

IT ACCESSIBILITY TASK FORCE 2018 REPORT

Date: February 12, 2019

To: Aaron Powell, Vice President for UW Information Technology and CIO, &
Randy Hodgins, Vice President, Office of External Affairs
University of Washington (UW)

From: Task Force Chair Sheryl Burgstahler
Director, Accessible Technology Services, UW-IT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DESCRIPTION OF TASK FORCE	1
MEMBERSHIP	2
RECOMMENDATIONS TO SPONSORS.....	3
ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FUTURE PLANS	3

DESCRIPTION OF TASK FORCE

CHARGE

Develop and implement plans for promoting the procurement, development and use of accessible information technology (IT) and establish best practices campus-wide.

OBJECTIVES

- Take steps toward the procurement, development, and use of accessible UW websites, documents, videos, commercial products, other IT and institutionalize cooperative relationships between key stakeholder groups.
- Develop strategies that can be applied campus-wide, such as accessibility audits, progress reports and the availability of IT accessibility tools (e.g., Siteimprove, SensusAccess, Ally).
- Recommend steps toward a more coordinated campus-wide effort in promoting the development, procurement, and use of accessible IT.

SAMPLE OF ACTIVITIES

- Review the UW home page and other high level pages to ensure that they reflect a high level of accessibility.
- Ensure that current and future templates for UW web pages, presentation slides, and other documents are designed to be accessible.
- Review the UW's Accessible Technology website (uw.edu/accessibility/) and recommend the addition of content useful to the campus community (e.g., best practices, templates, guidelines, standards).
- Develop plans for promoting web, document, and video accessibility, including who should be involved and what processes should be institutionalized.
- Submit annual progress reports to project sponsors.

MEMBERSHIP

The original members of the task force represented UW External Affairs and UW Information Technology (UW-IT). The number of stakeholder groups engaged in the task force has gradually increased to include the following members who represent all three UW campuses:

UNIVERSITY MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Thomas Winston Thorpe, Director, Web Strategy, twthorpe@uw.edu

UW-IT

- Sheryl Burgstahler, Director, Accessible Technology Services (ATS), sherylb@uw.edu (chair)
- Doug Hayman, Technology Specialist (with a specialty in captioning), ATS, dhayman@uw.edu
- Terrill Thompson, Technology Accessibility Specialist, ATS, tft@uw.edu
- Dan Comden, danc@uw.edu, and Hadi Rangin, hadir@uw.edu, Access Technology Center (ATC)
- Nick Rohde, Web and Content Developer, ncrohde@uw.edu

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Ian Campbell, Manager, Disability Services Office (DSO), campian@uw.edu
- Olivia Ramoino, Program Operations Specialist, DSO, oramoino@uw.edu

STUDENT SERVICES

- Jack Nguyen, Assistant Director, Disability Resources for Students, jack18@uw.edu

COMPLIANCE SERVICES

- Bree Callahan, ADA Coordinator, brec@uw.edu

PROCUREMENT SERVICES

- Raymond Hsu, Assistant Director, rayhsu@uw.edu

CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Karen Freisem, Instructional Consultant, kfreisem@uw.edu

FACULTY

- Torey Gilbertson, Lecturer, Rehabilitation Medicine, gilbet@uw.edu

CONTINUUM COLLEGE

- Danielle Allsop, Director, Instructional Excellence

UW BOTHELL

- Ana Thompson, Learning & Access Designer, thomana@uw.edu

UW TACOMA

- Patrick Pow, Vice Chancellor, Information Technology, ppow@uw.edu

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SPONSORS

The task force asks that its sponsors help to:

- Increase awareness of and promote compliance with State Policy #188–IT Accessibility and the UW’s IT Accessibility Policy, Guidelines and resources. Specifically, help educate respective units and leadership groups, perhaps inviting ATS staff or task force members to present to campus units.
- Ensure the availability of adequate numbers of staff members in all campus units to promote and support the procurement, development, and use of accessible IT.
- Support the exploration of increasing efficiencies and providing adequate support to ensure IT procured, developed and used at the UW is accessible to people with disabilities.

Thank you for your continued support of task force efforts.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FUTURE PLANS

As shared in annual reports since 2012, the full task force meets monthly and subgroups meet regularly to make progress within three areas of concern: enhancement of online resources, promotion of accessible IT and exploration of policies/processes. Accomplishments since the last report are summarized below.

