Web Accessibility for Those With Disabilities: What You Need to Know

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GOALS

Gaining

Online

Accessibility to

Learning through

Self-study

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Today's Presentation

- Context for Web Accessibility
  - What is it
  - Why is it important
  - Why should your member institutions care?
- Leveraging Web Accessibility Efforts During Reaffirmation
- GOALS Resources Can Help
- Discussion

Context

How is the web used in higher education?

- Recruitment
- Admission and financial aid
- Registration and payment
- Employment
- Student services
- Tutoring
- Social aspects of campus

- Courses, assignments, research, assessment
- 21st Century Learning
  - Course management tools
  - Open Educational Resources
  - Web 2.0
  - Mobile
  - Gaming & immersive environments

Accessing web content is important to students, faculty, and staff

The internet is essential in higher education. It is *used for everything* from teaching and learning to critical administrative and employment functions

By 2014, 22 million students will take some or all of their classes online

- Nagel, D. (2009, October 28). *Most college students to take classes online by 2014*. Campus Technology. Retrieved from http://campustechnology.com/articles/2009/10/28/most-college-students-to-take-classes-onlineby-2014.aspx?sc_lang=en

"The rate of growth in online education is 10x's that of the rate in all higher education"

- *Allen, E., & Seaman, J. (2011). Going the Distance: Online Education in the United States, 2011. Massachusetts: Babson*

Yet we are not just talking about online courses

What about campus courses with online content?

Blended – Hybrid – Enhanced

Who is Affected?

8.5% has a disability that affects computer and internet use:

- Vision
- Hearing
- Fine motor
- Cognitive
- Seizures
- Combinations of the above

Waldrop, J., Stern, S. (2003) Disability *Status: 2000*. U.S. Census Bureau. Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/c2kbr-17.pdf

We will show a video example provided by the National Federation of the Blind, 2011

THE COMMON APPLICATION

Preview | Help | Account | Logout

Anthony Olivero
Transfer applicant
Common App ID: **7532146**

- Instructions
- My Colleges
- Search for Colleges
- Common Application
  - Future Plans
  - Applicant
  - Demographics
  - Family
  - Education
  - Academics
  - Activities
  - Writing
  - Signature
- Supplements
- Payments
- School Forms

Brown University

Transfer Supplement to the Common Application

Check Errors & Save | Print Preview | SUBMIT

Application Type

This form will be used to initiate your application file and must be submitted before we can receive your Common Application Transfer documents. Please complete all the sections and submit the forms electronically.

Please indicate desired level of entrance:

- ○ Sophomore
- ○ Junior

Official standing will be based upon evaluation of transferable credit by the Office of the Dean of the College at Brown. Please refer to the Transfer section on the Admission Office website for more detailed information on transfer credit: http://brown.edu/Administration/Admission.

Check to indicate the semester of your preferred entrance:

- ○ Fall Semester
- ○ Spring Semester

There are a limited number of spaces available each semester, so it is not always possible to accommodate an applicant's preferences. *If you are not admitted to your semester of preference, would you still like to be considered for the alternate semester?*

A Personal Look at Accessibility in Higher Education

The problem with the "Accommodation" model

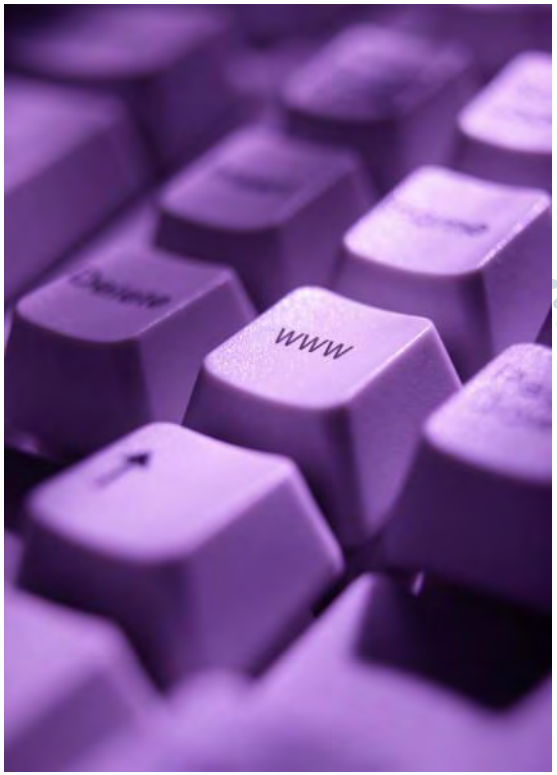
Students lose timeliness

Students lose content

Students lose participation

Institutional content cannot be considered accessible if you have to navigate inaccessible pages to get to it.

