



Baton Rouge Community College
Counseling & Accessibility Services
E-Learning Accessibility

Online Course Accessibility Checklist

The following checklist is a basic level list to work towards online course content accessibility. The goal is to be able to answer yes to all of the following.

Course

- Instructions for my course use plain understandable language. Acronyms are clearly defined.
- The course contains no blinking, flashing, or sparkling animated images.
- Text and background color have sufficient contrast on all documents, PowerPoint's, webpages outside and within the Learning Management System.

Links

- The links within my course and documents use descriptive text and are uniquely named. (For example, instead of "click here" use the name of the resource you are linking to for example, "Google").
- Websites I have linked to and required my students to use, follow appropriate guidelines.

Syllabus

- The syllabus has a Disability Services/ADA statement with the current contact and location information for Counseling & Accessibility Services.
- The syllabus lists contact information for technical assistance and when to use it?
- The syllabus outlines how students should communicate with you. Multiple options are provided?
- The syllabus lists a turnaround time for online communication. (i.e. 48 hours response on emails)
- The syllabus states standards of appropriate communication online. (i.e. Netiquette guidelines)
- The syllabus has a clear outline for course content and student expectations.
- The syllabus has examples for different standards of "discussion posting" for courses? (i.e. discussion grading criteria)
- The syllabus contains information about the required and optional textbook(s) and course material?

Documents

- Documents are saved as accessible Word (.doc, .docx), PDF (.pdf), or RTF (.rtf).
- Text in documents can be highlighted, copied, and pasted.
- Documents contain actual text, not scanned or copied images of text. (Example: You cannot highlight text on a scanned document).
- Images of text are avoided OR an alternative is provided. See Alternative Text section.
- Text formatting (shape, color, and styling) cannot be the only way to convey information. Example: If the incorrect answer is colored red, you must add an identifier like "This answer is incorrect".
- Document text has been modularized for easy navigation.
- Headings/Styles have been used for titles and document sections titles.
- Was the [built-in MS Office Accessibility Checker](#) used?
- View [Creating accessible Word documents from Microsoft Office Support](#) for more information

PowerPoint Presentations

- All course presentations were created using a standard template.
- Additional text boxes, smart art or objects were not inserted.
- The presentations were created using high and low contrast for text and background.
- The presentation includes alternative text for all graphics and pictures.

- The presentation includes text typed in the order it is read which can be verified in the "Outline" panel.
- All textual information within a PowerPoint slide appears in the proper order on the "Outline" view. (Using the built-in slide layouts provided within PowerPoint usually insures this.)
- An outline of the PowerPoint Presentation has been provided as an alternative to the PowerPoint Presentation.
- When tabbing, does the cursor move in a logical order if it were read aloud?
- Was the [built-in MS Office Accessibility Checker](#) used?
- View [Creating accessible PowerPoint presentations from Microsoft Office Support](#) for more information.

Excel Workbooks

- Do images (which offer important information not contained in the text) include text descriptions?
- Were header rows and column headings specified?
- Was the hyperlink text meaningful?
- Were merged cells avoided?
- Was the [built-in MS Office Accessibility Checker](#) used?
- View [Creating accessible Excel workbooks from Microsoft Office Support](#) for more information.

Alternative Text

- My course contains no blinking, flashing, or sparkling animated images.
- All pictures, charts, graphs and tables that contain information or data within my course and course documents have alternate text or a text description that conveys the same information.

Video and Audio

- All audio-video content, regardless of format (web, DVD and VHS), are captioned, have subtitles, a full transcript(s) or a synopsis.
- All audio-video content provided and/or linked to within my course and course documents contain synchronized captions or a full transcript.
- All video-only content (with no audio track) has a text description of the important visual content from the video.
- All audio-only content (podcast, mp3, CD's, etc.), I have provided within my course or linked to outside of my course have a transcript available.
- Transcripts or captions have speaker identification when media has multiple speakers.
- A synopsis has been provided for all audio, audio-video, video-only content and narrated presentations that do not have closed captioning or a full transcript.
- If you do not have accessible media have you contacted an IT for assistance?

