FY20 ICT ACCESSIBILITY SPOTLIGHT

Our students come first... About Mason

Assistive Technology Initiative

Compliance, Diversity, and Ethics

Aquia 238

Tel: 703-993-4329

Email: ati@gmu.edu

Website: http://ati.gmu.edu

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

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ABOUT THE ATI

Who We Are

The ATI, a unit of Compliance, Diversity, and Ethics (CDE), is committed to ensuring equivalent access to all information and communications technology (ICT) resources on our campuses. We provide direct assistive technology assessments, training, and support services to individuals with disabilities in the Mason community who require immediate ICT solutions. We also work closely with our campus strategic partners to develop and implement a comprehensive ICT accessibility plan. Visit the ATI website (http:/ati.gmu.edu) for more information.

What We Do

The ATI ensures equivalent access to ICT resources for students, faculty, staff, and visitors with disabilities and/or different learning styles in the Mason community. This includes addressing the technology accommodations needs of students, staff, and faculty with disabilities, the provision of video captioning/transcription in classrooms and on our front-facing websites, alternative formats for textbooks, assessments, and graphics (i.e., tactile) for individuals with print disabilities, web accessibility testing and training, as well as assisting faculty/staff with making their documents accessible. We work collaboratively with the ADA Coordinator, Disability Services (DS), Information Technology Services (ITS), Stearns Center, academic and administrative departments/units, instructional faculty, University Counsel, as well as library personnel to develop, coordinate, and implement a university-wide ICT accessibility plan that ensures conformity with the technical standards outlined in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.

FY20 HIGHLIGHTS

The ATI's service and support highlights over the 2020 fiscal year are as follows:

- Mirroring FY19, more than **1,300 students, staff, and faculty received support** through the ATI office.

- What the FY20 numbers show:

  - **29% increase** in the number of **AT assessments, support, and trainings** provided. This represents the largest number of students, staff, and faculty served for AT-related purposes in a given academic year.

  - **Over 700 alternate format jobs processed** (i.e., textbooks, tests/quizzes, and tactile graphics) for students with print disabilities.

  - **Over 3,000 videos processed for captions, transcripts, and audio descriptions**. This is a 28% increase over FY19.

  - **Significant increase in document accessibility requests:**

    - **101% increase** in number of Word, PowerPoint, and PDF **documents remediated** for faculty, staff, and students.

    - **5,000 more pages processed than in FY19.**

    - **Almost as many faculty members served in FY20** (96) than in FY18 and FY19 combined (99).

  - ATI staff **presented at 4 local, regional, and/or national conferences** on ICT accessibility-related issues.

- o ATI, in partnership with several higher education institutions across the state, worked with 2 of our 3 **statewide post-production captioning and transcription contracts** vendors, *Verbit.ai* and *3Play Media*, to reduce per-minute pricing rates by 10%. This resulted in cheaper per-minute post-production captioning and transcription costs for the entire Commonwealth of Virginia.

- o ATI, in partnership with DS, the Stearns Center, and ITS, **started piloting Blackboard** *Ally*. *Ally* will aid faculty in the development of more accessible instructional materials for students with learning challenges.

- o **28 different higher education, public school systems, and or executive branch institutions reached out to ATI staff for assistance with ICT accessibility issues** (i.e., ICT accessibility policies, captioning/transcription procedures, web accessibility testing, purchasing and procurement, etc.).

- o **ATI acquired a 3D printer** to aid with the production of tactile graphics for students with print disabilities.

COVID-19 IMPACT (3/17 – 5/17)

While requests for most ATI services remained steady during the time between closing and the end of the spring semester, we are now seeing massive increases in faculty/staff requests for support with captioning/transcription and website/software applications accessibility reviews (for ICT purchases).

Captioning, Transcription, and Audio Description

The table below shows costs related to COVID-19 from 3/17 (Mason's move online) until the end of the spring semester (5/17) to be consistent with FY19 numbers.

