



EA R4: Cornell Commitment to Web Accessibility

Abstract: This resolution calls for the University to adopt Web Content Accessibility Standards for all new websites and require remediation for conformance by legacy websites.

Sponsored by: Jeramy Kruser, Research and Technology Transfer Representative, Employee Assembly

Reviewed by: Personnel Policy Committee, MM/DD/YYYY

Whereas, worldwide there are 285 million people with some sort of visual impairment, 275 million people with moderate-to-profound hearing impairment, and many more have physical, speech, cognitive, and neurological disabilities or a limited understanding of English; and

Whereas, in 1990 the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in areas of public life, was passed; and

Whereas, under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a federal law which provides action to the promise of the ADA, federal agencies are required to make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities, and standards are provided; and

Whereas, the Cornell motto reflects our inclusive goal of “... any person ... any study”; and

Whereas, The University’s Equal Education and Employment Opportunity Statement declares that Cornell is “committed to assisting those persons with disabilities who have special needs related to their educational pursuit or employment” and prohibits discrimination on this basis; and

Whereas, The Campus Master Plan states that, “Cornell’s campus shall contain a diversity of inviting, accessible and safe places, for social and culture interaction, recreation, athletics, and passive enjoyment by faculty, staff, students and visitors...”; and

Whereas, Cornell’s websites are one of our most visible communications tools, and any site on the Cornell.edu domain is a representation of the university, reflecting our competency, values, and standards; and

Whereas, in order to meet our stated institutional commitment to accessibility, our web administrators, content providers, and developers need institutional support and a set of published standards to work from when creating new web sites and remediating legacy sites; and

Whereas, an inaccessible website can exclude faculty, staff, prospective and existing students, and their families, due to their abilities or the method they use to access the web; and

Be it therefore resolved, the Divisions of University Relations, Cornell Information Technologies, and Human Resources will set and publish a standard of accessibility for all websites on the Cornell.edu domain which will:

1. Set a baseline standard to meet Section 508 Standards, and to meet a minimum of 'A' level conformance with the current Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)
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- 44 2. require all newly created sites to meet these standards
45 3. require all legacy sites to be remediated for conformance upon any major update.

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47 **Be it finally resolved,** the Divisions of University Relations and Cornell Information Technologies will:

- 48 1. Revise the Brand Book to include accessible templates for items including but not limited to
49 presentations, videos, posters, and digital media;
50 2. Survey colleges, schools, and functional areas annually for their level of conformance, making
51 the survey results available to the Assemblies.
52 3. Provide guidance, incentive, access to training, and encouragement to all functional areas, aiming
53 for the highest level of conformance with WCAG and Section 508 Standards in all possible
54 cases.

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56 **Adopted by Vote of the Assembly (_ - _ -), _____, 2016,**

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58 **Respectfully Submitted,**

59 *Jeremy Kruser, Research and Information Technology Transfer Representative*

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