The Anatomy of an IT Accessibility Coordinator

Kara Zirkle, Assistive Technology Initiative
How Did I Become an IT Accessibility Coordinator?

• Commonwealth of Virginia adopted rules and regulations similar to Section 508. As part, Mason decided to put a Committee together to determine what a role and responsibility would look like to help achieve this new requirement. As part, the IT Accessibility Coordinator position was created.

• Mason is a level II state school – part of a requirement to was to have an IT Accessibility Policy in place.
Organizational Structure

- Poll Question

- What advantages and disadvantages does that have?
Reflection on What it Means to Be an IT Accessibility Coordinator

• Most people think I’m part of IT Technical Support to help with problems when software can’t be accessed ....

• IT plays such an integral part throughout various areas of campus, correlate that with accessibility throughout the university – it means I have my hands in a lot of different projects.

- Policy
- Procurement
- Academic Software
- Library
- Enterprise Wide Software
- Kiosks (vending machines, ATMs, laundry, etc.)
- Videos (Captioning, accessibility of Video Players)
- Documents (both on websites and through courses)
- Online Course Accessibility
- Websites
- 3rd Party Applications (Website, course supplemental, procurement, etc)
- The list could go on .......
Key Partnerships

• What are the key partnerships made that have helped promote accessibility?
  – This will be different for everyone based upon the organizational structure.

• **IT** - has opened the doors to sitting on various committees allowing updated information on projects, purchases, etc.

• **Library** – open to the public, various database and multi-media purchases. Knowing

• **Instructional Designers and Distance Education** – Working with those who are on the front lines of online teaching where building accessibility into the design vs an accommodation is key to the level of success.
Greatest Successes

• What has been greatest successes, and why were they successes?
  – Architecture Standards Committee (ASC) which has the Architecture Standards Review Board (ASRB)
  – DE Audits and Reviews
  – Updated Policy and added Procurement Policy
Biggest Challenges

- What were the biggest challenges?
  - Getting a top down approach
  - Equal Communication – defining accessibility
  - Keeping up with demand
Contact Information

Kara Zirkle, IT Accessibility Coordinator
Assistive Technology Initiative Office

Email: kzirkle1@gmu.edu
Web: http://ati.gmu.edu
Twitter: @AccessibleMason

Feel free to network and find me on LinkedIn: Kara Zirkle