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Definitions of accessibility:
- Accessible: refers to the concept that individuals with disabilities are able to access and use a product/system (this includes assistive technologies.)
- Accessible information technology: IT that has been designed, developed, or procured to be usable by and therefore accessible to people with disabilities.
- This includes computer hardware, software, websites, multimedia, telecommunications products, and stand alone products like printers/kiosks.

Why have content be accessible?
- Document accessibility is huge particularly for blind or low vision students.
- The idea of providing an accommodation in lieu of taking serious steps to provide equally effective technologies is no longer acceptable and may result in a law suit.
- An accessible information technology environment enhances usability for everyone.

Accessibility of course materials/online courses
- Course creators must ensure that materials are accessible. Remember that content includes websites, instructional materials, online courses and other electronic information for use by students.
- Create content with accessibility in mind—even if you don't currently have a student with a disability in your course.
- This will offset or reduce/eliminate the time/expenses of providing accommodations
- Do use the accessibility checker in Microsoft products before posting content to Blackboard
- Do utilize the services/expertise of the library staff for gaining alternative formats of content. There needs to be a comprehensive approach for rapidly converting content into accessible format i.e course textbooks.
Best practices

- Based on the Fifth edition of the Quality Matters (QM) rubric

1. Course instructions articulate or link to the institution’s accessibility policies/services
2. Course navigation facilitates ease of use
3. Information is provided about the accessibility of all technologies required in course
4. The course provides alternative means of access to course materials in formats that meet the needs of diverse learners.
5. The course design accommodates readability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Accessible Alternative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Printed text</td>
<td>Incompatible with screen readers used by blind/low vision students and students with learning disabilities</td>
<td>Supplement with audio, provide an electronic copy of text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio</td>
<td>Hearing impaired students may not hear it, students with LD (auditory processing) may have difficulty understanding it.</td>
<td>Supplement with printed text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video</td>
<td>Blind/low vision students may not see it, students with LD (auditory processing) may have difficulty understanding it.</td>
<td>Provide description, captions or written transcript</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture</td>
<td>Blind/low vision students may not see it</td>
<td>Add description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synchronous (real time) discussion</td>
<td>Blind/low vision students, students with LD and ADHD, students with medical/physical/physiological disabilities may</td>
<td>Use asynchronous (online) format for all or some discussions to allow more time for processing and responding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>have difficulty following up and keeping up</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tests/quizzes</td>
<td>Many students with disabilities have slower processing speeds that impact performance</td>
<td>Provide extended time/ Supplement with audio/provide large text size option</td>
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</table>
If you are an Office 365 user, you will find it very easy to open and use the accessibility checker in Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Look for the **Check Accessibility** button on the **Review** tab on the Ribbon. Click it to open the Accessibility Checker.

**TIP:** Another easy way to open the Accessibility Checker is to use the **Tell me** box. Press Alt+Q, and then, in the **Tell me** box, type **accessibility checker**.

If you have an older version of Word, Excel or PowerPoint, and you do not see the **Check Accessibility** button on the **Review** tab on the Ribbon, follow these steps to open the accessibility checker.

1. Click **File > Info**.
2. Select the **Check for Issues** button.
   **TIP:** To the right of the **Check for Issues** button, under the **Inspect** heading, is a list of any potential issues.

3. In the **Check for Issues** drop-down menu, select **Check Accessibility**.
4. The **Accessibility Checker** task pane appears next to your content and shows the inspection results.

5. To see information on why and how to fix an issue, under **Inspection Results**, select an issue. Results appear under **Additional Information**, and you’re directed to the inaccessible content in your file.
Understand the inspection results

After Accessibility Checker inspects your content, it reports the inspection results based on the severity of the issue found, categorized as follows:

- **Errors.** Issues that are reported as errors include content that is very difficult or impossible for people with disabilities to understand.

- **Warnings.** Warnings, in many cases, mean that the content is challenging for people with disabilities to understand.

- **Tips.** Tips let you know that, even though people with disabilities can understand the content, it could be better organized or presented to improve their experience.
Saving documents as PDFs

PDF files are not typically created in Acrobat. They are usually created in another program and converted to PDF.

If you are using Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, or Excel you can save a document as an accessible pdf.

