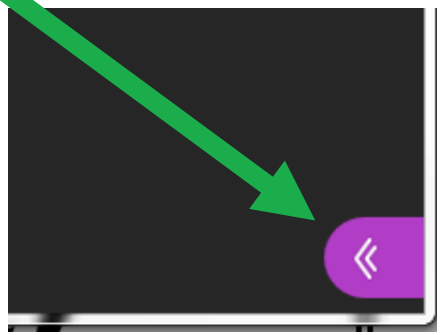
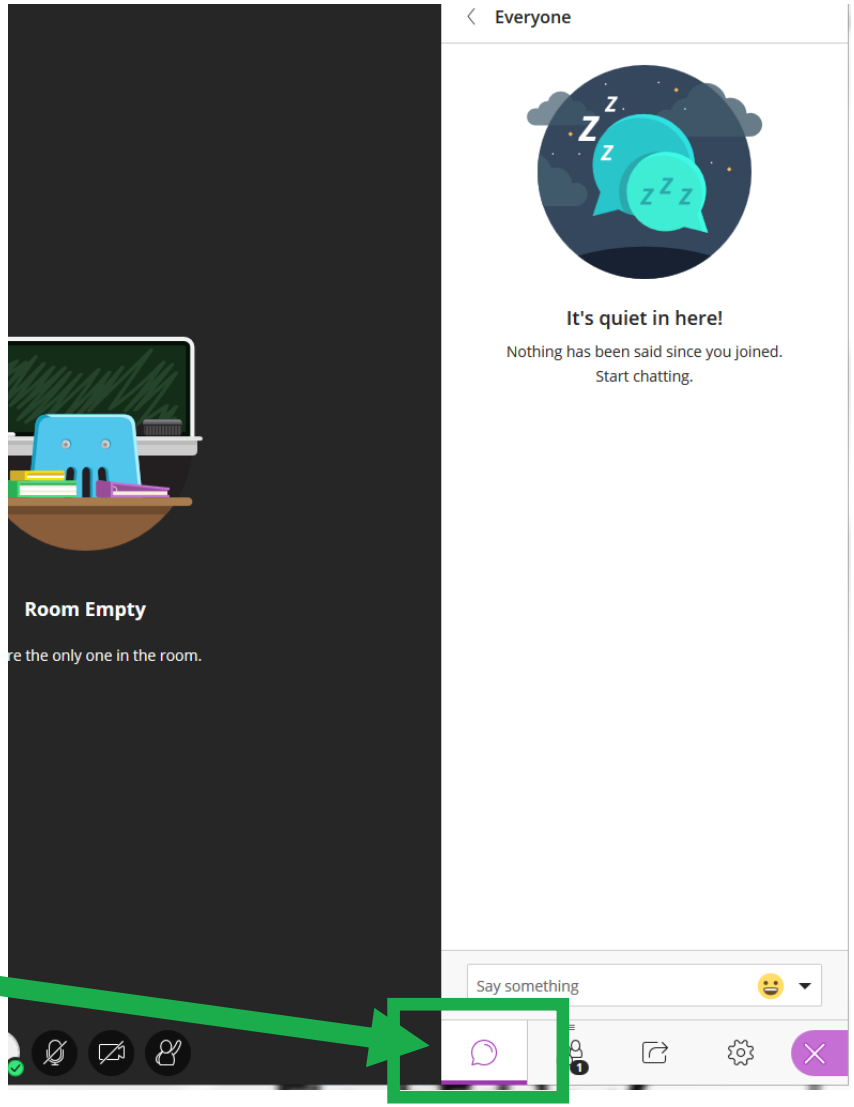
A few housekeeping things…

Participant video and audio will be turned off during the presentation. However, the chat area (located in the bottom-right corner) will be on and available to all participants.





Can You Hear Me?

Just a quick slide to test audio. If you can't hear me speaking right now, please indicate that you are having audio issues in the chat window (to the right) and one of the room moderators will be able to help you.

