

Accessibility at Augsburg Committee 2016 - 2017 Report

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.

Members

Co-chairs: Ann Garvey, Kathleen McGillivray

Scott Krajewski, Mary Lowe, Dawn Miller, Erin Voss, Sheila Fox Wassink, Christy Mattingly, Rachel Kruzel, Halle Chambers, Olivia Maccoux, Mary Stimpson

1. Web/Technological Accessibility

Recent Office of Civil Rights (OCR) agreements with colleges and universities have named Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 AA as the applicable standard.

Several committee members worked with Joe Mann, Marketing and Communications, (MarComm), to make sure we understood how to comply with these standards, and to assist Joe as he developed training sessions. In fall 2016, all web content managers had to attend a training on WCAG 2.0 AA accessibility standards. Those who did not attend had their access stopped in January, 2017, and if they attended a subsequent workshop, would have their access restored.

To reinforce learning and continue improvements on the web sites, and with funding from Day Student Government, Augsburg purchased a subscription to SiteImprove's analytics package. SiteImprove does monthly sweeps through inside.augsburg.edu, www.augsburg.edu, and augsburgathletics.edu, providing a report on accessibility in terms of WCAG A, AA, and AAA standards.

In addition to web accessibility efforts, we purchased a braille printer that is being used by students.

2. Purchasing Policy

Committee members worked with the Vice President for Finance and Administration to amend the Procurement Policy, so prior to the point of purchase, individuals ensure software, products, and materials have requisite accessibility features. Policy review and editing was completed in August, 2016.

3. Signage

Augsburg community members conducted signage audits of five buildings: Kennedy/Melby, Science, Music, Memorial, and Foss in Spring 2016. Jill Davenport, Central Services, worked with a local vendor and installed compliant signage in Fall 2016 and Spring 2017. Audits also yielded valuable data for the placement of exterior signage as the campus changes in the coming years.

4. Faculty and Staff Training

The Center for Learning and Accessible Student Services (CLASS)/Disability Resources staff conducted mandatory training for new faculty in Minneapolis as part of faculty orientation. In Rochester, CLASS staff provided training for faculty and staff. Additionally, CLASS staff presented two “Disability as Diversity” workshops as part of the Diversity and Inclusion certificate program. CLASS staff have worked with Education, Physician Assistant (PA), and Nursing departments to strengthen processes for ensuring students with disabilities receive reasonable accommodations and support for field experiences.

CLASS Office staff consulted with Event and Conference Planning (ECP) Office staff to develop processes for ensuring accessibility to events. ECP amended the student event planning form to include questions for event sponsors to address accessibility. MarComm staff created a specific page that is part of the LCD screen displays providing information on accommodations for events.

5. Physical Accessibility

Committee members continue to monitor and address issues related to physical accessibility. Two projects completed this year were”

- A. Chapel altar/stage: ADA compliant ramp for the altar/stage
- B. New stainless floor was installed in the Christensen Center elevator, reducing smells from food spills and making the elevator more pleasant for all to use.

Thanks to funding from the Day Student Government, we will have a state certified accessibility specialist on campus during the 2017 summer to do a physical accessibility audit of buildings and grounds. Kathy and Ann worked with Jill Davenport to develop a “scope of work” proposal and got input from students, faculty and staff as to priorities.

6. Preliminary priorities for 2017-2018

The committee will continue to focus on “physical, instructional and technological accessibility.” Some areas of focus for 2017-2018 are:

- a. Hagfors Center: monitor and ensure smooth transition for students, faculty, staff and community members as the building opens in 2018.
- b. Clarification between the CLASS Office/Disability Resources staff work and the work of the committee, as well as connection with Risk Management efforts.
- c. Employee accommodations request process, commensurate with Employee Handbook revisions
- d. 2017 Student Inclusion survey results review, specifically as impacts students who identify with physical or cognitive disabilities.
- e. Committee charter: conversation about including interpersonal or attitudinal environment, as well as physical, etc. In addition, review structure, work, and effectiveness.