What is Web Accessibility?

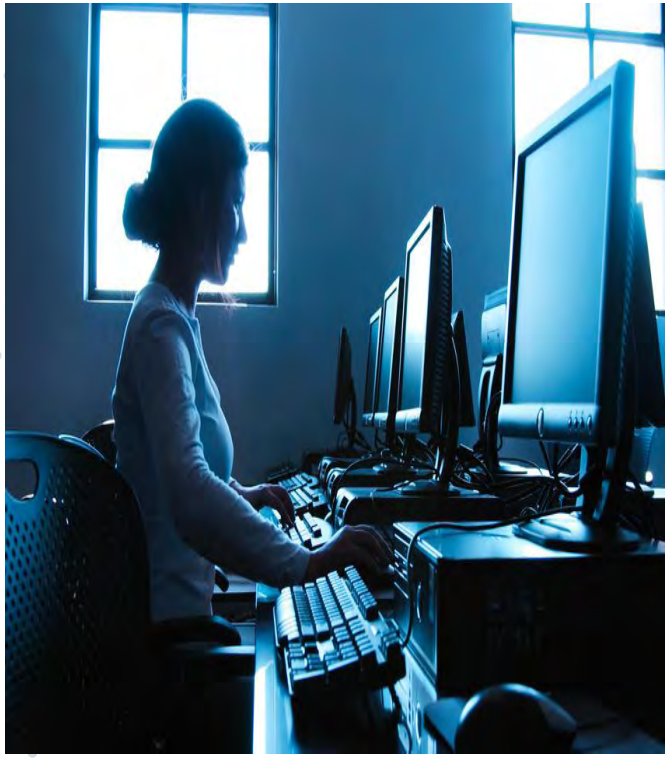


Designing for the broadest array of users

Just as we designed accessibility for the ***built environment***, we need it for the *digital* one

Why Web Accessibility?

Digital accessibility allows ***participation and engagement*** of students, faculties and staffs who have disabilities



These individuals could not otherwise succeed on par with their peers with independence and dignity

Why should accreditors & their member institutions care about web accessibility?

- ✓ It affects student outcomes
- ✓ It enhances institutional effectiveness
- ✓ The legal landscape is changing

Web Accessibility Is No Longer Optional!

Evolving laws and increasing litigation mean that an institution ignores web accessibility at their own peril.

Litigation

Students with disabilities are increasingly aware of their rights to access web content and advocate for this right at higher levels than ever. Campuses nationwide are feeling the sting of complaints and litigation.

"The continual procurement and development of inaccessible web materials used in higher education is driving those with disabilities to higher levels of complaint"

(Daniel Goldstein, Outside Counsel for the NFB [National Federation for the Blind] personal communication, February 23, 2011).

Examples of campus litigation:

- Arizona State University
- Case Western Reserve University
- Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia
- Florida State University
- Maricopa Community College District for inaccessible technology
- New York University
- Northwestern University
- Pace University
- Penn State University
- Princeton University
- Reed College
- University of Montana
- The Law School Admissions Council (serving over 200 campuses).

http://ncdae.org/blog/recent-legal-issues/

The Cost of Litigation is High!

The Costs to the Institution in the case of Florida State were in excess of $400,000!

Not to mention the cost of bad publicity…

Legislation is also evolving to recognize the changes that the digital revolution has made to modern education:

"Access to curriculum and instructional material is a civil right – one that all students should be able to enjoy equally. Although technological advancements make accessibility readily achievable in modern classrooms the level of accessibility continues to be uneven"

Senator Tom Harkin, Chair Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee.

US Senate (2012). *The promise of accessible technology: Challenges and opportunities. US Senate Committee on Health, Education and Labor Pensions*. [video broadcast] Retrieved from http://www.help.senate.gov/hearings/hearing/?id=15eea6a0-5056-9502-5d55-b899d73ef5f9

"It is unacceptable for universities to use emerging technology without insisting that this technology be accessible to all students".

2010 Whitehouse letter to all college and university presidents.

Dale, K. (2010). *White house continues its celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act*. Retrieved from http://www.whitehouse.gov/ blog/2010/06/30/white-house-continues-its-celebration-20th-anniversary-americans-with-disabilities-act

The US DOJ has announced that it will release a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) on web accessibility for state and local government websites this July. This notice separates state and local government rules (Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act) from the public accommodation rules (Title III).

RTF. (2013). *US Department of Justice to Propose New Rules on Web Accessibility,* Retrieved from http://raisingthefloor.org/news/us-department-justice-propose-new-rules-web-accessibility

How are Institutions Responding?

