Title: Digital Accessibility Policy

Approved by: Office of the President

Date Approved: December 15, 2021

Effective Date: January 1, 2022

Responsible Officials: Provost, Vice President for Marketing and Communications, Vice President of University Technology

Date of Last Review: December 15, 2021

Relates to: Faculty, Staff, Students

Case Western Reserve University ("CWRU" or "the university") is committed to the equal access to information, programs, and activities for everyone. Accessibility— ensuring people of all abilities are provided with substantially similar functionality, experiences and information—is an institution-wide responsibility.

This policy, which promotes compliance with applicable local, state and federal regulations, laws, and guidance, applies to all Case Western Reserve University academic and administrative units that create, maintain or procure websites, web-based applications, course materials or other online communications vehicles used for programs and activities of the university.

The policy aligns with CWRU's vision to promote and celebrate diversity and inclusion in its student body, faculty, and staff as well as its core values of academic excellence, inclusion and diversity, integrity, transparency and effective stewardship.

The remainder of this policy sets forth three major areas of digital content and the standards that relate to them.

I: Digital communication and documentation

All websites and applications using the university's name, logo or other branding elements and/or hosted on case.edu or a subdomain of case.edu that are created or significantly revised/redesigned should comply with the current [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)](#).

This section includes any websites created by or for any Case Western Reserve University college, school, department, program or individual representing the university in a professional capacity (e.g. faculty or staff member). Student-run websites hosted on

case.edu or a subdomain of case.edu and supported through university funding (e.g. student organizations) are expected to follow these standards.

This section includes documents (e.g. PDFs, Word documents), data-visualization sources (e.g. Tableau, tables/charts), images, and other electronic multimedia resources, such as videos and audio files, that are distributed online and used by the university for marketing or other communication or business purposes (e.g., social media, marketing email content, publicly available websites). Academic content is addressed in section II.

Regarding websites and applications still regularly in use but created prior to the publication of this policy, reasonable efforts should be made to bring them into compliance with the most recent WCAG. If a specific accessibility request is made for a legacy website or application (i.e. one created prior to this policy), reasonable accommodations must be made in a timely manner to ensure equal access to content.

All university websites and applications should have contact information publicly available through which a visitor can make an accessibility-related request.

Once a request/complaint is filed, the site/application owner is responsible for providing the individual **in a timely manner**: the content in an accessible alternative format and/or an estimated time for making the required changes.

If an individual does not receive a response to their request, if the response does not meet accessibility standards or if a unit has issues or concerns about meeting accessibility guidelines, they should email University Marketing and Communications at webteam@case.edu.

Any exemptions to these standards regarding websites must be granted in writing by University Marketing and Communications, the Office for Inclusion, Diversity and Equal Opportunity, and/or Disability Resources.

For guidance and resources on how to ensure your content complies with this policy, visit case.edu/accessibility. For more information about processes, procedures, and resources to help ensure accessibility, please refer to the CWRU Digital Accessibility website.

II: Accessible Course Materials

Equity of access to course materials and resources creates inclusive learning opportunities for all. Inclusive instructional strategies, content, and resources meet the needs of students with disabilities, and they likewise help to ensure academic success for all members of our campus community.

Digital instructional materials, optional and required, should be accessible and as effective and usable for persons with disabilities as they are for persons without disabilities.

As supported by the university's resources and training, any CWRU community member developing course material content (text, images, video, etc.) for digital publications, systems, and any other instructional content should ensure that all the necessary elements are provided to make the content accessible to people with disabilities, including, but not limited to, users with physical, sensory, and/or cognitive disabilities.

In courses with accommodated students, the approved accommodation must be met in a timely manner to ensure equal access to instructional materials and course activities.

III. Procurement of Information and Communications Technology (ITC)

CWRU is committed to providing software and services that meet the needs of people of all abilities. This section provides standards for the procurement of software and services, or "Information and Communications Technology" (or "ICT").

CWRU aims to comply with the most recent WCAG standard when procuring ICT.

When CWRU seeks to procure ICT, the CWRU IT Contracts Review Team, in collaboration with other university units, reviews the ICT products to evaluate their accessibility. In cases where the ICT product or services are found to be lacking, the procurement request may be denied.

For Roles & Responsibilities descriptions, and an outline of the work processes, see the Guidance/Procedures document.