Faculty Universal Design Guidelines

The purpose of the Kalamazoo Valley Community College Universal Design and Accessibility Committee is to facilitate the development, application, and evaluation of systems that are equally accessible for all. The committee will assess and prioritize the implementation of universal design recommendations, establish budget implications, and communicate implementation strategies consistent with accepted Universal Design principles.

What is Universal Design?

Universal Design is a philosophy about designing an environment that has equitable accessibility to the greatest extent possible for everyone, regardless of their age, ability, or status in life. It is in part, an expansion of the concepts mandated from Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which requires Federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities. **Whereas Section 508 is specific to the sub-culture of disability, Universal Design is inclusive of all populations.**

Moodle Course Accessibility Self-Checklist

Use this checklist to assess accessibility in your course:

- Are your .pdf files made from a Word Document?
- Do your .pdf files and web links open in a new window?
- Do your videos, such as YouTube, have Closed Captioning or a transcript?
- Do your images on the Moodle page and in your Word/.pdf files have alt tags?

If your course material isn't accessible or you need further explanation, please use the helpful guidelines and FAQs included in this packet.

Universal Design FAQ

- **What is Universal Design?**
Universal Design is a philosophy about designing an environment that has equitable accessibility to the greatest extent possible for everyone, regardless of their age, ability, or status in life. It is in part, an expansion of the concepts mandated from Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which requires Federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities. **Whereas Section 508 is specific to the sub-culture of disability, Universal Design is inclusive of all populations.**

  In a proactive effort to be wise stewards of college resources, Universal Design is being implemented as we work to meet the mandates of Section 508.

- **Does Universal Design mean I have to change my curriculum?**
No. Section 508 and Universal Design is about **accessibility;** however, when researching curriculum materials, you will want to look for accessible products. **For example, in researching software, if 2 products are comparable and both meet your needs, choose the most accessible product.**

- **What's the difference between accessibility and accommodations?**
The Accommodation Notifications you receive regarding accommodations for students are based on the guidelines and mandates derived from Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Legal accommodations are based on compliance with Civil Rights Acts whereas Universal Design is an expanded concept of inclusion and accessibility. Accommodating students with disabilities helps drive accessibility issues for the whole population.

- **Do I have to make immediate changes to my course?**
No. At this time, you will only need to make reasonable and appropriate accommodations based on a student's eligibility as authorized through the Special Services Office.
For example, if you have a blind student in your course, the student needs to request accommodations through our office. We will work with both the student and the instructor in accommodating the course. In this case, you may need to make changes immediately in order to accommodate the student. Your course content does not need to change; however, your format and how you make the content accessible may need to be reasonably adapted.

- **Will all courses need to follow Universal Design?**
That is the goal eventually. Keep in mind that some courses will be easier to make accessible than others. In addition, program standards will remain in place.

For example, numbers and symbols are difficult to make accessible in electronic format. Math courses will need special attention and may take a longer time to design a universal concept to curriculum, although there are steps that can be done in the short term.

- **What can I do right now to make my classes more accessible?**
Any documents you use for class should be available in an **accessible** electronic format. Ideally, the documents should be made available in both WORD and as a PDF file. You do not have to upload all of your course documents to Moodle. You should have an electronic file of all of your documents so you can post them or send them via email easily. Assistance will be made available if needed.

  Images such as graphs, charts, pictures, etc. should have alt text. That means a text description of the image posted under the picture. If you know how to do this, it's a good idea to incorporate the alt text as you're developing your materials. **At this point in time, however, the Universal Design Committee will be deciding when to implement this as part of accessibility in KVCC courses. Timing and implementation has not yet been decided upon.**

- **What can I do if I use videos, films, or other screen images?**

  Videos, films and other screen media should be captioned. If you have a deaf student in your course and use screen media, you should contact the Special Services Office to discuss what to do about captioning your media. It would be a good idea to consider looking for captioned material over non-captioned material that meets the needs of your course. If you are using non-captioned material and it is convenient for you to provide a transcription of the media, then certainly have one available in your electronic file. **The Universal Design Committee will decide during the 2014/2015 academic year when to implement this as part of the overall Universal Design plan in all courses. Timing and implementation has not yet been decided upon. When changing or developing your materials if you have an acceptable option that is captioned, choose that over the material that is not captioned.**

- **What is the student's responsibility for this?**
In Universal Design there are no student responsibilities other than asking for accessible content when necessary. If a student is disabled however and needs accessible materials for an accommodation, they must request the accommodation through this office so we may provide it for them or assist instructors in providing it for them.

