Tech Snacks: Accessibility Part 1 Text, Links, and Videos

Accessibility and universal design are growing concerns in higher education, and they can seem overwhelming for instructors. The easiest way to tackle accessibility is to start with small, actionable changes. Throughout the year we'll address some key accessibility issues one by one and provide a step-by-step checklist to help you pick some of the low-hanging fruit.

Text & Links

The most accessible form of online text is in the format of HTML. In Brightspace, you can easily create HTML documents for students where they can then use a built-in screen reader. Microsoft Office or Google Suite products such as Word/Google Docs and Powerpoint/Google Slides have features that support accessibility as well.

The following checklist helps ensure that your Brightspace content meets accessibility standards. This checklist applies to all text and links provided to students in your courses:

- ☐ **All text is recognizable by a screen reader (i.e., not a scanned image of a document).**
- ☐ **All text appears in at least size 12 font.**
- ☐ **Only Sans Serif fonts are used throughout the content.**
- ☐ **Text formatting—shape, color, and styling—is not used to exclusively convey information (e.g., important information is not identified by the instructor with a specific color of font).**
- ☐ **Text is not underlined unless it is a hyperlink.**
- ☐ **All bulleted or ordered lists are created using the editor toolbar.**
- ☐ **Headings are tagged as headings at appropriate levels to form an outline of the document.**
- ☐ **Tables (avoid if possible) use tagging to identify header rows/columns.**
- ☐ **Images (avoid if possible) use brief alt-text descriptions for non-visual users.**
- ☐ **Hyperlinks use descriptive text to provide meaning and context for links (e.g., links are not designated with text such as "read more" or "click here").**
- ☐ **Descriptive text is used for hyperlinks rather than URLs.**[1]
- ☐ **Web pages that are referenced are accessible (use a webpage checker).**

Videos

Online videos have become more and more important in online teaching. Many instructors record their own lecture videos for their courses. It is important to note that videos can sometimes present accessibility challenges to students.

- ☐ **Videos should include closed captions in order to access audio content.**
- ☐ **All visual content should be described verbally.**
- ☐ **YouTube provides captions that the video owner can edit.**
- ☐ **YouTube allows the video owner to download a written transcript of captions.**

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[1] See Diagrams 1 and 2 on the next page as examples.

Examples

Diagram 1: Brightspace Announcement example – not accessible

Dear students,

Please do the following before class on Monday:

1. Watch this and be ready to discuss it in class:
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vT_pivwPsTA
2. Fill this out:
   https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScMTSSw5Yudw_4myMuwS0Uf65v1z8m_nWxOVkjg6mC7vbnqow/viewform?usp=sf_link

Bis bald!
Frau Brandt

Diagram 2: Brightspace Announcement example – accessible

Dear students,

Please do the following before class on Monday:

1. Watch this video about Germany and be ready to discuss it in class.
2. Fill out this student survey, which will help me understand your own learning goals for the semester.

Bis bald!
Frau Brandt

Helpful Links

Microsoft guide to making tables accessible

Microsoft guide to making PowerPoint presentations accessible

Microsoft guide to adding alternative text (alt-text)