Accessibility at Augsburg Committee

2012-2013 Annual Report
Regional Leadership in Accessibility
The seeds of the committee were planted at an Associated Colleges of the Twin Cities (ACTC) sponsored event on 3/9/12 titled “Legal Mandates for Accessible Technology: What Campuses Need to Know.” Augsburg’s CLASS office took a leadership role in securing an ACTC grant to bring the speaker, Salome Heyward, to speak at an event that drew 120 faculty and staff from ACTC schools. From that event a group of faculty and staff started to meet regularly at Augsburg during the 2012-2013 academic year to discuss and work on issues of accessibility for students, particularly access to technology.

Strategic Drivers and Priority Action List
Cindy Peterson and Jim Trelstad-Porter led a strategic planning session on 5/21/12 which resulted in a 10-item prioritized action list matrix supported by key drivers for the group. The top 3 priorities were

1. Obtain commitment from leadership.
2. Identify compliance officer and accessibility champion.
3. Conduct comprehensive audit and response plan.

President Pribbenow formalized the group’s role on 9/12/12, resulting in the Accessibility at Augsburg Committee charter. Committee members launched several projects and engaged in activities noted below.

Accessibility at Augsburg Committee

Charter
The Accessibility at Augsburg Committee exists to sustain and advance the College’s commitment to physical, instructional and technological accessibility to all students, staff, faculty, and guests of Augsburg College. The committee serves as a catalyst for change and continuous improvement to assure equitable and effective access. The committee seeks input and involvement and support from all members of the campus community.

Goals
• To improve physical, instructional, and technological accessibility.
• To become a leader in Higher Education in accessible education.

Objectives
• Assess accessibility and implement solutions.
• Promote and facilitate the creation and enforcement of accessibility policies.
• Measure and monitor progress.
• Solicit feedback from students, faculty, staff and guests.
• Educate all members of the campus community including, but not limited to staff, faculty and students about their responsibilities for accessibility.
2012-2013 Meetings
A brief summary of the meetings are noted. Minutes can be found on the committee's moodle site.

3/29/12
• First meeting after ACTC event.
• Plan next steps for group.

4/23/12
• Rachel, a first year student, shared her experiences with assistive technology and successes and challenges.
• Plan affinity exercise to identify strategic drivers.
• Plan key stakeholders to include in this work.
• Launched moodle site.

5/8/12
• Update on accessibility of Library elevators.
• Looking for ways to collaborate with ACTC schools on physical audit.

5/21/12
• Affinity exercise lead by Cindy Peterson and Jim Trelstad-Porter.
• Strategic drivers identified.

9/25/12
• Met with President Pribbenow.
• Committee became one that reports to the President.
• GOALS (Gaining Online Accessible Learning through Self-Study) project team announced.
• Ann Garvey, Vice President of Student Affairs, designated as compliance officer.

12/6/12
• GOALS project wrapped up. Report drafted.
• Charter work begun.
• Discussion of Comfort/Support/Therapy Animals.

2/7/13
• Review of Charter draft.
• GOALs project complete and report posted.
• Updates on student issues/perspectives.
• Look to TFAPs work for incorporating accessibility.

4/17/13
• Updates on work since last meeting.
• Drafting 1-page creating accessible assignments handout for faculty.
Accessibility Activities

December 2012

- **GOALS project report completed**
  The GOALS (Gaining Online Accessible Learning through Self-Study) project is a FIPSE–funded project out of The National Center on Disability and Access to Education. The project creates a framework for annual review of web accessibility along with recommended actions to improve web accessibility. Erin Voss led a team of 2 faculty and 8 staff in a self-study applying the GOALS framework.

February 2013

- **Annual International Technology and Persons with Disabilities Conference (CSUN)**
  From 2/25/13 – 3/1/13 Erin Voss attended CSUN (International Technology and Persons with Disabilities Conference). Erin met the state of Minnesota accessibility officer. She was invited to attend the MnSCU Web Accessibility Working Group (no other private college has been involved yet). [http://www.accessibility.project.mnscu.edu/](http://www.accessibility.project.mnscu.edu/) Erin has attended two of the meetings.

March 2013

- **Minnesota Association on Higher Education and Disability (MNAHEAD) presentation**
  On 3/8/13 Sheila Fox Wassink presented on the Accessibility at Augsburg Committee. MNAHEAD is the regional chapter of the professional organization on higher education and disability.

- **Facilitating Access for All**
  On 3/12/13 Sheila Fox Wassink, Rachel Kruzel, and Erin Voss facilitated a CTL-sponsored workshop covering areas of physical, instructional and virtual accessibility.

- **Increasing accessibility at Augsburg for everyone**
  On 3/15/13 the Augsburg Echo ran an article highlighting the work of the Accessibility Committee.

- **Website [http://inside.augsburg.edu/accessibility/](http://inside.augsburg.edu/accessibility/)**
  Erin Voss created a website to both be a resource for the campus and also provide visibility to the committee’s work.

- **Charter Completed**
  The committee finished and approved a charter.

April 2013

- **Selecting Accessible Course Materials**
  Heather Ek, Erin Voss, and Sheila Fox prepared a 1-page faculty handout on “Selecting Accessible Course Materials.” The handout was distributed at the April faculty meeting.

May 2013

- **Creating an Inclusive Campus (CIC)**
  On 5/22/13 Heather Ek, Sheila Fox Wassink, Ann Garvey, and Erin Voss presented at the CIC on “Creating an Accessible Learning Environment.” The presentation included a short interview of a student that was closed captioned using a captioning service.
**Work Ahead**

The group plans to focus on three areas in 2013-2014:
1. Policy development and support and training.
2. Growing the website and using it as a vehicle to submit reports or complaints.
3. Perform annual GOALS benchmarking.

Several activities are planned in addition to the above areas of focus.
1. Grow attendance at meetings.
2. Integrate accessibility in blended course design work.
3. Assess physical accessibility.
4. Heather Ek will present with Inver Hills Community College at the Minnesota elearning Summit on the GOALS project in late July 2013.
5. Rachel Kruzel will attend the 2014 Annual International Technology and Persons with Disabilities Conference (CSUN) in March.
6. Include accessibility tool in campus MS Word installations.