Of course, the accessibility of the PDF depends on the accessibility of the original document.

So run the accessibility checker first, before saving your document as a pdf.

Microsoft Products

The majority of the PDF files on the web were probably created in Microsoft Word. The good news is that it is possible to create accessible PDF files in Office, as long as the following requirement is met:

The file must be accessible. That includes providing alternative text for images, proper headings, appropriate link text, etc.

When you are in your Microsoft product (Word, Excel, Powerpoint, etc)
Click on the File menu.

1. Click File > Save As and choose where you want the file to be saved.
2. In the **Save As** dialog box, choose **PDF** in the **Save as type** list by clicking on the upside triangle and clicking on pdf.
3. Click **Options**, make sure the **Document structure tags for accessibility** check box is selected, and then click **OK**.

4) Then click on save.
Quick Checklist for Course Accessibility

Audio (Podcasts)/Video
- Include synchronized closed-captions for video.
- Provide full descriptive narratives for video with no audio track.
- Include audio descriptions (also known as video descriptions or audio captioning). Provide narrative vocal description of important aspects of the video during breaks between dialogue.
- Provide text transcripts for audio

Microsoft Office, PDF, and Course Web Pages
- Use color appropriately. You can use color in your information but they have to have good contrast. Important information should not be emphasized with color alone. For example, “Assignments in green are due on Wednesday, and assignments in red are due on Friday” should not be the sole method of conveying information.
- Ensure that images have descriptive alternative text tags.
- Use Styles for consistency. For example, identify headings and subheadings in document(s).
- Save files as .rtf, .doc, or .pdf so they are easily downloadable.
- Use templates in Powerpoint. Avoid creating text boxes.
- Use Tab Key rather than Space Bar when indenting or spacing.
- Use simple tables. For example, do not merge cells, split cells, or embed tables within table/cells.
- Use text to provide a clear description of a website link rather than just the URL. For example, when creating a hyperlink, use text to display the name of the website rather than “Click here”.
- Check for PDF accessibility quickly by highlighting text. If the entire page highlights, it is not accessible.
- Check that links to external online resources are accessible, including any Web 2.0 tools being used.
Textbook Publishers

Questions to Ask Publishers

Are the videos captioned and audio recordings transcribed?
There should be transcripts for audio recordings and captions or subtitles for video.

Can all of the text that is displayed on the screen be read aloud by text-to-speech software?
Screen readers (assistive technology used by people who are blind) read real text. They cannot read images of text or text embedded in Flash animations/movies/simulations.

How accessible are the E-books?
E-books that use flash-based technology are typically not readable by a screen reader. Ask the publisher if they have a list of their E-books that are accessible.

Can all interactivity (media players, quizzes, flashcards, etc.) be completed by keyboard alone (no mouse required)?
People who are blind or people who have upper mobility disabilities cannot use a mouse. They use the keyboard to navigate and interact with the Web. Regulations require that any interactive elements on the publisher’s website (or on a DVD included with the book) be operable by a keyboard alone if they are used in your course. For example: An interactive exercise that requires dragging and dropping is not keyboard accessible, so unless there is a keyboard option to dragging and dropping, that sort of exercise should not be used in your course.

Is there any documentation available (VPAT or White Paper for example) that confirms accessibility or usability testing results?
A VPAT is a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template. It is used by many organizations to report the level of accessibility of their software products. If the publisher doesn’t have a VPAT or any research that confirms the accessibility of their product(s), don’t just take their word for how accessible they are. Ask them the questions above and if any of these answers are “No”, you might want to consider a different publisher.
Technology

**Purchasing Software from a Vendor**

**VPAT (Voluntary Product Accessibility Template)**
Ask publishers/software vendors to complete a [Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT)](https://www.federaljakob.org/). Recommend that VPAT be on file for campus to use if purchasing on own. Verify the version of software and date when template was completed.

**Web Tools**

[Web2 Access](https://www.web2access.org/) showcases a test in which they have evaluated many web tools and applications for interaction and collaboration.

Check [Web2Access report cards](https://www.web2access.org/) on many commonly used Web 2.0 tools.
Website evaluation tool

If you are sending students to external links, you can check the sites for accessibility by using an online tool called **WAVE**.