**To start the Microsoft Accessibility accessibility checker:

- On Office 2016 for Windows: **File > Check for Issues** dropdown menu > **Check Accessibility**
- On all other versions: **Review tab > Check Accessibility**

Additional Resources for Accessibility

- [Universal Design for Learning Guidelines \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Accessibility for Microsoft Word \(Links to an external site.\)](#) - WebAIM's tutorial describes how to use headings, add alt text, create links, and use Word's Accessibility Checker to identify accessibility problems. It also explains how to convert Word to HTML.
- [Create Accessible Word Documents \(Links to an external site.\)](#)- A series of short videos from Microsoft
- [Authoring Techniques for Accessible Office Documents: Microsoft Word 2011:Mac \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Creating accessible PowerPoint presentations \(Links to an external site.\)](#) – Microsoft
- [PDF Accessibility \(Links to an external site.\)](#) - from WebAIM
- [Captions, Transcripts, and Audio Descriptions \(Links to an external site.\)](#) - from WebAIM
- [Flash Accessibility Issues - from WebAIM](#)

E-Learning Accessibility

Hyperlinks

To support ADA compliance in online courses, we recommend beginning with ensuring all hyperlinks are text within a sentence to foster readability. If link text is meaningless or too long, students using screen readers have trouble figuring out where the link will take them. Keep link text concise and make sure that it makes sense out of context.

PowerPoint automatically creates a link when a user pastes a full URL onto a slide and presses Enter or Space. Raw URLs may not make sense to screen reader users or others, so make the link text descriptive.

To change the link text right-click the link and select Edit Hyperlink. On Mac, right-click the link and select Hyperlink > Edit Hyperlink. A dialog will appear. Click in the Text to Display field at the top of the dialog and enter descriptive link text.

Navigation

Course navigation is simple and consistent. Ideally, all content is within 3 clicks of the main course page.

Organization and Formatting

- Improve the organization of your page by including headings, lists and consistent structure.
- Avoid using very small font size - When designing informational material, a sans serif font is easiest to read. Times New Roman and Palatino have the additional strokes and should be avoided. Examples of acceptable sans serif fonts are Arial and Helvetica. Once a font is selected, it is best to use the same font throughout the course. Minimizing font variation helps make courses ADA compliant, and it can help all learners stay focused.
- Another factor to consider with text design is accessibility and usability. For accessibility and usability, it is best to have a dark-colored font on a light-colored background, also known as high contrast. The best option for readability is a black font with a white background. If instructors want to use color, they need to avoid using extremely bright background colors, such as red.
- It is especially advantageous to avoid red-green or yellow-blue combinations as contrasting colors because individuals with colorblindness are unable to differentiate the text from the background.
- After text colors are chosen, text formatting should be examined. Text formatting should follow the 'less is more' rule, particularly with the use of bolds and italics. Use them sparingly and only to emphasize extreme items. Concerning underlining, the only text that should be underlined is text that is hyperlinked to meet ADA compliance.
- Be sure that students who are color-blind can use your site. Do not rely on color to indicate meaning. For example, to not specify that assignments currently due by listing them in red.
- To accommodate students with learning disabilities, it is helpful to "chunk" your information using blocks of texts and headings, and to keep links organized.

DO THIS	NOT THIS
Module 1 Module Overview	Module 1 Module Overview
Module 2 Module Overview	Module 2 Module Overview
Alternative Text Accessibility Quick Start Tools Discussions	Alternative Text Accessibility Quick Start Tools Discussions
Fonts Color Hyperlinks Alternative Text Styles	Fonts Color Hyperlinks Alternative Text Styles

Use Headings and other Built-In Style Features

Using built-in styles and layouts improves the both the usability and accessibility of Word documents, PowerPoint presentations, Canvas/Oncourse pages, and other files. As you create these files:

- Use headings (e.g., Heading 1, Heading 2, Heading 3) to format and mark headings and indicate the organization of the content. Headings help everyone recognize ordinal and co-ordinal relationships between topics and enable those using screen readers to skim the page and find what they need.
- Use built-in bullet lists and numbered lists instead of trying to create them using tabs and spaces. The built-in lists provide a navigational structure for those using screen readers.
- Use built-in layouts in PowerPoint rather than building your own with text boxes. The built-in layouts include mark-ups, similar to the headings described above, which ensures that information is presented in the correct order for those using screen readers.

