DRAFT 2.0 April 21, 2020

Binghamton University Electronic and Information Technology (EIT) Accessibility Policy [1]

Applicability

This policy applies to University websites, applications, and other digital content created or provided by the University and its agents or affiliates.

Summary

Binghamton University is committed to promoting and providing an inclusive and welcoming digital environment. SUNY's increased reliance on technology across operations, student support services, and instruction necessarily drives a need to ensure that individuals with disabilities have equitable access to electronic information resources. This policy addresses accessibility in the development, procurement, and use of electronic and information technologies.

Policy

The delivery of digital and web-based information is increasingly central to carrying out the University's mission. The University is committed to ensuring that all are able to access, benefit from, and contribute to the University's broad array of academic, administrative, and research programs, services, and activities. As such, Binghamton University will make electronic information such as websites, digital course materials and library electronic resources accessible. In accordance with the University's mission and federal and state laws, ensuring equal and effective access to electronic and information technologies developed, procured and used by the University is the responsibility of all University administrators, faculty, and staff.

In accordance with this commitment, and with the knowledge that accessible digital content generally enhances usability for everyone, this Policy is established to improve the user experience.

Accessibility Standards

For the purposes of this policy, Binghamton University will use Standards recommended in the SUNY May 2019 Final Report and Recommendations of the SUNY Electronic & Information Technology Accessibility Committee. Binghamton University will also be mindful of and monitor changes to The Worldwide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1[3] , Level AA Conformance (WCAG 2.1 Level AA) and its successor documents (WCAG Silver).

The University will:

- Adhere to the SUNY Electronic Information Technology Accessibility Guidelines;

- Establish a campus Electronic Information Technology (EIT)[2] accessibility action plan that will regularly be assessed and updated;

- Develop, acquire, purchase, host, and/or use to the extent technically feasible, web pages, websites, hardware and software products and services that are accessible to persons with disabilities;

- Communicate this Policy to all members of the University community, particularly those in roles responsible for developing, selecting, purchasing, or maintaining electronic content, applications, and technologies.

Implementation of the Policy

Senior University leadership will designate an Electronic Information Technology Accessibility Officer (EITO) responsible for the establishment of a campus accessibility action plan. The EITO will be responsible for issuing, updating, and enforcing any requirements, standards or guidelines that support this Policy. It will be the responsibility of the EITO or their designate(s) to:

- Establish policies and procedures that support our shared institutional intention to provide accessible online environments;

- Develop strategies to incorporate accessibility into the creation, purchase and use of electronic information resources;

- Develop plans, assign roles and responsibilities and implement procedures to execute strategies to achieve policy compliance;

- Coordinate the creation of communication plans to promote and support the campus-wide EIT accessibility program;

- Coordinate the development and delivery of training programs for campus personnel who create, purchase, use and maintain EIT;

- Collaborate with Purchasing and other campus departments to ensure the acquisition of accessible EIT products and services;

- Continually monitor and assess Binghamton University's EIT Program and develop and implement warranted modifications.

Compliance
Upon a written complaint by an individual who is unable to access specific University-provided content, either the requested content must be remediated to conform to the Standards, or the requested content must be made available in an alternative format in a timely manner. Note: the unit responsible for the creation and maintenance of the content on the specific website is responsible for making it accessible or providing an alternative.

In cases where [conformance with the Standards](#) is not technically feasible or may represent an undue burden to the University, the reasons must meet the criteria for exceptions under the law and shall be determined at the sole discretion of the EIT Accessibility Officer.

The Electronic Information Technology Accessibility Officer, working with the Technology Accessibility Advisory Group, may require that some or all non-conforming portions of a University website be brought into conformance by designated staff or suppliers. Binghamton University Information Technology Services or Office of Communications & Marketing may be asked to remove non-conforming websites or electronic information from the Binghamton domain registry until they can be brought into conformance, or require a unit cease using a particular third-party service provider until the provider's product or service is in conformance.

The University shall set up and maintain exceptions procedures to provide equally effective alternate access to non-conforming electronic and information technologies, and will develop priorities for bringing existing legacy EIT into conformance.

The Technology Accessibility Advisory Group (TAAG)
Senior University Leadership has established the Technology Accessibility Advisory Group (TAAG) to advise and make recommendations to the EITO, including on the development of a prioritization schedule for improving accessibility on certain existing University websites or electronic content. (i.e., priority shall be given to the most highly trafficked sites and to those that contain core institutional information.) The TAAG, at the direction of and in coordination with the EITO shall periodically review this Policy, its associated procedures, and the governance model and, as appropriate, recommend changes. The review will help ensure that the Policy continues to align with the University's mission, including its commitment to accessibility.

Related Policies

- [Binghamton University's current accessibility statement](#) (linked at the bottom of every binghamton.edu page)
- [Discrimination Complaint Procedure](#)
- [Purchasing and Contracting (Procurement)](#)

Related Links

- [SUNY Accessibility Website](#)

External Links

- [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, As Amended](#)
- [Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – Section 508](#)
- [New York State Enterprise IT Policy – NYS-P008-005](#)
- [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0](#)

Adopted: *tbd*

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[1] Based in part on Harvard University Digital Accessibility Policy, [Harvard University Digital Accessibility Policy](#) consulted February 25, 2020.

[2] Electronic and information technologies (EIT): Information technology and any equipment or interconnected system or subsystem of equipment that is used in the creation, conversion, or duplication of data or information. EIT includes, but is not limited to, information resources such as the internet and intranet websites, content delivered in digital form, search engines and databases, learning management systems, management information systems, classroom technologies; web, computer, and mobile-based applications allowing for interaction between software and users; and services employing information technology and telecommunications equipment.

[3] Exceptions: In certain cases, meeting the accessibility standards required by these guidelines may not be feasible due to an undue burden or doing so would result in a fundamental alteration. Such assertions may only be made by the president or designee who has budgetary authority after considering all resources available for use, and must be accompanied by a written statement of the reasons why. These difficulties do not relieve University programs or services from meeting EIT accessibility obligations. Equally Effective Alternative Access must be provided upon request.

Equally Effective Alternate Access: The alternative format communicates the same information in as timely a fashion as does the original Web page. For interactive applications and hardware devices, "equally effective" means that the user action (e.g., registration) is accomplished in a comparable time and with comparable effort on the part of the requester.