

RESOLUTION AGREEMENT

This Agreement is entered into between the University of Montana and the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

I. BACKGROUND AND JURISDICTION

A. The U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the regulations that implement those statutes at 34 C.F.R. Part 104 and 28 C.F.R. Part 35. These laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education and by public entities. The University receives federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education, is a public entity, and is, therefore, subject to the requirements of these laws.

B. OCR received a Complaint of disability discrimination against the University of Montana on May 4, 2012 (OCR Reference No. 10122118). The Complaint alleged that the University is discriminating against students with disabilities by using inaccessible electronic and information technology, including: inaccessible class assignments and materials on the learning management system, Moodle; inaccessible live chat and discussion board functions in the learning management system, Moodle; inaccessible documents that are scanned images on webpages and websites; inaccessible videos in Flash format, that are not captioned; inaccessible library database materials; inaccessible course registration through a website, Cyber Bear; and inaccessible classroom clickers.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. "Accessible" means that individuals with disabilities are able to independently acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services within the same timeframe as individuals without disabilities, with substantially equivalent ease of use.

B. "Electronic and information technology" or "EIT" includes 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. The term electronic and information technology includes, but is not limited to, the internet and intranet websites, content delivered in digital form, electronic books and electronic book reading systems, search engines and databases, learning management systems, classroom technology and multimedia, personal response systems ("clickers"), and office equipment such as classroom podiums, copiers and fax machines. It also includes any equipment or interconnected system or subsystem of equipment that is used in the automatic acquisition, creation, storage, manipulation, management, movement, control, display, switching, interchange, transmission, or reception of data or information. This term includes telecommunications products (such as telephones),

information kiosks, Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) transaction machines, computers, ancillary equipment, software, firmware and similar procedures, services (including support services), and related resources.

C. “Equally effective” means that the alternative format or medium communicates the same information in as timely a fashion as does the original format or medium.

D. “Legacy websites” are University Program and Department websites published before July 30, 2013.

III. REMEDIAL ACTIONS

To resolve the concerns identified in the Complaint, the University will take effective steps, the specifics of which are described below, designed to ensure that EIT used in University programs and activities is accessible to individuals with disabilities.

A. EIT Accessibility Policy and Procedures

1. By March 14, 2014, the University shall develop a draft EIT Accessibility Policy that demonstrates its commitment to implementing accessibility of EIT. Along with the policy, the University shall develop draft procedures to implement its EIT Accessibility Policy across all disciplines and will provide to OCR for review and comment the draft policy and procedures. OCR will provide comments about the draft policy and procedures as promptly as possible, and the University will incorporate OCR’s comments into its policy and procedures unless there is disagreement, in which case the University and OCR will work together in good faith to resolve the disagreement.

2. Within 30 calendar days of receiving OCR’s comments about the draft EIT Accessibility Policy and Procedures developed pursuant to Section III.A.1. of this Agreement (or the resolution of any disagreement that arises about OCR’s comments, whichever is later), the University shall incorporate OCR’s comments and adopt and implement the policy and procedures.

3. Within 30 calendar days of adopting and implementing its EIT Accessibility Policy and Procedures pursuant to Section III.A.2. of this Agreement, the University will disseminate those policy and procedures to all staff and faculty, and the University will provide additional instruction and support to both staff and faculty. The University will also post the adopted policy and procedures on a University website. The University shall disseminate its EIT Accessibility Policy and Procedures on an annual basis to all University personnel, including senior academic leadership (deans and chancellors), department heads, faculty, and staff.

4. Within 30 calendar days of adopting and implementing its EIT Accessibility Policy and Procedures pursuant to Section III.A.2. of this Agreement, the University will provide presentations and workshops about the policy and procedures to University senior academic leadership, department heads, and information technology staff.

B. Grievance Procedure

By March 14, 2014, the University shall disseminate a grievance procedure compliant with Section 504 and Title II whereby a student, faculty member, staff member, or member of the public may file a grievance to the University's Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action ("EO/AA") regarding an EIT accessibility barrier. The grievance procedure shall be posted on the websites for the EO/AA Office, the Office of Disability Services for Students, and the University website dedicated to accessibility. The procedure shall include a mechanism whereby the Director of EO/AA or his or her designee shall investigate the grievance and respond to the grievant within a reasonable timeframe of the filing of the grievance.

C. EIT Procurement Procedures

1. By May 1, 2014, the University shall develop and institute procedures that require the University to purchase or recommend only EITs that will provide the same programs, benefits, and services as they do to individuals without disabilities, except when it would fundamentally alter a program or when it is not technically feasible to do so, in which case the procedures will require the University to provide accessible alternate EITs.

