5 Things Educators Need to Know About Digital Accessibility

Presented by Kim Ashbourne Aug 14, 2020
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Situating this presentation
How to participate today

• Times to ask question /discuss during the presentation
• Times to annotate using zoom tools
• Zoom chat – umm..
• Email me after kashbourne@uvic.ca
Introduction
1. What are we talking about? Accessibility vs accommodation in a digital world.
2. What is accessible digital content?

How can educators make course content accessible?
3. Accessible templates
4. Accessibility checkers
5. Key factors for accessible digital content
   • UVIC supports and other trusted online resources
ACCESSIBILITY

cultural accessibility

censorship

financial access

physical access

Universal Design for Learning

access to research

hardware and bandwidth

cognitive load

accessibility
What is digital accessibility?

Web accessibility (parent)

• Requires technology and content of the Web be made available to and usable by people, universally.

Digital accessibility (child)

• More broadly includes documents, audio and video files, software design, kiosks, apps and mobile devices

Both seek to ensure:

• people can find, understand, navigate, engage with and create/contribute information to the web and to the world.

A full web accessibility concept paper is available on my blog.
Who’s behind web accessibility?

**W3C, WEB ACCESSIBILITY INITIATIVE**
Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

**THE UNITED NATIONS**
Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Photo by Laura Ockel on Unsplash

Photo by Mat Reding on Unsplash
1. What is Accessibility vs Accommodation?

“Accessibility is the baseline of equal service, and accommodation is the second step to take when accessibility alone isn't enough.”
Disability Thinking, 2013

“the old-fashioned, ad hoc accommodations model ... fails miserably in the digital world…”
Lauren McLarney, National Federation of the Blind (Jan 2015)

“...accommodations are reactive solutions to address special cases. Accessibility is a proactive solution...”
M Lagrow, 2017, From Accommodation to Accessibility: Creating a Culture of Inclusivity
So, what is your experience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permanent</th>
<th>Temporary</th>
<th>Situational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Touch</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One arm</td>
<td>Arm injury</td>
<td>New parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>See</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind</td>
<td>Cataract</td>
<td>Misplaced readers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>Permanent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hear</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf</td>
<td>Ear infection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cognitive:
- Dyslexia
- Stress induced memory issues
- Distracted

Adapted from Microsoft’s inclusive design toolkit.
2. What is Accessible Digital Course Content?
Questions?

Photo by Camylla Battani on Unsplash
3. Use Accessible Templates and Themes

Select accessible templates in **Office** (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)

Select an “accessibility-ready” WordPress theme with the “accessibility-ready” filter
TIL tip: BrightSpace templates

U Vic offers pre-vetted accessible templates for "Files" in BrightSpace

1. Go to your course content.
2. Click the blue "Upload/Create" button and select "Create a file."
3. Click the "Select a document template" dropdown menu and select a template. TIL recommends the "Intro" template for a paragraph of text or less, and the "Basic page" template for longer text.
4. Add text, image, and media content as desired.

You can also edit an existing File:

1. "Cut" the content out with Ctrl-X
2. Apply a template, and "Paste" all of the content back in to have it formatted automatically.

Contact TIL Help with any questions.

Download the BrightSpace Set Up Guide and look for Accessibility template info
4. Use Built-in Accessibility Checkers

Among other things, they are designed to scan content for:

- Use of headings
- Sequential headings
- Ordered/unordered list structures
- Contrast ratio of text to background colors
- Table column/row headings and captions
- Image ALT text

Image sourced from BrightSpace Community
Word and PowerPoint offer built-in accessibility checkers.

See the full list of rules for Microsoft checkers.

Google Docs does not offer a built-in checker. Grackle is a paid add-on.
Accessibility checkers teach as they go

E.G. from PowerPoint

Why fix?
People who cannot view the slide will hear slide text, shapes, and content read back in a specific order. You should verify that the reading order and labels will make sense in the order they will be read back.

Steps To fix:
To check the reading order of content:
1. Switch to the Home tab, click Arrange, and choose Selection Pane.
2. The Selection Pane lists the objects on the slide. Objects will be read back beginning with the bottom list item and ending with the top list item. Correct any items that are out of order by dragging the items to the place you want. In the future, if you put content only in slide placeholder text boxes you can be confident information will be read back correctly.
TIL Tip: BrightSpace accessibility checker

Here's how to use it:

1. Once you have added all of your content, click the icon near the bottom of the text box that looks like an eye with a checkmark.
2. It will check your content and make suggestions.
3. You can click "Repair" and it will fix the issue for you or prompt you.
4. Once all repairs have been made, it will let you know no accessibility issues are detected.

Contact TIL Help with any questions.
5. Factors to Focus On
Use Alt Text

- Images that communicate information need alt text
- Diagrams and charts too
- Decorative images do not
- **Everything you need to know to write effective alt text** (article and image sourced from Microsoft)
Use Headings

Users can navigate content by keyboard, screen reader or document navigation pane.

Headings reduce scrolling and ease scanning for key info and groupings / connections.

