Accessibility Considerations for Online Courses
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Resource List
- Available through April 2014 on homepage of Web Accessibility Group (WAG)
- Available beginning May 2014 from Navigation bar: CSUN 2014

Definition of Accessible
- *" 'Accessible' means a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use. The person with a disability must be able to obtain the information as fully, equally and independently as a person without a disability."*
- From recent Resolution Letter between U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights and institute of higher learning

Online Courses
Today's discussion refers to:
- Courses delivered partially or fully online
- Course materials that are available online
- External websites, or any other web-based activities associated with an online course

Growth of Online Learning
- Growth and popularity of online courses at an all-time high
- Over 60% of institutes of higher education in the U.S. report online learning is a critical part of their long term planning (Sloan)
- Not limited to higher education; includes other organizations, as well
- Worldwide, $35.8 billion dollar industry, predicted to double in 2015 (SSB Bart)

Yet…..
- Legal landscape (U.S.) indicates many online courses are not accessible to students with disabilities

Question remains….
- Why not???

Disconnect

- Web accessibility standards and guidelines are often understood and implemented by website developers
- however, the same practices are often misunderstood or overlooked by online course developers

E-learning Accessibility

"The research literature in the field of e-learning is both broad and comprehensive, though the intersection between e-learning and web accessibility is less developed."
W3C Research and Development Working Group, Wiki, Oct 2013 p.2

Result

- Loss of equivalent academic experience and educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Instructor Challenge

- Instructors are challenged to meet accessibility compliance on their own

Online Courses – Group Effort

- Administrators
- Instructors
- Website and Web Application Developers
- Instructional Designers
- Digital Media Developers
- Information Technology Teams
- Procurement Personnel
- Disability Service Coordinators

Administrative Challenge

- Disparate group
- Requires a coordinated approach
- Administrators must provide much-needed leadership, guidance and resources

Administrative Solutions

- Web Accessibility Policy
- Implementation Plan for Web Accessibility

Web Accessibility Policy

Includes, but not limited to:

- Clearly Defined Purpose
- Legal Requirements
- Accessibility Standards
- Definitions
- Who Must Comply
- Timelines and Deadlines
- Assessment and Evaluation
- Dissemination Plan for the Policy
- Ramifications of Non-compliance

Implementation Plan

Includes, but not limited to:

- Administrative Buy-in
- Awareness Campaign
- Training & Resources
- Retrofitting and Remediation Plan
- Timelines and Deadlines
- Job Requirements for New Hires
- Training Future Educators
- Assessment, Evaluation
- Ramifications of Non-compliance

Global Awareness Campaign

- [Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD)](#)
- Joe Devon and Jennison Asuncion
- This year's event: May 15, 2014

Statewide Awareness Campaign

- Georgia Accessibility Awareness Day
- Fall 2014
- Guest Speakers

10 Tips for Creating Accessible Course Content

- Handout available with CSUN 2014 Resource List on [Web Accessibility Group (WAG)](#) website

Conducting Accessible Webinars

- Ensure the webinar technology is accessible

- Provide vendor accessibility information for using the product
- For live online classes:
  - Closed Captioned
  - Verbally describe all slide text and images
  - Follow accessibility for PowerPoint slides
  - Avoid "timed response" activities
  - Chat, Poll, Quiz, Breakout Rooms
  - Provide Accessible Handouts, in advance
- More information is available on 2014 CSUN Resource List, available at [Web Accessibility Group (WAG)](#) website

Conclusion
- Online learning is expanding rapidly, worldwide.
- All aspects of online courses and content must be accessible for students with disabilities.
- Administrative support, policies and plans are a critical component of online course offerings.
- Begin implementing web accessibility standards, guidelines and best practices, today!