



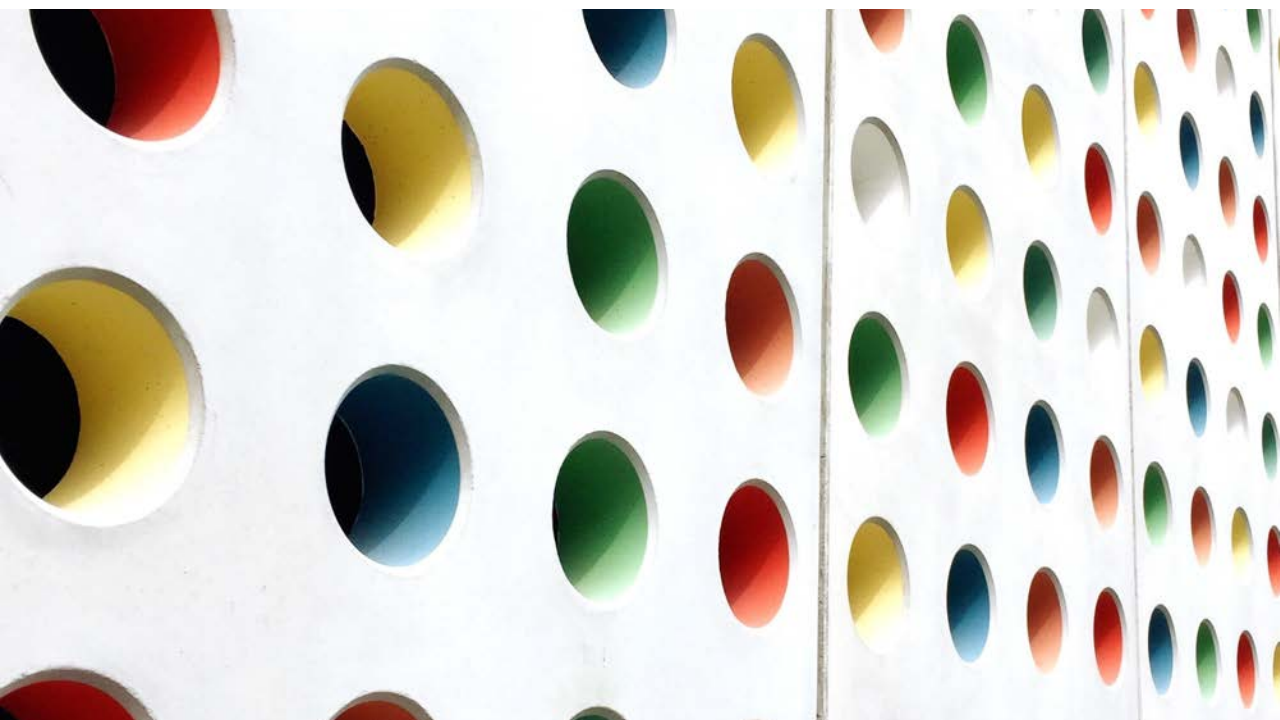
Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support,  
Illinois State University, College of Education

# Equity through Website Accessibility

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**Presented by:**  
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and Kiersten Baer**

**Illinois Center for Specialized  
Professional Support (ICSPS)**



# Who is ICSPS?

founded in 1977 at Illinois State University

creates, supports, and delivers professional development for career and technical education professionals across Illinois

provides technical assistance, develops publications, and facilitates program improvement strategies for our partners

focuses on transition, recruitment, retention, and completion—encouraging achievement of special populations learners

**icsps** impacting  
educational  
equity

# Who are Special Populations Students?

Individuals with Disabilities

Economically Disadvantaged

Nontraditional Fields

English Learners

Youth Experiencing Homelessness

Foster Care Involved Youth

Military Connected Youth

Single Parents, Parenting Teens, &  
Pregnant Mothers

Out-of-Workforce Individuals

# What to expect in the next few minutes



Strategies and tips to improve accessibility of your website



Ways to utilize your website as a recruitment tool



Nod your head, smile, and scratch down a note

Your  
webpage is  
the  
gateway to  
your  
program

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Ensure there is  
a clear place  
to go to get  
answers?

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# USER FRIENDLY?

