

# SSU Web Accessibility Implementation Plan

## Introduction

In order to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities, the CSU has established the Accessible Technology Initiative (ATI). In CSU Coded Memo AA-2007-04, ATI Priority One focuses on administrative websites, and requires that campuses recognize the ongoing institutional responsibility to create and maintain accessible websites. Further, each campus must develop a plan to develop and implement appropriate policies and procedures to ensure accessibility of the University's websites and content, and to identify the roles and responsibilities for those involved in the creation and maintenance of the University's administrative websites.

This plan for Sonoma State University establishes roles and responsibilities for the development and maintenance of the University's administrative sites and related policy and standards using appropriate consultative processes. It provides a framework for continuous creation, maintenance, and monitoring of websites, as well as remediation of accessibility issues. This plan incorporates specific elements required by the CSU Coded Memo AA-2007-04 (see items 1-11 below).

While the primary goal of this plan is to meet the requirements for accessibility of the University's web sites and content, the ATI Steering Committee recognizes that implementation of this plan will lead to other changes in the ways the University creates and maintains web sites.

## SSU's Administrative Web Sites – Background

ATI Priority One applies to content on administrative web sites. Administrative sites are those belonging to divisions, schools, departments and programs, including both public-facing pages and internal or "employee only" pages. Administrative sites may be created by SSU employees, developed by off-campus developers, or be part of a web-based tool or service hosted on or off-campus. Instructional materials are not included in ATI Priority 1. Some examples of administrative sites at SSU are:

- Biology Department <http://www.sonoma.edu/biology>
- Admissions & Records <http://www.sonoma.edu/ar>
- Customer Services <http://www.sonoma.edu/customerservices>
- University Library <http://library.sonoma.edu>
- Sonoma Seawolves <http://sonomaseawolves.com>
- Project Censored <http://www.projectcensored.org/>

Table 1 provides a snapshot of the numbers of administrative websites and people who edit those sites on SSU's main campus web server, [www.sonoma.edu](http://www.sonoma.edu). It also summarizes the findings of SSU's *First Year Report* (April 2007), which examined a cross section of the campus website, evaluating the level of accessibility and the resources needed to repair accessibility problems. See the *First Year Report* for more information about the scope of work and the current web development environment. <http://www.sonoma.edu/accessibility/web/fyr.shtml>.

Currently, SSU does not have an advisory committee or body that oversees or develops web policy. Web development and site maintenance is distributed to the departments and programs

that have sites. There is no formal branding for SSU web sites, and no "official" University template. Other than a few content elements, there are no requirements for administrative website design and development.

As with other CSU campuses, the scope of Sonoma's web presence is so vast, and the number of web authors so high, without any formal oversight it is unlikely that Sonoma would be able to meet the goals of ATI Priority One without significant changes. This plan provides a process for addressing this gap.

**Table 1 – Scope of SSU administrative websites, April 2007**

	<b>AA</b>	<b>AF</b>	<b>DEV</b>	<b>SAEM</b>	<b>UA</b>
<b>Web Editors on main campus web server</b>	120	32	2	20	8
<b>"Pages" on main campus web server</b>					
HTML	28,522	10,936	146	5,439	5,179
PDF	5,045	1,138	37	471	245
DOC	2,744	752	0	242	55
<b>First Year Report - Cross Section &amp; Repair Sample (HTML)</b>					
% Pages with accessibility errors	100%	~100%	100%	100%	100%
Avg. errors per page	76	1	33	261	25
Avg. repair time per page (minutes)	131	16	36	312	86
Est. People-years to repair all HTML on main campus web server	29.9	1.4	0.0	13.6	3.6
<b>Other web servers on campus</b>	32	20	0	2	0

## **WAIP Plan**

### **General Principles of Responsibility**

The following principles of responsibility inform this plan.

- Accessibility standards are the responsibility of the Director of Web Services, Information Technology.
- Content is the responsibility of the division that authors the content.
- Style, look and feel, and other issues related to the University's identity are the responsibility of the Vice President of University Affairs.
- Web technology is the responsibility of the Director of Web Services, Information Technology.

