Accessibility-Forward Course Development: Implementations of T/L Usability Tools for Improved User Experiences (And Why Ally Will Change Your World)
Presenters

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Objectives

1. Identify components that contribute to digital accessibility culture change on a higher education campus.

2. Analyze several distinct case examples from multiple campuses' successful implementation of a tool or technique to heighten the overall accessibility of educational content.

3. Evaluate the support technology solutions can have on creating a more inclusive learning environment.

4. Discuss overlooked areas of digital accessibility – impact on the faculty member, and usability for the student.
- Digital Accessibility Initiative
- Technology Implementation
- Successes and Challenges
- Future Directions
Digital Accessibility Initiative – Background

Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, SC

*Academic Healthcare Center*

- 3,000 students
- 13,000 employees
  - 800 residents
  - 3,000 faculty
Digital Accessibility Initiative – Momentum

2017
Digital Accessibility Task Force

2018
Digital Accessibility Committee

2019
Guidelines applied University > Enterprise
Digital Accessibility Initiative – Components

- Training and tools
- Standards and compliance
- Audit and corrective strategies
Technology Implementation – Timeline

01/18  Purchased Blackboard Ally

04/18  Campus training on Ally

05/18  Deployed Ally across ALL Blackboard Open LMS

08/18-12/18  Ally Hour, MUSC Ally Award
Technology Implementation – Blackboard Ally

Alternative Formats
Automatically checks for accessibility issues and generates alternative formats

Instructor Feedback
Guides instructors on how to improve the accessibility of their course content and alters future behavior.

Institutional Reports
Provides detailed data and insight to help further improve course content accessibility at the institution.
≈200 courses requested alternative formats

≈1,500 alternative formats downloaded
In their face, on their time, in their space, at their pace

Creating internal motivation because no one wants to see red

Return on investment with increased output and decreased personnel cost
"Details matter, it's worth waiting to get it right."

Steve Jobs
MUSC Successes and Challenges

**Successes**

1. 2017-2018: 42% vs. 2018-2019: 73%
2. Prioritize issues
3. Options with alternative formats
4. Wide-range of uses for Ally

**Challenges**

1. ‘Firehose’ effect
2. Low attendance at trainings
3. Accountability
4. Not informed
Future Directions

- Communicate the need
- Support through resourcing
- Incremental roll out
- Ongoing training and education
- Process improvement
Coastal Carolina University

- Accessibility & Usability Initiative under COOL/Digital Learning
- Administrative & Faculty-based outreach
- Internal grants
- Broad definition of access
Coastal Carolina University – Background

Who we are: CCU

- ~11,000 students, 47% out of state. SES considerations
- ~500 faculty, ~2000 employees: 73 baccalaureate degrees & 25 master degrees, 2 EdS, 2 PhD
## Initial Implementation at CCU

### 1. LC/MM usage analysis

#### Closed Captioning Initiative

#### 2. Course-level reviews

#### Trainings & Templates

#### 3. Campus-wide review

- **Ally acquisition**, **VPATs @ purchase**, and more

### Table: Accessibility Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Link to the Accessibility and Disability Services website is included in syllabus and student support services information within the course.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statement informs students how and where to obtain the services (not just telephone number), including email address, physical location, and descriptive website title.</td>
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<td>Course expectations are clearly provided for students on how to inform instructor of the need for accommodations. Example may include: “To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper forms and meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations as soon as possible, preferably within the first two weeks of class.”</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.1, 8.3</td>
<td>Consistent layout and design throughout the entire course with proper headings and heading structures employed.</td>
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<td>Feel free to use the Accessible Course Module Template.</td>
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<td>Links, files, and icons are labeled with easy-to-understand, self-describing, and meaningful names.</td>
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<td>Design allows for students to easily locate where they are through keyboard navigation.</td>
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<td>All multimedia is captioned. If all multimedia needing captioning is in queue with COOL for captioning.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Visual information contains alt text (tags), text descriptions, or audio description (if necessary).</td>
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See downloadable syllabus and "Course Information" Chapter 1.11.
Ally Pilot Data

- Ally pilot soft launched in Moodle self-hosted 3.2.9 on 69 courses Summer/Fall 2018; full launch SP2019
- All course formats
- Beta testing translations
• Courses range 11%-100%
• 42% documents-26% PDFs-14% Images-11% Other-7% Presentations
## Accessibility issues

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Severe</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Minor</th>
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1. **Document**: The document does not have any headers  
   - Count: 10,785 of 29,459

2. **Document**: The document does not have a language set  
   - Count: 6,074 of 29,459

3. **Document**: The document is untagged  
   - Count: 5,893 of 10,174

4. **Document**: The document has contrast issues  
   - Count: 5,420 of 29,459

5. **Image**: The image does not have a description  
   - Count: 5,395 of 9,596
## Accessibility Issues

<p>| | | | | | | |</p>
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</table>

### Document: The document is scanned but not OCR'd
1,182 of 29,459

### Document: The document is malformed
41 of 18,174

### Image: The image can induce seizures
1 of 5,395
It is often difficult to determine just how detailed a task list needs to be. Certainly, you do not want to spend too much time creating the list that will take to accomplish the task. The sample list above goes into three levels (1.1, 2).