A successful, user-friendly site consists of the following qualities:



## MOBILE FRIENDLY

Since more and more people use mobile devices to access the net, your website should be mobile friendly.

## ACCESSIBLE AND LOADS QUICKLY

Your site should take no more than a few seconds to load.

## ORGANISED AND EASY TO NAVIGATE CONTENT

Content should be of good quality, well structured, easy to read, and easy to navigate.

## COMPATIBLE WITH POPULAR BROWSERS

Your site should be able to open and function normally in major browsers such as Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox.

# Review your website to insure it is...

- ✓ Intuitive
- ✓ Accessible
- ✓ Easy to Navigate
- ✓ Inviting for potential students

# Top Ten Accessible Web Design

1. Use **onboard formatting tools** to create and provide appropriate labels. Verify structure by using onboard accessibility features.
2. Include **alternate text** for all images, complex image groups, graphs, and tables.
3. Provide **alternative access** to information provided visually or through audio. Alternate access for pre-recorded audio or video media could include audio tracks for information.
4. Provide **methods to stop visual and audio effects** from playing automatically. Repeating sounds, flashing lights, or automatically moving sliders can cause problems related to user experience.



# Top Ten Accessible Web Design

5. All functionality is available through **keyboard commands**. If any function cannot be achieved through arrow keys or tab function, then the user must be prompted.
6. Choose **colors carefully**.
7. Enable **resizable** text.
8. Turn **off auto features** that cause problems for users with disabilities. (e.g. text wrapping)
9. Use **hyperlink text to provide context** and inform users of destination.
10. Create **content with accessibility** in mind.



# Tips for Recruiting!

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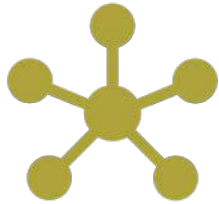
Get Excited and  
Challenge the Status Quo!

“You can’t fix a problem with the same  
thinking that got you into trouble.”

“If nothing changes, then nothing  
changes.”

# The three E's of Successful Recruiting!

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Engage



Equip



Empower

# Evidence Based Practices.

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It is crucial to **dispel stereotypes** held by instructors, parents, and/or the learners themselves regarding college opportunities by raising awareness of program opportunities early in the recruitment process.

When using pictures of any student **show them working – not just watching.**

**Include pictures with individuals in context** to reduce stereotypes by displaying elements of their personality or identity that are not work-related.

# Be Intentional In Representing ALL Students

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Use images of diverse individuals on marketing materials – both online and printed materials.



# EBP

Provide services and recruitment campaigns that draw diverse students to programs but do not take actions that single them out.

**Use common language** instead of professional/bureaucratic terms in promotional materials; if potential students do not recognize the meaning of language do not use it in recruitment efforts.

# EBP

When recruiting learners, it is important to use **multiple forms of media to market** to learners and family members since the decision to enroll in any program is often a family decision.

Use **gender inclusive language**, not gender specific; you are actively seeking students of all genders.

Use **promotional materials that feature photos and testimonials of current learners and graduates** of programs.

Success stories  
matter...

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Word-of-mouth  
marketing is a  
critical—and  
overlooked—part  
of recruitment!





## Word-of-mouth marketing is a critical—and overlooked—part of recruitment!

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Rethink word of mouth – texts, tweets, posts, shares – are all word-of-mouth communication.

Create a “Student Success in…” section on your website to highlight current and completed student experiences.





Does your program have a social media presence?

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# Follow up with Students!

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EMAIL STUDENTS FROM  
PREVIOUS SEMESTERS



CALL AND/OR TEXT  
STUDENTS TO CHECK IN



FOLLOW UP WITH  
SOCIAL MEDIA

# Take-a-ways

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- ✓ Share one strategy that you will take back to utilize your website in **recruiting participants** for your programs?
- ✓ Share one strategy that you will take back to enhance your **website accessibility**?