Asking Questions

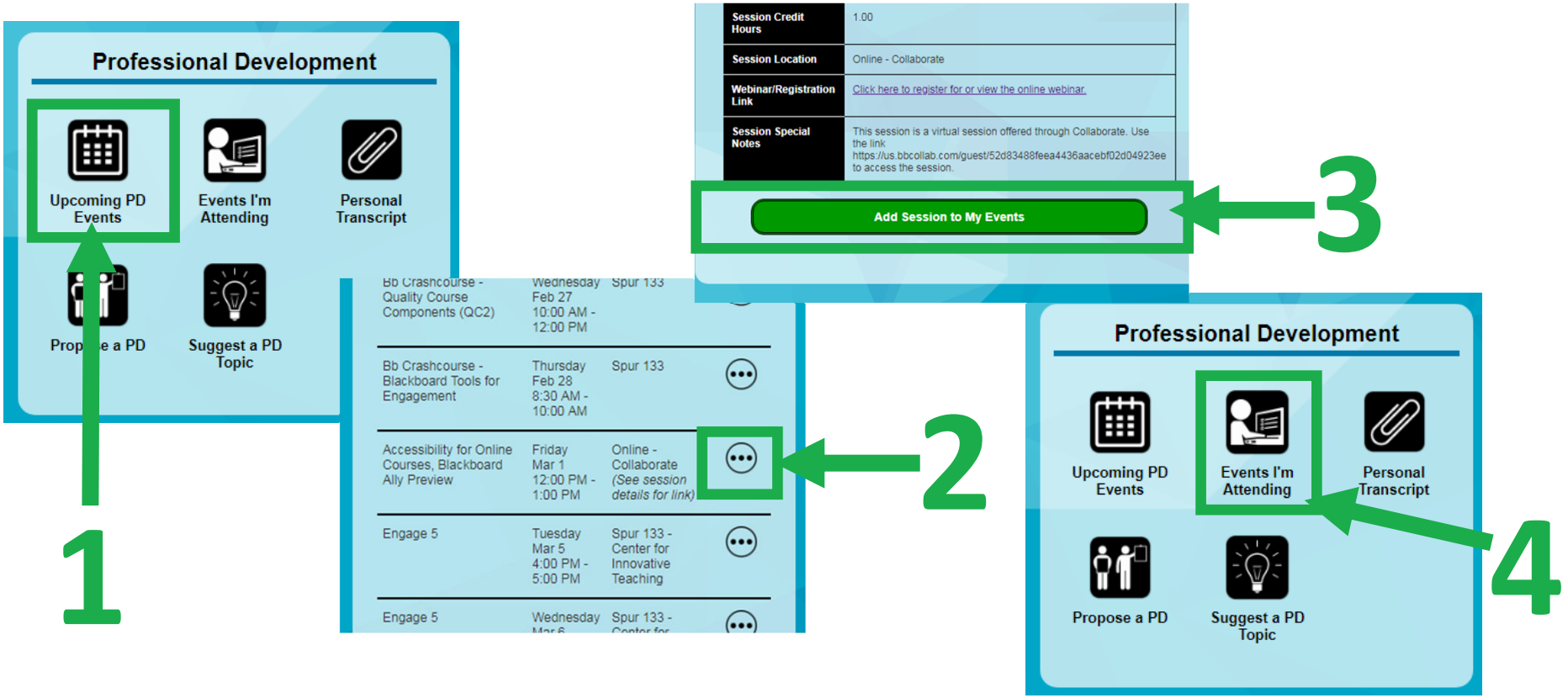
In order to keep this presentation moving at a reasonable pace, I may wait until the end to answer some questions. This session will have moderators that are monitoring the chat area – so please feel free to ask questions, as the presentation is happening, in the chat area and the Moderators will address your questions as they come in.

There should be some time at the end (5-10 minutes) where you can also ask any additional questions that you might have.

Get Your PD Credit!

www.odessa.edu/PD

Log in with your employee ID number, select the training session, and take the survey after we're done! ☺



Accessibility for Online Courses, Blackboard Ally Preview

First Friday!

March 1, 2019

GLOBAL

Topics To Cover:

- **Introduction**
- **Importance of Section 504 / 508**
- **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines**
- **Accessible Media**
  - Audio / Video Files
  - Images
  - Text
  - File Attachments (.docx, .pptx, .pdf)
- **Blackboard Ally**

Introduction

What is Accessibility?

