

## 3.3 Web Content Policies and Guidelines

### **POLICY:**

This policy exists to ensure the integrity of the Gordon College website and serves as a guide to publishing information to the web.

### **Standards and Accessibility:**

To ensure the highest accessibility to the Gordon College website, the college's official web pages should follow the standards developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) ([www.w3.org](http://www.w3.org)). The Gordon College website uses the XHTML 1.0 strict document type along with external Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) to control site-wide presentation standards (*HTML Working Group, 2004*).

The college's goals for web accessibility follow those published by the W3C (*Jacobs, 2000*). They are as follows:

- a. Make the web accessible to all by use of technologies that support differences in culture, language, education, ability, resources, technology, and physical limitations of users.
- b. Ensure user is able to make the best use of the resources available on the Web.

To meet the highest standards for website development, it is the responsibility of the webmaster(s) to adhere not only to W3C standards but also support the 1998 Amendment to Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. As stated on the Section 508 website ([www.Section508.gov](http://www.Section508.gov)), Section 508 was created to make information technology easily accessible to people with disabilities (*508 Law, 2002*). Web Communications fall under §1194.22 of Section 508 (see *Appendix I*). Paragraphs a-k of this section are modeled after the priority 1 checkpoints of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 (WCAG 1.0) published by the W3C (<http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG10/>). Paragraphs l-p are different from priority 1 of the WCAG 1.0 and must also be met.

Every effort should be made to comply with World Wide Web Consortium and Section 508 standards by using up-to-date web authoring technologies such as Macromedia's Dreamweaver MX with built-in markup validation and other accessibility analysis tools. A systematic manual approach should also be used to examine compliance issues which automated tools do not address.

### **Procedures used to meet compliance standards as derived from WCAG 1.0 Appendix A – Validation** (Ed. Chisholm, Vanderheider, Jacobs, 1999)

- Use an automated accessibility tool and browser validation tool such as HiSoftware® Cynthia Says. Please note automated tools do not address all accessibility issues, human review is essential.
- Validate HTML using web authoring technologies and W3C's HTML Validation Service (<http://validator.w3.org/>).
- Validate style sheets using W3C's CSS Validation Service (<http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/>).
- Use a text-only browser or emulator, such as Opera or Firefox with the web developer toolbar. Is the website still viewable?

- Use several different browsers, old and new versions, to check compatibility with each.
- Use a self-voicing browser, screen reader such as JAWS for Windows, magnification software, a small display, etc.
- Eliminating grammatical and spelling errors will increase comprehension of information disseminated over the web by ensuring accurate interpretation by screen reader software and/or the web user.
- Review content and structure for clarity and simplicity.
- When possible obtain feedback about accessibility and usability issues with the college's website.
- If any area of the Gordon College website is found to be inaccessible the Gordon webmaster should be contacted immediately so that the issue(s) can be corrected in a timely manner.

### **Web Publishing:**

Gordon College web page proposals should be submitted to the webmaster(s) along with approval from Department / Division supervisor (*See Official Web Pages*).

It is the objective of the college that faculty, staff, and students be allowed to liberally publish information on the website within reasonable judgment and within state and federal law (*see Unofficial Web Pages*).

Any content on web pages considered in violation of privacy, intellectual property rights or copyright law, anti-harassment measures, and all existing local, state, and federal laws and regulations shall be removed immediately and appropriate disciplinary procedures will be observed if applicable. Refer to Gordon's Computer and Network Usage Policy <http://www.gdn.edu/departments/computerservices/computerusage.asp>.

The Gordon College website is not to be used as a promotional tool. Information / links contained on the college's website should be comprised of educational material and/or the operational procedures pertaining to the college. Outside links (commercial sites) are permissible as long as they constitute an educational/operational significance and DO NOT involve paid advertising.

Faculty, Staff, and Students are not permitted to test server side scripts such as ASP on the Gordon College web servers. If a server side script is required please contact the webmaster.