- Early Adopters
  - The California Experience
  - Many institutions are setting policy and implementation plans – example: *Portland Community College*
  - Many need support and assistance. You could provide it.

Web Accessibility provides a number of value added benefits for your constituent institutions – most of which can help them make the case for reaffirmation

Value Added Benefits

Web accessibility makes sound financial policy

- More efficient than after-the-fact fixes.
- Helps protect the institution from legal complaints on accessibility
- Assists in recruitment and retention of students and faculty with disabilities.
- Funding agencies have begun to require accessible information communication for grants and contracts.
- Enhances collaborative possibilities in both the US and abroad.
- Good for public relations and development (i.e., campus fund raising campaigns).

Value Added Benefits

Web enhances student outcomes

- Assists students for whom English is a second language
- Helps multi-modal learners – students can access materials in a format that best suits their preferred learning style
- It assists those using older equipment, slow modems, or in places where sound is not allowed

Value Added Benefits

Web accessibility supports technology

- Standards compliant websites are also more likely to maintain their integrity as technologies evolve (forward compatible), and be compatible with newer browsers and emerging technologies
- SEO: Accessible content also tends to have a higher return on prominent search engines (e.g., Google,)
- Web Accessible design is usually more robust. This means it should work more reliably across different browsers and devices, such as tablets and mobile phones.

Value Added Benefits

Web accessibility aligns with institutional mission statements and strategic planning initiatives

- 86% of institutional mission statements in a national sample contained language supportive of web accessibility It shows a commitment to quality student outcomes, employee productivity, and supports diversity at all levels*
- It promotes an institution as socially responsible

**GOALS (2008). Evaluation of a sample of online institutional mission statements for language supporting web accessibility. Unpublished raw data*

Helping Your Member Institutions

- Raise awareness in your organization
- Encourage Web Accessibility across your institutions
  - Gain information
  - Gather resources
- Consider working with GOALS

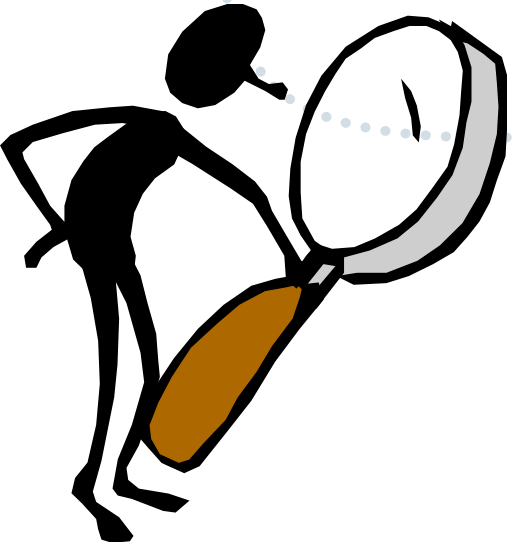
GOALS and SACSCOC

Project GOALS is working with SACSCOC (The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges) to create materials and processes that can be used by regional accreditors and their constituent institutions to help them inculcate web accessibility into the reaffirmation process

Making the proposition of engaging in web accessibility more attractive and less daunting:

The Foundation For Web Accessibility Is Already There!

Web accessibility maps onto the existing requirements for all 6 regional accrediting agencies

