# **Faculty Guide for Accessibility**

## Why make your course accessible?

* Makes learning inclusive and improves comprehension
* Eliminates barriers to learning for individuals with disabilities
* Reduces issues needed to fix for accommodations
* Saves time when done proactively when content is first developed

## Accessibility Concepts

### Organization

**Accessibility Purpose:** Provides clear order of navigation and identifies the purpose of content. Also aids individuals with cognitive disabilities or vision impairments.

* Use unique, descriptive titles for pages, documents, and slides
* Use consistent naming conventions
* Use consistent and clear layout of courses, webpages, and documents
* Add table of contents for long documents

#### Organization Resources

* [**The Basics of Accessible Digital Content Structure**](https://www.colorado.edu/accessible-technology/2017/03/20/basics-accessible-digital-content-structure)
* [**Layout and Hierarchy**](https://accessibility.digital.gov/visual-design/layout-and-hierarchy/)
* [**Video: Creating Accessible File Names**](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/video-create-accessible-file-names-4e73d73a-aedc-47af-88e4-8f2375a69fad)
* [**Writing Document Titles for HTML**](https://accessibility.huit.harvard.edu/technique-writing-document-titles)
* [**Add a Title, Heading, or Table of Contents in Google Docs**](https://support.google.com/docs/answer/116338?co=GENIE.Platform%3DDesktop&hl=en)
* [**Add a Table of Contents in Word**](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/insert-a-table-of-contents-882e8564-0edb-435e-84b5-1d8552ccf0c0)

### Headings

**Accessibility Purpose:** Improves scannability of pages and identifies topics for information. Also aids individuals with cognitive disabilities or vision impairments.

* Format headings correctly with heading styles
* Do not skip heading levels

#### Heading Resources

* [**Headings and Subheadings**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/headings/)
* [**AccessibleU: Headings**](https://accessibility.umn.edu/what-you-can-do/start-7-core-skills/headings)
* [**How to Add Headings in Canvas**](https://sbctc.instructure.com/courses/1578604/pages/how-to-add-headings-in-canvas)
* [**How to Add Headings in Microsoft Word**](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/add-a-heading-3eb8b917-56dc-4a17-891a-a026b2c790f2)
* [**Video: How to Add Headings in Microsoft Word**](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/video-improve-accessibility-with-heading-styles-68f1eeff-6113-410f-8313-b5d382cc3be1)
* [**Using Headings in Wordpress Sites**](https://www.calliaweb.co.uk/headings-wordpress-websites/)

### Hyperlinks

**Accessibility Purpose:** Explains where links direct to and their purpose, and improves ability to identify links. Also aids individuals with vision and motor impairments.

* Hyperlink links to descriptive, meaningful text
* Avoid vague phrases such as “click here” or “link”
* Underline, bold, use a different color for links to make them easy to identify
* Periodically check links to confirm whether they are broken

#### Hyperlink Resources

* [**AccessibleU: Links**](https://accessibility.umn.edu/what-you-can-do/start-7-core-skills/links)
* [**Video: How to Create Accessible Links in Word**](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/video-create-accessible-links-in-word-28305cc8-3be2-417c-a313-dc22082d1ee0)
* [**How to Add Hyperlinks in Canvas**](https://sbctc.instructure.com/courses/1578604/pages/descriptive-hyperlinks-in-canvas?module_item_id=33787875)
* [**How to Add Hyperlinks in PowerPoint**](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/add-a-hyperlink-to-a-slide-239c6c94-d52f-480c-99ae-8b0acf7df6d9)
* [**How to Write Descriptive and Accessible Hyperlinks**](https://online.umkc.edu/how-to-make-descriptive-accessible-hyperlinks/)
* [**What’s Wrong with “Click Here” Links?**](https://webaccess.berkeley.edu/ask-pecan/click-here)

### Reading Order & Orientation

**Accessibility Purpose:** Identifies correct flow of information for individuals using screen readers or text-to-speech software (including individuals with cognitive or vision impairments).

* Identify correct reading order of content
* Add content in-line and in a linear order
* Do not use content that is sideways (e.g. scanned materials)

#### Reading Order & Orientation Resources

* [**How to Edit Reading Order in PowerPoint and Acrobat**](https://accessibility.colostate.edu/reading-order/)
* [**How to Use the Reading Order Pane in PowerPoint**](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-slides-easier-to-read-by-using-the-reading-order-pane-863b5c1c-4f19-45ec-96e6-93a6457f5e1c)
* [**Reading Order Tool for PDFs**](https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/using/touch-reading-order-tool-pdfs.html)

### Page Layout

**Accessibility Purpose:** Improves readability and comprehension for all learners, including individuals with cognitive and vision impairments.

