Accessibility Primer for Faculty

# What you need to know…

**Accessible Design** is giving equal access and opportunities to everyone wherever possible, and reducing and overcoming barriers that may occur in: (1) digital content, (2) teaching and learning activities, and (3) assessment.

Considerations for Accessible Design

* Visual - learners need text-based alternatives to consume visual content.
* Hearing - learners need captions, transcripts, or other alternatives to audio.
* Motor - learners need content formatted for keyboard and assistive technologies.
* Cognitive - learners need multiple modes of information and a clutter-free experience.

**Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** is a framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people based on scientific insights into how humans learn.

UDL is accomplished by providing multiple means of:

* engagement - stimulate interest and motivation for learning
* representation - present information and content in different ways
* action and expression - differentiate the ways students can express what they know

# What you need to do…

## Accessible Text

* Use sans serif fonts such as Arial, Calibri, Tahoma, etc.
* Use high contrast color - don’t use color text or highlighting to emphasize importance; use bold or italics or the word “important”.
* Use the built-in headings (rather than increasing text size) to break up text and create structure for easy reading and scanning.
* Use bulleted or numbered lists
	+ Important - Do not copy and paste bulleted text from a Word document into Moodle. This action may bring in formatting that Moodle doesn’t understand and could lock your course, preventing you from being able to edit any content.
	+ Instead - “un-bullet” text, copy, and paste it into Moodle, then add the bullets once the text is in Moodle.

## Built-in Text Editing Accessibility Features

The text editing toolbar in Moodle has several built-in accessibility features:

**Accessibility Checker** checks the content in the area you are editing.



**Screenreader Helper** checks the content in the area you are editing for screenreader compatibility.



**Equation Editor** - use this tool to insert equations into Moodle, rather than images of equations.



## Accessible Tables

Use the **table builder** in Moodle to create accessible tables, do not copy and paste tables into Moodle as they are nearly impossible to make accessible.



* Tables should be simple and used to present data, not to format text for visual layout.
* Screen readers can not navigate merged cells.
* Column and row headers must be included and accurately identified.
* No nested tables.

## Accessible Images

* No flashing features.
* Use alternate text descriptions.
* If the image contains text, the text should be included in the alt text.
* If the image conveys a lot of information, such as an infographic, a full description or transcript should be provided to fully explain what the image is intended to convey.
* If an image is purely decorative, then say so in the alt text.
* Avoid using an image as the sole means of conveying importance, such as an image of an exclamation point.

## Accessible Video

* The video player must have controls to play, pause, and mute. Examples that meet these criteria include YouTube, Screencast-o-matic, and Vimeo. There may be more, but make sure you verify this before using it in your course.
* Videos used in a course must contain closed captioning AND a transcript.

## Accessible Links

* Do
	+ Use descriptive links (good linking example below)
		- In the [Accessibility Article](https://usability.yale.edu/web-accessibility/articles) by Yale, researchers found…
	+ Tell users if the link will open in a new window
* Don’t
	+ (Don’t) Use the url as a link (poor linking example below)
		- Read the Yale accessibility article <https://usability.yale.edu/web-accessibility/articles>
	+ (Don’t) Use “click here”