

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

June 26, 2015

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

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 other IT and institutionalizing cooperative relationships between key stakeholder groups.
- Develop strategies that can be applied campus-wide, such as accessibility audits, progress reports and the availability of tools such as SiteImprove.
- Recommend steps toward a more coordinated campus-wide effort in promoting the design of accessible websites and other IT.

ACTIVITIES

- Review the UW home page and other important pages to ensure that they reflect a high level of accessibility.
- Ensure that current and future templates for UW Web pages are designed to be accessible and include an accessibility link as part of the templates.
- Review the Accessible Technology at the UW website (uw.edu/accessibility/) and recommend the addition of content useful to the campus community (e.g., best practices, templates, specific campus guidelines).
- Develop plans for promoting Web accessibility, including who should be involved, what the processes would be, etc.
- Submit annual progress reports to project sponsors.

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 gradually 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; membership shared with Hadi Rangin, hadir@uw.edu
- Rick Ells, Senior Webmaster, Communications, rells@uw.edu
- Doug Hayman, Technology Specialist (with a specialty in captioning), ATS, dhayman@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, breec@uw.edu

OFFICE OF RISK MANAGEMENT

- Amanda Paye, Title IX/ADA Coordinator, apaye@uw.edu
- John Hoql, Training Specialist, jpahogl@uw.edu

UW PROCUREMENT SERVICES

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

CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Theresa Ronquillo, instructional consultant and affiliate faculty member, tmr51@uw.edu

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FUTURE PLANS

As shared in the September 2012, July 2013 and July 2014 reports, 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 in these three areas are summarized below.

EXPLORATION OF POLICIES/PROCESSES

- **UW's IT Accessibility Guidelines and Checklist.** The IT Accessibility Guidelines document (uw.edu/accessibility/guidelines/) was developed by the task force and subsequently approved and signed May 1, 2015, by Kelli Trosvig, Vice President and CIO of UW-IT. It was informed by Office for Civil Rights and Department of Justice rulings with respect to the inaccessibility of IT on other postsecondary campuses (see uw.edu/accessibility/requirements/) and developed through a process of many iterations with input from key stakeholder groups. The guidelines are accompanied by detailed instructions within the IT Accessibility Checklist (uw.edu/accessibility/checklist/).
- **Procurement Guidelines.** A section "Procuring Accessible IT" was added to information on "What UW Departments Need to Know about Buying" on the Procurement Services "How to Buy" web page (<https://f2.washington.edu/fm/ps/how-to-buy>). Task force members are exploring additional strategies for addressing accessibility of vendor products through the procurement process.
- **Annual IT Accessibility Report.** This year ATS expanded its annual report on Web accessibility that is attached to annual task force reports to more generally address IT accessibility. The 2014 report is attached as an Appendix to this report.
- **Inaccessible PDFs.** The task force has identified the proliferation of inaccessible PDF files to be a high-level concern on campus. Disability Resources for Students (DRS) handles approximately 26,000 document conversions per quarter, the majority of which are PDF files. In Autumn quarter 2014, 31% of PDFs were images with no selectable text, and 71% had no tags or bookmarks (only 7% had both). Additional data was gathered in a pilot project using CommonLook Clarity software, an enterprise PDF accessibility tool. A sample of 300 PDFs was collected by crawling outward from the UW home page. Of these PDFs, 28% were tagged, but a closer inspection of the tags revealed that few or none were tagged effectively (only 3% had alt text for images, and 0% of the 53 tables found in the sample had headers). A Google search for "site:washington.edu type:pdf" yields an estimated 57,900 results. It is estimated that the majority of these PDFs are inaccessible.
- **Videos.** The task force has identified the proliferation of uncaptioned videos to be a high-level concern on campus. A review of the situation revealed that the UW sponsors more than 60 YouTube channels that provide more than 123,000 minutes of programming. Of these, only 6% are captioned. Units that are well above average in captioned videos are the libraries (with 53% of its videos captioned) and the College of Engineering (with 72% of its videos captioned). The video subgroup continues to explore best provider(s) and processes to promote captioning videos campus-wide.
- **ADA Brochure.** The task force gave input regarding accessible IT that was incorporated into a new ADA brochure for campus that is now distributed through the UW Risk Management Office and through various campus units (e.g., ATC, DRS).
- **Future Plans.** In the future, the task force will continue exploring how to

- promote implementation of the IT Accessibility Guidelines.
- address IT accessibility in the procurement process.
- ensure that complaint-reporting processes at the UW are effective for identifying high-risk IT accessibility problems (in a related effort we may invite someone from the Attorney General’s office to speak with the task force.).
- assign and support IT accessibility liaisons in all key units.
- develop efficient strategies to identify inaccessible PDFs, remediate them, and train staff responsible for posting PDFs.