PowerPoint

- Use large, high contrast text to help students with low vision
- If you include an image, [add an alternative text label](#) for that image.

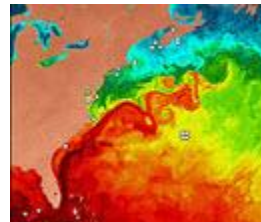
Images/Graphics

- Provide a text alternative for images where appropriate
- Alternative text (also called "alt text") is invisible text attached to images. It is read aloud by a screen reader, enabling someone who can't see the image to access the meaning of the image. Most Learning Management Systems (LMS), like Blackboard, Canvas, Moodle, etc., have an alt tag option when adding the image or graphic.
- Alternative text is required for all images, and writing it can be tricky, so the [WebAIM "How to Write Appropriate alt Text" \(Links to an external site.\)](#) tutorial is highly recommended. (You can skip the parts about HTML.) To get you started, here are some basic guidelines for writing it, depending on whether the image is active, informational, redundant, or textual.

Active Images



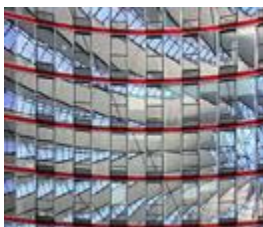
- The image serves as a link or button. Clicking it or hovering over it causes something to happen.
- Use alt text that conveys the **function** of the image (for example, "View map of Antarctica").



Informational Images

- The image is not active but conveys information that is not given in a caption or the body of the content.
- Use alternative text that conveys **the same information** as the image.

Decorative/Redundant Images



- The image is redundant to the text or conveys no information.
- Use **alt=""** for the alternative text.



Textual Images

- The image is of text.
- Use alternative text that is **the same as the text** in the image.

- Images and graphics can be a powerful addition to any course as they can exemplify content; however, even images have ADA regulations. Images and graphics should be relevant to the content, visibly easy to see and in high resolution. It is best to avoid animated or blinking images.
- MSWord files containing images can be easy for sighted users to understand, but pose problems for users who make use of screen readers. Use of titles and written descriptions help provide access to those who are “listening” to pages.
- PDF files need extra care when authoring to ensure ALT text and text flow allow reading by users of adaptive technology. PDF files that are scanned images of pages are not readable by adaptive software. For more information see [PDF Accessibility](#).
- Multimedia content (such as video files) can be accessed by students with hearing disabilities once they have been captioned. For audio and video as an alternative you may also provide the transcript in a separate text file next to the link to the media file.

Audio/Video

Just like with images and graphics, it is important to ensure that courses have clear audio and video. Clear audio requires minimal background noises, clear word pronunciation and consistent volume. Clear video has minimal movement to avoid blurred refocusing and high resolution in rendering.

- Both audio and video files require written transcription, also known as closed-captioning for videos. Including transcriptions with lectures shows due diligence towards ADA compliance, and so does providing transcripts of audio feedback.
- It is best practice to have audio or video clips that are 3 to 10 minutes in length. If the content that takes longer to cover, it is best to create short, segmented videos, each ranging from 3 to 10 minutes in length.
- The final aspect for audio and video accessibility is to use a universal audio or video player. We recommend using MP3 (audio) or MP4 (video) file formats.

Documents

- All text in a course should be searchable, which allows learners to search for words or phrases within a document. If a PDF document is not searchable, an accompanying plain text version should be available. When linking documents within a course, the label of the link should have the file extension type at the end (.doc or .docx for a Word document, .ppt for PowerPoint, .xlsx or .xltx for Excel, etc.).
- Tables and charts can also exemplify content being covered and must adhere to ADA compliance. Any table or chart needs to have identifying headers and labels as well as summaries. In addition, the course syllabus is a document that should include an accessibility statement for students which outlines ADA procedures.

Assessment

The assessment feature in Canvas makes quizzing and grading easy, but students with disabilities might face certain challenges with these assessments.

- The quizzes, which may be timed, are more difficult to manage using screen readers or other adaptive technologies
- Students with learning disabilities might require more time to finish certain assessments, or may have difficulty with forced completion

As an appropriate accommodation for their disability, some students registered with the Accessibility Services may be allowed extra time to complete quizzes and tests, or other changes to the parameters.