

IT ACCESSIBILITY TASK FORCE

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 14, 2014

DESCRIPTION OF TASK FORCE

CHARGE

Develop and implement plans for promoting IT accessibility and establishing best practices campus-wide.

OBJECTIVES

- Continue taking steps toward more accessible UW websites and institutionalizing a cooperative relationship between key stakeholder groups.
- Develop strategies that can be applied campus-wide, including services such as accessibility audits and the availability of tools such as SiteImprove.
- Recommend 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 and include an accessibility link as part of the template.
- Review the IT accessibility website and recommend, based on lessons learned by the task force, content useful to campus webmasters (e.g., best practices, templates, more specific campus guidelines).
- Develop plans for promoting Web accessibility, including 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 Information Technology (UW-IT). The stakeholder groups represented have grown to include the following members:

UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

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

UW-IT

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

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Ian Campbell, Manager, Disability Services Office, campian@uw.edu

STUDENT SERVICES

- Bree Callahan, Director, Disability Resources for Students, brec@uw.edu

OFFICE OF RISK MANAGEMENT

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

UW PROCUREMENT SERVICES

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

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FUTURE PLANS

As shared in the September 2012 and July 2013 reports, the task force continues to meet monthly and in smaller subgroup meetings to make progress within three areas of concern:

ENHANCEMENT OF ONLINE RESOURCES

- **Website Improvements.** Task Force members and their associates made major improvements to the Accessible Technology at the UW website at <http://uw.edu/accessibility>. On April 24, 2014 a major update of the site was unveiled, redesigned with a new overall structure designed to improve usability and better the needs of a variety of stakeholders throughout the UW. The site includes new content that provides step-by-step instructions for creating accessible documents, developing websites, and creating accessible videos. Also, the Office of Risk Management contributed content that summarizes key issues that have emerged in legal resolution agreements involving technology accessibility at higher education institutions.
- **Website links.** An "Accessible Technology" link that targets the Accessible Technology

at the UW site was added to the standard UW navigation menu that appears on the UW home page and all other sites that use the standard template.

- **Videos.** A new video—*IT Accessibility: What Web Developers Have to Say*—was created to complement the early video featuring President Young—*IT Accessibility: What Campus Leaders Have to Say*. The new video is now featured on the *Developing Accessible Websites* home page at <http://www.washington.edu/accessibility/web/>. Plans are to create a third video in the *IT Accessibility* series, focused on the end-user perspective. A video was also created to promote captioning on the UW campus and beyond.
- **UW Branding.** The Task Force is working collaboratively to assure accessibility of the UW branding efforts. The university in fall 2014 will begin rolling out a refreshed brand and design elements that will be incorporated throughout the main UW websites and online properties, including the Accessibility website. The refreshed elements, to be finalized over the summer, will be made available for all UW messaging tools (e.g., PowerPoint templates, print and video).
- **Future Plans.** Future work includes continuing to enhance the Accessible Technology at the UW site, continuing to make content more complete, making it easy for users to find information they are looking for and creating and posting more video tutorials and “how to” pages. There are also plans to conduct a usability study in Summer 2014. The Task Force will explore how IT accessibility could be addressed in any general complaint-reporting process developed at the UW and other ways to identify IT accessibility problems.

PROMOTION OF ACCESSIBLE IT

- **Captioning.** After completion of a request for proposals (RFP) process, AutomaticSync was selected as the contracted vendor for video captioning. UW-IT will promote captioning with its Panopto video capture product roll-out fall quarter.
- **Web Accessibility Checker Software.** The license for SiteImprove was renewed and its use continues to be promoted on campus. This service automatically scans websites for broken links, misspellings and inaccessible coding. The Access Technology Center subsidizes this effort.
- **Campus Presentations.** Task Force members identified key organizations and delivered presentations and conducted meetings (e.g., the Accessible Web users group, Web Council). DRS and Risk Management sponsored presentations by Salome Heyward, an attorney who specializes in accessibility issues and procedures on postsecondary campuses; a key issue discussed was accessibility of IT. Plans are underway for ATS staff to present online learning accessibility topics in a Teaching and Learning community of learners offering called Inclusive Online Learning.
- **UW-IT Training.** With high-level support, ATS is working to ensure that 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.
- **Campus Web Accessibility Proactive Checks and Support.** A designated staff person within the Access Technology Center routinely reviews high-level UW websites for accessibility and gives suggestions to website owners. Site owners are encouraged to consult the Accessible Technology at the UW site as a resource, use the standard UW templates which have accessibility built-in, and consider using SiteImprove to monitor

their sites for accessibility problems. Results from ongoing web accessibility reviews are included in the annual web accessibility report described below.

- **Capacity-Building Institutes (CBIs).** Plans are being made to host a campus-wide CBI on accessible IT in February, 2015. Plans are also underway, using DO-IT Center funding and the network of the Washington Association for Postsecondary Education and Disability (WAPED), to host a state-wide CBI on this topic. All CBIs will include representation from campus disability services and IT organizations and encourage these units to work together toward systemic change.
- **Accessibility Awards.** Task Force members are discussing the possibility of presenting UW/WA website accessibility awards that might be presented at the CBIs noted above.
- **Future Plans.** Future work includes delivering more presentations on universal design and learning technologies, enhancing UW-IT training to include more specific accessibility content, promoting the use of SiteImprove, exploring the purchase of PDF accessibility checking software, and developing and implementing a marking plan regarding captioning.

EXPLORATION OF POLICIES/PROCESSES

- **Subcommittee.** Amanda (lead), Terrill, Sheryl and Rick met as a subcommittee on IT accessibility policies to discuss legal resolutions that involved inaccessible IT at 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. It was determined that a procedures or guidelines approach is most appropriate for the UW at this time. A draft IT Accessibility Guidelines document is being created with plans to present a final document to project sponsors.
- **Resolution Agreement Summary.** Amanda explored risk management issues associated with recent resolution agreements between other schools and the Office of Civil Rights regarding the accessibility of IT on campus. She drafted content that is now available on the Accessible Technology at the UW site as noted earlier in this document.
- **Procurement Guidelines.** Task Force members have begun discussions in this area.
- **Annual Web Accessibility Report.** ATS has instituted a procedure for creating an annual web accessibility report. The 2013 version of the report is attached as an Appendix.
- **Future Plans.** In the future, the Task Force will continue to review options for aspirational and other policies that might be incorporated into the UW policy and procedures collections and make recommendations to project sponsors.

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

