Georgia State University
Proposal for the Use of FY 2003 Student Technology Fees

Priority 1

Submitting Organizations:
Major Unit: Division of Distance and Distributed Learning
Department: Division of Distance and Distributed Learning
Contact Person Name: Dr. Carla Relaford
Contact Person Email: relaford@gsu.edu
Contact Person Phone: (404) 651-1778

Minor Unit: Office of Disability Services
Contact Person: Caroline Gergely
Contact Person Phone: 404-463-9044
Contact Person Email: cgergely@gsu.edu

1. Project Title:
Making the Georgia State University Web ADA Compliant

2. Total Requested Amounts:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year 2003</th>
<th>Years Following Fiscal Year 2002</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$122,460</td>
<td>$0</td>
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3. Executive Summary
The goal of the proposed project is to bring all Internet resources and WebCT courses at Georgia State University into compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, thereby allowing all Georgia State University students fair and equal access to available educational resources.

4. Project Description
Title 11 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), in conjunction with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, mandates that all state institutions, including public universities such as Georgia State University, ensure that goods and services are equally accessible to individuals with disabilities and those without disabilities. These requirements include resources provided by state institutions via the Internet. A recent review of ADA guidelines conducted by our unit reveals that only 40% of the university academic web sites and a handful of the over 2,100 WebCT courses meet these accessibility requirements. The current proposal requests funds to bring the Internet resources we provide the Georgia State University community in-line with federal law and the needs of the diverse student population we serve. Particular attention will be focused on the courses using WebCT. DDL and ODS will solicit support from the various colleges and departments as well as the Center for Teaching and Learning and the Teaching and Learning with Technology Center. This
support will usually take the role of encouraging instructors to work with DDL on making their WebCT courses ADA compliant.

The primary reason existing Georgia State University web sites and on-line courses have not strictly followed ADA guidelines is a concern on behalf of web designers and instructors that these requirements will reduce their web sites and courses to nothing more than plain, unattractive text. These individuals also suggest that adhering to ADA regulations demands too much site-development time and results in sites that are difficult to maintain and update. We at DDL, along with our colleagues in the Office of Disability Services (ODS), believe that these fears are unfounded: with careful and thoughtful design, ADA-compliant sites and courses can be exciting and attractive, so as to appeal to non-disabled students while still meeting the accessibility needs of disabled students. Notice that the eCore course for GLOBE (http://www.georgiaglobe.org/) have poured considerable resources into making their courses ADA compliant, and 4 were selected for the Exemplary Courses Program by WebCT. So, our point is that ADA guidelines make for excellent overall web design in that they provide for clarity of material, ease of navigation, and access through any browser (not just the most recent versions). Moreover, sites developed under ADA guidelines provide a valid alternative to the high-tech, visually based presentations most designers and instructors adopt, which may provide a significant benefit to the many non-disabled students who have alternate learning styles or technology limitations.

There are more than 2100 WebCT courses currently available at Georgia State University and that number grows significantly each year. None of these courses are ADA compliant. There are an additional 50 or more Georgia State University related web sites (in addition to those 30 web sites that were redesigned in the first two years of this grant) that need to be revised in order to adhere to ADA guidelines. Our joint proposal with the Office of Disability Services plans to hire two full-time student assistants and/or one or more part-time student assistants to:

- Continue the development of the step-by-step process and documentation that all Georgia State University web sites may voluntarily follow to achieve ADA compliance; process is in the revising and documentation phase.
- Complete our design of a flexible model of WebCT course that meets the ADA guidelines; model is under review.
- Apply the model to existing WebCT courses (on an as-needed basis first, then rolling out the model to all other WebCT courses).
- Continue our plan to educate all Georgia State University web developers and Internet course designers on how to make all future web sites and courses ADA compliant.
- Continue offering hands-on and on-line training to other web development centers within the university wishing to bring their own sites into ADA compliance.
• Gain acceptance for a university-wide proposal to bring all Internet resources into compliance over a 3-5 year schedule.

The student assistant(s) will be advised by the DDL Web Resources Manager, Stephen Rehberg, and Dr. Carla Relaford, Director of DDL.

Prior awards: The first year DDL and ODS were granted $20,000. With that first year’s grant DDL was able to create ADA compliant web site designs and was able to redesign 28 of its web sites. In year two awarded $34,000, DDL and ODS have been able to create ADA compliant workarounds for the WebCT tools (used for online learning) and to evaluate with recommendations for compliance all web sites that students must access (excluding the main web site since that is being handled separately by other departments). In the remainder of year two of this grant, DDL will work with all the faculty who request service to bring their WebCT courses into ADA compliance. With only one student assistant working in this capacity, DDL anticipates that between 20 and 50 courses may be made accessible depending upon the amount of inaccessible materials in each course and the extent to which the instructor may be relying on inaccessible tools.

5. Relevance to Regents Guidelines

Guideline [1] Technology fee revenues should be used primarily for the direct benefit of students to assist them in meeting the educational objectives of their academic programs.

