Attachment D

Accessibility to Electronic Information at CSU

Status – September 25, 2000

Introduction

CSU needs to be more attentive to making its information more accessible, both because this is mandated by federal law and because it is the "right" thing to do, particularly in light of CSU's land grant mission. The goal is to establish a barrier-free learning environment. Universities are now required to devise plans for making all of their materials in electronic form accessible to persons with disabilities, and the University is at risk if it does not at least have a plan in place for making progress in this area. However, progress in this area must be consistent with available resources to be devoted to the effort.

This document provides the status of progress in this area. A small group of individuals are initially addressing this area. This group is Marla Roll Director of the Assistive Technology Resource Center, Pat Burns Director of ACNS and Tom Milligan Director of Media and Community Relations in University Relations.

A 10-point Plan for Action

The action items below were identified for attention. Each item includes status.

1.   University pan for making all of our electronic information accessible - The plan must be prepared and approved formally by the University. The plan should address, in priority order, central web pages, telephones, WebCT, departmental web pages, classroom notes, and other information provided centrally including video titles such as those already in OIS' video library, audio titles, etc. **Status – not yet begun.**

2.   University committee - A University Committee with oversight of these issues should be formed. **Status – Not yet begun, although a committee to recommend standards for accessibility of web pages has met and completed its function.**

3.   Training – The University should provide training on making electronic information more accessible. **Status - CTSS has worked with Marla Roll to integrate into its training details of how to develop accessible web pages. In addition, a course dedicated to making existing web pages accessible is planned for delivery jointly by CTSS and ATRC.**

4.   Information Technology Standards - CSU's standards for information technology, including hardware and software, must encompass accessibility. **Status – The Standards Committee has been asked to address this topic.**

5.   Purchasing - Purchasing needs to be oriented to address accessibility. **Status The degree to which and how this happens has yet to be defined.**

6.   Web Guidelines - Guidelines on accessibility and how the University accommodates different types of access need to be devised, approved by the University Web Committee and put on the University's web pages. **Status – A committee to recommend standards for accessibility of web pages has met and completed its function.**

7.   Vendor tracking - Vendors of major central software packages need to be tracked as to their compliance with this requirement. A case in point is WebCT. **Status – In process by Marla Roll.**

8.   Integration into Charges for Technology (CFT) activities - Assistive technology and accessibility need to be integrated into the CFT activity beginning fall 2000. In particular, presentations on assistive technology and accessibility should be made to the central CFT committee on an annual basis at the fall meetings of the central committee. **Status – Marla Roll will be invited to this semester's Charges for Technology central meeting. This meeting has not yet been scheduled, but is planned for early November.**

9.   Central efforts - Activities that can be done centrally, such as parsing University web pages to ensure that all pictures also have a text name, should be implemented as a matter of course. It is possible to automate the process so that, if the textual name is absent, then the filename us used as the text name. Issues deserving discussion are privacy (i.e. does the University have the right to modify these files) and "churn," e.g. how often do users update their own pages, and would replace the revised files that include the text name with their own files that do not. **Status – University Relations has reorganized development of its web pages to make the text-based version primary, rather than the graphical version, so that they are all accessible via screen readers. Other efforts have been rejected due to their manually intensive nature.**

10. Feedback - Annually, the University's environment should be checked for compliance, with some quantitative measure adopted to assess progress. Also, University Relations and others who develop web pages should have copies of the programs that are used by those with disabilities to access and display, so that they can evaluate their products in this context. Metrics that indicate progress should be included in the plan described in point #1 above. **Status – No progress yet on this item.**