- **Do I have to send out my materials to any student no matter what?**
No. You just have to make sure that they are accessible.

For example, if a student requests that you email the electronic file of your upcoming test you might place the test in the testing center to be accessed electronically.

- **What about Power Points?**
  Sure. These need to be accessible too. It's possible to make Power Points accessible. Remember though, it's the content that needs to be accessible as opposed to the style or design. Help will be made available if needed.

- **When do I need to have my class 100% accessible?**
  Our goal in the future would be to have class material 100% accessible, however that may not be a realistic option for some courses. Some accessibility options are just not available to us yet and require outside sources to evolve. At some time in the near future we may have enough resources to achieve 100% in all KVCC courses. For the time being, we should get as close as possible as soon as possible. Remember though this isn't accommodations. Accommodations need to be provided within a reasonable timeframe.
  For example, a blind student would like to take an Art History class. We would need significant advance notice to accommodate the course material for that student's particular needs. Legally that kind of accommodation must be requested with advance notice so that we can provide any accommodations within a "reasonable timeframe." The law doesn't define "reasonable timeframe" so the advance notice would be different for different accommodations. That does rule out requesting a time consuming accommodation request the first day of class. If the class has already been created or adapted with Universal Design in mind the student may not even have to make the request. Again, there will be complex scenarios that need to be evaluated in the process of Universal Design. You're not expected to resolve them all now. Those will be long term decisions. In addition, there isn't an expectation that every aspect of your course can be accommodated at a moment's notice.

  Keep in mind, accommodations are the legal right of a student whereas Universal Design eliminates the initial barriers that require the need for accommodations in the first place.

Moodle Course Accessibility Self Checklist FAQ

What is a .pdf file?

Portable Document Format is a file format used to provide documents independent of software, hardware and operating systems. It means you can share your document with others.

Why would I use a .pdf file?

The file is smaller, everyone has a PDF reader, and the heading structure will remain intact for screen readers.

How do I check if my .pdf files and web links open in a new window in Moodle?

Enter your course, change your role to student and click on each link.
If a URL or .pdf didn't open in a new window, you should:
>	Turn editing on

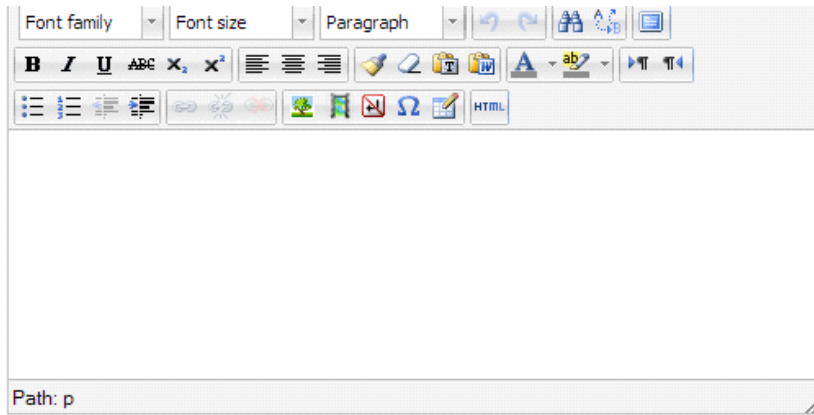>	Click on the editing tool to the right of the item:

 Under Appearance: select in pop-up

What are alt tags?

An Alt tag provides a textual alternative to non-text content in web pages or documents.

How do I add an alt tag to an image in Moodle?

If you enter an image/video into Moodle, you will enter it into a Topic heading or a label within the course.