**WAVE Tool link:** [http://wave.webaim.org/](http://wave.webaim.org/)

Simply type in (or copy and paste) the website address you want to use and then push enter. The website will come up with a summary on it. The summary will show how many errors that page has on it for accessibility. If you get a page that has many errors, you may want to think twice before sharing it with your students.
Captioning videos

Captioning Your Video
Video captioning can help students who are hard of hearing, international students whose first language is not English, and students who are not familiar with certain terminologies. There are several ways to caption a video:

**Automatic captioning for youtube:**
- Youtube allows for automatic captioning. In order to use this feature, you must be the owner of the youtube account.
- To make sure that automatic captioning is turned on for youtube videos you upload, you must check it under the youtube setting.
  
  - Select Playback from the left-hand menu.
  - Check "Always show captions."
  - Check Show automatic captions by speech recognition (when available) to enable automatic captions for videos that don't already have captions provided.
  - Click Save
Note that when you first upload a video to YouTube, the automatic captioning feature may not appear at first (takes a few minutes depending on the length of your video. The transcription should appear after the captions show up.

*Note: that the automatic captioning of YouTube are not always 100% correct. The captioning has gotten better but you will have to check and edit the captioning so the wording is correct.

You can check and edit the captioning of the youtube videos. To learn how to check your youtube automatic captioning watch the (YouTube tutorial).

**Adding your own captions**

To add captions to videos on YouTube, you must be the owner of the YouTube account where the video is hosted.

**Step 1. Login to YouTube, then go to Video Manager.**

Currently Video Manager is located within the Upload menu, accessed by clicking *Upload*.

![Video Manager menu](image)

**Step 2. Find the video you want to add captions to, select Captions.**

Video Manager features a list of all your current videos. Currently each video includes an *Edit* button. Click on the Edit button to reveal the *Captions* option.
Step 3. Upload your caption file.

The Captions area within Video Manager includes a variety of features for managing your video’s captions and subtitles.

- **Transcribe and sync** allows you to add captions as the video is playing. You listen to the video and type your captions as it goes along. Video stops and replays as you type for ease of use.

- One of the options is **Upload a File. This option allows you to upload a file that has the captions typed on it.**

- Select that option, then follow the prompts to upload your caption or subtitle file and identify the language. After you upload your file the new captions or subtitles will be live on YouTube within seconds.
Free web-based self-service:

- Free web-based self-service captioning tools; for example, Amara.org, in which you can listen to the video while typing subtitles in the textbox. Then the subtitles can be synced with the audio (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Amara Transcription Editing Interface
Transcripts for your video(Youtube)

Transcript

A video transcript should include the audio in text format, plus descriptions of key graphs and content displayed in the video. Providing video transcripts will also benefit students who learn best from reading and who are unable to load the video. They can download the transcript and still access key information in the video.

Downloading transcripts to videos on your Youtube account.

If you used YouTube’s automatic captioning function, you can download the audio transcript after the captions are generated (Figure 2).
**Figure 2. Download YouTube Auto-generated Transcript**

**Click on .srt to download the transcript. To open the file, go to the application wordpad on your computer. Click on file and click on open. Find the file where it is, then click on open. Your file will then open up.**

**Another way to get the transcript:**
1. Go to the url of the video.
2. Underneath the video, click on more.
3. You will see a drop down menu, click on transcript.

4. Now click and drag to select all the information for the transcripts.

5. Once you have all the information highlighted right click and click on copy or use the keyboard shortcut CTRL-C to copy the text.

6. Open up wordpad or Microsoft word and paste the copied information.
Transcripts trick
A simple way to make a transcript, is by using speech to text software. For this trick, we will use the speech to text tool in google docs. (So you will need to have a free google account for this to work)

1) First, print out your presentation. Have the printed copy in front of you.

2) Open up google docs. Go tools and go to voice typing.

1. This will give you a picture of an microphone. When you click on that microphone (it may ask you to enable your microphone), google will listen to your speech and transcribe what you say.
When you click on the microphone it will turn orange indicating that the software is transcribing.

You can then go through your presentation aloud. You can tell google comments like **comma**, **period** to add punctuation.

Your file automatically saves online. You can then print out the transcripts out or share them digitally for your classes if you need it.