Accessibility refers to the design of products, devices, services, or environments for people with disabilities. The concept of accessible design ensures both “direct access” (i.e. unassisted) and "indirect access" meaning compatibility with a person's assistive technology (for example, computer screen readers).

Accessibility is strongly related to universal design which is the process of creating products that are usable by people with the widest possible range of abilities, operating within the widest possible range of situations. This is about making things accessible to all people (whether they have a disability or not).

Source: *https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Accessibility*

Why Should I Care?

Accessibility, especially in the case of education, should always be a topic of consideration any time you are developing content/ assessments/ activities for students.

"The pursuit of accessibility demonstrates a spirit of inclusiveness that benefits everyone. Embracing the challenge to meet the needs of all students is a noble pursuit, but it's not just an adoption of policy. It's a creation of awareness, an awareness that fosters a healthy shift in culture. When this is the approach, the motivation to support all students drives every conversation, and the fear of legal repercussions becomes secondary. This should be the goal of every institution of learning."

- Martin LaGrow -

Section 504/508

Section 504

Section 504 is part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

This section of the Rehabilitation Act specifically prohibits discrimination based upon disability. It is an anti-discrimination, civil rights statue that requires the needs of students with disabilities to be met as adequately as the needs of the non-disabled are met.

Students that qualify as having learning impairments are students that have a disability, long-term illness, or various disorders that "substantially" reduce or lessens their ability to access learning in the education setting because of a learning, behavior, or health related condition.

Source: *https://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/section-504-2/*

Section 508

Section 508 is part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

This act requires federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology (EIT) accessible to people with disabilities. Under this law, agencies must give disabled employees and members of the public access to information comparable to the access available to others.

For those of us in Higher Education, it means that we need to make every effort to make all of our electronic/digital content in courses and in the classroom as user-friendly and accessible as possible, **regardless of whether students need it or not!**

Source: *https://www.section508.gov/manage/laws-and-policies*

What is the Difference?

Section 504 = Accommodation
Section 508 = Comparable Access / Accessibility

An *accommodation* is…

- provided based on specific needs of a student with a documented disability
- determined by an accommodations officer on a case-by-case basis
- provided for students whose needs require great intervention, such as live American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters or lecture transcripts for live courses
- for circumstances that are difficult to anticipate and prepare for

***Comparable Access / Accessibility* is…**

- the responsibility of all who create or publish digital content
- provided for all students, with no expectation of an explanation of need
- expected for disabilities that are easily anticipated

Source: *https://er.educause.edu/articles/2017/12/the-section-508-refresh-and-what-it-means-for-higher-education*

Accommodations (Reactive)

- Highlighted textbooks
- Extended time on tests or assignments
- Peer assistance with note taking
- Frequent feedback
- Extra set of textbooks for home use
- Computer aided instruction
- Enlarged print
- Positive reinforcements
- Behavior intervention plans
- Rearranging class schedules
- Visual aids
- Preferred seating assignments
- Taping lectures
- Oral tests
- Individual contracts

Source: *https://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/section-504-2/*

Digital Accessibility (Proactive)

- LMS is structured in an organized way so that screen readers can easily and quickly navigate students to important information.
- Text meets WCAG 2.0 Standards for Size and Contrast
- Embedded images and tables contain alternative description text for screen readers
- Audio files have transcripts
- Video files have transcripts/captions
- Attached files have been formatted with proper headings and accessibility properties
- Course files have alternative file format types available

Who Can Help?

