

# IT Access May 4, 2022 Meetup Conversations

Find the discussion listed by topic below that you would like to join for an open conversation. Then join the Zoom meeting linked in that section; participants will be given an opportunity to leave and join a new discussion approximately halfway through the meeting.

Have a great conversation with your colleagues and we will see you Wednesday, June 1, 2022 at 1p ET/10a PT for our next meeting.

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## GAAD (Global Accessibility Awareness Day)

### Session Information

- Host: Eudora Struble, Wake Forest University
- Share ideas and plans for GAAD events and celebrations.
- Attendance: 15 first-half attendees; 10 second-half attendees
- Note: Session attendees would like links to be shared.

## Expanding Beyond GAAD

- An accessibility week to promote GAAD. It is called Disability Awareness and Allyship Series.
- Extending Blackboard Ally's Fix Your Content Day to become a part of GAAD.
  - <https://go.blackboard.com/fix-your-content-day>
- Disability celebration month (April) pairing for webinars and disability justice conversations, did a tabling event. Pilot of faculty ambassador group has had good success this year as well. Logos, stickers, etc.
- GAAD works well for them, October national disability employment month works well for them.
- Trying out disability pride month in July.
- GAAD month is every month (started at library just this week).
- World Usability Day instead of GAAD; in November, looking for ideas. How well are your events attended and what's the mix of faculty and staff.
- Just finished up a 5 part Disability Justice Series as well that was well received, the recordings and accessible handouts are posted on our Office of Equity and Inclusion Professional Development Site too.
- Fix your content day, reached out to dept chairs to get them engaged and taking that hype and personal ask approach has made a big difference

## Promoting GAAD

- GAAD - as a focused feature in the campus-wide bi-monthly accessibility newsletter. (Alternates with internet security office)
- Use Accessibility games to promote accessibility awareness during GAAD.
  - <https://focus.hteumeuleu.com/>
  - <https://de.ryerson.ca/wa/maze.html>
- Utilize GAAD to facilitate site checking and using tools to auto-check; was going to be a hackathon, now targeted training for site admins.
- Reframe disability as a normal part of human experience and build awareness.
- Speakers like Haben Girma and Derek Featherstone have had good attendance for GAAD celebrations on campus.
- Partnered with the office of strategic communication to put marketing out to more of the campus. Events success has been to have development teams and tech providers on campus to present on their own approach to accessibility.
- Inclusive Design Champions and also do an award in "Excellence in Inclusive Design Award"
- Bad timing for a particular campus, during finals this week. Access awareness challenge: canvas course with short challenges. Use phone with voice, use laptop without mouse, color contrast, etc. 20 min lesson for each day (Or can do all at once) 6 different challenges. Have leadership of institution do an intro video or message to get focus drawn at a high level!
- Less 'exciting' format but using institutional leaders to attract wider audiences was successful for an 'ADA celebration' event; president or high-level leaders to support or promote events or overall work.

- Celebrating what successes departments have had made many more people come to them and want to be involved!

## GAAD Trainings

- GAAD - offering trainings for faculty and staff focused on:
  - Intro to Web Accessibility
  - Intro to Creating Accessible PDFs
  - 5 Steps to More Accessible Social Media
  - Using Free Tools to Support Digital Accessibility
- A few schools do different events and try to coordinate; vendor accessibility webinars and training (like games). A pilot of Ally at some schools may promote Blackboard Ally day. "Teach together Minnesota" day before GAAD.

## GAAD Session Linkshare

- <https://accessibility.calpoly.edu/content/index>
- <https://huit.harvard.edu/news/news-types/digital-accessibility>
- <https://itaccessibility.uiowa.edu/GAAD22>
- <https://www.minnstate.edu/system/asa/innovations/teach-together-mn.html>
- <https://worldusabilityday.org/>
- <https://www.minnstate.edu/system/equity/prodev.html>

## VPATs and Procurement

### Session Information

- Host: Jiatyan Chen, Stanford
- Share your best practices around VPAT reviews and procurement practices, and learn from colleagues' experiences.
- Attendance: 37 participants, 46 max

