

Report to Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) in Response to *Resolution in Support of Enhancing Worldwide Web Access for Students with Disabilities*

May 1, 2006

Governors State University (GSU) is submitting this report to the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) in response to *Resolution in Support of Enhancing Worldwide Web Access for Students with Disabilities* as submitted for Action Item #12 on October 5, 2004.

This report consists of four sections:

- I. Accessibility Standards
- II. Evaluation of Institutional Web Pages
- III. Plan for Continuous Improvement
- IV. Annual Status Report on Web Accessibility

I. Accessibility Standards

This section identifies the standards with which GSU is striving to comply and why those standards have been chosen.

GSU is striving to comply with Section 508 (Subpart B—Technical Standards—*1194.22 Web-based intranet and internet information and applications. 16 rules.*) of the Federal Rehabilitation Action because GSU is a state institution of higher learning that receives federal funding. (See <http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=12#Web>.) Subpart B 1194.22 refers to *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0* (WCAG 1.0), May 5, 1999, or <http://www.w3.org/TR/1999/WAI-WEBCONTENT-19990505/>.

II. Evaluation of Institutional Web Pages

This section presents an evaluation of the extent to which GSU's web pages meet the accessibility standards identified above and how these web pages will be improved.

Beginning with GSU's home page, we evaluated the home page and 13 institutional pages linked from the home page, going one link deep from the home page using the FAE Functional Accessibility Evaluator v. 0.8.6b (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) at <http://appserv.rehab.uiuc.edu/fae/>. Other evaluation tools and resources used were:

- *Checklist of Checkpoints for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0* <http://www.w3.org/TR/1999/WAI-WEBCONTENT-19990505/full-checklist.html>
- W3C HTML Markup Validation Service <http://validator.w3.org/>
- W3C CSS Validation Service <http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator>

The following web pages were evaluated using FAE.

Page Title	Web Address
Home Page	http://www.govst.edu/
A-Z Index	http://www.govst.edu/atoz/
Apply/Register	http://www.govst.edu/appreg/
About GSU	http://www.govst.edu/AboutGSU/
Degree Programs	http://www.govst.edu/degree/
Admission & Financial Aid	http://www.govst.edu/AdmissFinAid/
Student Services	http://www.govst.edu/sas/
News & Events	http://www.govst.edu/NewsEvents/
Directions	http://www.govst.edu/directions/
GSU Online	http://www.govst.edu/gsuonline/
Bookstore	http://www.govst.edu/bookstore/
Library	http://www.govst.edu/gsu_library/
Alumni	http://www.govst.edu/alumni/
Privacy Policy	http://www.govst.edu/privacy/

Summary of FAE's Findings for HTML Best Practices

Code	Compliance	Goals for Improvement
Navigation & Orientation: Inclusion of structural markup that facilitates navigation and contextual orientation		
Document Title <title> element	86% compliant. 14% of the pages displayed the same <title> element.	Make sure that each web page has a unique <title> so that users of speech technologies like screen readers (e.g., Jaws, Windoweyes, and HAL) can easily read the <title> content in the <head>.
Document Title <h1> element	0% compliant.	Rewrite all cascading style sheets (CSS) to include standard <h1> through <h6> header elements. The <h1> element includes subsection information and <i>may</i> contain web-site information. The <h1> element is easy for users to navigate to with assistive technologies as well as the keyboard in some browsers (e.g., Opera or Mozilla/Firefox accessibility extension).
Navigation Bars & elements	0% compliant. No and elements have <code>title</code> attributes.	Use or element as a container for navigation bars and other grouping of links, which are important to represent in HTML markup so that users can easily identify the navigation bars and skip over or move to them. By providing a distinctive label with the <code>title</code> attribute for each grouping, users can also identify the purpose of each navigation bar.
Navigation Bars Redundant text links	90% compliant. 10% of all area elements do not have redundant text links.	Make sure that all text links have redundant text. The text associated with links must provide a clear indication of the target of a link. Links with the text "Click here" or "more..." are ambiguous and force users to examine content surrounding a link to infer its probable destination. This is a minor annoyance to sighted users, but a major problem for speech-reader users.
Section Headings	0% compliant. 0% of the text content is contained in <header> elements (h1-h6).	Rewrite CSS to include standard h1-h6 <header> elements to convey document structure.
Form Controls	0% compliant. 0 controls are associated with <label> elements via their <code>id</code> attributes, and 0 are nested within <label> elements.	Label and group all form controls to provide explicit references that can be used by screen readers to communicate the purpose of a form control. Use the <code>tabindex</code> attribute to make instructions and other information part of the tab navigation ordering, so that screen-reader users can orient easily to information needed to complete the form.
Document Linearization	83 nested tables were found out of 121 <table> elements, with a maximum depth of 5.	Replace all table-generated layouts with CSS positioning. For data tables, identify row and column headers. For data tables that have two or more logical levels of row or column headers, use markup to associate data cells and header cells.

