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Diversity and Inclusion Website Assessment_2020

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Nelson Poynter Memorial Library

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Diversity & Inclusion Website Assessment

Nelson Poynter Memorial Library

University of South Florida St. Petersburg

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Diversity and Inclusion Library Website Assessment: 2019-2020

During the 2019/2020 academic year, Nelson Poynter Memorial Library planned on conducting an assessment of the library building's spaces in terms of diversity, inclusion, and equity. The goal of this assessment was to identify opportunities for the library to become a more inclusive, safe, and welcoming space for students and to continue to prepare for future library renovations. As a result of the COVID-19 global pandemic, an assessment of the library's physical space became less important, and with the statewide Florida shelter-in-place orders, this planned for assessment also became unfeasible. With students, faculty, and staff now working from remote locations, the library's virtual space, aka our website, has become an even more important location to foster, express, and share our commitment to diversity and inclusion. As such, we revamped our assessment plan to conduct an assessment of the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library's website. In April and May 2020, the USF St. Petersburg library website was assessed for how inclusive it was in terms of: 1) images and videos, 2) language and rhetoric, and 3) content.

A strategic goal of the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library is to "Foster diversity and inclusion in order to provide access and opportunity for all of our users and employees." For this assessment, our specific goal was to improve our online space in order to create a welcoming and informative website that makes all library users feel respected, see representations of their identities and community, and easily find relevant diversity related library content. Analysis focused on including analysis of representations of gender, race, ethnicity, visual impairments, varied physical and neuro- abilities, and library support for economically disadvantaged students. Our underlying assumption was that the library had many diversity and inclusivity related initiatives, services, and resources; whether they were adequately represented and communicated on our website needed to be systematically tested.

Means of Assessment:

The Nelson Poynter Memorial Library website was assessed by three distinct, but complementing, assessments that focused on: 1) Images, 2) Language, and 3) Content. For all of the assessments we systematically examined the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library website (homepage: lib.usfsp.edu). Third-party vender websites, such as the databases, were excluded from analysis as their content was outside of library control. Additionally, USF St. Petersburg Centers and departments physically located within the library building, but with different faculty-specific missions were excluded from this assessment; these excluded units are OLITs (Online Learning Instructional Technology department) and CITL (the Center of Innovative Teaching and Learning).

1) Image Assessment

Two librarians (including co-author EM) and the Research & Instruction library Assistant (co-author EN) conducted the image assessment. In order to assess the libraries website a methodical search was done. Using a spreadsheet checklist, the testers went through the top two levels of the NPML website. The testers were given the following instructions:

Look at all images and videos on home page and 2nd level

1. Look at all images and videos on the library home page and 2nd level of pages, linked directly off of the home page using the checklist below
2. For each image or video, go through the checklist of indicators in an excel spreadsheet and mark Y if the image or video matches the indicator, N if it did not, or n/a if it was not applicable (for example if the picture was of ADA equipment but no people, than it would receive a Y for the ADA indicator, but n/a for any indicator pertaining to people)
3. If a page had multiple images or videos, the tester would go through the checklist for each image or video on a separate row.

We worded the indicators so that yes indicated a representation of diversity and inclusion. It was not expected that every image or video would have all of these indicators.

1. Does the image have alternative text?
2. Does the image portray adaptive technologies?
3. Does Image portray range of ability (ie wheelchair, seeing eye dog, Developmental disability)?
4. Does video with sound contains accurate closed captioning video and audio content?
5. Does video include an accurate transcript?
6. Does media not include flashing lights or color sequences?
7. Do library patrons have diverse and inclusive gender representation?
8. Do library staff have diverse and inclusive gender representation?
9. Do library patrons have diverse and inclusive race and ethnicity representations?
10. Do library staff have diverse and inclusive race and ethnicity representation?
11. Are students a range of ages (not just "traditional" aged students)?
12. Are a range of body types portrayed?

Additionally, the spreadsheet had a section for notes, where the testers were instructed to add any issues related to diversity and inclusion that were not encompassed by the 12 indicators. Suggested changes could also be made in the notes section.