ENHANCEMENT OF ONLINE RESOURCES

- **Website Improvements.** Task force members and their associates made major improvements to the Accessible Technology at the UW website (uw.edu/accessibility). The site includes updated content on legal challenges to IT accessibility nationwide; significantly enhanced step-by-step instructions for creating accessible websites, documents and videos; and a link to the captioning video described below.
- **Videos.** A new video — *Captions: Improving Access to Postsecondary Education* (uw.edu/accessibility/videos/) — was created with targeted funding through ATS to complement the earlier videos on IT accessibility; a short complementary video featuring a faculty member using captions in his Panopto lectures.
- **UW Branding.** The task force has worked collaboratively to ensure accessibility of products created as part of UW branding efforts. In fall 2014 the UW began rolling out a refreshed brand and design elements that are now incorporated throughout the main UW websites and online properties, including the IT Accessibility at the UW website. The refreshed elements are made available for all UW messaging tools (e.g., PowerPoint templates, print and video). Particular effort has gone into ensuring the new WordPress and Drupal themes are accessible.
- **Future Plans.** Future work includes
 - continuing to enhance the Accessible Technology at the UW site to make content more complete, to make it easier for users to find information they are looking for and to create and post more “how to” pages.
 - Identifying websites (e.g., sites that are supported by the Center for Teaching and Learning) where we can link to IT Accessibility Guidelines and other resources and where tailored content is needed.

PROMOTION OF ACCESSIBLE IT

- **Captioning.** ATS is promoting captioning in Panopto video capture processes and continuing to locate uncaptioned videos on high-level, high-traffic websites and when identified work with the host to get captions included. ATS has requested additional funding from UW-IT to centrally fund a limited set of videos that are high-profile (e.g., on high-level websites, in large classes). Targeted funding through ATS is supporting a new video featuring how a professor uses captioning in his large lecture class as a best practice, benefiting students who are deaf, English language learners, students who wish to search for specific content in a lecture and those who want to know the spelling of a technical term used in class.
- **SensusAccess.** ATS and DRS tested, piloted and then co-funded a license for this Web-based product that converts a document from an inaccessible format (e.g, a scanned PDF image) to a more accessible one and are promoting its use by students with disabilities through DRS.

This service does not satisfy all accessibility needs (for example, it doesn't add tagged structure to PDFs, which is necessary for screen reader users). However, it does generate a readable document that is accessible for students with dyslexia and other learning disabilities, who read with support from assistive technologies. This provides a quick, short-term, do-it-yourself solution for students who need to access inaccessible documents when the DRS office is closed. The UW Document Conversion Service is located at <http://tinyurl.com/uw-doc-convert> and is linked from the DRS website, Accessible Documents website, and Access Technology Center websites. Since going live in December 2014, over 120 unique users have used the service, including 12 who have used it 10 or more times, and one person who has used it well over 100 times.

- **Campus Presentations, Events.** Task force members identified key organizations and delivered presentations and conducted meetings (e.g., the Accessible Web user group, Center for Teaching and Learning community of learners called Inclusive Online Learning, UW Bothell Faculty Fellows, state IT group, UW Medical Center Web developers, and Tech Connect. Task force members hosted activities for Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD) on May 21 that included an Access Technology Center open house, a presentation to the Web Council and the Drupal User Group, a statewide IT accessibility webinar, and an informal period of "accessibility tune-ups" offered over lunch in the UW Tower café. Also, ATS staff launched a new promotional website (nomouse.org) and a #nomouse campaign, which within three days had reached nearly 100,000 people on Twitter.
- **UW-IT Training.** With high-level support, ATS continues to work 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 ATC.
- **Campus Web Accessibility Proactive Checks and Support.** A designated temporary, part-time staff person within ATS routinely reviews 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 standard UW templates that 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 IT accessibility report included as an Appendix to this report.
- **UW Capacity-Building Institute (CBI).** ATS hosted an IT accessibility capacity building institute (CBI) for about 20 postsecondary institutions in Washington State. Participants came in pairs — one person from disability services and one from IT.
- **Future Plans.** Future work includes
 - delivering more presentations on universal design and learning technologies.
 - enhancing UW-IT training to include more specific accessibility content, considering other training and professional development (e.g., for online instructors) on campus to promote the inclusion of accessibility topics.
 - promoting the use of SiteImprove and SensusAccess.
 - continuing to develop and implement marketing plans regarding captioning.
 - hosting CBIs, including a campus-wide CBI focused on accessible IT in October 2015 (to include key stakeholders who are, ideally, point people for accessible IT work in their units and encourage campus units to work together toward systemic change; and possibly presenting UW website accessibility awards); a statewide IT Accessibility CBI in February 2016; as well as a possible state-wide CBI focused on accessible online learning.
 - developing and promoting GAAD activities and additional events to celebrate the 25th

anniversary of the ADA.

- targeting TAs/RAs and branch campuses with training.
- offering series of 1-1 consultations with Hadi on accessible web design.
- focusing more efforts on IT administrative products, such as course registration, ticketing systems, space scouting, etc.
- increasing efforts to address issues related to IT-based learning and supporting faculty, including incorporating more accessibility content into courses supported by the Center for Teaching and Learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SPONSORS

The task force asks that its sponsors:

- help promote the procurement and development of accessible IT within their respective organizations.
- help promote the IT Accessibility Guidelines wherever relevant.
- support efforts to assign or hire permanent staff members throughout campus to promote accessible IT and increase ATS staff so that they can proactively identify and work with webmasters and individuals who post inaccessible media campus-wide to make IT more accessible and more staff across campus skilled in accessible design techniques.
- help the task force identify and develop strategies to more broadly communicate to campus audiences about the importance of accessibility and the tools in place to help achieve better accessibility.