	Spring FY19 3/17/19 – 5/18/19	Spring FY20 3/17/20 – 5/17/20
Videos processed	657	589
Minutes processed	8,014	12,184
Costs	$13,044	$16,795

The *Faculty Development Primers* provided by the *Stearns Center* and other initiatives on campus to support students with accessing instructional resources at a distance, have contributed to a substantial increase in the number of

captioning and transcription requests related to courses being developed for the fall FY21 semester.

The table below shows the number of requests (and related costs) from the start of the summer session (5/18) through 7/24.

	Summer FY20 5/17/19 – 7/24/19	Summer FY21 5/18/20 – 7/27/20
Videos processed	171	1,488
Minutes processed	2,394	17,975
Costs	$3,223	$21,387

Website/Software Applications Accessibility Reviews

The table below shows the number of Architecture Standards Review Board (ASRB)-related website/software applications accessibility reviews from 3/17 until the end of the spring semester (5/17) doubled as compared to the same period in FY19. Much of this increase is due to the purchase of instructional resources that directly impact students (e.g., web conferencing solutions, apps that integrate with Blackboard, etc.).

	Spring FY19 3/17/19 – 5/18/19	Spring FY20 3/17/20 – 5/17/20
ASRB Reviews	10	22

The table below shows the number of ASRB-related website/software applications accessibility reviews from the start of the summer session (5/18) through 7/24. Notice the continual increase in the number of ASRB-related website/software applications accessibility reviews.

	Summer FY20 5/17/19 - 7/24/19	Summer FY21 5/18/20 - 7/27/20
ASRB Reviews	12	17

FY20 BY THE NUMBERS

112
Students provided with alternate formats

703
Alternative format jobs (i.e., textbooks, tactile graphics, quizzes, and tests)
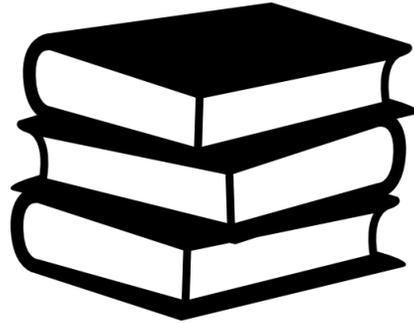
3,079
Captioning, transcription, and/or audio description jobs

238
Faculty/Staff provided with captions, transcripts, and/or audio descriptions

15,916
Pages processed

1,342
Documents remediated

96
Faculty/Staff provided with remediated documents

FY20 BY THE NUMBERS CONT.

160
AT assessments, support, and trainings provided for students, staff, faculty, and visitors with disabilities

467
Websites and web-based software applications tested for accessibility

49
ICT accessibility trainings provided (F2F & Online)
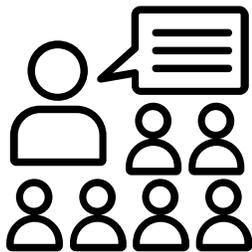
821
Individuals trained on ICT accessibility

FY20-FY22 GOALS

The *ATI's FY20-FY22 Strategic Plan* details the office's goals over the next 2-3 years. We will focus on the following areas:

- Communications and Marketing
  - Improve campus-wide marketing and communications
  - Update ATI's web-based resources (i.e., accessibility.gmu.edu, ati.gmu.edu)
- Web Accessibility
  - Integrate feedback from assistive technology users into the web and applications testing process
  - *COMPLETED:*
    - Acquire space for development of web accessibility and assistive technology testing lab (Fall 2019)
- Document Accessibility
  - Improve scalability of document remediation service
- Alternate Formats
  - *COMPLETED:*
    - Procure technology that would aid in creation of 3D-printed tactile graphics (Fall 2019)
- Purchasing and Procurement
  - Develop public database/resource for tracking web and applications testing results

- Library Accessibility
  - Work with library staff to develop clear guidelines for access to library programs and services

- **AT & ICT Accessibility Training**
  - Improve campus-wide training efforts related to assistive technology (AT) and information and communications technology (ICT) accessibility.

CONTACT US

For more information about Mason's ICT accessibility policy, strategic plan, and ATI services, visit the ATI website (*http:/ati.gmu.edu*).