### **New Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **University Web Advisory Committee**

Sonoma will form a University Web Advisory Committee. Among its priorities will be campus compliance with the requirements of Accessible Technology Initiative's Priority 1 (Accessibility of Administrative Web Sites). Members will include a responsible administrator from each Division, Disability Services for Students, and Disabled Employee Program, a member from the Academic Council, and the IT Director of Web Services. The University Web Advisory Committee will:

- Recommend University web policy;
- Identify administrative sites critical to institutional access;
- Audit, monitor and create reports regarding compliance with ATI requirements (with the assistance of the University Web Team);
- Prioritize remediation of administrative websites;
- Review requests for exceptions to SSU web policy;
- Review requests for exceptions from use of University Web Team services.

The University Web Advisory committee will not review or monitor content, except when issues of accessibility may apply.

## **University Web Team**

Employees with primary responsibilities for web design, development and production will work together as a team. Work related to ATI will be coordinated by the IT Director of Web Services.

The University Web Team will have responsibility for development and technical maintenance of all of Sonoma's administrative web sites. The University Web Team will work with:

- University Web Advisory Committee
- Department content experts
- University Affairs
- Information Technology
- Contracted off-campus web developers (working on approved administrative sites)
- Other University employees responsible for administrative online services with web interfaces (e.g., CMS).

University Web Team members are not required to be formally reassigned to Information Technology, however they will work together on a daily basis. While sites built and maintained by the University Web Team will be a collaborative effort, individual University Web Team members might focus the majority of their efforts on, or act as lead developer for, a specific division, school or group of departments.

University Web Team members must be competent in web development methods, and be able to create web pages and other web content that meet current web standards. Web standards include valid HTML, XHTML, CSS, Section 508 and WAI standards, and other markup, scripting and style techniques. University Web Team members must also have the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively design and implement an accessible and user-friendly site, and must be familiar with information architecture, graphic design principles, and user interface design. University Web Team members will expand their technical and design skills as new technology becomes available at SSU. University Web Team members will be the University's professional web developers, and their position descriptions should reflect this.

Following a prioritized list established by the University Web Advisory Committee, the University Web Team will transfer all administrative sites into templated layouts that comply with ATI requirements, SSU policy, and SSU marketing guidelines. The University Web Team will work

with Department Content Editors and other content experts to ensure web site content is up to date and accurate.

Other responsibilities of the University Web Team include:

- Creation and customization of University templates for administrative websites in compliance with accessibility requirements, SSU web policy, and department needs;
- User support and training for Department Content Editors;
- Monitoring and evaluating sites for compliance with ATI requirements; and
- Maintaining and reporting compliance data to University Web Advisory Committee.

The University Web Team will also work with Information Technology to evaluate, select and implement a [Web Content Management System](#) (WCMS) , and make it available to all departments who work with the University Web Team to provide a mechanism for rapid creation and updating of web content without the need for advanced HTML skills or high-end editing applications. The WCMS will help ensure that web pages meet accessibility requirements, are secure, have a consistent look and navigation across and between individual sites, and that outdated web pages are removed in a timely manner.

### **Department Content Editors**

Each department will identify an employee responsible for maintaining the department's administrative website. These Content Editors must be familiar with accessibility requirements, and be able to effectively edit the content of existing web pages using semantic markup. Department Content Editors do not necessarily need to know HTML or CSS, but should have good writing and computing skills, and be able to follow basic guidelines for accessible content creation in MS Word, Dreamweaver and other related applications. Department Content Editors will work with the University Web Team during site updates, redesigns and repairs.

To foster technical competency, Department Content Editor responsibilities should be assigned to an employee long-term rather than rotate the responsibilities among multiple employees. The responsibilities and required skills should be included in the Department Content Editor's job description, whenever appropriate.

### **Department Content Owners**

Each administrative website must have a Department Content Owner who is accountable for the site. The Department Content Owner may be a Department Chair, Dean or other appropriate administrator. The Department Content Owner may also be the Department Content Editor. Hands-on, day-to-day responsibility for the site or parts of the site may be delegated to a Department Content Editor, but the Department Content Owner is ultimately responsible for the site's content and accessibility. Department Content Editors will need approval from an administrative site's Department Content Owner to gain write-access to the site.

## **WAIP Plan - ATI Web Accessibility Implementation Plan Framework**

Coded memo AA-2007-04 calls for each campus to develop an implementation plan for web accessibility, addressing the following eleven points.

