

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Dr. Candice Welhausen  
**CC:** Dr. Derek Ross, Dr. Chad Wickman  
**FROM:** Brandi Jean Jones  
**DATE:** February 13, 2020  
**SUBJECT:** Website Analysis – Meta-Analysis (Issues and Approaches)

This memorandum, for the attention of my Masters of Technical and Professional Communication (MTPC) graduate committee, is to detail and evaluate my completion of a website analysis for Dr. Stewart Whittemore's English 7010 course, Technical and Professional Communication: Issues and Approaches.

This memorandum will detail the background of the project, the overall goal and execution of the project, and the rhetorical choices that I made as a technical and professional communicator to best serve the needs of my client.

Keywords: web development, audience analysis, web accessibility

### **Background of Project**

This website analysis was completed individually in Dr. Stewart Whittemore's English 7010 course, Technical and Professional Communication: Issues and Approaches, in Fall 2018. The project consisted of examining a website and reviewing its functionality and accessibility, while also giving background and context to the various fundamentals of web accessibility. The site chosen for evaluation was Auburn University's Department of English.

During this project, I was responsible for:

- completing an in-depth analysis of the Department of English website
- researching the background of web accessibility and providing context to support my recommendations for improvement
- utilizing web accessibility tools, such as the Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool (WAVE).

### **Audience of Project**

The primary audience of the project was the Web Development and Strategy team at Auburn University's College of Liberal Arts. Specifically, this web analysis was presented to CLA's director of Web Strategy and Development, Sean Henderson.

### **Goal and Execution**

The goal of this project was to support CLA's Web Development and Strategy team by providing an in-depth analysis focusing on accessibility improvements that could aid with their website redesign of the Department of English.

To complete this project, I studied the history of web accessibility and familiarized myself with the four principles of web accessibility, as detailed by the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0). I then inspected five pages within the Department of English's site and investigated the accessibility of each page using a web accessibility evaluation tool (WAVE). Afterward, I compiled the results for the use of CLA's Web Development and Strategy team in their website redesign efforts.

### *Background on Web Accessibility*

To display the logic and reasoning backing my recommendations, I used a logos-based rhetorical strategy by providing clear statistics regarding the importance of web accessibility, particularly in the context of higher education. I cited credible organizations with timely data, such as the World Health Organization and the United States Census Bureau, to back my claims. Additionally, I took care to frame this particular case study within the historical context of accessibility, as suggested by Bigham et al., 2011.

### *Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool (WAVE).*

Following Ismail's claim (2019) that accessibility tools can expose significant accessibility barriers in metrics (such as the number of problems, detailed warnings, and the status of success criteria violations), I utilized a web accessibility evaluation tool (WAVE) to glean insights into problematic (or potentially problematic) areas of the site. This tool scanned the site's pages for all instances of WCAG 2.0 non-compliance and helped me in identifying areas that the CLA Web and Strategy team should focus their attention on to meet WCAG 2.0 standards.

## **Conclusion of Project**

Upon completion of the English 7010 course, I submitted my web analysis to CLA's Web Development and Strategy team for consideration. I then worked alongside the web team as a graduate assistant to redesign and update the site to follow accessibility best-practices. The new site was published in Spring 2019.

## **Contact**

If you have any questions or comments regarding this website analysis, please contact me at [bjj0011@auburn.edu](mailto:bjj0011@auburn.edu).

## **References**

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