

02-20-00 Accessibility Policy

PURPOSE

This institution is committed to the fundamental academic principles of equity and accessibility by providing all students and staff with equitable access to the College's programs, services, events, and staff development activities. The goal of this policy is to support an inclusive academic environment by incorporating design concepts that reduce or remove barriers and adhere to federal regulations and standards for accessibility. This institution will achieve this goal by endorsing this policy through procedures which ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to the College instructional, informational, marketing, and promotional materials as well as content posted on websites similar to individuals without disabilities.

DEFINITIONS

- **Accessibility:** The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Education defines accessibility as meaning "when 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 integrated and equally effective manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use."
- **Web:** To include, but not limited to, all websites, Web pages and Web-based software published or hosted by the College or used to conduct College business (including remotely hosted sites and software) must meet the above standards and indicate in plain text a method of contact for Persons with Disabilities having trouble accessing content.
- **Instructional Materials:** All electronic instructional materials, optional and required, must be Accessible. This includes, but is not limited to, syllabi, textbooks, presentations and handouts delivered within the College's learning management system, via email or via another electronic means for face-to-face classes as well as e-learning courses. It also includes electronic instructional activities such as instructional videos, online collaborative writing, Web conferencing, blogging, etc.
- **Documents:** All College produced, maintained or distributed electronic documents must be Accessible. This includes, but is not limited to, word processing documents, PDFs, presentations, publications and spreadsheets that are scanned, uploaded, posted or otherwise published or distributed electronically.
- **Electronic Media:** All electronic multimedia resources used by the College for instruction, communication, marketing, promotion or other academic or business purposes must be Accessible. Video must be closed-captioned and audio-described and audio resources must be transcribed.

- **Software, Hardware and IT Systems:** All software, hardware and IT systems used for academic and research purposes, administrative and business purposes, and customer service must be Accessible and produce Accessible products or content, which includes compatibility with assistive technology, provided a commercially available product exists and its purchase would not result in undue financial and administrative burdens or a fundamental alteration. If Accessible Information Materials and Technology (AIMT) are not fully compliant with accessibility standards college must be prepared to make an accommodation. If such accommodation is made for faculty or staff, such accommodation shall be made in collaboration with Human Resources.
- **Procurement/Purchases:** The College will purchase AIMT, that meets or exceeds the above Accessibility standards. The College recommends that all applicable Requests for Proposals (RFP) and all applicable contracts include language that outlines this requirement and provides stipulations for how the vendor is expected to demonstrate compliance. When compliance is not met, Alternative Access Plans must be provided.

POLICY/GUIDELINE

The College shall, in accordance with applicable laws, provide equal opportunity in and access to instructional, informational, marketing, and promotional materials as well as content posted on websites to ensure the broadest possible community participation in its mission.

Ensuring equal and effective access is the responsibility of all College departments, programs, events and activities, including student organizations.

The College shall be guided by the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), 2.0, Level AA standards for electronic and information technology accessibility, as well as the standards established by Section 508 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, as amended and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Requirements

1. Digital Accessibility Responsibility
 - a. All employees are responsible for the accessibility of digital content they create and/or procure.
2. All colleges, departments and central units are responsible for ensuring access for students to their digital content and applications in accordance with current accessibility standards and universal design. This standard establishes minimum requirements for the accessibility of electronic information, communication, and technology necessary to meet the college's goals and ensure compliance with applicable law.
3. Specific applications are as follows, but not limited to:
 - a. Websites

- b. Instructional materials, in house and vendor provided
 - c. Documents
 - d. Electronic Media
 - e. College Presentations
 - f. Software, Hardware, IT Systems, Communication, Digital Content
4. Universal Design
- a. Content and products should also promote universal design and access.
5. Web Platform Accessibility Issue Reporting
- a. Accessibility issues may be brought to the attention of the institution by submitting accessibility feedback through from statements such as those below.
 - b. Statements similar to ones below should be placed at the bottom of every current webpage, in every course, and the footer of the College's Course Management System e.g. D2L. The statement must include a form of communication. The communication method must be accessible.
 - i. Nashville State Website: Nashville State is committed to ensuring its web content is accessible to everyone. If you have any accessibility questions or suggestions, please contact webmaster@nsc.edu.
 - ii. NS Online: Nashville State is committed to ensuring its course content, related materials, and software is accessible to everyone. If students have any accessibility issues, questions, or suggestions, please contact your instructor. If instructors have questions or need assistance with improving accessibility within D2L, please contact online.learning@nsc.edu
6. Accessibility Training
- a. Accessibility training, in an online environment, is available to all employees at Nashville State Community College who participate in the process of creating or purchasing of digital content.
 - b. New employee orientation must include accessibility training requirements.
7. Vendor Contracts and Renewals
- a. Develop, purchase and/or acquire, to the extent feasible, hardware and software products that are accessible to people with disabilities.
 - b. All contracts and renewals adhere to Nashville State Community College Purchasing Policy: 04-04-00.

8. Content for Teaching

- a. Content created by instructors must be created using current accessibility standards.
 - i. Any non-accessible content must have an alternative Access Plan which could be developed in partnership with the Access Center as needed.

SOURCES

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Office of Civil Rights overview of Section 504 and Title II US Access Board Section 508 Standards Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 AA

RELATED POLICIES

For TBR Guidelines specific to the TBR Accessibility Initiative please visit: <https://www.tbr.edu/student-success/accessibility-initiative> NSCC's purchasing website: <https://fa.nsc.edu/finance/purchasing/policies/>

Approved by NSCC Cabinet 10/25/21