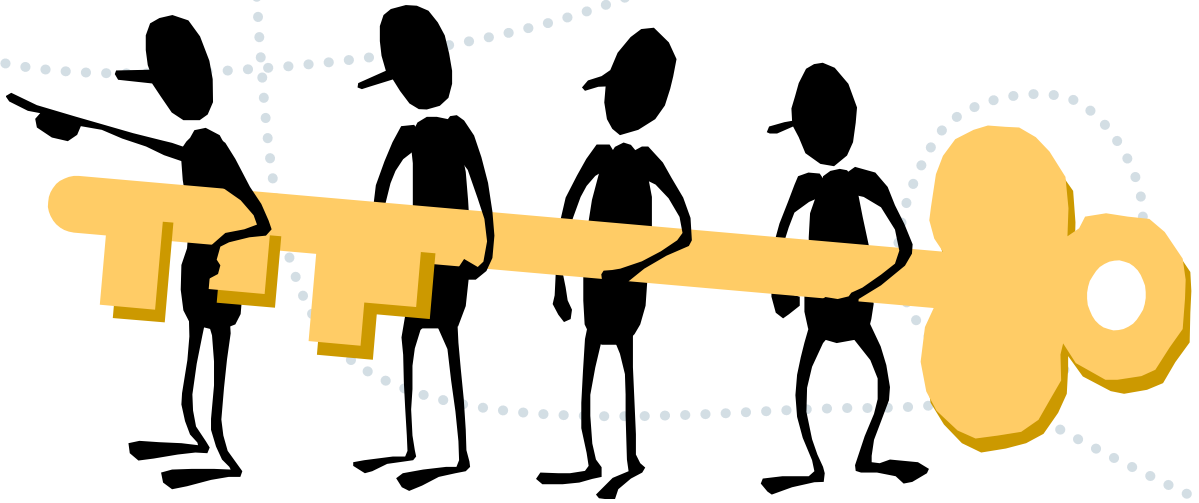


An analysis of Principles, Standards and Criteria of the 6 regional accreditors revealed areas of support for web accessibility as part of the accreditation evaluation - *ncdae.org/goals/accreditation/mapping.php*

Themes Include:

- ✓ Institutional Mission
- ✓ Strategic Planning
- ✓ Quality
- ✓ Technology
- ✓ Library and Information Resources
- ✓ Distance Education
- ✓ Equity and Serving the Needs of All
- ✓ Student Services / Student Needs / Student Success
- ✓ Ethics and Integrity
- ✓ Risk Management

Value Added Web Accessibility: Why not make it count?



Institutional efforts to improve digital accessibility can serve as a “two-fer”

Providing a platform for using web accessibility efforts during reaffirmation helps to improve the quality and outcomes of institutions and promotes the values of the accreditation process

Web Accessibility can be addressed across many different accreditation requirements

Web Accessibility can also serve as one aspect of an institution's quality improvement plans

Thematic Analysis of 160 SACSCOC Institutional QEPs

- Reading/Writing/Literacy/Oral Skills/Information Literacy (50)
- Critical Thinking/Contextual Learning/Active Learning (44)
- Remediation (22)
- Freshman Experience (20)
- Diversity/Ethics/Values/Globalization (19)
- Math (16)
- Teamwork/Collaboration (9)
- Technology (8)
- Student Scholarship (7)
- Real World Training/Career/Professionalism (6)
- Academic Advising/Mentoring (6)
- Access to JIT materials (3)
- Student Retention/Completion (2)

While quality enhancement generally focuses on student outcomes, many plans lend themselves to including students with disabilities. Some plans are an obvious fit (Diversity, Technology, Ethics, Remediation etc…) but, many others also benefit from including digital accessibility.

We Want to Help!

Project GOALS is developing additional resources to help you and your constituents

Best Practices for Institution-Wide Web Accessibility

ncdae.org/goals/accreditation/bestpractices.php

Indicator #1: Institutional Vision and Leadership Commitment

Institution-wide web accessibility is best attained and sustained when there is leadership to support a vision and commitment toward institutional accessibility. This support should come from many levels including an institution's governing board, central administration, and key personnel. Each must actively support, participate, and take ownership in the work and outcomes of accessibility.

Two Benchmarks distinguish Institutional Vision and Leadership Commitment:

Benchmark A: The Commitment of Administrative Leadership

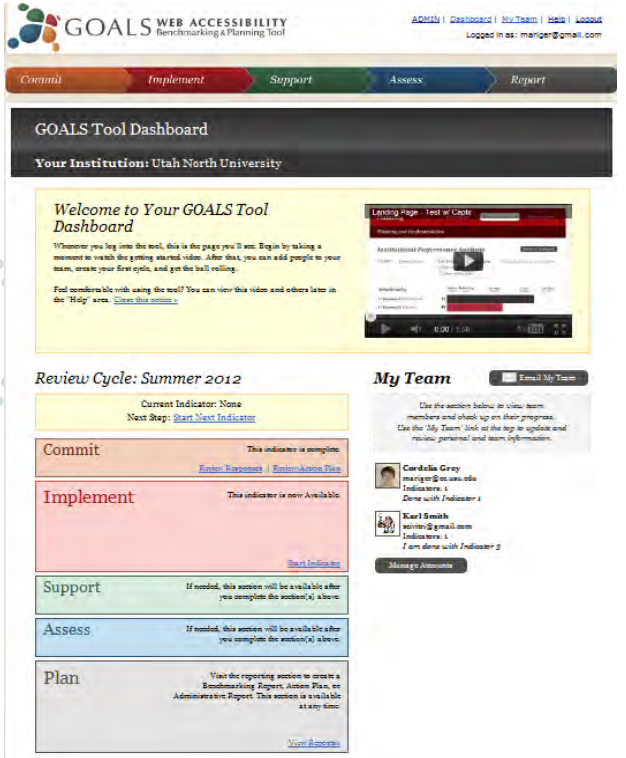
Administrative leadership begins with a vision and commitment toward change. Typically this vision, and its leadership support, stems from efforts made at top administrative levels within an institution. For some systems this would also include the institution's board of governors or trustees. Over time the leadership commitment results in the development and enforcement of an accessibility policy and plan, along with the necessary resources to implement them.