* Use white space for content and do not crowd elements together
* Use margins on documents
* Recommended to use line spacing of 1.5 or double spacing

#### Text Layout Resources

* [**Whitespace: Not Just a Waste of Space!**](https://www.calliaweb.co.uk/whitespace-not-just-a-waste-of-space/)
* [**Whitespace and Text Alignment**](https://clemson.instructure.com/courses/197/pages/white-space-and-text-alignment)
* [**Margins, Padding, and Whitespace**](https://webaim.org/techniques/textlayout/#whitespace)

### Text Alignment

**Accessibility Purpose:** Improves readability and comprehension for all learners, including individuals with cognitive impairments.

* Left align text (for languages read left to right, e.g. English)
* Avoid centering text (centering is acceptable for titles)
* Do not justify text

#### Text Alignment Resources

* [**Text Block Formatting**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/legibility/textblocks/)
* [**Text Alignment**](https://webaim.org/techniques/textlayout/#text_alignment)

### Text Emphasis

**Accessibility Purpose:** Improves readability and comprehension for all learners, including individuals with cognitive and vision impairments.

* Use bold for emphasis
* Do not use italics, underline, all caps, or a combination for emphasis

#### Text Emphasis Resources

* [**Bold Instead of Italics**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/legibility/boldface/)
* [**Emphasized Text**](https://clemson.instructure.com/courses/197/pages/emphasized-text)

### Lists

**Accessibility Purpose:** Improves readability and comprehension for all learners, including individuals with cognitive and vision impairments.

* Format lists with list styles
* Format nested lists as an outline or with headings

#### List Resources

* [**AccessibleU: Lists**](https://accessibility.umn.edu/what-you-can-do/start-7-core-skills/lists)
* [**Lists in HTML**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/listshtml/)
* [**Lists in Word**](https://blogs.wright.edu/learn/accessibility/word/lists-in-word/)

### Font

**Accessibility Purpose:** Improves readability and comprehension for all learners, including individuals with cognitive disabilities.

* Use accessible fonts (Arial recommended)
* Use sans serif fonts; avoid serif and decorative fonts
* Select fonts available on all devices

#### Font Resources

* [**Font Face**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/legibility/fontface/)
* [**Best Fonts to Use on Your Website**](https://www.calliaweb.co.uk/best-fonts-to-use-on-your-website/)

### Language & Symbols

**Accessibility Purpose:** Improves readability and comprehension. Also aids individuals with cognitive or vision impairments, and English language learners.

* Add language tags to documents
* Avoid jargon, abbreviations, and idioms
* Spell out acronyms on first reference and use periods if possible (e.g. US vs U.S.)
* Avoid use of special characters and symbols
* Format math equations with Math Editors, MathML, or alt text

#### Language & Symbol Resources

* [**Content Language Accessibility in Canvas and Microsoft Office**](https://clear.unt.edu/teaching-resources/accessibility/content-language-accessibility)
* [**Foreign Languages and Accessibility**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/foreignlanguages/)
* [**Abbreviations in HTML**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/abbreviations/)
* [**Screen Readers: A Guide to Punctuation and Typographic Symbols**](https://www.deque.com/blog/dont-screen-readers-read-whats-screen-part-1-punctuation-typographic-symbols/)
* [**Equations: MathML, Images and LaTeX**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/math/equations/)
* [**Canvas Math Editor**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/software/canvas/canvasmath/)
* [**Math and Technical Content Guidelines**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/math/stemguidelines/)

### Images

**Accessibility Purpose:** Allows individuals with cognitive or vision impairments, or individuals with slow internet connections to read content.