Office of Disability Services (Accommodations)

Becky Rivera-Weiss
Special Populations Outreach Specialist
(432) 335-6861 | brivera@odessa.edu
https://www.odessa.edu/current-students/disabilities/

OC Global (Content Accessibility Assistance)

Julie Lyon
Instructional Design Coordinator
(432) 335-6659 | jlyon@odessa.edu

Sabina KC
Instructional Designer
skc@odessa.edu

Jennifer Lee
Web Design and Instructional Technology Specialist
(432) 335-6649 | jlee@odessa.edu

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

Common Guidelines

Perceivable

Provide text alternatives for nontext content.
Provide captions and alternatives for audio and video content.
Make content adaptable; and make it available to assistive technologies.
Use sufficient contrast to make things easy to see and hear

Operable

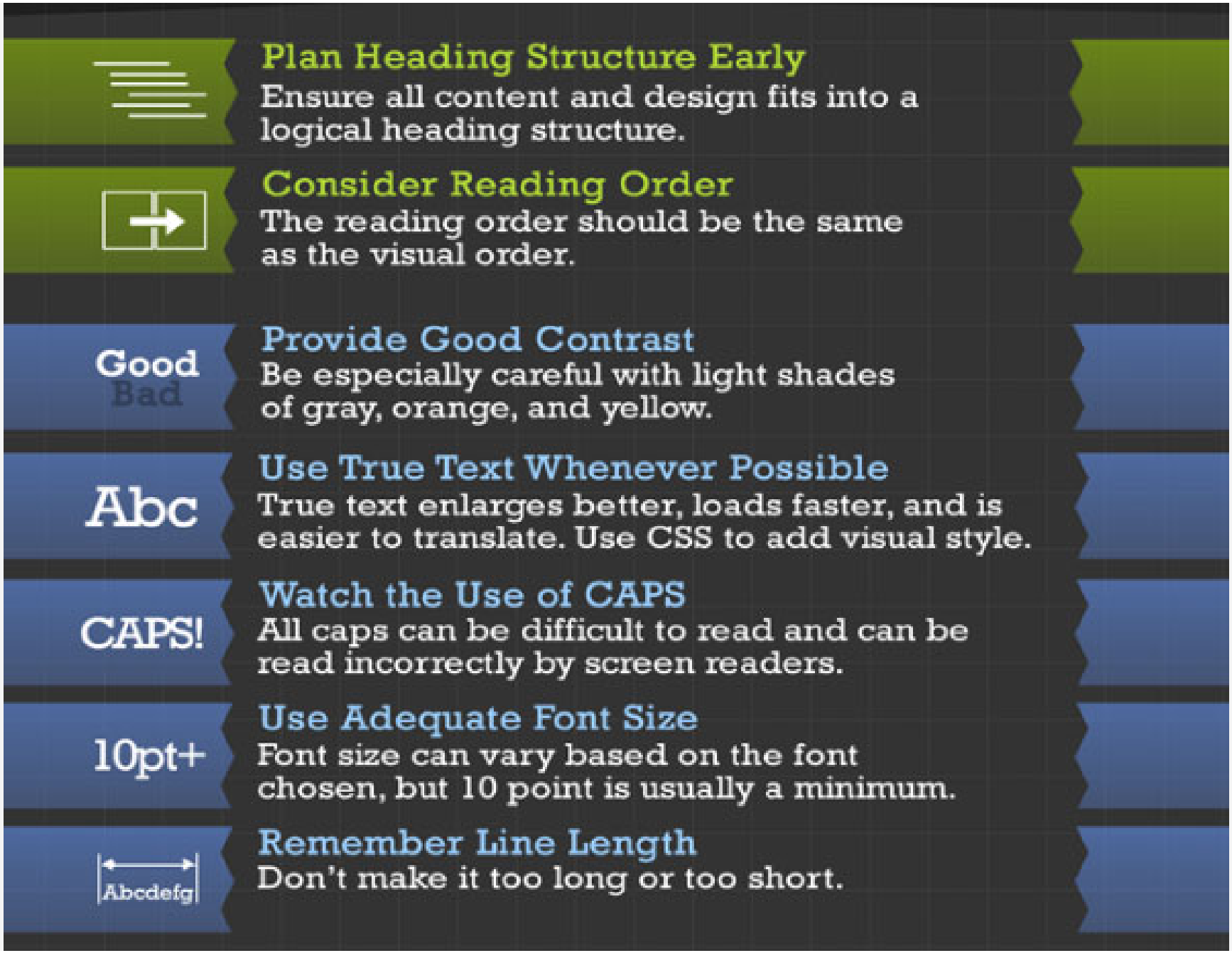
Make all functionality keyboard accessible.
Give users enough time to read and use content.
Do not use content that causes seizures.
Help users navigate and find content.