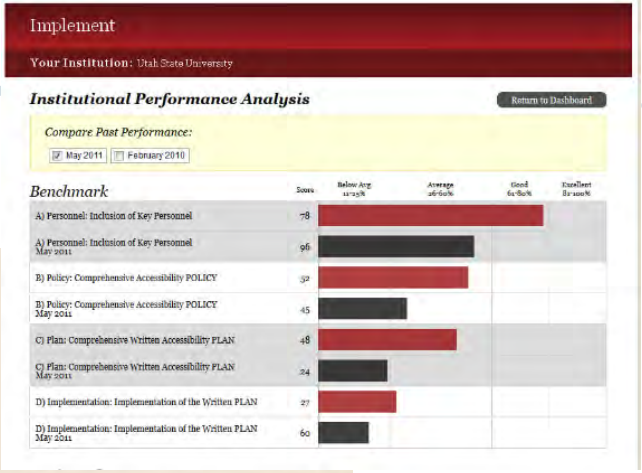
Examples of administrative commitment:

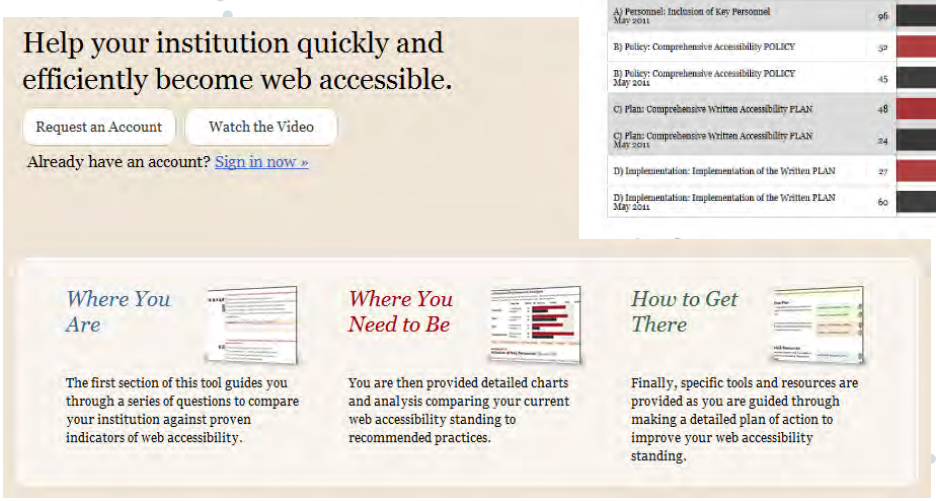
- An institutional statement of vision or commitment to web accessibility
- The creation and support of a web accessibility task force or institution-wide accessibility group
- An institutional policy on web accessibility
- An institution-wide accessibility action plan
- The availability of resources for web accessibility efforts
- Efforts to advance the visibility, promotion, and communication of web accessibility efforts

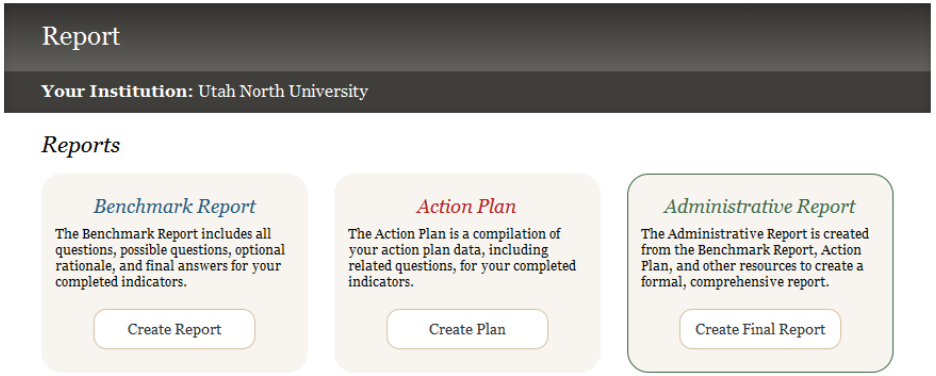
Institutional Benchmarking and Planning Tool

- Uses the Best Practice Indicator Schema
- Benchmarks institutional web accessibility
- Scaffolds Action Planning
- Tracks progress over time









ncdae.org/goals/planningtool.php

Would you consider accepting this process as part of an institution's continuous improvement?

