity

1. General

The University of New Mexico is committed to the principles of Universal Design. It endeavors to employ these principles for the design of welcoming environments that are usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaption or specialized design. This is in keeping with Regents’ Policy 2.18 (“Guiding Principles”) and UAP 2720 (“Prohibited Discrimination and Equal Opportunity”), as well as federal and state requirements for accessibility and equal opportunity.

Universal Design means that rather than designing spaces, services, and instruction for the “average” user, they are designed for people with a broad range of abilities, ages, learning styles, languages, cultures, and other characteristics. It accommodates people who may experience working or learning barriers as a result of physical, emotional, cognitive, linguistic, socio-economic, or cultural conditions, or because of gender or religion. Universal Design puts a high value on both diversity and inclusiveness, and benefits people of all ages and abilities. Universal Design exceeds the minimum legal requirements in the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

2. Principles of Universal Design

The principles of Universal Design provide guidance in the design and redesign of environments. The principles will be considered when the University designs or redesigns its physical spaces, programs, and services. The seven principles of Universal Design are:

- **Equitable Use.** The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.
• **Flexibility in Use.** The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

• **Simple and Intuitive Use.** The design is easy to understand, regardless of the user’s experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.

• **Perceptible Information.** The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user’s sensory abilities.

• **Tolerance for Error.** The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

• **Low Physical Effort.** The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

• **Size and Space for Approach and Use.** The appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of users’ body size, posture, or mobility.

Employing Universal Design principles will increase accessibility for potential and current students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

### 3. ADA and Facility Access Committee

The University’s ADA Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity chairs the ADA and Facility Access Committee. This committee includes representatives from across the University, including the Accessibility Resource Center, Facilities Management, Planning Design and Construction, Health Sciences Center, Parking and Transportation Services, Academic Affairs, and Information Technologies. The committee is charged with:

• providing recommendations on ADA accessibility updates;

• maintaining the ADA Transition Plan regarding facilities; and

• ensuring the principles of Universal Design are maximized at UNM, including by:
  o referencing this policy in the RFP process for capital projects,
  o providing representation on the Building Committee for major projects,
  o reviewing design plans or deviations from design plans.

### 4. Twenty-Percent Provision to Create Accessibility

Under the ADA, any building constructed or altered after January 26, 1992, must use twenty-percent of the construction or alteration monies toward creating accessibility. The accessible path of travel is required to the extent that it is not “disproportionate” to the total cost. Regulations implementing the standards define “disproportionate” as exceeding 20% of the total cost of alterations to the primary function area. The 20% cap applies only to costs associated with the accessible path of travel, including an accessible route to the primary function area from site arrival points, entrances, and retrofits to restrooms, telephones, and drinking fountains.
Compliance is required up to the point the 20% cost cap is reached, even where it does not result in a fully accessible path of travel. Where costs exceed this cap, compliance should be prioritized in this order:

1. an accessible entrance
2. an accessible route to the primary function area
3. restroom access
4. an accessible telephone
5. an accessible drinking fountain
6. access to other elements such as parking and storage.

5. Procedure for Complaint Resolution

Complaints regarding accessibility issues may be directed to the University’s ADA Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity. The ADA Coordinator will take into account the guidelines of this and other related policies, legal requirements, and regulations concerning “reasonable accommodation” to make a recommendation for resolution of the complaint. The ADA Coordinator may also consult with the ADA and Facility Access Committee and other University offices.

University units are responsible for adhering to recommendations made by the ADA Coordinator, to the maximum extent possible.

6. References

RPM 2.3 (“Equal Opportunity & Affirmative Action for Students & Employees”)
RPM 2.4 (“Diversity and Campus Climate”)
RPM 2.18 (“Guiding Principles”)
UAP 2310 (“Academic Adjustments for Students with Disabilities”)
UAP 2720 (“Prohibited Discrimination and Equal Opportunity”)
UAP 3110 (“Reasonable Accommodation for Applicants, Employees, and Participants with Disabilities”)
UAP 5050 (“Facility Maintenance, Repair, and Alteration”)
UAP 5300 (“Universal Restroom Initiative”)
Office of Equal Opportunity
Accessibility Resource Center