Our proposal not only serves the immediate needs of students with disabilities including learning disabilities, but serves the entire student body who use technology off campus because our compliant designs take into account download time and ease of use. Our compliant designs do not limit the innovations of instructors but enhance them by ensuring that these innovations do not exclude any part of our student body.

6. Relevance to Strategic Plan

Our proposal directly addresses the Strategic Plan in attracting more students, retaining students, enhancing the undergraduate/graduate student experience. Compliant course design removes many barriers for students with disabilities as well as enhances the educational experience for all students by ensuring that the content will be presented in multiple formats addressing the various learning styles of all students.

7. Impact on Students Served

The proposal is aimed at students with disabilities, and their use of the Georgia State University web. The impact is dramatic. Currently, students with disabilities, especially those using adaptive equipment, have not registered for any course that uses WebCT. These students are being cut off from the most innovative teachers (see the Innovative Teaching Awards winners for the last three years). For students with learning disabilities the Georgia State University web is also intimidating and
contains many barriers; these students will also be served by ease of use of all sites and courses and a growing awareness that all students are not equal when they enter the classroom.

8. Justification of One-time Funding Requirements

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<th>Object of Expense</th>
<th>Itemized Descriptions</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Extended $ Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff Salaries</td>
<td>Stephen Rehberg &amp; Carla Relaford: $ 5,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$ 10,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Staff benefits @ 29%: $ 1,450</td>
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<td>$ 2,900</td>
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<td>Fringe Benefits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Salaries</td>
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<td>$ 24,960</td>
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<td>dollar amounts</td>
<td>sections 10/11, or provide explanation in sections 10/11)</td>
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<td>Services (Requires</td>
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<td>&amp; Facilities)</td>
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<td>Network Connections and Infrastructure Costs (Requires review of UCCS)</td>
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<td>Other Expenses</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$ 122,460</strong></td>
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9. **Consequences of Partial Funding**

State what the consequences would be on the effectiveness and viability of the proposal if it were only funded in FY 2003 at the following percentages of the requested total:

*Only 75% funded:*
At this percentage, the project is still very viable. We would have to cut back on the number of student assistants which would limit the scope of the project and extend deadlines to more than 3-5 years.

*Only 50% funded:*
The project is still viable but deadlines will have to be drastically extended.

10. **Standard Dollar Amounts**

11. **Standard Replacement Thresholds**

12. **Prerequisite, Non-Technology Fee, Funding**

13. **Matching Funds**

We are offering to match funds in the form of current staff that we have that are certified to oversee this type of endeavor. Our certified trainers will be on hand to assist in the implementation and maintenance of this project. These ‘funds’ are available indefinitely and will ensure that the project maintains the quality of support we at Distance & Distributed Learning are proud to provide.

14. **Staffing and Other Support Availability**

Implementation of our proposal is fairly simple, with an annual budget of $122,460. This included $36,000/year to pay 2 full-time student assistants (40 hours/week for 48 weeks at $18.75/hour), $24,960/year for a part-time student assistant (40 hours/week for 48 weeks at $13.00/hour), $5,000/year for Mr. Rehberg, and $5,000/year for Dr. Relaford. The remaining 12,600 would be spent on the hardware and software needed for the student assistants and directors. The partners estimate that the overall project will take three to five years to complete. After this time, each department, college, instructor, and/or support service entity would assume responsibility for maintaining the sites and courses under their jurisdiction according to ADA guidelines.

The current unit supervisor for Distance & Distributed Learning is Carla Relaford.

15. **Space Availability**

The room we are planning to use is Urban Life 805, and is currently occupied by
our staff at Distance & Distributed Learning. The room will require far less than $25,000 renovation, if there is even a need to renovate.

16. Impact on Facilities

None

17. Impact on Computing/Network Infrastructure

The impact of this project on the university computer/network infrastructure has the potential to be quite profound. Compliance with ADA guidelines will improve the ease of use of Internet resources for all students, staff, and faculty, and enhance the university’s overall image in the state, local, and educational communities. As such, other institutions would be likely to follow Georgia State University’s lead by redesigning their own sites and courses, thereby improving the quality and accessibility of higher education in general.

Please contact DDL for any additional information or further assistance related to this proposal at (404) 651-1778.

18. Post-Project Assessment Criteria

DDL and ODS will undertake the hiring and payment for the requested assistants and maintain accurate records of monies spent. These records, available through DDL, will be forwarded to any legitimate requesting authority from within or outside of the University System of Georgia.

19. Review and Acknowledgements

Attach electronic notes or documentation showing that the following units or administrators have reviewed or acknowledged this proposal:
Dean or functional unit endorsement
Matching funds commitment from appropriate fiscal officer
CBSAC approval, if necessary
University Computing and Communications Services review or acknowledgement, if necessary
Planning and Facilities review or acknowledgement, if necessary