Universal Design for Accessibility: It Helps Everyone!
Tips & More Tips for Creating Accessible Course Content

Web Application Accessibility

1. **Accessibility Statements:** added to Syllabus and course homepage.
   - Accessibility statement about content
   - Links to vendor accessibility information for LMS software, publisher sites, and other software used in your course.
   - Include Disability Accommodations statement

2. **Semantic Structure:** *always use* to create structure in documents, HTML, etc.
   - Headings: Heading 1 for document Title, Heading 2 for all section titles, and Heading 3 for all sub-section Titles.
   - Strong (instead of bold) and Emphasis (instead of italics).
   - Table of Contents should be provided based on the Headings used. Table of Figures if document contains many images.

3. **Lists:** *always* create by using icons in the toolbar
   - True Bulleted Lists
   - True Numbered Lists

4. **Tables:** use the table options in the toolbar
   - True Columns, True Tables: always used instead of spacebar or tab.
   - Reformat tables to avoid merging columns and/or rows.
   - Use column headings.

5. **Readability:** make your text easy to read
   - Divide large blocks of text into smaller more manageable sections (chunking!)
   - Avoid complex sentences.
   - Use sans-serif font for items to be read online.
   - Use serif fonts for documents designed to be printed.

6. **Images:** explain your images
   - ALT text: A clear, concise description approximately 120 characters that conveys meaning or purpose of the image.
   - If ALT text alone is insufficient, provide a Long Description in surrounding text, as a caption, or as separate, accessible document.
   - Use double quotation marks ("") as ALT text on "decorative" images.

7. **Colors and Contrast:** *never* use color ALONE to convey information
   - Provide Sufficient Color Contrast between foreground (text) and background color.
   - Ensure background does not overpower text on PowerPoint slides, Websites, etc.
   - Try the [Colour Contrast Analyser](https://www.paciellogroup.com/resources/contrastanalyser/) or other contrast analysis tools. (https://www.paciellogroup.com/resources/contrastanalyser/)

8. **Descriptive Hyperlinks:** *avoid* using "click here"
   - Link text must make sense out of context.
   - Link the name of the item that you want to link instead of using "click here" or a Website address (URL)
   - If you need to provide the actual URL, add it as plain text in parentheses after the link

9. **Accessibility Checkers**: *always* use the software's built-in Accessibility Checker
   - Available for Word, Open Office, Adobe Acrobat, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.
   - Follow the Repair recommendations.
   - Conduct manual checks using accessibility checklists.

10. **Multimedia:** provide captioning and alternate formats
    - Search for already captioned videos (YouTube: search term,[space]cc)
    - Audio-only: provide Text Transcript;
    - video-only: provide Video Description (text description of key visual elements needed for comprehension);
    - Video with Audio: provide Closed Captions, Text Transcript, and Video Description.
    - Direct students to accessible media players such as YouTube HTML5 Video Player (https://www.youtube.com/html5) or the Able Player

11. **Synchronous Activities:** prepare in advance
    - Ensure technology is accessible, verbally describe slide text and images, and avoid timed-response activities in Chat or Poll.
    - Provide handouts 48 hours in advance.

12. **LMS and Third Party Software:** work with LMS providers and Publishers to obtain accessible content

Microsoft Word Accessibility

1. **Utilizing Styles**:
   - Use Styles to identify important points in a document.
   - Do NOT just make your text larger, bold, or italicized
   - Screen readers use styles to identify the important portions of a text. There is no way for a screen reader to know that text is important if it's just bold or larger.
   - Styles also allow you to generate a table of contents.
   - NEVER use color alone to make your text stand out.
   - Styles can be found on the home tab
   - The document title should have Heading One Style
   - Topic headings should use the heading two style.
   - Subtopics should use the heading three style
   - You can always make text larger/bold/italicized AFTER you apply the style.

2. **Creating Ordered and Unordered Lists:**
   - Always use Word's numbered and bulleted list tools instead of typing in bullets and numbers.
   - Screen readers can recognize lists created using the tools and can therefore identify how many items are in the list ahead of time.

3. **Choosing Fonts:**
   - If most users will be reading on a screen, use a sans-serif font such as Arial or Verdana.
   - If most users will be reading a printed copy, use a serif font such as Times New Roman.
   - The font size should be 12 points or larger for those who are sight impaired.
   - Don't use more than two different fonts in the same document.

4. **Include ALT Text for Images:**
   - Screen readers can identify image content if you add ALT text.
   - Right click on an image and choose "format picture"
   - Click on the third icon
   - Select Alt Text
   - The description is more important than the title, especially if you're converting to a PDF file.

5. **Adding Tables:**
   - It is difficult for a screen reader to understand tables.
   - You can identify the header row by highlighting it before right clicking and choosing "table properties"
   - Next, check the box that identifies the row as the header:
   - You can also add alt text to a table.

6. **Document Properties:**
   - Use Backstage View (the file tab) to add information about the document's Title, Author, Subject, Keywords, and Language.
   - They are utilized by screen readers to identify content in documents.

7. **Saving as an Accessible PDF:**
   - You can't save an accessible PDF using Word for the Mac ☹
   - Images must be inline so they are part of a screen reader's reading order. Select the Picture Tool's format tab→wrap text→inline with text.
   - Use the SAVE AS function. Don't print to a PDF.
   - Select Options and ensure that select **"Document structure tags for accessibility"** is checked

Microsoft PowerPoint Accessibility

1. **Best Practices:**
   - Ensure slide titles are relevant.
   - Keep images to a minimum to avoid clutter
   - Avoid distracting sounds and text effects including transitions. (ADHD sensitivity)
   - No more than six bullets per slide
   - One line of text per bullet
   - Use alt text for images (third time is the charm)

2. **Use Default Layouts:**
   - Don't add textboxes as screen readers will read the content LAST even if textbox appears at the top of the slide
   - Outline view won't display the added textbox content (at least on a Mac)

3. **Creating Tables:**
   - Use Insert→Table and choose the correct numbers of rows and columns. Do not draw the table.
   - Assign column headings by ensuring the header row checkbox is selected

4. **Creating Charts:**
   - Create charts within PowerPoint whenever possible.
   - You can copy/paste data from Excel into the PPT chart.

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