



Framingham

State University

Plan for Web Accessibility New Content and Functionality

OCR Complaint No. 01-17-2288

(Resolution Agreement dated: April 13, 2018)

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OVERVIEW

Framingham State University (“the University”) seeks to treat all individuals with dignity and respect and to value people as its first priority. To this end, the University is committed to providing accessible information to all people wherever possible. The University will work to ensure that persons with disabilities have an opportunity equal to that of their non-disabled peers to access and utilize information technologies, and technology-related services, except where doing so would impose an undue burden on the University or require a fundamental alteration of our programs.

Framingham State University is committed to providing equal access to employment and educational opportunities for otherwise qualified persons with disabilities. The University has codified this commitment in the [University's Equal Opportunity Plan](#).

Any member of the University community or any applicant for admission or employment who believes that he or she has been a victim of disability discrimination or harassment, or who alleges that the University has failed to provide reasonable accommodations, appropriate auxiliary aids and/or academic adjustments, may initiate a claim as outlined in the University’s Complaint Investigation and Resolution Procedures located at Appendix 3 in the University’s Equal Opportunity Plan.

PLAN SCOPE

The Plan for New Content and Functionality (“the Plan”) outlines how the University plans to ensure that all new online content and functionality developed, procured, or used by the University will be fully accessible to individuals with disabilities. These procedures apply to all University sponsored web pages and programs used to conduct University business and activities, including web resources used in courses. The Plan further outlines the implementation of training programs to support these objectives.

This Plan for New Content and Functionality applies to the following content:

1. All new or modified web content and navigation structure for web sites contained within the framingham.edu domain.
2. All new web content developed or modified for FSU courses or organizations in Blackboard
3. Procurement of new electronic and information technology software, hardware, and services

In February 2018, the University formed a Working Group on Accessibility and Usability to address accessibility concerns for University sponsored web content. The Plan is an outgrowth of this group’s work and will continue to be developed as the University remains vigilant in attaining its goal of equal opportunity access, or equally effective alternate access, for individuals to participate in the University’s programs and activities offered through the University’s website.

DEFINITIONS

Web site or web content: Any single piece or collection of data, documents or information in any format, published on an intranet or the World Wide Web.

Acceptably accessible: A web site or web application is considered “acceptably accessible” when all of its content meets the nationally-recognized accessible technology standards of WCAG 2.0 Level AA and WAI-ARIA 1.0.

Editors: University employees who are designated to add, update, or change new and existing web content on official University web sites.

BENCHMARKS FOR ACCESSIBILITY

In order to ensure the accessibility of our web site and web content, the University will comply with a set of nationally-recognized accessible technology standards.

WCAG 2.0 Level AA and WAI-ARIA 1.0

The Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) is an effort coordinated by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), an international standards organization for the World Wide Web. The WAI has published multiple guidelines for accessibility which address a variety of web-related technologies, including the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), and the Accessible Rich Internet Applications Suite (WAI-ARIA).

Adherence to these accessible technology standards is one way the University will ensure persons with disabilities are able to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same benefits and services within the same timeframe as their nondisabled peers, with substantially equivalent ease of use; that they are not excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination in any Recipient programs, services, and activities delivered online, as required by Section 504 and Title II and their implementing regulations; and that they receive effective communication of the University’s programs, services, and activities delivered online.

WEB ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

The University provides the following Website Accessibility Statement (effective date June 13, 2018) on its site at: www.framingham.edu/about-fsu/accessibility/website-accessibility-statement:

Framingham State University is committed to providing access to all individuals, with or without disabilities, seeking information on our website. FSU will comply with the standards of the [World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.0](https://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG20/quickref/).

If, because of a disability, you are unable to access content on the Framingham State University website, have questions about the accessibility of content or technology used by FSU, and/or would like to report barriers to accessing any technology used by FSU, including this website, please use the form on the following page: [Report a Web Accessibility Issue](#).

You may also email accessibility@framingham.edu with any questions.

The above information is prominently displayed via a link to “Accessibility Statement” in the footer of the University’s homepage and each page throughout the website, including all subordinate pages owned and managed by the University.

USE OF TEMPLATES

The University provides multiple templates to structure departmental web sites on Framingham.edu. These templates can only be edited by the University’s web developers. All current templates are confirmed as compliant with WCAG 2.0 standards.

All new and modified templates will be created in a manner compliant with WCAG 2.0 standards.

Academic Affairs, in collaboration with the ITS-Education Technology Office (ETO) and the Center for Academic Success and Achievement (CASA), will provide faculty with accessible document templates for commonly used documents such as syllabi.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM - BLACKBOARD

Authorized organization leaders may choose to use applications and layouts provide within the University’s learning management system, Blackboard, or create new content designs. When setting up new content pages or applications it is understood that all provisions provided by WCAG 2.0 Level AA and WAI-ARIA must be satisfied.