For any project, the lowest level should be small enough for one person to accomplish but big enough to measure in hours.

This might seem like a lot of effort up front, but it will serve you well over the course of the project. In addition to helping you create a more accurate schedule, a detailed task list helps to better track the progress of the project.

A task list is the input to the [Work Breakdown Structure] or WBS, which is the foundation of many project management software packages. It can also become a template for future, similar projects.

**Schedule**

Once you have a task list in place, simply assign a time frame to each task to determine your project schedule. Sounds easy, right? The difficult part is knowing how long each task will take. If you are working with an organization that has done many similar projects in the past, you may have access to the statistics on average time that were used. For other projects, you might use past projects to create an estimate for your project.

But most of the time, you just have to make an educated guess. There are two ways to approach scheduling. If you get to pick your deadline, assign each task a strict date and a duration (how long it takes to accomplish that task). The start date for each will usually follow from the end date of the task before it. If you are using project management software, there are called dependencies, or indicators of tasks that must be complete before the current task can begin. For example, you cannot begin a review task until the development task is complete. When you enter all this information into project management software, the system calculates the end date and total time spent for you.

In real life, however, you will often be given a deadline by upper management, or have a deadline based on some external event like a major trade show. If you have an internal, unmovable deadline, use a percentage method to determine approximate start and end dates.

A project that has a research phase, a development phase, a testing phase, and a production phase may break down to a 10 percent research, 67 percent development, 15 percent testing, and 18 percent production. If your deadline is 12 weeks away, you know that the research must be complete and the development must start after 1.8 weeks.

Remember that virtual teams may require some extra time for communication issues. Go through your task list and determine how long each task should take, and then compare your task durations to the schedule time frames based on percentage. If you have a buffer, such as a task that takes four weeks to accomplish but is due in just one week, you then have two choices: You can either reduce the scope of the project to decrease the number of tasks you take on or you can add more people to your team.

Notes:

- Be realistic; when adding people to schedule a tight schedule, don’t simply add up your people. "Crash programs kill because they are based on flaky stuff, with unrealistic promise. You can get a job a month." – Werner von Braun, rocket scientist.
Collaborations & Momentum Building

- Face-to-face trainings (DA & OER)
- One-on-one consultations
- Institutional & instructor reporting; college-level reporting
CCU Successes and Challenges

**Successes**

1. Rolled out campus-wide captioning option
2. Integrated accessibility trainings into grants
3. Began campus-level discussions & improvements-cultural shift started
4. Successful initial use & promos of Ally on user end

**Challenges**

1. Technology ownership
2. LMS instance & load considerations
3. Next steps with accessibility corrections-reporting and individual course corrections
4. Promotions
Resources & Take Aways

- Ally **User Group**
- COOL **A & U Initiative**
- Read about **ASR w/ e360**
- Contact **Sherri Restauri**

Special thanks to John Scott/Bb Ally for sharing Ally images
Instructor Perspective

Dr. Sarah Elizabeth Moreman
Perspective of a differently-abled instructor (hearing impaired)

Use of Blackboard as part of her pedagogy
60-65 students

3 English classes

Writing Prompts (Sept. 6th)

**Writing Prompt #1**
Blackboard

**Writing Prompt #2**
Can you explain how you use the Blackboard in this class and/or other classes where faculty require you to login, either as an online class or one that is hybrid/web-supplement?

**Writing Prompt #3**
What are some accessibility challenges you have faced with using Blackboard?

**Writing Prompt #4**
What aspects about Blackboard from which you do benefit?
And explain why.
Outcomes from LMS Integration

1) Convenience
2) Communication
3) A Sense of Community

Full video (~20 minutes)
Abridged video (~7 minutes)
Student Perspective

Accessible for ALL students

• Attention Deficit Disorder
• Hearing Impaired
• Students of all learning styles
• Visually Impaired
Closed Captions

• Improved Comprehension
• Viewer Flexibility
• Improved Searching (great studying)
Student Perspective

Alternative Formats

- Ally provides PDF, Audio, ePub, and Electronic Braille
- Easier access
- Meets the needs of each individual
Session Evaluations & Drawing

- Download and open OLC Conferences mobile app
- Navigate to specific session to evaluate
- Select “Evaluate Session” on session details screen (located under session type and track)
- Complete session evaluation*

* Each session evaluation completed (limited to one per session) = one contest entry

Five (5) $25 gift cards will be awarded to five (5) individuals
Must submit evals using the OLC Conferences mobile app or website