2) Language Assessment

Two librarians (including co-author EM), the Research & Instruction library assistant (co-author EN), and another librarian conducted the language assessment. Using a similar framework of a checklist of indicators in an excel file, EM and EN systematically examined the same top two levels of the NPML website; for this assessment however, the testers looked at the text and the indicators pertained to language and rhetoric. This assessment was meant to look for consistent use of names and titles across genders and evidence of use of best practices of universal design for individuals who are color blind, use assistive ADA technology, or are neuro-diverse. As with the images it was not expected that instances of each indicator would be found in all the language but a yes meant it included inclusive language.

Reviewers were given the following instructions:
1. Look at all text on the library home page and 2nd level of pages, linked directly off of the home page using the checklist below
2. For the text on each webpage, go through the checklist of indicators in an excel spreadsheet and mark Y if the text matched the indicator or N if it did not.

3. In notes column feel free to list any observations about the page including incorrect information or specific non-inclusive language or suggestions

Again, we worded the indicators so that yes indicated a positive representation of diversity and inclusion. It was not expected that every page would have all of these indicators.

1. Use of Gender-neutral pronouns and nouns (police officer instead of police man
2. Text is in small concise blocks (Not long, run on paragraphs that could be confusing or unconsciously make less likely/more difficult to read)
3. Are page instructions easy to follow? (Are they in logical order, can you understand them, are there visual explanations?)
4. Bold, Italic, or text size used to provide meaning to text (For people who are color blind, that emphasis is not added only by color, but in another fashion that can be determined)
5. Person first language (a student that is blind rather than blind student)
6. Consistent use of professional title conventions (If Dr. A (male), then also Dr. Y (female); if Sally, then also Dave (Manager Dave Smith))

3) Content Assessment

For the content analysis, our methodology was heavily influenced by two publications. The first is an article by Lori Mestre (2011) titled, "Visibility of Diversity within Association of Research Libraries Websites" and published in the Journal of Academic Librarianship. In this article, Mestre documents her systematic scanning of all Association of Research Libraries (ARL) websites in terms of racial and ethnicity diversity related efforts. Specifically, she looked for whether the ARL websites provided information on relevant contact persons (subject specialists, language abilities, diversity liaison, prominence of diversity in the library's mission, vision, and values, presence of a diversity committee and their associated reports, events, and activities.

The second publication that guided our methodology was the seminal website usability book by Krug (2006) titled *Don't Make Me Think*. From this, we utilized his usability interviewing template to structure the content search. Participants were asked to search for 9 items on the website without using the Google or the site's search options. All interviews were conducted over Microsoft Teams by a report co-author (KvB) and the participants were required to share their screens with the interviewer. This enabled the interviewer to see where they were searching, where they clicked, and whether they successfully found the content items on the website. Participants were also asked to voice their thoughts throughout the process, so that the interviewer could have insight to their thoughts. The interviewer took notes throughout the process, and the virtual meetings were not recorded. The interviewers took an average of 15 minutes to complete.

Results

1) Image Assessment

Two librarians and one library assistant completed the text assessment checklist for the first two levels of the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library Website. The demographics of the testers are:

- Academic Status: 2 faculty, 1 staff
- Gender: 3 female
- Race/Ethnicity: 3 White

The testers looked at 37 webpages, 12 of which were found to contain images. On these 12 webpages there were a total of 38 images and 1 video.

Overall, the testers found that the library images portrayed a range of diversity of students, staff, and faculty in terms of gender and racial identity but that the library website was not very inclusive in terms of images representing varied abilities or non-traditional aged students.   The table below outlines the testers and their corresponding number of affirmative answers to the images and each indicator.

	Tester 1	Tester 2	Tester 3	Notes
Alt text for Images	19	14	4	
ADA technology	1	1	0	Photo of ADA desk
Patron/ Staff Range of Abilities	0	1	0	Photo of Therapy Dogs
Video Closed Captioning	1	1	1	
Video transcript	0	0	0	
No Flashing lights in video	1	1	1	
Patrons gender inclusive	13**	17*	12**	* All multi-gender photos **Student multi-gender photos
Lib staff gender inclusive	4***	15*	5***	***Staff multi-gender photos
Patrons racial/ethnic inclusive	12	13	14	
Lib staff racial/ethnic inclusive	3	4	4	
Non-trad Students	4	5	5	
Varied Body Types	15	15	15	

For most indicators the testers were consistent in their findings. Their ratings varied for the following indicators: finding the 1) ALT text for the Images and 2) Library patron and staff gender inclusivity.