A new application, Blackboard Ally has been enabled in all new Blackboard course spaces as of May 2018. Blackboard Ally evaluates documents that are uploaded to Blackboard and provides an accessibility score for each file. The tool explains what accessibility issues mean for students and leads course leaders through the steps needed to improve or correct the accessibility of these online course materials.

PROCUREMENT AND THIRD PARTY APPLICATIONS

The procurement and use of third party digital applications have been and will continue to be modified to satisfy compliance with accessibility and usability standards. The Business Office has modified their procurement procedures for web based applications, requiring vendors to

disclose their products' accessibility standards at time of bid and prior to purchase. Contracts or requests for third party applications are previewed and reviewed for these standards prior to purchase and implementation.

Requests for exceptions require written justification, an explanation of any undue burden or fundamental alteration, and a description of how an alternate accessible format will be provided to users with disabilities. Requests for exceptions must be submitted to the President for consideration and approval by him/her or designee.

AUDIO/VIDEO CONTENT

The University requires that all video published on the website by the University contain captions and, where necessary to communicate important visual elements of a video, a video description. For video, auto captioning may be utilized but must be reviewed and corrected for accuracy. Links to documents referenced in the video will be included in the captions and video description, as applicable.

Audio-only content must be accompanied by a written transcript.

EDITOR ACCESS

Divisional and departmental leaders will designate editors for specific subordinate pages on Framingham.edu and will be responsible for ensuring that all editors in the University's content management system ("CMS") have completed the requisite training through the Web Team at the University. No new personnel responsible for developing, loading, maintaining, or auditing online content and functionality in the CMS will gain access to those systems without first completing web accessibility training as specified by the Web Team.

All current editors with access to the CMS to add or modify content on any University web sites must complete training on creating accessible documents and web content no later than fall 2018. Editors who have not completed training by that time will have editing access removed until such time that training has been confirmed as completed.

TRAINING AND RESOURCES

The University recognizes the importance of ongoing accessibility training and will provide training to all appropriate personnel, including, but not limited to: content developers, administrators, staff, faculty and all others responsible for developing, loading, maintaining, or auditing online content and functionality.

The Web Team and ETO at the University shall administer a training program to help content authors and editors establish competency in the creation of accessible web site content and

applications. Training shall be offered regularly and in multiple modes, including self-paced and in-person instructor-led training opportunities.

The following trainings have been created and implemented within the timeframes outlined in the chart. The University will continue to develop and procure additional training to meet the needs of our community.

Training Title	Brief Description	Timeline	In-Person or Recorded
Create Accessible Web Content	General information about web accessibility standards, accessibility best practices, and technical guidance on how to create accessible web content within the University's content management system. Create headings, add descriptions to images, transform links into hyperlinks, and make tables accessible.	(February 2018 - present)	In-Person and Recorded
Create Accessible Documents	Accessible documents and multimedia. How to create Word documents and PowerPoints with headings, descriptions for images, descriptive links, and accessible tables. Demonstrate easy workflow for captioning videos made in Panopto.	(February – present)	In-Person

Blackboard Ally	Blackboard Ally is a tool to help us enhance the usability and accessibility of our course documents. Ally evaluates documents that are uploaded to Blackboard and provides an accessibility score for each file. The tool explains what accessibility issues mean for students and leads us through the steps needed to improve the accessibility of our documents.	(February – present)	In-Person
Create Accessible Word Documents	Learn how the new Blackboard Ally tool can help you to identify how accessible your documents are. We will also demonstrate how to create Word documents with headings, descriptions for images, descriptive links, and accessible tables. The presentation will focus on the Windows version of Microsoft Word.	(February – present)	In-Person
Creating Accessible Images with Alt Text	Alternative text, or "alt text" lets people perceive the information contained in an image if they can't see it. It also increases the searchability of a document. In this workshop, we will review different ways images are used in documents, and what the best practices are for associating alt text based on how the image is being used. We will look at different types of images, and how to associate alt text with them in Blackboard as well as in Microsoft Word.	May - Present	In-Person

Make PowerPoint Accessible	Learn how the new Blackboard Ally tool can help you to identify how accessible your documents are. We will also demonstrate how to make your PowerPoint presentations accessible.	June - Present	In-Person
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MONITORING

The University will continue its annual subscription to SiteImprove Content Suite to maintain, monitor, and optimize the University’s websites for accessibility.

Web site administrators for the University will routinely review newly created content on Framingham.edu. New and modified content found to be not in conformance with the aforementioned accessibility standards will be removed until such time the content has been made acceptably accessible.