A Template for Institutional Web Accessibility Activities

ncdae.org/goals/accreditation/template.php

Indicator #1: Institutional Vision and Leadership Commitment

Benchmark A: The Commitment of Administrative Leadership

Evidence of Administrative Leadership can include:

- A posted statement of vision or commitment
- The creation and maintenance of a web accessibility task force or institution-wide accessibility group
- An official institutional policy on web accessibility
- An institution-wide accessibility action plan
- Resources that are available for web accessibility efforts
- Activities to promote the visibility, endorsement and communication of web accessibility efforts

This benchmark specifically supports requirements or plans by:

Evidence	Description	Supporting Documentation	Additional Notes
Describe any evidence that is currently in development			

Examples of ways to include Web Accessibility in a Reaffirmation Portfolio using the GOALS Template

ncdae.org/goals/accreditation/example.php

- **Example 1** highlights web accessibility efforts as a whole, describing how each benchmark is applicable to the requirements of an accreditation agency.
- **Example 2** embeds specific benchmarks into the evidence narrative for a given principle, criteria or standard.
- **Example 3** embeds web accessibility into a quality improvement plan and uses the templates to structure the impact.

Support for Review Teams

Assessing the quality of institutional web accessibility for an accreditation portfolio can be a complex issue. It can be especially challenging when those reviewing materials for quality are not familiar with the topic.

Project GOALS is developing a set of resources that can be used by review teams and accreditors to help them determine the quality of evidence related to web accessibility

Reviewer Guidance Documents

A guide to help review teams understand and assess the quality of evidence related to web accessibility:

www.ncdae.org/goals/accreditation/index.php

An example of the guidance document

Indicator #1: Institutional Vision and Leadership Commitment

Benchmark A: The Commitment of Administrative Leadership

Evaluating the evidence for an administrative commitment to web accessibility: Assessment Review Teams might see evidence for this commitment of leadership in any number of ways. Below are 6 examples that would substantiate that a true commitment exists among institutional leaders. Thus, other evidence may also exist. It should be noted, that not all examples below are required to point to evidence of this Benchmark. However, work across these examples show added strength of the commitment.

An institutional statement of vision or commitment to web accessibility. The varying strength of this evidence would also include that the statement:

- Is explicit that it pertains to web accessibility for persons with disabilities
  - A definition will help clarify what is meant by web accessibility
- Is easily understandable
- Is published with any other commitment and vision statements
- Is easy to find
- Is publicized and promoted
- The statement makes relevant stakeholders aware of their responsibilities toward web accessibility

Evidence Evaluation Matrix

A Guide to Help Accreditation Review Teams Navigate the GOALS Reviewer Guidance Documents

ncdae.org/goals/accreditation/matrix.php

If the evidence addresses:	You may want to reference:
Policy	Indicator 1 - Benchmark A (*leadership*) Indicator 2 - Benchmark A (*stakeholder inclusion*) **Indicator 2 - Benchmark B*** (*policy specifics*) Indicator 4 - Benchmark C (*ongoing improvement*)
Accessibility Planning and Implementation	Indicator 1 - Benchmark A (*leadership*) Indicator 2 - Benchmark A (*stakeholder inclusion*) **Indicator 2 - Benchmark C*** (*plan specifics*) **Indicator 2 - Benchmark D*** (*implementation*) Indicator 4 - Benchmark A (*progress evaluation*) Indicator 4 - Benchmark C (*ongoing improvement*)
Resources and Budgeting	Indicator 1 - Benchmark A (*leadership*) Indicator 2 - Benchmark C (*plan specifics*) Indicator 2 - Benchmark D (*implementation*) Indicator 3 - Benchmark B (*time and effort*) Indicator 3 - Benchmark C (*budget*)

Other Accreditation Materials

- Accredibility: Using Your Web Accessibility Efforts As Evidence During Reaffirmation ncdae.org/blog/accredibility-using-your-web-accessibility-efforts-as-evidence-during-reaffirmation/
- Accessibility, Accreditation and the Evolution of Digital Technologies ncdae.org/resources/articles/2012technologies.php