Understandable

Make text readable and understandable.
Make content appear and operate in predictable ways.
Help users avoid and correct mistakes.

Robust

Maximize compatibility with current and future technologies.


Plan Heading Structure Early
Ensure all content and design fits into a logical heading structure.
Consider Reading Order
The reading order should be the same as the visual order.
Good
Bad
Provide Good Contrast
Be especially careful with light shades of gray, orange, and yellow.
Abc
Use True Text Whenever Possible
True text enlarges better, loads faster, and is easier to translate. Use CSS to add visual style.
CAPS!
Watch the Use of CAPS
All caps can be difficult to read and can be read incorrectly by screen readers.
10pt+
Use Adequate Font Size
Font size can vary based on the font chosen, but 10 point is usually a minimum.
Abcdefg
Remember Line Length
Don't make it too long or too short.

Link
Make Sure Links are Recognizable
Differentiate links in the body of the page with underlines or something other than color alone.
Design Link Focus Indicators
Ensure keyboard users can visually identify links when navigating with a keyboard.
Skip
Design a "Skip to Main Content" Link
A keyboard accessible link for users to skip navigation should be at the top of the page.
Click Here
Ensure Link Text Makes Sense on Its Own
Avoid "Click Here" or other ambiguous link text, such as "More" or "Continue".
Use Animation, Video, and Audio Carefully
Provide a play/pause button. Avoid flashing or strobing content that could cause seizures.
Don't Convey Content with Color Alone
Users often can't distinguish or may override page colors.
Search
Design Accessible Form Controls
Ensure form controls have descriptive labels, instructions, and validation/error messages.

100% Accessible?

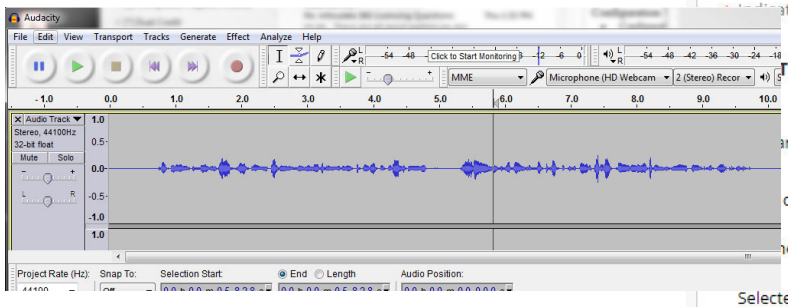
Let's be honest -***it is difficult to make every course 100% accessible***. Most courses, when they are created for the first time, have accessibility on the very end of the list of things-to-get-done. When creating your content, you want to make sure that you keep accessibility in mind and try to include it in every area that you can as you are building.

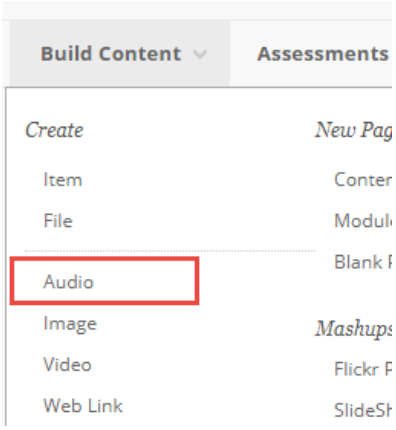
A course can be less than 100% accessible and still be offered - but - there are some things to keep in mind. If you offer a course that isn't accessible in all areas and you have a student with disabilities that needs special accommodations for the content offered, you will need to be prepared to provide them with whatever they request in a *reasonable amount of time*.