2. By May 1, 2014, the University shall implement as part of its request for proposal process a requirement that bidders meet the accessibility standards of WCAG 2.0 Level AA for web-based technology (as set forth in Appendix A to this Agreement) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act for other EITs; and requiring or encouraging, at the University's discretion, as part of any contract with its vendors, provisions in which the vendor warrants that any technology provided complies with these standards and any applicable current federal and state disability laws.

D. EIT Accessibility Training

1. By March 14, 2014, the University shall provide and make readily available, to faculty and staff who develop or post content on any University website or through other EITs, or who select, create, or post EIT for students or otherwise incorporate students' use of EIT in their classes, information about their obligations to ensure EIT accessibility and about resources to assist in meeting those obligations, including instruction on how to make digital information

accessible and how to both manually check and use automated tools to ensure the accessibility of such content and EIT.

2. By March 14, 2014, the University will establish a University website that will be dedicated to accessibility, and that will provide tools and information for training of faculty and staff.

3. Within 30 calendar days of adopting and implementing its EIT Accessibility Policy and Procedures pursuant to Section III.A.2. of this Agreement, the University shall conduct training, instruction, and support at all levels of University personnel about the University's policy and procedures and shall list the tools and techniques that are available for faculty and staff to comply with the policy and procedures so that the University's policy and procedures are effectively and consistently implemented. At a minimum, training shall be provided to:

- a) the University's Section 504 and Title II coordinators;
- b) Disability Services for Students staff members;
- c) information technology staff members;
- d) web editors;
- e) personnel responsible for purchasing EIT; and
- f) library staff members.

E. EIT Coordinator

By March 14, 2014, the University shall hire or designate a staff member with responsibility and commensurate authority to coordinate the University's EIT Accessibility Policy and Procedures.

F. Student Survey

By March 14, 2014, the University will issue a confidential survey to students and former students who were registered with the office of Disability Services for Students during the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, and 2013–2014 academic years. The survey will ask such students and former students to identify any and all barriers to EIT they encountered as a student at the University.

G. EIT Accessibility Audit

1. By June 6, 2014, the University shall complete an accessibility audit of its EITs that will examine the accessibility and usability of the EITs provided by the University to students, prospective students, faculty, and staff who have disabilities. The audit shall examine various aspects of the University's EITs, including but not limited to, University websites, documents posted to webpages and websites, application processes, library services, learning management systems, access to classroom podiums and liquid crystal display devices, course

registration software, videos, and videos in Flash format, personal response systems (“clickers”) and banking arrangements offered to students, faculty, and staff, including website and ATM access.

2. The audit required by Section III.G.1. of this Agreement shall be conducted in a professional manner in consultation with an individual or individuals who is or are knowledgeable about access to EIT by students, faculty, and staff with disabilities. The audit will also be benchmarked by appropriate processes.

H. EIT Corrective Action Strategy

1. By August 29, 2014, the University shall develop an EIT Corrective Action Strategy based on the student survey findings obtained pursuant to Section III.F. of this Agreement and the audit findings made pursuant to Section III.G. The strategy shall include dates by which corrective actions shall be completed. The dates agreed to in this Agreement shall be incorporated into the University’s strategy. The strategy shall include:

- a) priorities for making EIT accessible¹;
- b) schedule for making EIT accessible;
- c) provision for testing of EIT accessibility including by users of that EIT who are representative of the class of students with disabilities;
- d) dates by which the steps of the plan will be completed; and
- e) enhanced efforts to notify students of how to request that the University make accessible for them specific EITs.

2. By August 29, 2014, the University shall disseminate the EIT Corrective Action Strategy it developed pursuant to Section III.H.1. of this Agreement among its colleges and campuses and post it on a University website dedicated to accessibility.

I. Library Services and Library Website

1. By March 14, 2014, the University’s library website shall be accessible in accordance with WCAG 2.0 Level AA standard, as set forth in Appendix A to this Agreement. The Mansfield Library shall conduct monthly accessibility scans to ascertain whether any new posted content is inaccessible. The University shall notify content authors if corrections to pages are needed and of reasonable timelines for corrections to be made. The University shall note if corrective action has been taken during the next monthly scan.

¹ The parties anticipate that the University will identify some EIT that is old and not currently or frequently used and that the strategy will not include provisions for going back to make such EIT accessible. If such EIT becomes currently used in a class or program, it will be made accessible in accordance with the EIT Accessibility Policy.

2. By July 1, 2014, the Mansfield Library shall implement a search engine that is accessible in accordance with WCAG 2.0 Level AA standard, as set forth in Appendix A to this Agreement, which can search across all library collections, including, but not limited to, e-journals, databases, and e-books.

J. Websites

1. By December 31, 2014, all webpages published or hosted by the University on or after July 30, 2013, shall be accessible according to WCAG 2.0 Level AA standard, as set forth in Appendix A to this Agreement. During the interim period (until December 31, 2014), upon a specific request for access by an individual with a disability, the University will update webpages to be in compliance with the WCAG 2.0 Level AA standard, or the University will otherwise make the content available in a timely manner and in an equally effective accessible format to the individual.