SUMMARY

The task force has made significant accomplishments since its inception in 2012, particularly in developing campus policy and guidelines; creating and following system-wide IT accessibility plans; increasing campus awareness; developing proactive processes that promote the accessibility of websites, videos, and documents; and engaging accessibility enthusiasts system-wide as IT Accessibility Liaisons. However, we are far from reaching a high level of accessibility of all the UW’s IT. Tens of thousands of UW websites and documents (mostly

PDFs) are not accessible to individuals with disabilities, hundreds of videos remain uncaptioned and many software products in use are not accessible to people with disabilities. Many of the campuses that are making the greatest progress toward accessible IT nationwide have received formal civil rights complaints from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights or the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division. We have not received a formal complaint, at least in part because of how ATS and the task force have used the resolutions that have resulted from these complaints as our guide toward making our campuses compliant with legal mandates as well as the new Washington State Policy #188 on IT accessibility.

DRS and DSO have made significant efforts, often in cooperation with ATS, in providing accommodations to specific students, faculty and staff with disabilities who encounter IT accessibility barriers, but more efforts are needed to make the IT we develop, procure and use at the UW accessible so that many of these accommodations are not required. Proactive approaches such as universal design are consistent with the social model of disability and UW efforts toward a more inclusive campuses.

EXPLORATION OF POLICIES/PROCESSES

- **State Policy #188.** (ocio.wa.gov/policy/accessibility) was adopted August 11, 2016, to establish “the expectation for state agencies that people with disabilities have access to and use of information and data and be provided access to the same services and content that is available to persons without disabilities...” Sheryl Burgstahler continues to serve as UW Coordinator with respect to Policy #188, engages with the State representative for Policy #188 and with coordinators at other postsecondary institutions in Washington and country-wide, and ensures that all Policy requirements and deadlines are met by the UW.
- **Policy #188 Plan and Progress** activities are posted on the IT Accessibility website at www.uw.edu/accessibility.
- **Procurement Guidelines.** Procurement Services continues to embrace a policy and procedures for Procuring Accessible IT (Section 7.2.15 in their Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual at finance.uw.edu/ps/resources/policies-and-procedures). The Procuring Accessible IT page on the Accessible Technology home page (uw.edu/accessibility/procurement) reflects the current policy/procedure.
- **Annual IT Accessibility Report.** The January–December 2018 ATS report summarizes ATS services as well as data reflecting the state of accessibility at the UW. The data suggests that much more needs to be done to promote accessible IT on UW campuses.
- **DRS and ATS Processes.** The collaboration between DRS and ATS continues to be strong and has become a model for other campuses that has been shared at conferences, including the Accessing Higher Ground 2018.
- **Feedback Mechanism.** The earlier established procedure for reporting IT accessibility barriers continues to be reflected on the Accessible Technology site.
- **Future Plans.** The task force will continue exploring ways to, on all three campuses:
 - Promote implementation of the IT accessibility policy, IT accessibility guidelines, and IT accessibility in procurement policy in units and specific work flows.
 - Continue to develop efficient central processes for identifying inaccessible PDFs, converting them to another more accessible format, remediating them, and training staff system-wide.

- Continue to locate channels through which to connect with department coordinators and/or department instructional designers to promote accessibility as part of their work flows; keep track of these groups to facilitate the delivery of future presentations.

ENHANCEMENT AND PROMOTION OF ONLINE RESOURCES

- **SensusAccess.** ATS and DRS continue to co-fund a license for this web-based product that converts documents from inaccessible formats (e.g., a scanned PDF image) to more accessible formats. The service continues to be promoted through DRS, DSO, and ATS. The UW Document Conversion Service (tinyurl.com/uw-doc-convert) is linked from the DRS, Accessible Technology at the UW, ATC and other UW websites. Since unveiling the service in December 2014, it has been utilized by over 1000 unique users.
- **Blackboard Ally.** UW-IT licensed Blackboard Ally, a plug-in for promoting accessibility of online instruction within Canvas. Ally has three primary functions, each for a different target audience: (a) for students, automatically converting uploaded course materials into more accessible formats; (b) for instructors, providing immediate feedback to instructors on accessibility of their uploaded materials; and (c) for administrators, providing data to administrators on the types of materials uploaded and the nature of their accessibility problems. A launch team was created and led by UW-IT, and included three members of the Task Force (two representing ATS and one representing Compliance Services). Student features launched fall term 2018, faculty features had a limited release in winter 2019, and a full release across all UW courses will occur in spring 2019.
- **Siteimprove.** Siteimprove, an online service that crawls websites and reports broken links, misspellings and accessibility issues, continues to be funded and used by multiple campus units. As of December 2018, 118 websites at the UW were using Siteimprove. Across all sites, there are 3,644 errors in meeting the WCAG 2.0 at Level A and 370 errors at Level AA (meeting both levels is required by Policy 188). This is only a slight improvement over December 2017 (124 fewer Level A errors, offset slightly by 25 more Level AA errors). One possible reason for the lack of significant progress is that we are frequently rotating sites in and out, and limiting the number of pages scanned by some sites, in order to stay under our 50,000-page limit of our license. This lack of consistency makes it difficult for site owners to fully integrate Siteimprove into their testing workflows. In an effort to increase the tool's effectiveness in 2018, we (1) provided individual outreach and support to Siteimprove users, (2) provided training opportunities to ensure more consistent use of the tool, (3) hosted our first Siteimprove hackathon designed to be a productive work session plus fun opportunity to build community. We will continue with these efforts in 2019. Also, in fall 2018, a sub group of the task force explored whether it would be feasible to increase the number of pages evaluated for accessibility by either (a) expanding our Siteimprove subscription to an enterprise license with unlimited pages, (b) partnering with other educational institutions in the state for a larger enterprise-level subscription, or (c) negotiating a license with another company. The subgroup met with and received demos from four companies, one of which (Monsido) stands out as being a possible alternative that could better meet our needs. The subgroup will be coordinating a group of web designers and developers to conduct a pilot test of Monsido in February 2019.
- **Accessible Technology Website Improvements.** Task force members and their associates continued to improve the UW's Accessible Technology website

