Online Accessibility Guidelines and FAQs

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A quick move to put your course online does not mean you can ignore those students who require accommodations. In fact, the materials you post to your online course shell will require some additional care to ensure they are fully accessible.

Foundational Resources

A couple of great resources to making your courses accessible can be found here:

- ADA Compliance for Online Course Design: EDUCAUSE created this to help you understand why accessibility is important and the full range of people who benefit from accessible documents.
- Accessible Teaching in the Time of COVID-19: This link provides you with information that will help you better understand your options for transitioning a course into an online modality with a focus on accessibility.

Quick User Tools

These resources address the specifics of making certain file types accessible:

- Microsoft Mechanics - Accessibility Playlist: This link takes you to a group of short videos to help you make your Office documents, presentations, and spreadsheets accessible.
- Make your Word Documents Accessible to People with Disabilities: This page offers tips on accessibility that are specific to Microsoft Word.
- Creating Accessible Excel Documents: Yes, Excel can be accessible too! This link provides information about how to change your Excel documents to make them accessible.
- Using the Acrobat Pro DC Accessibility Checker: Ensure your PDFs are accessible, too. This link will help you better understand how to do this.

Additional Considerations

A few other key topics to consider when you seek to make your documents accessible are below:

- Use of Color: There are pros and cons to using color in your documents because some variations in color, fonts, and font sizes are not detectable by screen readers. This link provides guidance about the appropriate use of color.
- Contrast Checker: This link will allow you to check the color contrast in your documents when color is absolutely necessary for a graph or chart.
- MathType for Equations: Creating accessible equations and mathematical symbols can be exceptionally challenging without a plug-in available from Microsoft. Michigan State University provides outstanding guidance on creating accessible mathematical symbols.