Any document published to the web that makes use of excessive Bandwidth may be removed immediately by the Computer Services Department. Computer Services have made a coordinated best effort to keep the website running 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

### **Official Web Pages:**

Gordon College's official website on the gdn.edu domain is supervised by the webmaster who reports to and/or seeks direction from the Director of Computer Services and the VP of Institutional Advancement. All official web pages must comply with the college's standards and overall design. Official Pages include the college's home page and its associated web pages that display content from various divisions, departments, or committees which convey the college's vision.

**Unofficial Web pages:**

Unofficial web pages pertain to online material created for educational purposes that reflect individual conception and do not convey the college's vision. Such web pages include, but are not limited, to Faculty, Staff, and Student course-related pages. Individual web pages do not fall under the scope of the college's official web standards. Web compliance observance is left to the discretion of the web page's author.

The following disclaimer should be placed on the home page of all student course-related websites.

**Student Web page Disclaimer:**

This web page and its associated web pages are not an official publication of Gordon College; it is a course-affiliated project. The author of these pages is solely responsible for content.

**APPENDIX I**

*(Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards,  
Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, part 1194.22)*

- a. A text equivalent for every non-text element shall be provided (e.g., via "alt", "longdesc", or in element content).
- b. Equivalent alternatives for any multimedia presentation shall be synchronized with the presentation.

- c. Web pages shall be designed so that all information conveyed with color is also available without color, for example from context or markup.
- d. Documents shall be organized so they are readable without requiring an associated style sheet.
- e. Redundant text links shall be provided for each active region of a server-side image map.
- f. Client-side image maps shall be provided instead of server-side image maps except where the regions cannot be defined with an available geometric shape.
- g. Row and column headers shall be identified for data tables.
- h. Markup shall be used to associate data cells and header cells for data tables that have two or more logical levels of row or column headers.
- i. Frames shall be titled with text that facilitates frame identification and navigation.
- j. Pages shall be designed to avoid causing the screen to flicker with a frequency greater than 2 Hz and lower than 55 Hz.
- k. A text-only page, with equivalent information or functionality, shall be provided to make a website comply with the provisions of this part, when compliance cannot be accomplished in any other way. The content of the text-only page shall be updated whenever the primary page changes.
- l. When pages utilize scripting languages to display content, or to create interface elements, the information provided by the script shall be identified with functional text that can be read by assistive technology.
- m. When a web page requires that an applet, plug-in or other application be present on the client system to interpret page content, the page must provide a link to a plug-in or applet that complies with Section 1194.21(a) through (l).
- n. When electronic forms are designed to be completed on-line, the form shall allow people using assistive technology to access the information, field elements, and functionality required for completion and submission of the form, including all directions and cues.
- o. A method shall be provided that permits users to skip repetitive navigation links.
- p. When a timed response is required, the user shall be alerted and given sufficient time to indicate more time is required.

## REFERENCES

Many of Gordon's web content policies were derived from the following resources:

"508 Law". Section 508. 2002. [www.section508.gov](http://www.section508.gov). 7 Dec. 2004.

<http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=3>.

Ed. Chisholm, Wendy; Vanderheider, Greff; Jacobs, Ian. "Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0". World Wide Web Consortium. 1999. Web Accessibility Initiative. 7 Dec. 2004.

<http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG10/>.

HTML Working Group. "HyperText Markup Language (HTML) Home Page: Recommendations." World Wide Web Consortium. 2004. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Keio University. 7 Dec. 2004. <<http://www.w3.org/MarkUp/>>.

Jacobs, Ian. "About the World Wide Web Consortium: W3C Mission". World Wide Web Consortium. 2000. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Keio University. 7 Dec. 2004. <<http://www.w3.org/Consortium/>>.

"Section 1194.22 Web-based intranet and internet information and applications." Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board. [Published in the Federal Register on December 21, 2000] 36 CFR Part 1194 [Docket No. 2000-01] RIN 3014-AA25. <<http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/508standards.htm>>.