Other GOALS Resources

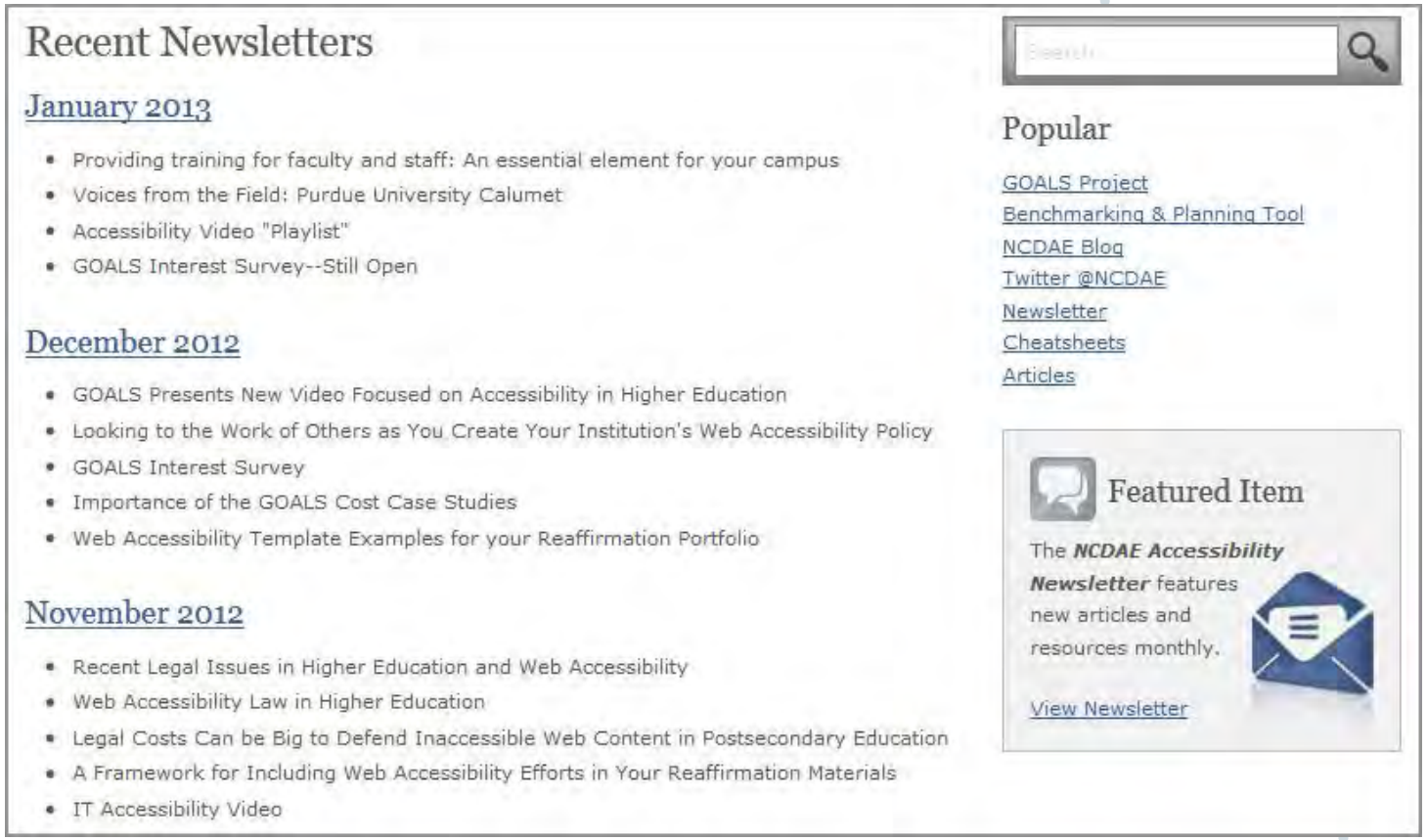
Cheatsheets

- Microsoft Word
- PowerPoint
- PDF Conversions
- Adobe Acrobat
- Captioning YouTube
- Adobe InDesign
- More to come….

www.ncdae.org/resources/cheatsheets

Monthly Newsletter

- To view the newsletter archives or to subscribe, visit: www.ncdae.org/resources/newsletter/



Recent Newsletters

January 2013

- Providing training for faculty and staff: An essential element for your campus
- Voices from the Field: Purdue University Calumet
- Accessibility Video "Playlist"
- GOALS Interest Survey--Still Open

December 2012

- GOALS Presents New Video Focused on Accessibility in Higher Education
- Looking to the Work of Others as You Create Your Institution's Web Accessibility Policy
- GOALS Interest Survey
- Importance of the GOALS Cost Case Studies
- Web Accessibility Template Examples for your Reaffirmation Portfolio

November 2012

- Recent Legal Issues in Higher Education and Web Accessibility
- Web Accessibility Law in Higher Education
- Legal Costs Can be Big to Defend Inaccessible Web Content in Postsecondary Education
- A Framework for Including Web Accessibility Efforts in Your Reaffirmation Materials
- IT Accessibility Video

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The ***NCDAE Accessibility Newsletter*** features new articles and resources monthly.