Image courtesy of the WAI Video Introduction to Web Accessibility and W3C Standards
Heading order matters

H1: Recipes

H2: Breakfast
   H3: Banana muffins
   H3: Bacon and eggs
   H3: Pancakes

H2: Lunch
   H3: Salads
      H4: Caesar
      H4: Cobb
   H3: Sandwiches
      H4: Cheese and tomato
      H4: Tuna salad
Headings in Word

Edit Headings in the Styles Pane

View and navigate by headings in the Navigation Pane
# Headings in Google Docs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Navigation Command</th>
<th>Keyboard Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Show document outline</td>
<td>holding Ctrl + ⌘, press a then h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move to next heading</td>
<td>holding Ctrl + ⌘, press n then h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move to previous heading</td>
<td>holding Ctrl + ⌘, press p then h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move to next heading [1-6]</td>
<td>holding Ctrl + ⌘, press n then [1-6]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move to previous heading [1-6]</td>
<td>holding Ctrl + ⌘, press p then [1-6]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use Built-in List and Table Features

Use the Insert List and Insert Table functions instead of creating your own with lines, hyphens, etc. in Word, PowerPoint, Wordpress, BrightSpace and Google Docs

• What you need to know about tables
Offer Captions and/or Transcripts

Critical for hearing impaired and deaf users to perceive audio/video content.

Aids language learners, and people in loud or quiet listening environments.

Images courtesy of the WAI Video Introduction to Web Accessibility and W3C Standards
Write / highlight hyperlinks correctly

• **Link and button writing considerations**
  • Use “edit Hyperlink” to put the URL into the code of the page

• Don’t write links like this [https://webaim.org/techniques/hypertext/](https://webaim.org/techniques/hypertext/)

• Don’t link “CLICK HERE”
Speak slowly
Write concisely
Simplify instructions
File size / streaming requirements
This COVID pivot is tough for everyone

- Reasonable goals
  - Stress reduction
  - Support learning
  - Connect and foster inclusion

- Unreasonable goals
  - Perfection
  - Mastery
Centre for Accessible Learning Tips

• Use the accessibility checkers and features built in to Brightspace! They will greatly improve access for the majority of your students.

• Provide image descriptions/alt text for images in slides decks and assignments.

• Offer verbal descriptions for board work (or when pointing to something) during live and recorded lectures.

• If audio recordings are provided for slides, state the slide number at the start of each new slide to help blind or low visions users understand what slide is being used and when a slide has changed.
Suggested resources

• How to create an accessible word document
• How to create an accessible PowerPoint
• How to create accessible content in an LMS
• The correct use of headings – WebAIM is a good source but USA
• I’m not a website designer. How can I make my site accessible?
• Accessibility tools and research from Google, Apple and Microsoft
• Accessibility tools for video conferencing
  • How to live-caption Zoom calls VS automatic captioning in Teams and GoogleMeet
UVic support

- **Teach Anywhere** site offers some basics about accessibility under “Essential Guidelines for Creating Content”
- Centre for Accessible Learning offers broad accessibility guidelines within their *Universal Design for Learning publications and videos*
  - CAL captioning services
  - **Sample Accessibility Statement** for your syllabus
    - CONSIDER: recommending to students that they use accessibility checkers
- **UVIC Education Technology Cohort**: *An Introduction to Digital Accessibility*

Other Education Resources
- **Accessibility tips for educators** can also be found on other university websites or the **AODA Faculty Toolkit**.
Thank you.
What do you think?

• What is still muddy?

• What’s your biggest take away?
Bonus: Normalize accessible digital content

• Don’t hide it
  • Share accessible digital course content with everyone, not just students requesting accommodations
  • Curate accessible digital content (accessible pdfs, videos with captions, audio with transcripts etc.)

• Talk about it
  • Ask for accessibility tech support from Uvic
  • Talk to the library and bookstore about sourcing accessible digital course content
  • Talk to colleagues, ask questions, offer support

• Formalize it
  • Syllabus and assignments
When should educators and students seek accessibility help?

A. If they don’t know how to create or curate accessible digital content or their accessibility skills could use an update.

B. Their course content wasn’t “born digital.”

C. They aren’t comfortable online and digital communication is essentially a new language.

D. When they don’t know how to resolve an error found by an accessibility checker.

E. When they want to discuss a course content idea with an accessibility expert prior to creation or acquisition (before they put hours into learning a video quiz tool and then find out the quiz isn’t accessible.)

F. When a student makes an accommodation request or files a complaint.

G. All of the above.

Yup, the answer is **All of the above.**
Headings in PowerPoint

If you use an accessible template, your headings will be styled for accessibility.

But if you need to edit a style: the View tab lets you open the Slide Master.
Title and Content Layout with List

- Add your first bullet point here
- Add your second bullet point here
- Add your third bullet point here
Title and Content Layout with Chart
Two Content Layout with Table

- First bullet point here
- Second bullet point here
- Third bullet point here

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 1</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 2</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 3</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Title and Content Layout with SmartArt

- Step 1 Title
  - Task description
  - Task description

- Step 2 Title
  - Task description
  - Task description

- Step 3 Title
  - Task description
  - Task description
Add a Slide Title - 1
Add a Slide Title - 2
Add a Slide Title - 3
Add a Slide Title
- 4
Add a Slide Title
- 5