We have no adequate explanation for variable findings of ALT text for the images, perhaps more training on how to find ALT text should be done in the future. Regarding photographs of gender inclusivity, with a more detailed analysis of how each tester rated the photos, a clear explanation emerged. Tester 2 has worked at the NPML for a much shorter time and thus labeled any group image that had both women and men as being gender inclusive. In contrast Tester 1 and 3 only categorized photos of group shots with just students for one indicator and group shots of library staff for the next indicator.

2) Language Assessment
Two librarians and one library assistant completed the text assessment checklist for the first two levels of the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library Website. The demographics of the testers are:

- Academic Status: 2 faculty, 1 staff
- Gender: 3 female

- Race/Ethnicity: 3 White

Testers looked at 37 webpages for inclusive language, the following chart shows the testers agreement with the statements. We found this assessment to be the most subjective among our three diversity and inclusion assessment presented in this report. Additionally, the language and instructions that we used for our indicators would need further clarification if this assessment should ever be replicated.

Statement	Tester 1	Tester 2	Tester 3	Average
1.Use of gender-neutral pronouns and nouns	37 100%	31 84%	37 100%	35 95%
2. Text in small concise blocks	34 92%	25 68%	35 95%	31 85%
3. Page instructions are easy to follow	19 51%	17 46%	36 97%	24 65%
4. Bold, italic, or text size used to provide meaning to text	33 89%	29 78%	37 100%	33 89%
5. Person first language	36 97%	31 84%	37 100%	35 94%
6. Consistent use of professional title conventions	37 100%	31 84%	37 100%	35 95%

Overall, the testers were generally in agreement for the indicators. Tester 1 and 3 were very positive in their ratings and consistent with each other. Tester 2 was consistently less positive than Tester 1 and 2, but was in agreement with the areas that needed improvement. Overall, the testers found that instructions on the webpages were easy to follow only 65% of the time, that an average of 15% of the webpages were not in small concise text blocks, and that heading could sometimes be confusing.

Areas we did particularly well in included use of gender-neutral pronouns and nouns, consistent use of professional title conventions, and use of person first language.

3) Content Assessment

Ten members of the USF St. Petersburg community completed the usability assessment: The self-reported demographics of these respondents included:

- Academic Status: 4 faculty, 4 staff, and 2 students
- Gender: 7 women and 3 men
- Race: 6 participants who are white and 4 participants that are African American
- Ethnicity: 1 person who is Latino

In general, mostly all the participants in this usability assessment were successfully able to find these diversity and inclusion elements on the library website:

- The library's Mission, Vision, and Values
- The Library's Events and Activities page, along with the specific tag for Diversity events
- The contact librarian for the World Languages Program

Participants found these two elements slightly more difficulty to find were:

- The ADA/ Assisted Technologies library services for students' webpage
- Various student affordability initiatives (ie. Textbooks on reserve, equipment lending)

The participants were asked to find several items on the webpage that were not there in order to see how they navigated the website to find these items. These included

- Reference to the Gender-neutral washroom
    - Searchers used the top Toolbar, *About* tab, to look at either the Library Maps or Library Space Reservations
    - Or else, the searchers scrolled down and found the *Library Spaces* link at the bottom of the page
- The identity of the library's diversity contact person
    - Most searchers went to the Toolbar, *People* tab and either to the *Faculty & Staff Directory* or to the *Contact Us* links
    - Three searchers went to the *About* tab, then the *Departments* link
- The library Diversity Committee's webpage
    - There was no consistent pattern of where the searchers looked for the committee's webpage. Most started off in the Toolbar, then going the following links: *Departments*, *Administration*, *All Services*, *All Resources*, and *Research Contacts* pages

Recommendations

Based on these results, we would like to make the following recommendations to the NPML Website Committee and the NPML Diversity and Inclusion Committee for consideration

1) Image Assessment:

Our specific recommendations for individual images to make them more inclusive are:

- Make sure that all images have an alt text description.
- Videos should have a transcript for viewers to read
- Many of the webpages did not include images. Some pages, specifically the Library Spaces page, should add images that complement the text. According to universal design multiple ways of presenting information, both visually and textually should be included.