### VPAT and Procurement Topics of Interest

- Process of including VPAT? Validating VPAT and app? Temporary Exceptions and EEAAP?
- Integrating into process first, catch anything that requires a contract. Starting with ISO, if IT, must have IT risk and accessibility review before procurement lets the contract go through. Allowed to say no? Strongly advice to choose others, if there is a functional need, must fill out EEAAP and work with vendor template for roadmap. VPAT has a lot more information than we think - meta data of when, by whom, which tools - rather than skipping straight to the SC.
- Also risk based, use VPAT extensively, has a matrix to grade our confidence in the VPAT, and risk matrix, has power to stop the process, tied to policy.
- Policy + accessibility + data recovery, how to get to the next level (is this required? Educating service owners?)
- Educating community of accessibility. Academic steering committee (reps as associate

deans) knows what is happening, eg, if faculty asked why they still haven't got permission, the dean looks like (commenter's) project tracking list and points out that the vendor has stalled on providing a VPAT. VPAT review for how they do the testing, and contact the vendor if info is thin, "because of exposure, we want to do minimum testing." Capturing more but things still slip through.

- In VPAT, always look for the reasons for partially supported.
- Use student workers to help review robust rubrics, only escalate to staff if necessary.
- Temporary exceptions? Follow-ups? Extended conversation with service owners to provide alternative access, roadmap from vendor. Good vendors do check in with fixed items.
- Don't just look at the functions only. EEAAP for course, meet with instructional designer to help formulate EEAAP for classroom activity by looking at course outcome → better crafted course. eg. Circuit design tool → pair programming techniques.
- Which units' responsibilities? IT, compliance, disability?

## Accessibility Promotion and Community Building

### Session Information

- Host: Cynthia Kauder, Texas A&M
- Share effective ways to get your campus members aware of accessibility efforts at your institution, and brainstorm or share the ways that your institutions are working to build accessibility and disability awareness into the DEIA (diversity, equity, inclusion & accessibility) efforts on campus.
- Attendance: Approximately 25 throughout the session.

### Accessibility Promotion

- Open office hours for faculty and staff; seem to have repeat attendees and often a challenge to reach new people.
- Three-pronged approach including modifying policies, using Standard Administrative Procedures, and incorporating training. The training allows participants to receive professional development certificates and covers laws, documents, captioning and more. Incentives include \$200 for completion for staff and 2 days off for completion for faculty. Their accessibility initiative includes making all core and gateway classes 100% accessible. Additionally, they have recently sent some faculty members to ATHEN and similar conferences.
- Q: How to get the word out and drive participation of "accessibility champions" from the ranks of faculty. A: Indicated that it is oftentimes a struggle and many echoed this. There is pushback mostly about faculty feeling overwhelmed, not necessarily about doing the right thing. Accessibility staff try to frame it as UDL and strive to be proactive and helpful. Using student workers for PDF remediation has been very successful. Mentioned that even though they have tools like Blackboard A11y, many do not know how to use it to improve access.
- There is some faculty pushback, but they try to encourage the subject matter experts to add alt text because instructional designers and accessibility staff cannot provide the

intended meaning for images.

- Pinpointed that the issue of inaccessible PDFs within course content was coming from library resources, specifically e-Reserves. They have established guidelines to utilize cleanly scanned copies which can at the very least use optical character recognition to make them accessible. Interlibrary loan has also been an option.
- (University) has accessibility services but no course remediation services and that is sorely needed. They have encouraged instructional designers to stop using PDFs completely and suggest using web-based content.
- We have Ally as well and are in the process of switching our LMS from Blackboard to Canvas and are using that process to try to get the word out about UDL and accessibility. We also have a Usable Materials Center for remediation of documents and adding captions.
- We offer video captioning through Kaltura, with the dept. paying for human corrections if needed.
- At (University), we've arranged vendor contracts with 3PlayMedia for captions & transcripts and with AbleDocs for PDF remediation. Those services still have to be paid for by individual departments. There is a staffed center on campus that makes accessible course materials for individual students with documented disabilities; physical books, digital documents are converted as needed.
- (Author) maintains an open source accessibility called Sa11y, which is geared towards content authors. I have a ruleset that discourages PDFs. I recently released a beta WordPress plugin. To learn more: <https://sa11y.netlify.app/> John Jameson at Princeton University maintains a similar tool based on Sa11y, called Editoria11y - which is available as a turnkey drupal module!
- Abbyy Finereader is good for OCR of books and documents.
- SensusAccess allows staff and student assistants to convert documents from one digital format to another.