(uw.edu/accessibility). In particular, the Creating Accessible Documents section (uw.edu/accessibility/documents) was updated significantly in anticipation of the Ally rollout.

- **Future Plans.** The task force will continue to:
 - Enhance the Accessible Technology website to make content more complete, to make it easier for users to find information they are looking for, to create and post more “how to” pages and videos, and to ensure that content is relevant to various stakeholder groups.
 - Complete the launch of and support structure for Ally.
 - Continue to explore the feasibility to expand our Siteimprove subscription to an enterprise level or to partner with other educational institutions in the state for a larger enterprise-level subscription.
 - Increase levels of promotion of the use of Siteimprove, SensusAccess and Able Player (a free, open-source, fully accessible HTML5 media player developed by ATS with support from AccessComputing).
 - Develop an "Accessibility Approved" library of plugins, modules and widgets for use on WordPress and Drupal.
 - Develop and promote the use of accessible UW-branded templates for documents, events, and presentations.
 - Conduct a pilot test of Monsido.

PROMOTION OF ACCESSIBLE IT

- **Captioning Videos.** ATS continues to promote captioning in Panopto video capture processes and to use secured permanent funds for captioning high-traffic, high impact videos. In 2018, 473 high impact videos containing 32 hours of programming were made more accessible by adding captions. The task force continues to identify the proliferation of uncaptioned videos to be a high-level concern. Using YouTube Caption Auditor (YTCA), a tool developed by ATS, we conduct audits of known UW-affiliated YouTube channels each quarter. As of December 2018, we now have over 7,500 videos (nearly 3,000 hours of programming) across 88 known channels. Only 20.1% of these videos are captioned (this figure does not include YouTube videos that are captioned by the YouTube computer application and not edited). Although up from 18.4% in April, and 7.6% in August 2015, but considerably more improvement is needed. Of the 88 channels, 19 have captioned over 50% of the videos (21.6%) but 40 (45.5%) have captioned 0. The improvement during 2018 was due at least part to the IT Accessibility Liaisons meeting in May, which focused on video accessibility. The discussion in that meeting carried over onto the Video & Digital Content Creators mailman list, which led to multiple channel owners working diligently to improve their "YTCA score." One of those (School of Public Health) captioned all 96 of their videos. They're the second channel to attain captioning perfection (Compliance Services was the first). ATS is actively using this data (including specific data for each YouTube channel) to motivate departments to accelerate their captioning efforts.
- **Inaccessible PDFs.** The task force continues to identify the proliferation of inaccessible PDF files to be a high-level concern. Three students have been added to the ATS PDF accessibility team. In 2018, 286 public-facing PDF files were remediated for accessibility.
- **Campus Web Accessibility Support.** ATS staff continues to provide individualized and

group support to web designers and developers both on request and through targeted outreach. Four ATS staff members meet regularly with UW web designers and developers to review their sites, test them with a variety of devices and settings (including assistive technologies), and offer feedback that includes code-level solutions. Individuals who receive these services over time tend to develop a high level of accessibility expertise and are empowered and encouraged to support others through various community meetups, on the AccessibleWeb Mailman list and by delivering training or becoming an official IT Accessibility Liaison (see related section below). Results from ongoing web accessibility reviews have been positive.

