

39 – IT Accessibility

Action Item Template Response

General Action Item Information

Lead Division/Office: Learning Technologies

Action Item Number: 39

Action Item Short Name: IT Accessibility

Dependencies with other EP Action Items: 3, 4

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I. DESCRIBE YOUR PLANS FOR IMPLEMENTING THIS ACTION.

As technology used in support of the university's missions becomes ever more pervasive, that technology should continue to remain accessible to those with disabilities. A comprehensive plan for ensuring this accessibility will be developed, with a specific focus on compliance training. This training will address a broad spectrum of topics, from how to increase awareness of technology accessibility, to Adaptive Technology Center consulting with individuals, groups, and departments.

This action will address the need to include new services to ensure that information technology hardware, software, systems, and instructional content are accessible. This implementation plan will be developed in consultation with other university entities that serve those with disabilities, including the IUPUI Office of Equal Opportunity, IUPUI Adaptive Educational Services, IUB Adaptive Technology Center, IUB Disability Services for Students, IUB Center for Disability Information and Referral, and others.

For instructional and student support, we will implement a new support model. At IUPUI, the campus unit Adaptive Educational Services (AES) will close their adaptive technology lab and UITS will assume responsibility for those services. This will allow AES to focus on addressing the accommodation needs of their clients, while UITS focuses on technology tools. The new service model will extend the tools, software, and support to multiple Student Technology Centers across the campuses to better serve users.

II. WHAT ARE THE POLICY AND PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS OF YOUR PLANS?

If accessibility is to be achieved at the highest level of compliance, there is a potential need for significant resources to develop new technologies and retool existing technology infrastructure and applications. For example, faculty will require additional guidance on how to ensure their digital material is accessible to all students; consultants trained in accessibility issues that impact effective pedagogy will need to work directly with faculty. Given the additional resources this kind of compliance often requires, all UITS divisions will need to consider the impact of such compliance, including (but not limited to) allowing additional development time for online resources, and considering compliance in purchasing/placing physical IT resources.

In practice, Adaptive Educational Services at IUPUI will no longer provide direct adaptive technology support and those functions will transfer to UITS Adaptive Technology Services.

For instructional development and faculty needs, the campus Centers for Teaching and Learning would provide development training for faculty, and Media Design and Production would provide standards-based compliant online/web development, transcription, and captioning services for instruction. Usability testing should be broadened to include assessments for accessibility.

III. IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS.

The stakeholders in this Action Item are faculty, staff, students and UITS, as well as the following: the IUPUI Office of Equal Opportunity, IUPUI Adaptive Educational Services, IUB Adaptive Technology Center, IUB Disability Services for Students, IUB Center for Disability Information and Referral.

IV. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

For instructional and student support, we will implement a new support model. At IUPUI, the campus unit Adaptive Educational Services (AES) will close their adaptive technology lab and UITS will assume responsibility for those services. This will allow AES to focus on addressing the accommodation needs of their clients, while UITS focuses on technology tools. The new service model will extend the tools, software, and support to multiple Student Technology Centers across the campuses to better serve users.

Accomplishments to Date:

1. The ATAC has facilitated transcript creation for courses when necessary at IUB as well as providing technology based accommodations for faculty and students with hearing impairment or when students with vision impairment need descriptions of action oriented parts of videos which convey needed contextual information for full comprehension of the material. Funding resource issues still persist if true that ALL videos need captions or transcriptions and/or audio description
2. The plan includes reassigning staff and working smarter to be able to provide continuing excellent ATAC direct client services as well as building a strong web accessibility support presence. ATAC has gained approval for an Administrative Practice for Web Accessibility from the Director of ADA Compliance and the Web Standards Committee.
3. Staff reassignment has led to greatly strengthened support for both Sakai (Oncourse) and IU campus web accessibility initiatives. Beginning January 2011 a campaign to increase web accessibility awareness will begin with ATAC manager and staff meeting with the first round of key campus web stakeholders.
4. ATAC will continue to promote web accessibility. The group has performed over 51 web accessibility presentations and evaluations for a variety of departments.
5. The ATAC has created improved web accessibility review templates. Increased web accessibility knowledge supports developers by having these tools during the development stage rather than having to backtrack and fix inaccessible web applications after the fact.
6. ATAC consulted with the STCs to review accessibility of hardware and software. This resulted in the implementation of three new applications to all STCs at IUPUI and IUB campuses increasing universal access.
7. Additional efforts with the WCMS group to evaluate Cascade Server for accessibility during purchasing phase. ATAC attended WCMS training sessions to understand how tool is being implemented and how issues of accessibility are being addressed.