# Resources

## **Website Self-Assessment Checklist:**

<http://webaim.org/standards/508/checklist>

## **Electronic Documents Self-Assessment Checklists:**

<http://www.hhs.gov/web/section-508/making-files-accessible/checklist/index.html#>

## **Tutorials and Guides:**

<http://icsps.illinoisstate.edu/2016/08/electronic-and-web-accessibility-webinar-series/>

## **List of website Self-Check Resources:**

<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=36441>

# Compliance Standards

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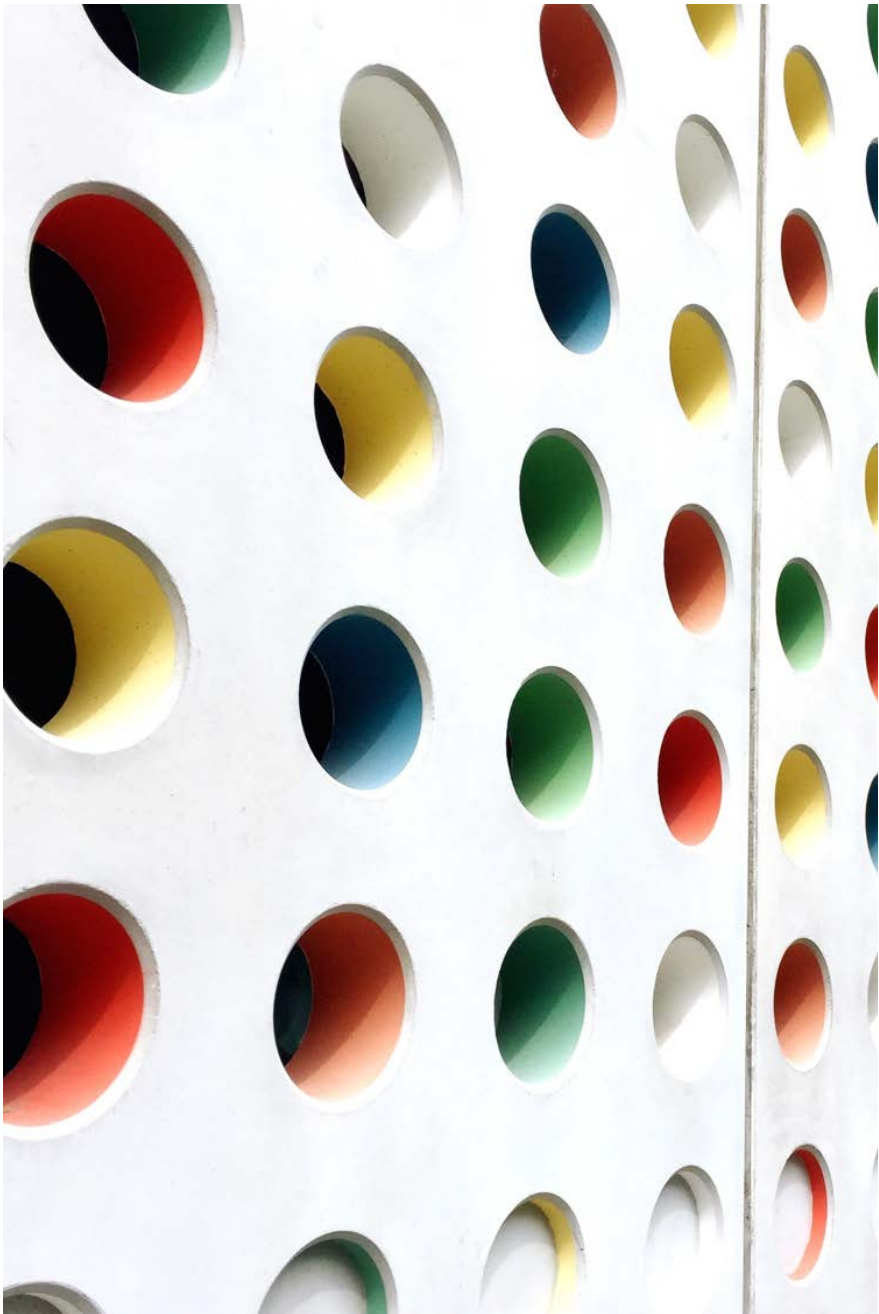
Web accessibility is guided by the following laws and standards. Each standard has guidance on how to achieve compliance:

## **Section 508 Standards for Electronic and Information Technology:**

<https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/communications-and-it/about-thesection-508-standards/section-508-standards>

## **Illinois Information Technology Accessibility Act:**

<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/IITAA/IITAAStandards.html>



# icsps

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educational  
equity

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Thank you!

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