### **1. A process for auditing, monitoring and remediation of websites.**

The University Web Team will use AccMonitor to automatically monitor administrative websites. Reports for each administrative site will be run periodically (monthly or quarterly?) and made available to the Department Content Editors, University Web Advisory Committee and appropriate department administrators, and the University's Office of Internal Audit Services (IAS).

The University Web Advisory Committee will identify, prioritize and schedule administrative websites for manual evaluation and remediation, following the published CSU ATI timeline for Web Accessibility Milestones & Deliverables.

Using the First Year Web Report as a template, the University Web Advisory Committee will produce annual progress reports for the CSU, identifying a cross section and repair sample, and work with the University Web Team and Department Content Editors to replace or remediate sites that are not in compliance.

### **2. A process for establishing accountability and documentation procedures.**

All administrative websites must be registered with the University Web Team. Each website must have a Department Content Owner who is ultimately responsible for the site's accessibility.

The University Web Team, Department Content Owners, and Department Content Editors will monitor monthly AccMonitor reports to identify accessibility issues that need remediation. As sites are updated, replaced or repaired, the University Web Team and Department Content Editors will use AccMonitor and the Manual Evaluation process to evaluate the finished product and save it as part of the site report.

All administrative websites must go through the evaluation process at least once, and during each redesign to verify compliance with ATI requirements. The University Web Team and Content Editors will use AccMonitor Interview Wizard or AccVerify to document compliance.

Departments that choose not to use University Web Team services for an administrative site must use the manual evaluation process to verify the website's compliance and document it with AccVerify. Departments must keep a local copy of the AccVerify report and manual evaluation results, and send a copy to the Web Team.

### **3. A strategy to ensure that new websites and web content incorporate accessibility in the design and authoring process.**

A Web Content Management System (WCMS) will be made available to departments who work with the University Web Team. The WCMS will provide a mechanism for rapid creation and

updating of web content without the need for web or HTML editors. The WCMS will help ensure that web pages meet accessibility requirements, are secure, and that outdated web pages are removed in a timely manner.

When creating new sites, or redesigning existing sites, the University Web Team will incorporate accessible design methods in all phases of web site development, and test sites for potential accessibility problems at all stages of development.

Administrative sites created or redesigned outside the University Web Team must be submitted to the University Web Team for accessibility compliance testing before the site may go into public production. Sites that do not pass compliance testing must be repaired before going into production.

The University Web Team will use the process established for the ATI First Year Web Report – an automated evaluation with AccMonitor, followed by manual evaluation.

The University Web Team will maintain a list of recommended and supported web development tools that produce accessible content. University Department Content Editors and third-party developers will use the supported tools or know how to create accessible content in the tools of their choice.

#### **4. A process for determining exceptions and for developing, documenting and communicating the equally effective alternate form of access that will be provided.**

The University Web Advisory Committee will create a process for approving exceptions to the compliance requirements and remediation process. Departments requesting an exception must provide the Web Committee with a plan for providing equally effective access to the content.

This plan must include:

- The identity of the person(s) responsible for providing alternate access;
- A method of communicating the process for obtaining the information and services;
- A complaint process to address access issues; and
- A deadline for repair or replacement of the site.

#### **5. A process for identifying critical administrative websites that require remediation.**

All University web sites must be registered with the Web Team. This includes all web servers on campus, administrative sites, web applications, web interfaces for E& IT on the campus network, and University sites hosted off-campus, both public and intranet sites.

The University Web Advisory Committee will develop criteria for identifying critical administrative sites, and prioritize and schedule administrative sites for evaluation and remediation by the University Web Team and Department Content Editors.

## **6. A process for providing alternative ways of delivering information during any period in which websites are undergoing retrofit.**

The University Web Advisory Committee and University Web Team will work together to develop alternate means to deliver information during periods of retrofit for sites remediated by the Web Team.

Any department that does not want to use University Web Team services must submit a request to the University Web Advisory Committee, and include a plan for alternate information access during remediation.

## **7. A training plan for those who develop and maintain websites and who author web content.**

The University Web Team will need resources for training to ensure all members are competent in core areas, including:

- Accessibility standards
- Accessible content creation
- Web standards (using valid HTML/XHTML, CSS and scripting)
- Usability
- Graphic design basics.

