Overview of IT Accessibility Issues & Our UW Journey
Two UW Centers:

Access Technology Center (ATC)

- 1984-
- Funded by UW

DO-IT Center

- 1992-
- Supported with federal, state, corporate, private funds
- Expanded to DO-IT Japan, 2007
Topics of Presentation

- Approaches to Accessibility: Accommodations & Universal Design
- Civil Rights Complaints Regarding Inaccessible IT
- UW’s Basic Approach to Accessible IT
- IT Accessibility Highlights at UW
- IT Accessibility “Ideal State”
- Key Aspects of UW Approach
- Resources
Ramp The Curbs

Forging a stream of humanity, this silent protester carries his campaign on his back. His goal: to end high-rise sidewalks. (photo by grant haller)
Ability on a Continuum

see
hear
walk
manage physical/mental health
read print
write with pen or pencil
communicate verbally
tune out distraction
learn

Not able
Able
Views of Disability

• Outcasts, shame
• Medical diagnosis
• Mainstream
• Social justice/diversity

Access Approaches

→ Exclude, offer charity
→ Cure, rehabilitate
→ Accommodate
→ Apply universal design + accommodate
Accommodations:

An accommodation adjusts a product or environment to provide access to a specific person.
Examples of Accommodations:

- Extra time on tests
- Proctored exams
- Materials in alternative format
- Alternative assignments
- Moving to accessible classroom
- Sign language interpreters
- Note takers
But sometimes it is the design of the product or environment that should be reconsidered…
“Coffeepot for Masochists”, Catalog of Unfindable Objects by Jacques Carelman; in Donald Norman’s *The Psychology of Everyday Things*, 1988
Universal Design =

“the design of products & environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.”

The Center for Universal Design
www.design.ncsu.edu/cut
Apply UD to:

- instruction
- student services
- physical spaces
- technology
Inaccessible → Accommodation → UD

Uncaptioned video → Interpreter for student who is deaf → Captioned video → Captioned & audio described
Universally-designed Video

- Address multiple audiences in design
- Film with captions in mind
- Large, clear captions
- Searchable captions
- Design so that key content is spoken & visually presented
- Audio-described version available
Approaches to the Provision of Accessible IT Features

- As an accommodation for students with disabilities
- As a universal design feature for the purpose of ensuring access to everyone
UD – know it when you see it:

...at “skateboard park”
Examples of IT Barriers

> Word, PowerPoint, & PDF files & web pages not designed to be accessible to screen readers used by people who are blind or have Dyslexia or other reading challenges
> Some navigation not usable with the mouse alone
> Uncaptioned videos not accessible to students who are deaf
UW-IT’s Basic Approach to IT Accessibility

- Universal design & accommodations
- Distributed IT & distributed responsibility for accessibility
- Central unit (/ATS) with assistive technology showroom & IT accessibility consultation & training that works closely with DRS & DSO
- Extensive resources online, many funded with external funds
OCR/DoJ Complaints/Resolutions
Agreements & Lawsuits RE IT Accessibility

University of Cincinnati • Youngstown State University • University of Colorado-Boulder • University of Montana-Missoula • UC Berkeley • South Carolina Technical College System • Louisiana Tech University • Maricopa Community College District • Florida State University • CSU Fullerton • California Community Colleges • Ohio State University: University of Kentucky • MIT • Harvard
Key Legislation

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and its 2008 Amendments
“Accessible” means a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use. The person with a disability must be able to obtain the information as fully, equally and independently as a person without a disability.
Legal Cases: Lessons Learned

- Conduct accessibility audit & develop corrective action strategy
- Develop & disseminate accessible IT policy
- Set and disseminate IT accessibility standards
- Provide training & education
- Develop procurement policies & procedures
- Develop & publicize grievance procedure
- Address developed, procured & used IT: websites; learning management systems; classroom technologies; bank ATMs; purchased software
IT Accessibility Highlights & UW

1984 > IT access support assigned, Micro Support Group
1990 > Access Technology Lab/Center began
1992 > DO-IT Center began with NSF funding
1993 > DO-IT began creating AT/accessible IT videos
   > UW courses, presentations on AT began
1995 > First online learning course taught at UW & designed to be accessible
UW’s First Online Course

- 1995
- Instructors: Sheryl Burgstahler & Norm Coombs
- Title: *Adaptive Technology for People with Disabilities*
- Technology: Email, discussion list, Gopher server, telnet, file transfer protocol
- Mailed materials: publications (also online), captioned & audio described VHS videos
IT Accessibility Highlights & UW

2001  > AccessIT funded by U.S. Department of Education

2002  > UW AccessibleWeb@u user group began, led by Rick Ells

> Accessibility incorporated into HTML training

2006  > AccessComputing funded by NSF
IT Accessibility Highlights

2006  >Hosted nationwide IT accessibility capacity-building institute

2011  >Began license & deploy SiteImprove to test the accessibility of campus websites

2012  >IT accessibility campus-wide task force
       >Video…What Campus Leaders Have to Say

2013  >Video…What Web Developers Have to Say
       >Launched proactive initiative to test website accessibility & assist webmasters
IT Accessibility Highlights

2014

> *Automatic Sync* contract for captioning signed

> *SensusAccess* licensed for PDF accessibility

> Increased efforts with UW IT development teams & outside vendors

> Standard wording for knowledge/skills on accessible IT to for open job descriptions

> Draft wording created to include in Purchasing questions for IT vendors

> Video to promote captioning

> Accessibility wording included in IT job listings
IT Accessibility Highlights & Plans

2015 >Capacity building institute for IT & disability professionals at 24 WA institutions
>Capacity building institute for UW stakeholders
>Video case study about captioning as a best teaching practice
>Increase # of presentations on campus
>Develop a formal group of IT accessibility contacts in departments/units?
>Present accessibility awards?
>What are your ideas?
IT@UW Accessibility “Ideal State”

- Campus-level task force with annual reports
- Guidance website
- Accessible “standard” web page templates
- IT accessibility consulting/testing services
- Accessibility included on IT dev/support teams
- Work with UW & vendor staff for LMSs, etc., in collaboration with other campuses
- Accessibility considered in IT purchasing
IT Accessibility “Ideal State”

- IT accessibility courses offered
- Accessibility included in general IT training
- Accessibility included in IT job postings
- IT accessibility leader in each campus unit
- Captioning promoted as a best practice
- Grant writers supported RE accessible IT
- Accessibility-awareness activities & products
IT Accessibility “Ideal State”

- Regular IT accessibility capacity-building institutes for UW & other WA schools
- Grants secured to supplement & expand reach of IT accessibility efforts
- Engaged in IT accessibility leadership through professional organizations & publications
- Students with disabilities accessibility/usability testers
IT Accessibility Task Force

Engages in ongoing activities & makes recommendations regarding:

- Enhancement of online resources
- Promotion of accessible IT
- Exploration & improvement of policies/processes
Goal, Legal & Policy Foundation, Guidelines, Target

- **Goal**: An inclusive university
- **In accordance with applicable state & federal laws including Section 504 & ADAAA; & Executive Order 31**
- “Guidelines” formal document under review
- **How-to guidance provided on website**
- **Target: WCAG 2.0 Level AA guidelines**
Resources

- Access Technology Ctr
- Disability Resources for Students
- Center for Universal Design in Higher Education
  www.uw.edu/doit/programs/center-universal-design-education/
- AccessDL  www.uw.edu/doit/accessdl
- Accessible Technology at UW
  www.uw.edu/accessibility/