Frames	N/A No <frame> elements found	Frames have inherent problems for accessibility. GSU will continue to stay clear of frame-based content.
Access Keys	N/A No accesskey(s) defined.	accesskey can provide keyboard shortcuts to frequently used links or form controls. The use of accesskey is optional because it has not enjoyed widespread success. If accesskey becomes mandatory, we will implement it.
Text Equivalents: Proper use of images for interoperability and the provision of text descriptions for non-text content		
Images	80% compliant. 20% of all elements do not have alt text.	Provide a text equivalent for every non-text element (e.g., via "alt", "longdesc", or in element content.
Embedded Objects	N/A No <embed>, <applet>, or <object> elements were found.	An embedded object is an object created with one application and embedded into a document created by another application. Embedding the object, rather than simply inserting or pasting it, ensures that the object retains its original format.
Scripting: Avoidance of scripting techniques that compromise accessibility and interoperability		
Device Independence onmouseover onmouseout	0% compliant. No elements with an onmouseover attribute also have an onfocus attribute. No elements with an onmouseout attribute also have an onblur attribute.	Research on change event accessibility issues. Make programmatic elements such as scripts and applets directly accessible or compatible with assistive technologies. For scripts and applets, ensure that event handlers are input device-independent. For scripts, specify logical event handlers rather than device-dependent event handlers.
Dynamic Content	0% compliant. No calls to document.write or document.writeln were found.	Research to resolve.
Styling: Use of CSS styling techniques to separate content and structural information from styling and presentation		
Text Styling Inline style elements	50% compliant.	Eliminate inline style elements through judicious use of CSS.
Text Styling color attribute	Non-compliant. An average of 1 element with a color attribute per page was found.	Eliminate color as a way to separate content from styling through judicious use of CSS.
Content Positioning	83 nested tables were found out of 121 table elements, with a maximum depth of 5.	Replace all table-generated layouts with CSS positioning.
Standards: Support for standards to improve interoperability and provide more choices in the use of technologies for rendering web content		
W3Standards DOCTYPE	6% compliant. 94% of all pages did not include a DOCTYPE declaration.	Make sure that all pages include a DOCTYPE declaration.
W3Standards Default Language declaration	0% compliant. No pages included a default language declaration.	Make sure that all pages include a default language declaration.
W3Standards Character Encoding Declaration	100% compliant.	

III. Plan for Continuous Improvement

This section describes GSU's plan for continually improving the accessibility of its web pages.

GSU acknowledges a legal and professional obligation to assure that persons can access electronic information regardless of their ability to see, hear, or manipulate computer hardware or software.

GSU will develop and adopt a policy governing World Wide Web Accessibility that demonstrates the university's commitment to making information and communications technologies accessible to individuals with disabilities. The policy will be based on the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) guidelines as the standard for Web accessibility. The policy will set forth a method for identifying portions of current Web sites to be brought into compliance as a priority, based on number of "hits" or specific requests for access. The policy will establish minimum standards for Web page accessibility.

The table below lists current and future policies, support programs, and computer programs that relate to ensuring accessibility of GSU's web pages. The table also presents what actions GSU will take and a corresponding timeline. This will be the basis for future status reports to be submitted to IBHE through the annual *Report to the Governor and General Assembly on Underrepresented Groups in Illinois Higher Education* (URG Report) reporting process.

Timeline

Date	Status, Activity, or Goal
01 May 2006	The Information Technology Policy and Planning Council (ITPPC), whose purpose is to develop policies and carry out strategic and tactical planning for information technology at GSU, is in place. <i>Interim Web Presence Policy</i> is in place. Ektron's CMS200 serves as main web-development tool. Preparation for implementation of CMS400.NET is in process.
01 Aug 2006	CMS400.NET will be in place.
01 Jul 2006	<i>Interim Web Accessibility Policy</i> will be in place.
30 Oct 2006	Final <i>Web Presence Policy</i> will be in place.
30 Dec 2006	Final <i>Interim Web Accessibility Policy</i> will be in place.
01 Jun 2007	Compliance with Section 508 will be achieved.
01 Jun 2008	Compliance with IWAS will be achieved.

IV. Annual Status Report on Web Accessibility

Beginning with URG Reports submitted to IBHE staff in January 2007, GSU will submit a status report on the goals and activities outlined above in Section III *Plan for Continuous Improvement*, as submitted to IBHE in spring 2006. The status report will also include a description of any changes to the goals outlined in GSU's plan and why such changes are necessary.