

Universal Design for Learning: Accessibility

Universal design of instruction creates a learning environment that supports all students. This means that all course materials and requirements support varied ways of learning, engagement and assessment.

The following suggestions support accessibility, which is part of Universal Design standards. These steps will help you create an inclusive learning experience that benefits all of your students and saves you time!

1 Select Accessible Publisher Materials & Tools



Not all publisher content and tools are accessible! Request a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) from your publisher representative. Review the VPAT carefully to ensure that the features you wish to use are accessible.

- Homework systems must support keyboard navigation and input.
- Content must be readable by a screen reader.

CHALLENGE: Some flash-based simulations require the use of a mouse to move elements from one place to another on the screen.

SOLUTION: Ask your rep if an accessible version of the simulation is available. If not, consider alternative engagement methods or see if another publisher provides an accessible product.

2 Create Accessible Content



Handouts, presentations and readings created for your students must meet accessibility guidelines. What does this mean?

- Documents and webpages are organized with headings and subheadings.
- PDF and other documents can be read by a screen reader (the text is selectable).
- Text is of sufficient size and contrast to the background to be viewed by individuals who may have a visual impairment.
- Color alone is not used to communicate meaning.
- Images have appropriate alternative text.
- Tables include headers.
- Link text makes sense out of context.
- Videos are Closed Captioned.

CHALLENGE: PDFs that are scans of a physical book or journal may just be a photograph of the page (you won't be able to select the text). If this is the case, a screen reader can't read the document.

SOLUTION: Upload your file to [Sensus Access](#). This online service will convert your document to a more accessible format. Sensus Access can convert the most common file types: .DOC, .DOCX, .PDF, .PPT, .PPTX and .JPG to the file type you prefer. It will even convert text to an audio file! Note that the service cannot add alt text to images and documents will need review to ensure full accessibility.

3



Multiple Means of Engagement

As you create your course, give students multiple ways to engage with the course material. Information can be provided through lecture, text, images and charts. Varied assessment methods provide alternatives for students to demonstrate learning.

- Accurate Closed Captions are required for video and audio recordings.
- Materials must be accessible to screen readers.

CHALLENGE: YouTube videos are captioned through voice recognition software and generally do not meet accessibility requirements for accuracy.

SOLUTION: Request Closed Captioning services through [UF's Web Services Captioning Request Form](#).

4



Disability Resource Center

Encourage students who self-identify with a disability to register with the [Disability Resource Center](#) (DRC). You can refer students to the DRC if you suspect significant learning challenges. The DRC can also provide curriculum support for adapting assignments.

- Communicate your commitment to an inclusive environment with a syllabus statement (a sample statement is included in the [UF Syllabus Policy](#)).

CHALLENGE: A student needs additional time on quizzes and exams.

SOLUTION: Use the "Moderate This Quiz" feature in e-Learning to give the student the time required.

- **Important!** When you receive an accommodation letter from a student, follow up quickly to ensure that your students don't fall behind in class.
- Communicate the urgent nature of accommodation requests to your TAs.
- Keep any discussion of the request confidential and do not ask the student the nature of his/her disability.
- Contact your DRC Learning Specialist or Testing Coordinator with any questions!

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Get Help!

Visit [Accessible UF](#) for details and how-to information. Additional support is available through:

- [E-Learning Support](#) for help with Canvas accessibility.
- [Center for Instructional Technology and Training](#) for help with accessible course design.
- The Center for Online Innovation and Production can assist with distance learning courses. Please visit <http://dce.ufl.edu/> for more information.
- [Comprehensive Support for STEM Students with Learning Disability](#) (CS³LD) for Universal Design for Learning instructor resources.
- [UF Libraries](#) provides equipment and services.
- Learn about [Accessible Online Environments](#) through UFIT online training.
- [Office of Faculty Development and Teaching Excellence](#) Guides on Accessibility, Learning Disabilities and Universal Design for Learning.