

## University of Baltimore

### III – 1.4 Digital Accessibility Policy

Approved by President Schmoke on August 13, 2024

#### I. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure accessibility of all users of the University of Baltimore’s (the “University”) websites and other information technology platforms, including those with disabilities, in accordance with both federal and state regulations and guidelines.

This policy serves to establish standards for the accessibility of all university Web-based information, web-based content, and other information technology used to conduct university business and academic activities as well as to ensure compliance with the applicable state and federal regulations.

#### II. Policy Statement:

This policy sets minimum standards for all university digital information used to conduct university business and academic activities to ensure compliance with applicable federal and state regulations.

#### III. Definitions

- A. Digital Information Owner: the representative of each University unit that leads an area of campus in the functional use and maintenance of Digital Information and is responsible for the maintenance and accessibility of the Digital Information within their control.
- B. Digital Accessibility: the ability of a website (public and nonpublic facing), mobile/desktop application, and electronic documents to be easily navigated and understood by users with and without disabling conditions including visual, auditory, motor or cognition.
- C. Digital Information: Content provided through technology-based applications and hardware (web, mobile, desktop, audio/video, etc.) Digital Information includes all public facing pages, web-based information published by faculty, staff and students, course materials within the LMS and all other web-based information sponsored or posted by the University.
- D. System Owner: a person that is responsible for the technical implementation, maintenance and performance of the application and/or platform housing Digital Information.
- E. Undue Burden: significant difficulty or expense if carried out (burden on the institution not the student).
- F. WCAG: [Web Accessibility Guidelines](#), best practices and standards for accessibility compiled by a working group of the World Wide Web Consortium.

#### **IV. Scope:**

This policy will apply to all Digital Information which is currently available, newly created, adopted (such as content created by the third party) or redesigned by faculty, staff and/or students, on behalf of the University or in their official capacity as a member of the University, on or after the establishment of this policy.

#### **V. Requirements:**

All Digital Information newly adopted or redesigned by any university administrative, academic, or program unit must follow the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). The University will ensure that all web-based material meets WCAG 2.1. As new standards are published, the University will work to bring its materials into compliance with revised standards within a reasonable time period given the scope of the new standards and scope of affected Digital Information.

Each Digital Information Owner, in coordination with the System Owner must establish priorities and timetables for updating any Digital Information pre-dating the implementation of this Policy not meeting WCAG standards.

This policy replaces the University of Baltimore's Web Accessibility Policy for New Content.

#### **VI. Roles and Responsibilities**

Digital Information Owners are responsible for ensuring that all Digital Information under their control complies with WCAG guidelines. Digital Information Owners are responsible for: (1) responding to requests to make content accessible; and (2) providing remediation for affected Digital Information by either (a) replacing or modifying content or (b) providing an equally effective alternative in a timely fashion.

System Owners are those positions responsible for technical implementation and maintenance of the platforms housing Digital Information. They oversee audits of Digital Information for compliance with standards of this policy. They will meet periodically with Digital Information Owners to review digital accessibility standards. They review requests for exceptions and make determinations on those requests. System Owners will advise and determine the technical feasibility of any updates, modifications, or maintenance.

#### **VII. Procedures for Requesting Exceptions**

- a. Any university administrative, academic, or programmatic unit may request an exception to the requirements of this policy on the basis that compliance with the World Wide Web Consortium's standard: (a) would result in a fundamental alteration to the content or functionality of any Digital Information (b) would result in an Undue Burden (as that term is defined herein), and/or (c) is not technically feasible as determined by the System Owner.

- b. Units seeking an exception must submit an exception form, explaining in detail why the policy exception is being sought and how, if the requested exception is granted, the unit will provide equally effective alternative access and ensure, to the maximum extent possible, that individuals with disabilities will receive the same benefits or services as individuals without disabilities.
- c. Exception forms should be submitted to system owners identified in this policy for their review.