Individual members will specialize in areas such as graphic design, scripting, content management, multimedia development, and will need resources for training in those areas, including accessibility in those areas. This training will be ongoing and updated as technology, web development methods, and accessibility standards change.

The University Web Team will offer training for Department Content Editors on the methods for maintaining administrative websites, using the University's WCMS, creation of accessible content in HTML, MS Word and PDF, detecting and repairing accessibility problems, and documenting remediation efforts.

New Department Content Editors must complete basic training before they are given access to administrative web sites.

The University Web Team will also offer periodic training sessions to others who author content (Word, PDF) for administrative web sites maintained by the Web Team. The University Web Team will not provide HTML/CSS training for people working on administrative sites produced outside the scope of the University Web Team work.

## **8. A communication plan to educate the campus about web accessibility requirements.**

The University Web Advisory Committee will be responsible for official communication to the campus regarding ATI-related policy issues, the formation of the University Web Team, and appointment of Department Content Editors.

The University Web Team will maintain an Accessibility website with information about ATI, training, events, tools, policies, and other related information. A link to the Accessibility site will be maintained on the SSU homepage, and other high-level pages, and included in communications to the campus. The University Web Team will announce training events via NewsBytes (weekly newsletter for faculty & staff) and other appropriate communication channels.

### **9. An evaluation process to measure the effectiveness of the plan.**

The University Web Team will provide the following reports to the University Web Advisory Committee:

- List of all administrative websites registered with the Web Team, and their Department Content Editors and Content Owners;
- List of Department Content Editors who have received ATI training;
- AccMonitor reports for all administrative websites;
- Summaries of manual evaluation results for all new sites; and
- Summaries of pre- and post-remediation results for sites repaired by the Web Team.

Also, each year (2008-2012) the University Web Advisory Committee will select a new cross section of the University's web presence. The University Web Team will produce a report based on the ATI First Year Report template.

### **10. The identification of roles and responsibilities associated with the above processes.**

See descriptions of University Web Advisory Committee, University Web Team and Department Content Editors, Content Owners above.

The Purchasing department (AFD, Financial Services) will work with the University Web Advisory Committee, University Web Team and Content Owners to ensure that contracted third-party developers and hosts are informed of ATI requirements, and comply with University accessibility monitoring and remediation efforts.

### **11. Milestones and timelines that conform to the dates listed below.**

#### **ATI Milestones**

No later than September 1, 2007: New and updated administrative websites, web applications, and web content produced by the SSU Web Team, Department Content Editors or by third-party developers should, at a minimum, conform to baseline accessibility standards as defined in Section 508, Subpart B, and where appropriate, Subpart C.

(<http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/standards.htm>)

May 15, 2009: All administrative sites that are critical to institutional access (as identified by the University Web Advisory Committee) should, at a minimum, conform to baseline accessibility standards as defined in Section 508. If remediation or replacement of the website is not possible

or would constitute an undue burden, then a plan to provide an equally effective alternate form of access must be developed, documented, and communicated.

May 15, 2012: All websites at SSU must fully conform to Section 508.

### **Additional SSU Milestones**

*(The following dates are from the original draft and need to be updated. They are goals, not requirements.)*

No later than January 1, 2008: Representatives to the University Web Advisory Committee have been named, the committee has had its first meeting, and established a schedule for future meetings.

No later than September 1, 2008: The Purchasing department has a set of accessibility requirements for contracted third-party developers.

No later than January 1, 2008: University Web Team members have been identified, and a date for assignment to the University Web Team has been set.

No later than January 1, 2008: All existing SSU administrative websites have been registered with the University Web Team (or Web Office). All sites have a Content Owner. Department Content Editors for each site have been identified. AccMonitor sites have been run for each administrative site, and reports delivered to the University Web Advisory Committee and Content Owners.

No later than July 1, 2008: University Web Team has formed. The University Web Advisory Committee has produced a prioritized list of critical institutional sites for the University Web Team to transfer to accessible University templates.

August 1, 2008: Half of the critical sites conform to baseline accessibility standards. Department Content Editors for those sites have been trained in accessible content creation methods.

May 15, 2009: The University Web Advisory Committee will evaluate progress towards full compliance, and develop a detailed plan for reaching the goal of full compliance with Section 508 by May 15, 2012.