

High Impact/High Priority Recommendations

While the committee feels that all of the recommendations listed in the accompanying documents are important, the following reflect those that will have the greatest impact. As such, they are high on the committee's priority list. They are as follows:

Improving Student Access in the Classroom

- **Only online and face-2-face courses that currently have a student with a sensory impairment enrolled in them** should have to meet the *minimum standards for accessible course materials* as outlined in the *Bridge* report. A timeline for addressing the issues in all courses should be considered as well.
- Incorporate accessibility reviews for all E-learning and information technology applications, including supplemental materials, to be used in **all online and face-2-face classrooms that currently have a student with a sensory impairment enrolled in them** are to be tested for accessibility. A timeline for addressing the issues in all courses should be considered as well.
- Send out Provost's letter highlighting the *minimum standards* necessary (See **E-Learning Technology** in *Bridge* report) for faculty members to ensure equivalent access to their course content.
- ODS communications with faculty members and teaching assistants supporting students with sensory impairments (student must be registered with the ODS) should include making the academic department's Chair/Dean, as well as the Provost's Office, mindful of the student's needs as well. This will ensure that all parties are aware of the students in their programs that may require additional supports to ensure equivalent access.
- Schools and colleges should identify an individual (i.e., Dean, Assistant Dean, Chair, etc.) who oversees faculty compliance as it relates to making their courses accessible to a student with a disability.
- Faculty members that will be supporting students with sensory impairments in their courses should attend ODS/ATI training prior to the start of the semester. It is suggested that they have a joint follow up meeting (2-weeks for Fall/Spring, 1-week for Summer) with ODS, ATI, and the student after course starts to ensure that the student has sufficient access to the course materials.
- Testing Accommodations:
 - For students with visual impairments, **ALL** tests, quizzes, exams (hard copy and/or web-based) should be submitted to the ATI at least 2-weeks prior to

the student taking the exam. This time is necessary for accurate conversion of exams/tests/quizzes into an accessible format (i.e., electronic, Braille, and/or tactile graphics).

- As it relates to accommodations for exams, faculty should follow accommodations listed on faculty contact sheet provided by the ODS.
- Faculty members teaching online courses should participate in accessibility training on how to make their e-learning course accessible to individuals with disabilities. This could be accomplished through the faculty development workshops already established by the ID Team.
- Departments that have degree programs with students with sensory impairments enrolled in them should attend ODS/ATI trainings at beginning of each school year.
- Include accessibility reviews in the DE course review process. Any course that does not meet the *minimum standards* (See **E-Learning Technology** in *Bridge* report) should not be approved by the ODE until it does. The ATI can work with the ID Team and the ODE to minimize faculty frustration and ensure that this process is as efficient as possible.

Improving Web Accessibility/Procurement

- All parties responsible (i.e., developers, content managers) for maintenance/upkeep of websites should participate in an annual training on Section 508 and web accessibility.
- All e-learning and information technology purchases over \$2000 should be submitted to the ASC for review.
- Include accessibility language as part of RFP's. Documentation should include both VPAT and ETA documents (See Definitions). ATI staff can assist with reviewing these documents.
- Include accessibility language in all contracts, contract addendums, and/or software license renewals. This will ensure that those items originally purchased without accessibility language will have that as part of the contractual agreement going forward.
- Educate faculty and staff regarding their roles and responsibilities as it relates to negotiating pricing and compliance for e-learning and information technologies implemented in the classroom.
- Review all top-level websites (i.e., HR, Admissions, the Office of Distance Education, Mason home page, etc.) and their accompanying documents, videos, etc. for accessibility and resolve any compliance issues with VITA and Section 508.

Structural Improvements

- Provide additional funding to Academic Departments and ITU to hire graduate students that would review their course materials and make them accessible for faculty. This ensures that subject matter experts for each respective area would be reviewing and adapting the course materials.
- Implement an accessible, enterprise-wide video platform that supports the lecture capture and the delivery of video content in all Mason courses.