

UW IT Accessibility Project

A progress report to
Kelli Trosvig, Vice President and CIO, UW- IT &
Randy Hodgins, Vice President, Office of External Affairs
From Task Force Co-Chairs Sheryl Burgstahler and Gina Hills

July 8, 2013

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

CHARGE, AS REQUESTED BY KELLI TROSVIG AND RANDY HODGINS

Develop a plan for promoting Internet accessibility and establishing best practices for use campus-wide.

OBJECTIVES

- Continue taking steps toward more accessible UW websites and institutionalizing this cooperative relationship between our two groups.
- Develop strategies that can be more generally applied campus-wide, including services such as accessibility audits and tools such as SiteImprove.
- Recommend next steps toward a more coordinated campus-wide effort in promoting accessible website design.

ACTIVITIES

- Review the UW home page and other important pages to ensure that they reflect a high level of accessibility.
- Ensure that the current and future templates for UW pages are designed to be accessible.
- Include an accessibility link as part of the template.
- Review the IT accessibility website and decide, based on lessons learned in this project, what content useful to campus webmasters might be modified or added (e.g., best practices, templates, more specific campus guidelines).
- Draft a plan for how to continue promoting Web accessibility, who should be involved, what the process would be, etc.

TASK FORCE PROGRESS

The task force has met monthly since June 2012, engaging in all of the assigned activities.

MEMBERSHIP

The original members of the task force represented UW External Affairs and UW-IT. The current members of the task force represent four groups:

UW EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

July, 2013

- Harry Hayward, Director of Digital Media and Special Programs, Marketing, hhayward@uw.edu
- Gina Hills, Director, Web Communications, Marketing, ghills@uw.edu (co-chair)
- Bob Roseth, Director, News and Information, roseth@uw.edu

UW-IT

- Sheryl Burgstahler, Director, Accessible Technology Services, sherylb@uw.edu (co-chair)
- Dan Comden, Manager, Access Technology Center (ATC), Accessible Technology Services, danc@uw.edu
- Rick Ells, Senior Webmaster, Communications, rells@uw.edu
- Terrill Thompson, Technology Accessibility Specialist, Accessible Technology Services, tft@uw.edu

DISABILITY RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

- Bree Callahan, Director, breec@uw.edu

OFFICE OF RISK MANAGEMENT

- Amanda Paye, Title IX/ADA Coordinator, apaye@uw.edu

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FUTURE PLANS

As shared in the September 2012 report, the task force has continued to meet monthly and in subgroup meetings to make progress within three areas of concern:

ENHANCEMENT OF ONLINE RESOURCES

- Task Force members and their associates have continued to improve the Accessible Information Technology at the UW website (<http://uw.edu/accessibility>). The website was converted to the newest UW WordPress template. These templates are accessible, mobile-friendly and incorporate the latest navigation and design of UW websites. UW-IT and UW External Affairs staff collaborated extensively to ensure the accessibility of the standard UW template, which is now available to all campus units.
- Information and links were updated on the Accessible Information Technology at the UW website.
- A video featuring President Young—*IT Accessibility: What Campus Leaders Have to Say*—was added to the home page.
- Two videos complementary to the leadership video—one for campus webmasters and one focusing on beneficiaries of accessible Web design—were scripted and filmed, and will be added to the website when complete.
- Future work includes continuing to enhance the Accessible Information Technology at the UW website, post two new Web accessibility videos, revamp content to make it more complete, make it easy for users to find information they are looking for and create and post more video tutorials and “how to” pages.

PROMOTION OF ACCESSIBLE IT

- A request for proposals (RFP) was developed and sent out to solicit bids for a preferred video-captioning service for the university. Responses have been reviewed and a selection will be made soon. We expect to invite 1-2 vendors in for a “live” presentation and Q&A session by the end of July.
- The license for the SiteImprove tool has been renewed and its use continues to be promoted on campus. This service automatically scans websites for broken links, misspellings and inaccessible coding.
- A Web accessibility evaluator within the Access Technology Center routinely reviews top-level UW websites for accessibility and gives suggestions to webmasters. The evaluator promotes the use of accessible templates and SiteImprove software, and the Accessible Information Technology at the UW website.
- Task Force members identified key organizations and delivered presentations and conducted meetings (e.g., The Web Council, Center on Teaching and Learning, Educational Outreach, the IT Director group, Accessible Web users group and Student Life).
- Accessibility is now being included as a topic in all of UW-IT’s Learning Technologies courses, using expertise and materials from the Access Technology Center.
- Plans are being made to host a campus-wide Capacity-Building Institute on accessible IT in the coming academic year. Task Force members are discussing the possibility of presenting website accessibility awards that might be presented at this event.
- Future work includes choosing a captioning vendor, delivering more presentations on universal design and learning technologies, enhancing UW-IT training to include more specific accessibility content and promoting the use of SiteImprove.

EXPLORATION OF POLICIES/PROCESSES

- Amanda (lead), Terrill, Sheryl and Rick have formed a subcommittee on IT accessibility policies that has met to discuss Office of Civil Rights findings at -- and remedies for -- other institutions, types of policies and procedures adopted by other schools, and types of IT accessibility statements and policies that might be appropriate for the UW.
- Amanda is exploring risk management issues associated with recent resolution agreements between other schools and the Office of Civil Rights regarding the accessibility of IT on campus.
- In the future, the Task Force will review options for aspirational and other policies that might be incorporated into the UW policy collection and make recommendations to project sponsors.

The task force will continue to submit annual progress reports to project sponsors.