West Virginia Northern Community College

WEB ACCESSIBILITY

Effective Date: March 22, 2007

Date Approved by WVNCC Board of Governors: March 22, 2007

Authority Reference: Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Sections 504 and
508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Replaces previous policy dated: (No previous policy)

Rule: To meet the needs of all students and to comply with the requirements of public
law and promulgated standards for developing universally designed web sites and
web-based learning opportunities.

Rationale: The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Sections 504 and 508 of
the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 require that individuals with disabilities receive
equal access to programs, services and activities unless doing so would
fundamentally alter the nature of the program, service or activity or such access
would impose an undue burden. Although making Web sites and Web courses
accessible to all students, including those with disabilities, is not a legal mandate,
Northern must begin to take the appropriate steps in making our web sites and
web-based course work accessible. The work done in accessibility compliance
has yet to match the demand for distance learning opportunities and electronic
information. West Virginia Northern Community College must now be committed
to addressing section 504 and 508 that require equal access by all individuals to
web-based information. To create web sites that are barrier free, we will adhere to
those guidelines promulgated by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). The
goal of this policy is to be proactive and eliminate barriers wherever possible as
opposed to reactive where the disabled student is only accommodated. The
following procedure will be implemented wherever possible.

Procedure: West Virginia Northern Community College Web Accessibility Standards

I. Technical Standards

West Virginia Northern Community College has adopted the Guidelines of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), Priority 1, as its standard for Web accessibility and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. W3C was created in 1994 to develop common protocols for the World Wide Web. W3C is comprised of 400 organizations from around the world and has earned international recognition for its contributions to the growth of the Web. One of the W3C objectives is Web access for individuals with disabilities.

The College's adoption of the W3C Guidelines provides compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. (See attachment for Guidelines.)

II. Compliance

West Virginia Northern Community College's efforts toward compliance will follow these principles:

- The target date for compliance across the campus is January 1, 2010.

- The first priority for compliance is West Virginia Northern Community College's Web pages associated with students.

- The next priority for compliance is all instructional materials associated with Web courses. A Web course, for the purposes of this rule will be defined as one in which 50% or more of the instruction occurs online.

- The January 2010 date of compliance is contingent upon the College securing the necessary funding to purchase equipment and provide the training required for implementation of this rule.

III.   Responsibility

Responsibility for Web accessibility at West Virginia Northern Community College will follow these principles:

- West Virginia Northern Community College's ADA Compliance Officer will be responsible for overseeing the College's Web sites, i.e., marketing, student affairs, public relations, etc., to assure their accessibility is in compliance with W3C guidelines.

- West Virginia Northern Community College's Web Master and Web page authors, including instructors, are responsible for the accessibility of documents they create and edit.

- Division Chairs will be the initial contact for all web accessibility matters.

IV.   MONITORING

Monitoring Web accessibility at West Virginia Northern Community College will follow these principles:

- Identified Web developers and College departments are to self-monitor sites for compliance and address complaints accordingly.

- All faculty teaching a Web course as defined above will be responsible for assuring that a mechanism is provided inside every WebCT course for student feedback regarding the accessibility of course materials and content.