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Accessibility of Older Campus Buildings for Handicapped Persons

Submitted by: Nan LoBue

3/4/2016

Question:

I have been told that certain older buildings on campus, such as the Newton Building, are "grandfathered" and thus not required to meet handicapped accessibility requirements for newer construction. However, could not certain features (such as more automatic door openers, ramps, and openings in the curb from parking lots) be installed in these older buildings?

I cannot find any official information on this issue.

Rationale:

Accessibility to older academic buildings all across campus would be increased for both students and faculty suffering from temporary or permanent physical disabilities.

SEC Response:

3/17/2016: The Senate Moderator discussed this with Interim President Jean Bartels. She confirmed that older buildings are indeed grandfathered as far as handicapped access. That stands until a building is "majorly" renovated, at which time access must be brought up to current standards. This may from time to time necessitate relocation of a class due to an enrolled student needing such handicap access.

She also stated that if you know of particular case(s) where a "simple" modification should be made (installation of a door button, for example), contact your department chair and/or Rob Whitacker, VPBF.

-- Pat

Senate Response:

Minutes, 3/23/2016: ● One from Nan LoBue (CLASS) about [Handicapped Access of Older Buildings](#). Yes, indeed older buildings are grandfathered in in terms of handicapped access. There is a threshold. I'm told it's 50% of the building's value in terms of any major renovations, at which point then that building would be brought up to current standards for handicapped access. However, if you see real needs please tell your department chairs, tell Rob Whitaker, something because they do have special money for just such items that comes down from the state.