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Other GOALS Resources

- An Action Paper for Institutional Administrators www.ncdae.org/goals/actionpaper.php
- Institutional Tips www.ncdae.org/resources/tips/
- Factsheets www.ncdae.org/resources/factsheets/
- NCDAE Blog http://ncdae.org/blog/
- Additional Articles www.ncdae.org/resources/articles/
- Cost Study Data and Analysis – Coming Soon

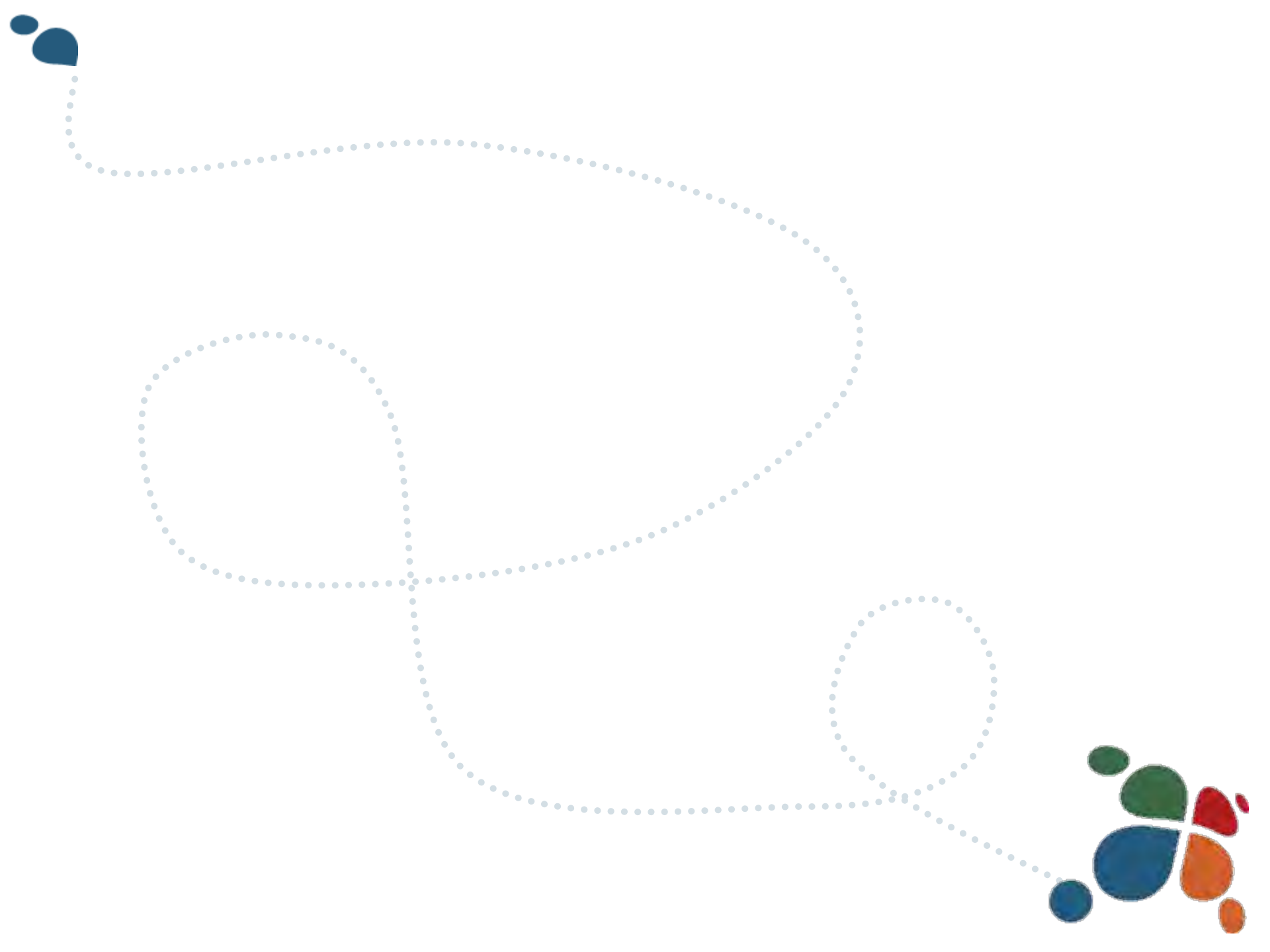
WebAIM Resources

- Introduction to Web Accessibility webaim.org/intro/
- Infographic: Web Accessiblity for Designers webaim.org/resources/designers/
- Quick Reference: Testing Web Content for Accessibility webaim.org/resources/evalquickref/
- Wave - a free web accessibility evaluation wave.webaim.org/
- And much much more….

What resources would you like to see?

GOALS would love to help…

Discussion

Contact us:

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