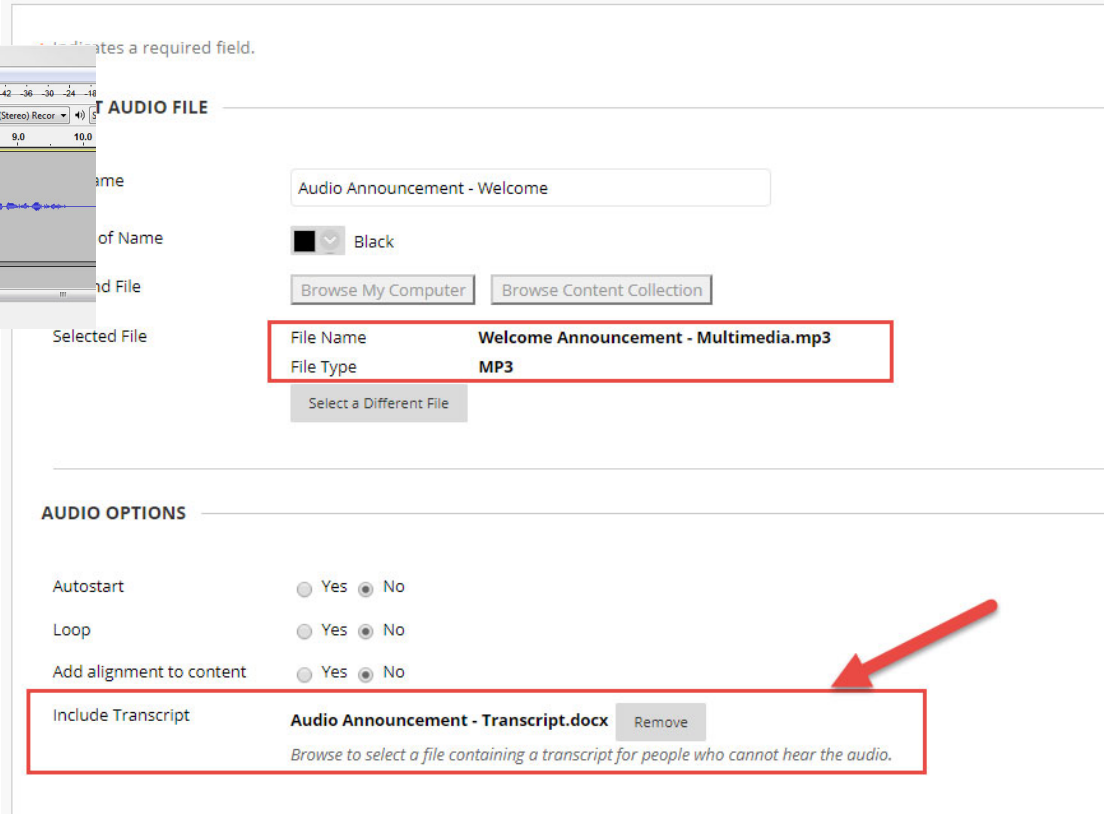
Accessible Content in Blackboard

Audio Files

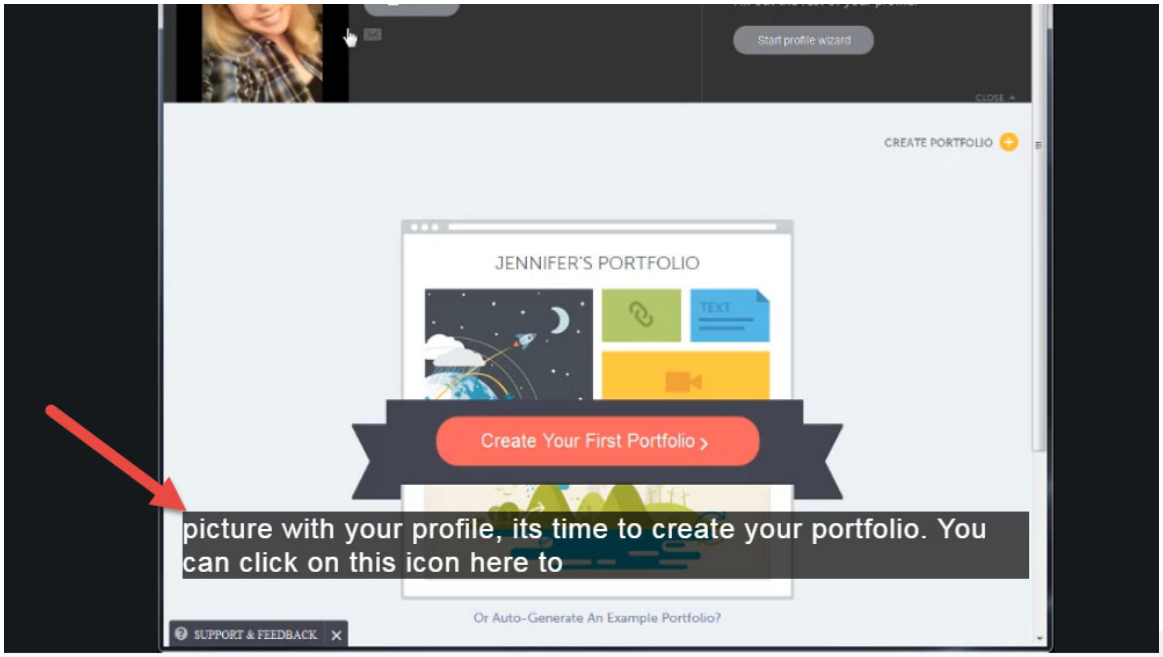
Any audio files you include with your class (regardless of how long or short they are) need to have an accurate transcript provided with them.