* Add alt text for all images, shapes, graphs, etc. to describe their purpose
* Phrase alt text to be brief, descriptive, and concise
* Do not write “image of” or “graphic of” in alt text
* Do not use file name as alt text
* Avoid images of text (should be formatted as text)
* Mark images with no instructional purpose as decorative
* Add a detailed description or caption for complex images (in addition to alt text)
* Change complex images to a different format if they cannot be easily described with a combination of alt text and detailed description
* Provide a text alternative for scanned documents
* Add titles and axis labels for graphs and charts

#### Image Resources

* [**AccessibleU: Alt Text**](https://accessibility.umn.edu/what-you-can-do/start-7-core-skills/alternative-text)
* [**Video: How to Add Alt Text in Word**](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/video-improve-accessibility-with-alt-text-9c57ee44-bb48-40e3-aad4-7647fc1dba51)
* [**Video: How to Add Alt Text in Outlook**](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/video-improve-image-accessibility-in-email-e93969e3-21c1-47ad-a4c5-0e5fb868a7f8)
* [**Video: Improve Image Accessibility in PowerPoint**](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/video-improve-image-accessibility-in-powerpoint-2e7fdfc4-1fa5-4092-be4b-8a4ca592197c)
* [**How to Design Great Alt Text**](https://www.deque.com/blog/great-alt-text-introduction/)
* [**Long Description for Images**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/images/longdescription/)
* [**Flowcharts**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/images/flowcharts/)
* [**Decorative Images**](https://www.w3.org/WAI/EO/Drafts/tutorials/images/decorative/)

### Tables

**Accessibility Purpose:** Improves table readability for all learners, including individuals with cognitive and vision impairments.

* Use tables only for data presentation and analysis
* Avoid using tables for text or page formatting (aesthetic purposes)
* Add a caption or description for tables
* Use headers for tables
* Avoid complexly formatted tables
* Repeat header row across pages
* Avoid blank or merged cells
* Add table alt text

#### Table Resources

* [**AccessibleU: Tables**](https://accessibility.umn.edu/what-you-can-do/start-7-core-skills/tables)
* [**Video: How to Create Accessible Tables in Word**](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/video-create-accessible-tables-in-word-cb464015-59dc-46a0-ac01-6217c62210e5)
* [**Video: How to Create Accessible Tables in Excel**](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/video-create-more-accessible-tables-in-excel-86e50f77-0f15-4537-ab1d-62d0e4cd5645)
* [**Video: How to Create Accessible Charts in Excel**](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/video-create-more-accessible-charts-in-excel-19e81ce7-88af-4a3f-a4ef-a26c344527b3)
* [**How to Create Accessible Tables in Canvas**](https://sbctc.instructure.com/courses/1578604/pages/tables-in-canvas?module_item_id=33787874)
* [**Accessibility in Google Sheets**](https://accessibility.oit.ncsu.edu/google-sheets/)

### Multimedia

**Accessibility Purpose:** Provides text for individuals with hearing impairments, those in quiet or loud environments, or English language learners.

* Provide closed captions for videos
* Edit automatic captions for clarity
* Include a written transcript for audio recordings
* Describe images aloud during video or audio lectures
* Do not use videos with blinking or flickering content

#### Multimedia Resources

* [**AccessibleU: Video and Audio**](https://accessibility.umn.edu/what-you-can-do/start-7-core-skills/video-audio)
* [**Editing Captions in MyMedia**](https://itsupport.ou.edu/TDClient/30/Unified/KB/ArticleDet?ID=302)
* [**Creating Accessible Videos**](https://www.washington.edu/accessibility/videos/)
* [**Accessibility Best Practices for Zoom**](https://usability.yale.edu/web-accessibility/articles/zoom)

### Contrast

**Accessibility Purpose:** Improves readability for all learners, including those with vision impairments, color blindness, or individuals printing in black and white.

* Use a variety of color intensities
* Avoid using blurry images
* Avoid pastels and light colored text
* Avoid extremely bright colors
* Avoid textured backgrounds

#### Contrast Resources

* [**AccessibleU: Contrast**](https://accessibility.umn.edu/what-you-can-do/start-7-core-skills/contrast)
* [**Video: Use More Accessible Colors and Styles in PowerPoint**](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/video-use-more-accessible-colors-and-styles-in-slides-65c8c964-9449-4b5f-88ea-e226abd68337)
* [**Contrast Tips**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/legibility/contrast/)

### Color

**Accessibility Purpose:** Improves readability for all learners, including those with vision impairments, color blindness, or individuals printing in black and white.

* Avoid red/green color combinations
* Recommended to use monochrome coloring for graphs
* Avoid color coding information unless an additional method is used
* Add dashes lines or symbols to graphs

#### Color Resources

* [**Avoiding Color Coding**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/color/colorcoding/)
* [**Problematic Color Combinations**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/color/colorvisiondetails/)
* [**Vibrating Color Combinations**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/color/brightcolors/)
* [**Charts and Accessibility**](https://accessibility.psu.edu/images/charts/)