### Accessibility Community Building

- Mentioned methods of communication at (University) to include a SharePoint website with current accessibility information, which is separate from the IT Accessibility website. Also created a SharePoint Accessibility Innovator Network team and host bi-monthly meetings to share successes and challenges. Guest speakers from across campus present at each meeting.
- Accessibility is featured annually in the Disability Pride and Heritage month. They hold an Accessibility Expedition, where groups go through campus to find physical barriers to access. All findings are sent to the Facilities department. There is also a virtual expedition with challenges that include barriers to access. They partner with campus UDL groups for more visibility and utilize badges for training. They have also made policy and procedure changes and have been incorporating accessibility into procurement.
- Driving acceptance of accessibility practices is a bit of a paradigm shift similar to transitioning to word processing back in the 1980's. Providing services helps to move this forward, and more people are on board when they are being helped along.

- Because of the pandemic and shift to online learning, the university created Keep Teaching and Keep Learning websites targeting faculty/instructional designers and students respectively.
- Try to change the discussion about disability and suggest that it is a diversity issue. Because there are diverse populations and preferred modes of access, they frame accessibility in this way.
- Indicated that a former CIO suggested the creation of a DEI group within the Division of Information Technology at (University). The group meets bi-weekly and stresses the importance of listening and trying to understand unique experiences of individuals and groups. Participants speak freely and whatever conversations take place within the sessions stay within those sessions. It's been a very valuable experience for all who have participated.
- Several others commented that it seems when DEI conversations are had, accessibility/disabilities have not been included.
- Starting in Fall, (commenter) will have Accessibility Faculty Fellows (one for each college) - they will have release time to assist with accessibility training/awareness, etc for faculty
- This is (our) committee makeup: The EIR Accessibility committee consists of an individual from Accommodations, Procurement, Information System and Services, Marketing and Communication, and the Center for Teaching and Learning.

#### Session Linkshare

- <https://keepteaching.tamu.edu/>
- <https://keeplearning.tamu.edu/>
- <https://sa11y.netlify.app/>

## Encouraging Accessible Communication Methods (social, web, email, etc.)

#### Session Information

- Host: Kara Gaulrapp, UPenn
- Share and brainstorm ways to get your campus improving accessibility in its social media, email, web and other communication methods.
- Attendance: Approximately 12-15 throughout the session

#### LMS integrations

- [EquatIO \(TextHelp\)](#) to add Math/STEM Accessibility features to Text Editor
- Pope Tech has a Canvas integration coming Summer 2022 (currently doing demos)
  - More information:
    - [Pope Tech Canvas LTI Dashboards \(Word doc\)](#)
    - [Their LMS page](#) currently just highlights instructor guides

- [Blackboard A11y](#)
- [Yuja Panorama](#)
- [UDOIT](#)

### Seeking guidance

- Creating more accessible forms with signatures using Adobe Sign. What workflow are you using? What tools?

### Resources and tips

- [Sa11y](#): Free, scalable website accessibility checker that is geared towards content authors. Maintained by IT Access CG member Adam Chaboryk from Ryerson University
- [Creating Accessible Emails](#)
- When contacting content creators about accessibility issues:
  - We don't want to come off like we're attacking anyone or make them feel bad.
  - What did they do well? What can they improve?
    - "The content you used is laid out well and easy to understand, but we need a text equivalent of that."
- Try to always give context:
  - Send screenshots or a video recording using VoiceOver or another screen reader
    - Example: Pull up the VO rotor, navigate to the Links pane, and show the person all the "Learn more" links
- Develop templates and processes where possible
- If you get an email (like an all-staff email) and it isn't accessible, write to the person or department who sent it
  - If you or another person encountered a barrier, for instance if you have color vision limitations or using a screen reader, and are comfortable doing so, share that with the person.
- Email issues:
  - No text, just text on images
  - Images don't scale on mobile
  - If the image has a transparent background, the text is hard to read on apps using dark mode
  - Ensuring templates also work when the user has their email client defaulted to only get the [plain text version](#) of an email
    - If you don't have a plain text version of your email available, the HTML source code may render for that user