

Accessibility for All Learners

How can you improve accessibility in your online course?

TIP
1



Establish consistent, easy navigation throughout your online course. When developing course design and content, select color contrasts and fonts that allow for maximal readability and minimal distractions.

TIP
2



Ensure that all documents and presentations (Word, PDFs, PowerPoint, etc.) are accessible. See Blackboard Course Accessibility Checklist at: <https://ati.gmu.edu/resources/accessibility-resources/course-checklist/>

TIP
3



Make sure that all videos are captioned and/or have transcripts. All course videos should stream through an accessible video playback platform like Kaltura or YouTube. Contact ATI for free closed captioning.

TIP
4



If you have required applications and/or website resources beyond your Blackboard course (e.g. publisher resources), check that all are accessible or have accessible alternatives.



Be proactive about accessibility. Use universal design for learning (UDL) principles to optimize teaching and learning for all of your students.

Assistive Technology Initiative (ATI)

ATI provides services for Mason faculty, staff, and students to ensure equivalent access to curricula and resources.

Web: ati.gmu.edu
Phone: 703-993-4329
Email: ati@gmu.edu



ATI services for faculty include:

- Closed captioning and audio description for videos
- Training and support for creating accessible materials
- Course accessibility reviews/audits

Best Practices from Mason's Online Faculty

How do YOU improve accessibility in your online course?

Providing Additional Time for Tests

"When students need additional time to complete tests, I create a copy of the test and configure the test settings in accordance with the accommodations needed by students. Then, I use adaptive release to create a rule that provides access only to students who need it."

- Dr. Esperanza Roman-Mendoza,
Associate Professor,
Spanish (CHSS)

Following UDL Principles

"The best way to reach all learners is to design your online instruction following the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). By providing multiple means of representation, multiple means of action and expression, and multiple means of engagement, faculty can ensure that the online environment becomes accessible for students with various abilities, needs, preferences, and environmental circumstances."

- Dr. Anya Evmenova,
Assistant Professor,
Special Education
(CEHD)

Leveraging Free Accessibility Resources at Mason

"Accessibility is simply the degree to which any resource - regardless of whether it is a device, program, service, or environment - is available to a given user. Relating this to online education, the technology platform and the instructional resources used in an online or hybrid course play a critical role in how much a student is able to participate. An inaccessible technology resource could adversely impact some students with disabilities. The ATI's role is to support instructors with designing instructional materials that ensure equal access for all learners."

- Korey Singleton, Manager,
Assistive Technology Initiative (ATI)

Learn more about improving accessibility in online courses!

Moore, E. A. (2014). Improve Accessibility in Tomorrow's Online Courses by Leveraging Yesterday's Techniques. Retrieved from: <http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/online-education/improve-accessibility-tomorrows-online-courses-leveraging-yesterdays-techniques/>

Ten Simple Steps Toward Universal Design of Online Courses. Retrieved from University of Arkansas at Little Rock: <http://ualr.edu/pace/tenstepsud>



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