Colorado State University Guidelines for Accessibility of Electronic and Information Technology

I. Philosophical Statement

Access to information by all members of its learning community is inherent in Colorado State University’s mission as a land grant institution of higher education. In this regard, consideration must be given to the delivery and exchange of information via electronic and information technology at Colorado State University. Much of the University’s instructional and business activities are conducted in whole or in part through electronic means. Consequently, it is imperative to increase the campus community’s awareness of the available methods for making communications and resources accessible by all members of our community, including those with disabilities that limit access to websites, email content, social media, print materials and other traditional modalities. It is the University’s express intent to utilize new technologies to help overcome these barriers at the institutional, departmental and individual levels.

Access to information by members of the University community is critical. Accessibility of information transmitted through electronic and information technology assists a broad population of our University community: individuals with disabilities; those with diverse learning needs; and, individuals for whom English is not a primary language. The application of the principles of universal design to the delivery of information and resources through electronic and information technology is consistent with legal and ethical requirements placed on the University as well as contributing to an inclusive environment that assists the University to recruit and retain the best student, faculty and staff talent.

The University’s commitment to accessibility to electronic and information technology contributes to a rich and effective learning environment for members of our University community, particularly students.

II. Policy Statement

University communications and information transmitted electronically or digitally shall be made accessible by prevailing University standards. This requirement applies to the various forms of communication via electronic and information technology including Web sites, course and instructional materials (Word documents, PDF documents, Power Point presentations, video,
podcasts, etc.), courseware, software, other classroom technologies, content management systems, search engines and databases, registration and grades, financial and human resource management systems, telecommunications, and emerging technologies. Many of these popular software and systems tools have accessibility features already built in that can be easily utilized with a minimal amount of training, either self-guided or through training resources offered by the University. All faculty and staff are encouraged to take the time to investigate and utilize such resources. Resource references are provided at the end of this revised guideline and online at http://accessibility.colostate.edu.

The department/unit responsible for the creation of information that is shared through electronic and information technology is responsible for enabling its accessibility.

Prevailing standards for electronic and information technology are the standards set by the University based on guidance and standard practice. Applicable standards for CSU are posted at http://accessibility.colostate.edu.

The University is committed to consistently improving accessibility through implementation of accessibility standards. These standards will be progressively developed to provide the knowledge, tools and resources to enable individuals who transmit information electronically or digitally to do so in accessible formats. In time, the culture at the University will become one of universal design with respect to electronic and digital information. Strategies toward accessibility include:

1. Provide training and educational resources to University community members, including faculty, web developers and personnel involved with course delivery to ensure accessibility of electronic and digital information.
2. Provide a website to the University community with resources and links to sources detailing how to provide electronic and digital information in accessible formats.
3. New electronic and digital information should be accessible upon implementation through electronic and information technology.
4. Accessibility will be included as a decision factor in the purchasing process. The standard by which to measure accessibility is the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template.
5. The Vice President for Information Technology and the Office of Equal Opportunity will be responsible for implementation of these guidelines.
III. Resources

Educational, self-assessment and compliance resources can be found at:
http://accessibility.colostate.edu.