



ACCESSIBILITY FOR DIGITAL MEDIA

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KEY TERMS: ACCESSIBILITY

- **Usability:** making things that people can use safely, effectively, efficiently, and enjoyably.
- **Accessibility:** usability for a broad range of users, particularly accounting for the ways that digital spaces exacerbate disability-related barriers to access
- **Inclusion:** not only making things accessible to diverse users, but constructing your space or community to fully involve and engage diverse users
- **Universal design:** creating spaces to be inclusive to the greatest possible number of users from the outset, rather than treating accessibility concerns as an afterthought, a luxury, or a negotiable

KEY TERMS: STANDARDS

- **WCAG:** [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#)
 - SIUE policy requires adherence to WCAG 2.1, Level AA
 - This is not the highest or most rigorous standard
- **Perceivable:** Users should be able to see, hear, or otherwise sense what's on the page.
- **Observable:** Users should be able to use the navigation and user interface.
- **Understandable:** Users should be able to understand what's on the page.
- **Robust:** The page should work reliably across different devices, operating systems, and assistive technologies.

ALT TEXT

- A model for accessibility in the classroom
- A form of scaffolding for all students
- An example of universal design

STRATEGIES AND MECHANISMS

ALT TEXT: GENERAL GUIDELINES

- 1-2 sentences per image
- Indicate the role the picture is playing within the surrounding content
 - Decorative
 - Illustrating a concept you've alluded to in text
 - Adding new content that isn't represented elsewhere
- Describe the features of the image that are salient for you and your readers
- If there's text that students should read, transcribe it

ALT TEXT: IN THE CLASSROOM

- **What if the image is meant to be an object of inquiry?**
 - You do NOT have to give students the answers
 - You DO need to give them the building blocks with which to build arguments
- **What if you need more detail?**
 - 1-2 sentences is a good guideline
 - If you need more room, try to align the length of your alt text with the amount of time and attention you expect sighted students to give the image
- **What if you have a LOT of images to describe?**
 - Alt text generators, built into tools like Powerpoint and Word as well as online
 - Caveats: These produce very generic results, and use AI – consider what you want students to focus on, and how AI tools align with your course policies.



WRITING ALT TEXT

- What are your pedagogical goals?
- How much time do you want students to spend with the image?
- **Tip:** Use text to speech (Windows+H) to talk through your image instead of writing out alt text

VIDEOS

- **Perceivability for all students**
 - What content in the video is salient and meaningful?
 - To whom is that content perceivable?
- **Captions** for students with hearing impairments
 - Automatic transcription through YuJa – verify accuracy and timings!
 - Correct as necessary OR utilize [OSEO's captioning service](#)
- **Audio descriptions** for students with vision impairments
 - Create a separate audio file
 - Create a text alternative (static, not captions)

DATA VISUALIZATION AND MAPS

- Existing or external visualizations (images): Describe data and patterns in the alt text
- For new visualizations (images): Can also provide access to data in a table
- For existing interactive visualizations: Check accessibility, and if necessary use screen capture with voiceover and captions
- For new interactive visualizations: Utilize frameworks like [Data Navigator](#)

WEB CONTENT

- **Assess with [WAVE](#)** – some things are already accessible
 - Focus on structure/navigability and the specific content you want your students to engage with
 - If there are things that aren't accessible, consider a narrated and captioned screen recording
- **Use simulation tools like [Funkify](#) or screen reader apps**
 - This is a starting point only!
- Always go back and evaluate your own public-facing content too!