Digital Accessibility Checklist

Promoting accessible teaching practice for all students

DASH
Digital Accessibility Support and Help

The U.S. Department of Justice has issued updated ADA Title II regulations requiring public colleges and universities to make all digital content conform to WCAG 2.1 Level AA standards by **April 24, 2026**. Faculty are expected to design accessible course materials, lecture slides, videos, electronic documents, and websites that ensure all students have equal opportunities to succeed. Visit DTEI's *Teaching Accessibility Guide* for details.

Action 1: Add Alt Text for all Images

Alternative text, or alt text, is descriptive text that communicates the meaning or purpose of an image in digital content. If an image requires detailed explanation, provide a brief alt text and supplement it with a longer image caption. Using the image below as an example:

Alt Text: Illustration of a virus structure with labelled components.

Image Caption: A detailed illustration of the structure of a virus particle. The virus is spherical with a pink outer envelope studded with green spike proteins extending outward. Inside the envelope, there is a blue layer representing the lipid membrane, depicted with a series of interconnected circular shapes. At the center, there is a hexagonal structure showing the genetic material as a purple squiggly line, indicating the viral RNA or DNA. Lines from various parts of the virus point to labeling text, explaining different components.
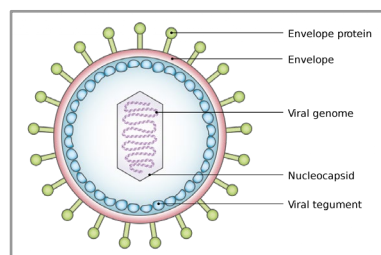
- ☐ Keep it concise and clear (describe meaning, not just appearance), typically between 8 and 80 characters and no more than 125 if needed, to accurately represent the image's content.

- ☐ Avoid starting with "the image of" or "the picture of" in alt text since assistive technologies already announce images, so these phrases add unnecessary redundancy.

- ☐ For decorative images, enter two quotation marks (`""`) so screen readers will skip them.

- ☐ If working with many images, consider using an alt text generator or uploading files to ChatGPT to generate initial drafts. **Faculty are expected to revise auto-generated alt text for accuracy, clarity, and alignment with your teaching content.** Otherwise, the alt text may not serve its intended purpose for students.

- ☐ Learn more tips for writing effective alt text and tools to create alt text for STEM content.

- ☐ You can request assistance from the DASH alt text service. Availability is on a first-come, first-served basis, depending on resource capacity.

Action 2: Caption Lecture Videos

Adding captions to lecture videos benefits not only students with disabilities but all learners. Captions support students reviewing material in noisy environments and those for whom English is a second

language. Fortunately, most video platforms now provide reliable auto-captioning. Faculty are expected to review captions carefully and revise them as needed to ensure clarity and accuracy.

☐ Identify speakers, especially in multi-speaker videos or overlapping dialogues.

☐ Auto-captioning is available when recording videos using Zoom or YuJa. We recommend downloading your Zoom recordings and uploading them to YuJa before the Zoom file expiration date. Please avoid recording or uploading videos directly to Canvas.

☐ When using **external video sources** (e.g., YouTube) without captions, you can insert the link in YuJa to generate auto-captions. Once captions are created, share the YuJa link with students through Canvas instead of posting the uncaptioned YouTube link.

☐ Schedule a one-on-one appointment with DTEI's instructional designers for help with using YuJa or Zoom for creating lecture videos and managing captions.

Action 3: Organize Electronic Documents and Slides

☐ Set up document properties, such as document title, author, language, etc.

☐ Create a hierarchical heading structure in sequential order.

☐ Enhance Readability with font style, size and line spacing.
   ○ Font Style: Sans-serif (Arial, Calibri, Roboto) for digital; serif (Times New Roman, Garamond) for print.
   ○ Line spacing: At least 1.5 times the font size is recommended.
   ○ Font sizes: 12pt body text minimum; 18pt for large text.

☐ Adjust font and background color ratio using the color contrast checker. Also, be mindful of using color highlighted text.

☐ Replace a raw URL to a meaningful descriptive text link, and avoid vague phrases for hyperlinks, such as "click here".

☐ Properly format the lists with bullet points or numbers. Do not use emojis as bullet points.

☐ Use built-in tables to present tabular data or formatted data.

Action 4: Pass Digital Accessibility with Accessibility Checkers

☐ Run the built-in accessibility checker for your Microsoft Word document or PowerPoint files.

☐ Install and run your Google Docs document with GrackleDocs, a GoogleDocs extension add-on tool. Using GrackleSlides to test your Google Slides.

☐ Use the Canvas Accessibility Checker for content created in the Rich Content Editor.

☐ Schedule an appointment with the DASH team for digital accessibility consultation if needed.