Additionally, some of our recommendations are more suited to a broadly based improvements that aim to increase a variety of representations for the website as a whole rather than particular image

- Include more photos of students with varied (dis)abilities
- After doing the assessment it became clear that it could be difficult to differentiate library staff and patrons, particularly since staff often take part in photo shoots. To combat this confusion the questions should eliminate looking particularly at staff or patrons and evaluate on a whole, should this assessment be replicated, we recommend changes to the instrument not to distinguish between students and staff.

2) Language Assessment:

Main recommendations from the language assessment include consistency among the webpages and in language, better organization of information and more visual cues interspersed with the text.   Based on the results we make the following recommendations:

- Consistent naming conventions (librarian vs. Librarian, circulation desk vs. Checkout desk)
- Consistent organization of information, which will help with making instructions more clear
- More visual and text explanations that reinforce each other
- More concise language
- Review pages majority of testers agreed did not have easy to follow instruction
    - Technology Help
    - Textbooks on Reserve
    - Reservations & forms
    - Study Rooms
    - Library Spaces
- Review pages majority of testers agreed the text was not in small concise blocks
    - Reservations & Forms
    - Crows Nest Archives

3) Content Assessment:

Our recommendations from the content usability assessment are more specific:

- On the STC webpage (http://lib.usfsp.edu/student-technology-center/), in the left-hand table of contents, add a link to the ADA / Assisted Technologies for Students page
- Regarding the gender-neutral washroom on the library's 1st floor
    1. In the Library Spaces webpage (http://lib.usfsp.edu/spaces/home), should include information about the variety of library spaces with both text and images describing the study space options and other pertinent info (such as the gender-neutral washroom and diaper changing station). An example of what this might include is from the Florida State Strozier library study space guide: https://www.lib.fsu.edu/strozier-study-rooms
    2. Update the library maps to include this information. Currently the library maps, incorporate only binary gender icons demarking the washroom locations.
- The library's Diversity and Inclusion Committee should create a webpage. This page would highlight the library's inclusivity and accessibility goals, contacts, projects, and accomplishments at an upper level so users can do not have to click around to find it. This page should be a centralized location containing:
    1. The annual goals and accomplishments of the library with regards to diversity and inclusion
    2. the library's related diversity and inclusion contact people (i.e. Chair of the Library Diversity Committee, Liaison to the USFSP Study Abroad programs, World Languages Subject Librarian). Also to consider, whether to list library staff language skills (ie library staff or faculty that speak Spanish or other languages)
    3. Links to past and present diversity & inclusion related events (events page limited to the diversity tag) and libguides (ie. Living Library page)

4. Information on library collections, including description and links to the Weekly Challenger Digital Collection, the Children's and Young Adult Multicultural Book collection, and others relevant materials
5. A section on Library Student Affordability Initiatives linking to our textbook and lending programs
6. A link to the library's ADA / Assistive Technologies Services to Students page
7. A home location for the USFSP and library's Native American Land Acknowledgement webpage (construction of this page is currently in process)

- This new Diversity Committee webpage could be located in several places on the library website
  1. On the library homepage, under the **About** tab in the top right toolbar
  2. On the All Services (http://lib.usfsp.edu/services) or All Resources (http://lib.usfsp.edu/resources) webpages
- Create a mechanism to report issues if something is not accessible or inclusive

Our final overall recommendation is to our future selves and other librarians who may read this report and consider replicating our assessments. All of the instruments have now been tested for internal consistency among testers and found that the language that we used to describe our indicators was not always clear between testers. Should we do this again on a future website, we now have identified clear areas where our instruments text and instructions need be improved.

General Conclusions:

This assessment was helpful for us to systematically understand how we are representing and communicating the library's diversity and inclusion message, initiatives, and strategic priorities. This assessment has also provided us with a practical list of recommendations our library Diversity and Website committees to consider as areas for improvement. These three assessments complemented each other and provided us with a comprehensive knowledge of the images, language, and content that we use to welcome our community to our virtual space. While no one page or single image can or should encompass library diversity, overall, we found that our website is doing a good job of providing iterative representations of diversity, consistent use of inclusive language, and easily found content that affirms our diversity and inclusion related values and strategic goals. But there is room for improvement as we strive to make our library website, the welcoming, respectful, and inclusive virtual space.

References

Krug, S. (2006). *Don't make me think!: A common sense approach to web usability*. Indianapolis, IN: Pearson Professional Education.

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