2. By May 16, 2014, the University shall identify a strategy to ensure that webpages that provide essential student functions are accessible according to WCAG 2.0 Level AA standard, as set forth in Appendix A to this Agreement.

3. By December 31, 2014, all University Program and Department websites, including legacy pages, unless technically impossible, shall contain a clear statement (or a link to a statement) describing the University's commitment to web accessibility and a method to report barriers and/or to receive an alternative equally effective accessible format.

4. Upon a specific request for access by an individual with a disability, the University will update legacy pages to be in compliance with the WCAG 2.0 Level AA standard, as set forth in Appendix A to this Agreement, or the University will otherwise make the content available to the individual in a timely manner and in an equally effective accessible format.

K. Learning Management Systems

1. By March 14, 2014, the two accessibility issues related to the University's learning management systems cited in the OCR Complaint (chat and forums) will be resolved.

2. By March 14, 2014, the University will identify its strategy to ensure the ongoing accessibility of its learning management systems.

L. Classrooms

By May 1, 2014, the University will implement a program to provide information, education, and support for ensuring that EIT used in classrooms (including, but not limited to, clickers, podiums, blogs, and other software) is accessible.

IV. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A. Report about EIT Accessibility Policy and Procedures

1. By March 28, 2014, the University will provide OCR with a detailed report about its draft EIT Accessibility Policy and Procedures developed pursuant to Section III.A.1 of this Agreement. The report will include a copy of the draft policy and procedures, the name, title, and relevant qualifications of the individuals involved in developing the policy and procedures, and the methods the University used to create the policy and procedures.

2. Within 45 calendar days of incorporating OCR's comments about the draft EIT Accessibility Policy and Procedures developed pursuant to Section III.A.1. of this Agreement (or the resolution of any disagreement that arises due to OCR's comments, whichever is later) the University will provide a detailed report to OCR about the adoption and implementation of the policy and procedures required by Section III.A.2 of this Agreement.

3. Within 60 calendar days of adopting and implementing its EIT Accessibility Policy and Procedures pursuant to Section III.A.2. of this Agreement, the University will provide a detailed report to OCR about the dissemination of the policy and procedures required by Section III.A.3. and the presentations and workshops required by Section III.A.4.

B. Report about Grievance Procedure

By March 28, 2014, the University will provide OCR with a detailed report about its Section 504 and Title II grievance procedure required by Section III.B. of this Agreement. The report will include a copy of the grievance procedure and a description of the methods used to disseminate the grievance procedure.

C. Report about EIT Procurement Procedures

By May 15, 2014, the University will provide OCR with a detailed report about its EIT procurement procedures developed pursuant to Section III.C of this Agreement. The report will include a copy of the procurement procedures, the name, title, and relevant qualifications of the individuals involved in developing the procedures, and the methods the University used to create the procedures.

D. Report about EIT Accessibility Training

Within 120 calendar days of adopting and implementing its EIT Accessibility Policy and Procedures pursuant to Section III.A.2 of this Agreement, the University will provide OCR with a detailed report about the resources provided and the trainings conducted pursuant to Section III.D.3., including descriptions of resources provided, training dates, the qualifications of trainers, descriptions of the types of trainings participated in with a corresponding list of personnel who attended each type of training by their position titles and departments, copies of the training agendas, and a copy of any handouts and visual aids used for the trainings.

E. Report about EIT Coordinator

By March 28, 2014, the University will provide OCR with a detailed report about its implementation of Section III.E of this Agreement, regarding the selection of a staff member to coordinate the University's EIT Accessibility Policy and Procedures.

F. Report about Student Survey

By September 15, 2014, the University will provide OCR with a detailed report about the results of the student survey administered pursuant to Section III.F. of this Agreement. The report will include a summary of the nature of each survey response, any actions taken by the University based on the survey data, and any University actions taken related to students who asserted that EIT inaccessibility had adversely affected their education or otherwise had adversely affected their ability to participate in University programs and activities. The report will also include copies of all survey responses.

G. Report about EIT Accessibility Audit

By June 27, 2014, the University will provide OCR with a detailed report about the results of the accessibility audit of its EITs required by Section III.G. of this Agreement. The report will include a copy of the audit, the name, title, and relevant qualifications of the individuals involved in the audit, the methods the University used to conduct the audit, and each EIT audited.

H. Report about EIT Corrective Action Strategy

By September 15, 2014, the University will provide OCR with a detailed report about the EIT Corrective Action Strategy developed and disseminated by the University pursuant to Section III.H. of this Agreement. The report will include a copy of the University's strategic plan, the name, title, and relevant qualifications of the individuals involved in developing the plan, the methods