

Strategic Digital Accessibility Plan

Western Oregon University

Team Members

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Accessibility-Related Campus Documents

- [Learning Management System](#)
- [Provision of Auxiliary Aids and Accommodations: Community Members](#)
- [Board Statement on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility](#)
- [Accessibility Statement](#)

Background Information

In April/May 2023, a team from Western Oregon University (WOU) attended the Strategic Digital Accessibility Training sponsored by Open Oregon Educational Resources and WebAIM. The training consisted of four two-hour sessions of synchronous training and several homework assignments. The team worked and met asynchronously between meetings to complete homework assignments and to discuss the intricacies of creating a digital accessibility plan specific for WOU.

At the time of the Strategic Digital Accessibility Training, accessibility responsibilities were spread among a number of campus entities (e.g., Office of Disability Services, University Computing Solutions, University Technology Advisory Committee), but there was no cohesive or comprehensive strategy. Academic units, committees, and individuals worked in relative siloes with little awareness of each other's efforts; WOU did not have an accessibility plan.

The team's early efforts during the Strategic Digital Accessibility Training centered on obtaining administrative support in two areas:

- A commitment to digital accessibility
- An investigation into the existing infrastructure for digital accessibility on campus

Team members discussed meeting with the President's Cabinet to inquire about the above items, but as the training progressed, other campus priorities (including an Equity Assessment Action Plan) precluded the team's ability to engage the Cabinet. In addition, WOU was in the midst of hiring a number of key administrators whose units would be or could be tasked with carrying out an accessibility plan. By the last training session, writing a Strategic Digital Accessibility Plan for the entire campus began to feel insurmountable.

The WOU team then switched focus to the Library and Academic Innovation (LAI) unit. Creating a Strategic Digital Accessibility Plan for one unit felt more feasible. LAI was a fairly small unit, they were heavily invested in accessibility, and several LAI employees were members of WOU's Strategic Digital Accessibility Training team. Documented below is our first draft of an accessibility plan for LAI.

LAI Strategic Digital Accessibility Plan

Purpose

Students with disabilities at Western Oregon University deserve access to all Library & Academic Innovation (LAI) content in order to engage, to learn, and to be known. Because we know that advancing digital accessibility is a collective project with many stakeholders, this local action plan proposes short term and long term goals to help LAI stakeholders work together and improve digital accessibility over time.

Possible Goals/Action Items

- Complete accessibility remediation for OER Stipend Award Course Documents.
- Investigate the scope of digital technology in LAI

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- Digital projects
- Digital collections
- Put together inventory of digital assets
 - Do we need to keep it?
 - Should we get rid of it?
- List our platforms and whether or not they meet accessibility standards
 - Do what's in our control (platforms probably won't be)
 - Our content is within our control
 - Start by going forward; don't worry about remediation
- Check website for accessibility
- Check with ODS: What in the library do you fix all the time?
- List digital technology with LAI created or hosted content. Might be the same as above. (e.g., Research Guides, website, Omeka)
- Create inventory of digital infrastructure. Include responsible parties.

As we drafted the above items for the LAI Digital Accessibility Plan, it was LAI's turn to lose a key administrative role, and once again, creating a plan seemed insurmountable. Due to the rapidly nearing end of the school year, we agreed to postpone any more planning until Fall 2023.

Update (1/6/2024)

WOU has filled the majority of administrative positions, including a Director of University Computing Services (who will likely be involved in accessibility planning conversations once they have their feet underneath them in the new role). We're also currently in the process of hiring a Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) so the accessibility plan for LAI is on hiatus. However, one major takeaway from WebAIM's training was that the foundation for a digital accessibility plan is a digital accessibility policy. As a member of the University Cabinet, the Library Dean was able to make the case to our administration that the university needs a policy, and the creation of a policy was added to the university's Equity Action Plan. Also, our DEI office is focusing all of their big DEI training events this academic year (2023-24) on accessibility.

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