- **The University Marketing and Communications Web Development Team** has continued its efforts to increase the accessibility of its products and services. Two members of the team participated in the first UW Siteimprove Hackathon, during which they worked to address accessibility issues that Siteimprove identified within the UW Boundless theme. Additionally, they continue respond to accessibility issues in the theme that are filed via the Issues queue in GitHub.
- **Campus Presentations and Events.** Task force members along with ATS and the IT Accessibility Liaisons helped identify key organizations, delivered presentations, conducted meetings, and kept track of other meeting on campus. These include those hosted by the UW Web Council, UW Bothell, UW Tacoma, Continuum College, the UW College of Education, the UW Engineering Department, the UW SE Asia Studies Department, UW Professional & Continuing Education, Foster School of Business, Learning Technologies, Undergraduate Academic Affairs, Center for Teaching and Learning, UW Health Sciences, Office of the Provost, UW Libraries, UW Civil and Environmental Engineering Department, Environmental Health and Safety, the Siteimprove Users Group, WordPress Users Group, Drupal Users Group, Front-End Developers Community of Practice, and the UW Elearning Special Interest Group. A collaborative presentation occurred at TechConnect, a system-wide event where the IT community learns and shares content and promising practices. ATS staff led courses for UW-IT Learning Technologies, covering topics that include accessible document creation, website accessibility, and PDF accessibility and remediation. UW Bothell Office of Digital Learning and Innovation (DLI) led workshops on Canvas accessibility, Document and PDF accessibility/remediation, a week-long online course on accessibility basics for instructors, a presentation with librarians on inclusive teaching, JIT training for the new ASUWB marketing team on accessible content and user-centered design, a workshop of accessible MS Office documents for the P&A Web Team, Introduction to Ally Canvas course and workshop, Open Learning Lab (OLL) student lab redesign to provide accessible options for students and Web Communications provided training on web content accessibility. ATS also continued to host monthly Web Accessibility and Usability Meetups in which campus web developers shared their projects in progress, asked questions related to coding practices, and discussed challenging issues in accessible web design and development.
- **Off Campus Presentations and Events.** Task force members and their colleagues delivered presentations, hosted booths, and organized pre-conference events at various academic conferences including Accessing Higher Ground, the California State University Northridge (CSUN) Assistive Technology Conference, the National Association of Education Procurement, Northwest Managers of Educational Technology (NW/MET), WA Canvas Conference, the Association on Higher Education And

Disability (AHEAD), and meetings for Western Washington University Libraries and St. Louis University. Webinar presentations included those hosted by 3PlayMedia, AHEAD, EASI, Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), Great Lakes ADA, and the Washington Special Education Technology Center.

- **Capacity Building Institutes (CBIs).** The task force gave input and recruited participants for two CBIs related to accessible IT that were hosted by ATS. One event in December, 2018 lasted one day and was for designated Policy #188 coordinators of postsecondary campuses statewide. Ongoing communication takes place online within the Accessible IT Community of Practice to further discuss how we can increase the accessibility of IT on all campuses in Washington state and, more specifically, address Policy #188 requirements. A similar one-day event focused specifically on the UW took place in May. A special online learning CBI for Washington state was held in June.
- **IT Accessibility Liaisons.** The task force and ATS worked together to increase the number of UW staff volunteering as IT Accessibility Liaisons to more than 120 members. Each Liaison formally agrees to communicate online, meet about three times per year and promote accessible IT in their units. Three half-day meetings of IT Accessibility Liaisons were held in 2018, focusing on accessibility in procurement, designing and creating accessible videos, and online learning/library resources, respectively.
- **Future Plans.** Along with ongoing activities, future work includes these tasks:
 - Continue to document and share efficient workflows and costs for using outside vendors in reducing the use of PDFs and in remediating of PDFs.
 - Continue to freely caption high-impact, high-use videos and remediate PDF files.
 - Deliver more presentations and other outreach, including effective training and support for Ally.
 - Recruit and support more IT Accessibility Liaisons and conduct 3 meetings per year.
 - Continue to offer capacity building institutes for the UW and for Washington state postsecondary institutions and offer a state-wide CBI focused on accessible online learning.
 - Consider offering a Canvas course on accessible online learning.
 - Consider offering a UW Professional Organizational Development course on accessible IT.
 - Present an *Accessible IT Capacity Building Award* for promoting the accessible design of IT and universal design of instruction both onsite and online. Recipients of these awards are groups of people at the UW who have promoted the procurement, development, deployment and use of IT that is accessible to faculty, staff, students and visitors with disabilities. Consider presenting *Accessible IT Trailblazer Awards* to individuals for their exemplary efforts.
 - Consider offering other incentives for captioning collections of UW videos.