- To add an alt/tag, you should include text in the Image description area.

Accessibility Worksheet for MS Word/PDF Files

An electronic copy is a document created on the computer as a digital version as opposed to handwritten or typed (on a typewriter).

An *accessible* electronic copy is a document that allows for anyone using alternate means to be able to access it.

Use the following steps to create an accessible Word document:

To create headings and subheadings:

- Select the text you want to make into a heading

- On the Home tab, in the Styles group, select the appropriate level heading style from the Quick Styles gallery

- Use short headings (fewer than 20 words); at most one line long

Use columns and not tables or spaces to simulate columns for text.
(For assistance, contact the FSC or Mary Kay)

Add text descriptions/alt text for any images when inserting them into Word:

- Pictures, clip art, charts, tables, shapes, SmartArt graphics, groups, embedded objects, links, video and audio files need alt/text.

- Swirls and divider lines don't need alt text

- Images (such as charts and graphs) that provide information need a text description

    - Alt text has a 255 character limitation

    - If you need more to describe the contents, point the listener/reader to an Appendix to describe the chart/graph

    To add alt text, do the following:

    - Right click the image or object, and then click **Format**.
    - Click alt/text
    - Enter a description of the image or object in the Title and Description text boxes.
      Tip: Use clear, but concise descriptions. For example, "a red Ferrari" tells the reader more about the image than "a car."

- Click **Close**.

Verify links within a document
- Verify all links work

  - External links

  - Foot/end notes

  - Tables of contents

Color and Contrast need to be appropriate
- **Color**

  - Don't use color as the only way to convey information to the reader/listener, (Use color and bold or color and italics. Currently, a standard practice on the internet, color text, not just blue/underlined, indicates a link.)

  - In charts/tables, add some kind of pattern in addition to color (visual cue for color impaired viewers).

- **Contrast**

  - Have as much contrast as possible between the foreground and background.

Font
- **Font Face**
  - Use a standard font; such as Arial, Times New Roman.

  - Headings should be clear and legible, not decorative.

- **Font Size**
  - 12-14 points (Small fonts are difficult to read.).

- **Line Spacing**

  - Word's default of 115% is appropriate

For detailed cheat sheets, refer to: The National Center on Disability and Access to Education: http://ncdae.org/resources/cheatsheets/

Accessibility Worksheet for MS PowerPoint Presentations

Use slide layouts (template)
Use alternative text for images that convey information
- Alt/text can be read by a screen reader

To provide alternative text:
- Right click on the image
- Select Format Picture
- Select the Alt Text
- Add the alt text to the Description field
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If you use a table, be sure to provide narrative detail.

For Links:
If you want to add a web link to a PPT presentation, after adding the link:
- Select the link
- Right click
- Edit hyperlink (ctrl + k)
- Change the Text to display field to something more descriptive
  - You could include the weblink within the text to display

The Outline panel contains text of the content of the presentation.

The Notes panel:
- will not appear on the slides
- may not be accessed by a screen reader

Keep in mind:
- Use sufficient font size and use common sans serif fonts, such as Arian and Tahoma
- Avoid using text boxes not in a pre-defined template
- Provide good contrast and lots of white space.
- Don't use color as the only way to convey content
- Avoid automatic slide transitions
- Use simple slide transitions
- Use simple language
- Check reading order of text boxes
- Ensure any embedded video has captions and the player controls are accessible
- Ensure any embedded audio has a transcript included
- Be sure any animations are brief and not distracting from the content of the slide

PowerPoint 2010 contains an Accessibility Checker
Select File > Info > Check for Issues > Check Accessibility

Export your PPT as a PDF if being viewed on the web. The file is smaller, everyone has a PDF reader, and the heading structure will remain intact.

Hints for Alternative Text for Images
Provides a textual alternative to non-text content in web pages or documents.
- (Apply the same principles to media, applets, or other on-text web content.)
- Can be read by screen readers
- Should describe the content and function of the image
- Should be succinct
- Should not be redundant
- Should not use phrase "images of.." or "graphic of …"

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