Accessibility: Making Your eLC Course *Work*!

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Agenda

1) Overview of Section 508
2) Accessible Course Design
3) Accessible Course Content

Section 508

- Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 and states in part: "*Electronic and Information Technology must be equally accessible to people with and without disabilities*."
- State of Georgia receives funding through the *Assistive Technology Act*
- Board of Regents has determined all institutions under BOR fall within scope of 508

USG Web Accessibility Policies & Resources

- [USG Accessibility](#)
- [Higher Education, The Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 508](#)
- [Web Accessibility and Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [USG Accessibility Tutorial](#)
    - [Training](#) resources (including Distance Education Accessibility Guidelines and Checklists for creating accessible documents

Benefits of 508 Compliance

- Accessible to individuals with disabilities
- Comply with US Federal Law
- More usable for all learners using wide variety of technologies
- Accommodate different learning styles
- Assist speakers of English as second language
- Captions increase comprehension for all learners
- Expands your reach

If We Don't Comply?

- US Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights
- US Department of Justice, Office of Civil Rights
- Lawsuit in State or Federal Court

Higher Education – Lawsuits and Civil Rights Complaints

- June 2011 - Lawsuit, Florida State University
    - Specialty software for homework/exams
    - Lecture materials
    - Classroom Clickers
    - Textbook
- Nov 2010 – Civil rights complaint, Penn state
    - Departmental Websites
    - Learning Management System
    - Library Online Catalog
    - Classroom Clickers
    - Smart Podium
    - PNC Bank ATMs

508 and Learning Management Systems (LMS)

1) Framework (eLC)
2) Accessible Course Design
3) Accessible Course Content

8 Tips for Accessible Course Design

1. Accessibility Statement (Syllabus and/or eLC Course Homepage)

- UGA Disability Resource Center

2. Orientation Document

- Include on Syllabus or as separate document
- Describe general layout of your course
- Types of content found in the course
- Features or tools that will be used or required
- Accessibility efforts made for 508 compliance
- Welcome suggestions on how to increase accessibility
- Links to vendor Accessibility information
  - eLC (Bb Vista) Accessibility Statement
  - eLC-New (D2L) Early Adopters Only

3. Course Structure & Layout

- Keep homepage simple and uncluttered
- Organize related content (Folders or Modules)
  - Same icon layout for all Folders; same display options for all Learning Modules
- Provide unique and descriptive titles for all content

4. Navigation

- Ensure Course Menu is organized and up-to-date
- Add Search tool and move to top of Course Menu
- Move frequently used tools just below Search tool
- Remove all tools not currently used

5. Color Scheme

- Choose colors carefully
- Use eLC "High Contrast" color scheme
- Avoid using color as the sole means of conveying important information (i.e. do not color-code)

6. Backgrounds

- Keep backgrounds simple
- Homepage, Documents, PowerPoint slides, etc.
- Ensure background doesn't overpower text
- Ensure high contrast between text and background

7. Screen Flicker, Moving or Blinking Text

- Ensure no component of web content flashes more than 3 times per second
- Avoid flicker frequency >2Hz and <55Hz
- Because difficult to determine, avoid flicker, moving or blinking text, animated GIFs, etc.

8. Avoid Inaccessible Tools*

- Chat / Whiteboard (avoid required participation in real-time sessions)
- Grading Forms (provide alternate means of communicating with students who cannot access Grade Forms (Ex: comments can be emailed to students)
- Who's Online (avoid required use)
- *From *Using Blackboard Vista Accessibly*, California State University, Chico

- *Wimba = Accessible!*
  - Offers a *fully accessible interface*
  - [Accessibility Best Practices Guide for Wimba Classroom](#)
  - Captioning can be provided (outsource to qualified vendor)
  - Slide Descriptions can be provided (add Slide Descriptions after upload PPT file)

8 Tips for Accessible Course Content

1. Set Your File Properties

- Document Title
- Keywords
- Subject
- Author

2. Ensure Readability

- Divide large blocks of information into smaller more manageable sections
- Avoid complex sentences
- Use proper numeric or bulleted lists
- Include Table of Contents with active hyperlinks to document sections

3. Use Semantic Structure

- Semantic structure is *critical* and *absolutely essential* for accessibility
- Use Styles (or Tags) to create structure:
  - Headings (instead of bold or larger font)
  - Strong (instead of bold)
  - Emphasis (instead of italics)
  - Etc.

4. Provide Descriptive Hyperlinks

- Link text should make sense out-of-context
- Link text should be unique and describe destination
- Avoid using "click here" or "email me"

5. Provide Text Equivalents

- Images, Charts, Graphs, Audio, Video, etc.
- ALT text included in Image Properties
- Clear, concise description of image <100 characters
- Some images will also require a Long Description
- If image is decorative only, provide " " null for ALT text
  - WebAIM Resource: [Appropriate Use of Alternative Text](#)

6. Provide Long Description (when ALT text alone is insufficient)

- WebAIM: [Creating Accessible Images, Long Descriptions](#)
- W3C Resource: [Excerpts from the NBA Tape Recording Manual, Third Edition](#)

7. HTML Preferred File Format
- HTML is most widely accessible format
- Content should originate in HTML editor
    - Save As HTML is *not accessible*
- If HTML is not possible:
    - Review Section 508 Checklists, USG Accessibility Tutorial, Training to create accessible Word, PowerPoint, Excel, PDF, etc.

8. Create Accessible Multimedia
- Audio Only
    - Text Transcript of spoken word (accessible document)
- Audio/Video
    - Synchronized captions
    - Text Transcript
    - Video Description (text description of key visual elements in the video)
    - [Sample of combined Text Transcript and Video Description](#)

Contact Information
- Please post questions to WAG Listserv
- To join visit the [WAG Homepage](#)