Survey of Institutional Practices to Promote College-wide Web Accessibility

With Recommendations

Accessibility Committee
December 13, 2012

Executive Summary

Members of the Augsburg Accessibility Committee are concerned with the accessibility of Augsburg's web presence so that all students, faculty, and staff can access and use it effectively and efficiently without barrier. This includes those individuals who have disabilities. Because of this concern, the Accessibility Committee requested that the GOALS Self-Assessment Team complete The GOALS Benchmarking and Planning Tool based on the Recommended Practice Indicators for Institution-wide Web Accessibility.

This self-study was completed during the Fall 2012. Team members who engaged in this self-study and helped to complete the survey and recommendations for action included:

Erin Voss, Administrative Liaison for Computing
Tony Bibus, Professor Emeritus
Micheal Bloomberg, Librarian
Kelly Crawford, HR Generalist
Heather Ek, Academic Liaison for Computing
Nathan Gorr, Director of Graduate Admissions
Rachel Kruzel, Accommodations Coordinator
Joseph Mann, Web Manager
Alicia Pickens, Residence Hall Director
Jody Sorensen, Associate Professor

The GOALS Benchmarking and Planning tool is designed to assess the presence of key benchmarks that are part of more global indicators of institution-wide web accessibility. Those indicators include: (1) Institutional Vision and Leadership Commitment; (2) Planning and Implementation; (3) Resources and Support; and (4) Assessment.

Findings

Indicator 1: Institutional Vision and Leadership Commitment. Augsburg College demonstrates Average performance across benchmarks for this indicator.

Indicator 2: Planning and Implementation. Augsburg College does not yet have any performance data for benchmarks within this indicator.

Indicator 3: Resources and Support. Augsburg College demonstrates Below Average performance across benchmarks for this indicator.

Indicator 4: Assessment. Augsburg College does not yet have any performance data for benchmarks within this indicator.

Recommendations

It is the recommendation of the self-study team that work commence on the objectives below. Each of these actions can be started without waiting for prerequisites to be completed, so they are truly "next actions" that can be taken to move Augsburg towards more complete web accessibility.

- Develop a vision and commitment statement regarding accessibility, which specifically mentions web accessibility as a component. Work through the college's governing bodies (e.g., faculty and staff senates, Board of Regents) to enact this statement and begin to include it in institution-wide documents. [Indicator 1: Institutional Vision and Leadership Commitment]

- Appoint a group charged with developing an institution-wide web accessibility policy. This group should include representatives from all stakeholder groups, as well as personnel who will be key in implementing the policy. [Indicator 1: Institutional Vision and Leadership Commitment]

- Raise awareness of, educate about, and promote web accessibility through campus messaging. Publicly recognize the work of the Augsburg Accessibility Committee and its members. [Indicator 1: Institutional Vision and Leadership Commitment AND Indicator 3: Resources and Support]

- Identify laws and regulations that apply to Augsburg, regarding web accessibility, to guide development of a policy and plan. This should include those that apply to the employee experience as well as the student experience, and may also include a review of our accreditation requirements. [Indicator 2: Planning and Implementation]

- Create a group tasked with identifying all college web presences (www.augsburg.edu and beyond, including sites such as Records & Registration, Financial Aid gateways, and Parking Services) and conducting an initial base audit of their accessibility for future comparison. [Indicator 4: Assessment]

Moreover, the team recommends revisiting the GOALS survey in Fall 2013.