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Electronic Accessibility Rubric

This rubric is a tool that can help you prioritize accessibility improvements for specific document or content types. Detailed explanations and tutorials for these steps are available on the Accessibility by Design Website.

Accessibility is a continuum. Our goal is to move along the continuum towards better and better accessibility. Each column in the table below lists steps in order from Emerging to Developing, Proficient and Advanced tasks. Begin with Emerging steps. These are the highest priority for each content type.

Select one or two steps at a time, until you at least reach the **Universal Design Goal** for each content type. The **Developing** column is the Universal Design Goal for most content types. The **Accessibility Goal (Advanced Column)** is the level that is needed for an accommodation.

*Note: This rubric covers common content types but is not exhaustive, and additional steps may be required to make documents fully accessible.

Content Type	Emerging	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Microsoft Word (or similar)	• Use headings and styles • Make links descriptive • Designate a header row for tables	***Universal Design Goal*** • Provide alternative text for simple images • Ensure good color contrast	• Simplify tables • Provide table data for charts & graphs	***Accessibility Goal*** • Provide long description for complex images, charts, graphs • Run accessibility checker & resolve all issues
Microsoft PowerPoint (or similar)	• Choose a theme with sufficient color contrast, including on hyperlinks • Make slide titles unique • Use built-in slide layouts	***Universal Design Goal*** • Make links descriptive • Designate the header row on tables • Provide alternative text for images	• Adjust the reading order of slides • Provide long description for charts and graphs • Provide auto-captions for embedded videos • Provide transcripts for embedded audio files	***Accessibility Goal*** • Edit captions for embedded videos • Run accessibility checker & resolve all issues

Content Type	Emerging	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
PDF - Scanned	***Universal Design Goal*** • Find a clear, legible copy • Run text recognition (various tools available)	Edit with Acrobat Professional: • Set the document title • Set the primary document language • Add tags using the Autotag Tool	• Check that Reading Order Panel tags are in correct reading order • Check that Reading Order Panel tags are correctly labeled (headings / structure) • Designate a header row for tables • Provide alt text for images	***Accessibility Goal*** • Check the Tag tree for correct structure • Provide long descriptions for complex images, charts, graphs • Run accessibility checker and resolve issues
PDF – Converted from Other Programs	***Universal Design Goal*** • Start with an accessible source document (e.g. Word, PowerPoint) • Enable tags when saving as PDF (avoid print to PDF, Canva, which do not create tags)	Edit with Acrobat Professional: • Set the document title • Set the primary document language • Check that Reading Order Panel tags are in correct reading order • Check that Reading Order Panel tags are correctly labeled (headings / structure)	• Provide long descriptions for complex images, charts, graphs **Forms:** • Check that Forms have descriptive labels • Check that Form field tab order is logical	***Accessibility Goal*** • Check the Tag tree for correct structure • Run accessibility checker and resolve issues

Content Type	Emerging	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Canvas	• Use the CSU Canvas template • Use headings • Make links descriptive • Provide PowerPoint documents alongside lecture videos for note-taking	***Universal Design Goal*** • Add alternative text to images • Upload searchable PDFs • Choose third-party add-ons with care • Avoid digital proctoring	• Use the native Canvas math editor to produce equations in MathML • Post videos using a third-party tool that provides auto-captions (e.g. Echo360, Kaltura) • Allow transcripts for both video and audio files • All uploaded files are accessible (PPT, Word, PDF, etc.)	***Accessibility Goal*** • Edit auto-captions for accuracy • Use accessible question formats on quizzes & exams • Run UDOIT & resolve issues
Multimedia	• Ensure that any text on the screen has sufficient contrast with the background • Describe visual content orally • Provide text transcripts for audio-only files • Provide auto-captions for video • Use a video player with buttons for playback and caption visibility	***Universal Design Goal*** • Provide transcripts for download in addition to captions • Use a video player that displays interactive transcripts alongside video (e.g. Echo360, Kaltura)	• Provide edited captions for video • Provide edited transcripts for audio	***Accessibility Goal*** • Provide audio description for video OR • Provide text transcripts with narrative description of visual information for video

Content Type	Emerging	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
STEM Content	• Add alt text to equation images (as they should be spoken) • Convert LaTeX to MathML or MathJax	***Universal Design Goal*** • Use authoring software that outputs MathML or MathJax (e.g. MathType, Pandoc). • Use the built-in Canvas equation editor, which outputs MathML	• Make documents available in HTML format as an alternative to PDF	***Accessibility Goal*** • Convert existing images to code using math text recognition software (e.g. InftyReader, EquatIO) • Edit math recognition results in an equation editor that can output MathML or MathJax (e.g. EquatIO, MathType)
Complex Images, Charts, Graphs, etc.	• Include long descriptions in the surrounding text whenever possible. • Link to a long description in an appendix if space is lacking on the page. (Link back to the original location from the appendix.)	***Universal Design Goal*** • Provide tabulated data for charts and graphs as part of the long description • Ensure that color is not used as the only means of conveying information	• Check that any interactive images can be manipulated using a keyboard and screen reader • Have alternatives available for interactive images	***Accessibility Goal*** • Code interactive images for keyboard & screen reader access or request the publisher to do so • Provide tactile graphics if appropriate for the subject (e.g. maps, anatomy)

Content Type	Emerging	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Tables	• Designate a single header row and/or column	***Universal Design Goal*** • Consolidate multiple header row information into one row • Move overall table title to a heading or caption above the table to eliminate an extra header row	• Move any text that is not data or a header outside of the table • Determine if merged cells can be unmerged and still convey the relevant concepts using full columns/rows	***Accessibility Goal*** • Split table up if you have merged cells in the middle that serve as a "title" for a new section • Split table up if you have a row that functions as a new header row in the middle of a table • Move any remaining content of merged cells outside the table
Web Content	• Use headings for structure • Make links descriptive	***Universal Design Goal*** • Provide Alternative text for images • Designate a header row for tables	• Ensure text, hyperlinks and illustrations have good color contrast. • Use a video player that can be controlled using mouse, keyboard, screen reader	***Accessibility Goal*** • Run an accessibility checker that checks for WCAG AA standards on each web page (e.g. WAVE tool). Manually check and resolve errors and alerts. • Test with keyboard navigation