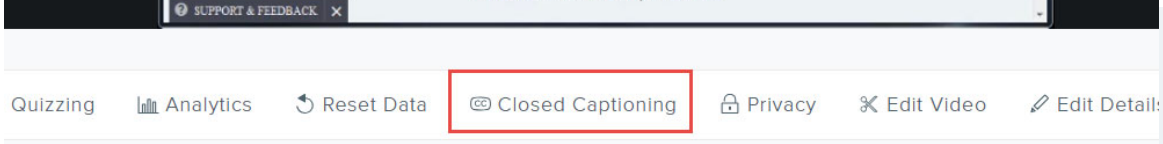


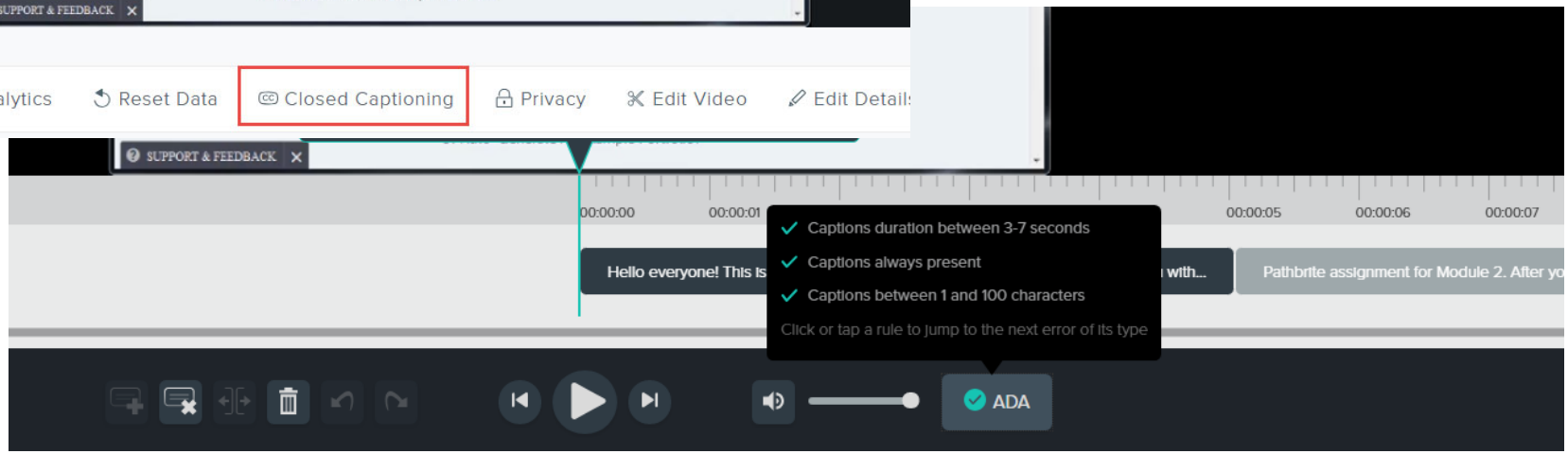




Video Files – TechSmith

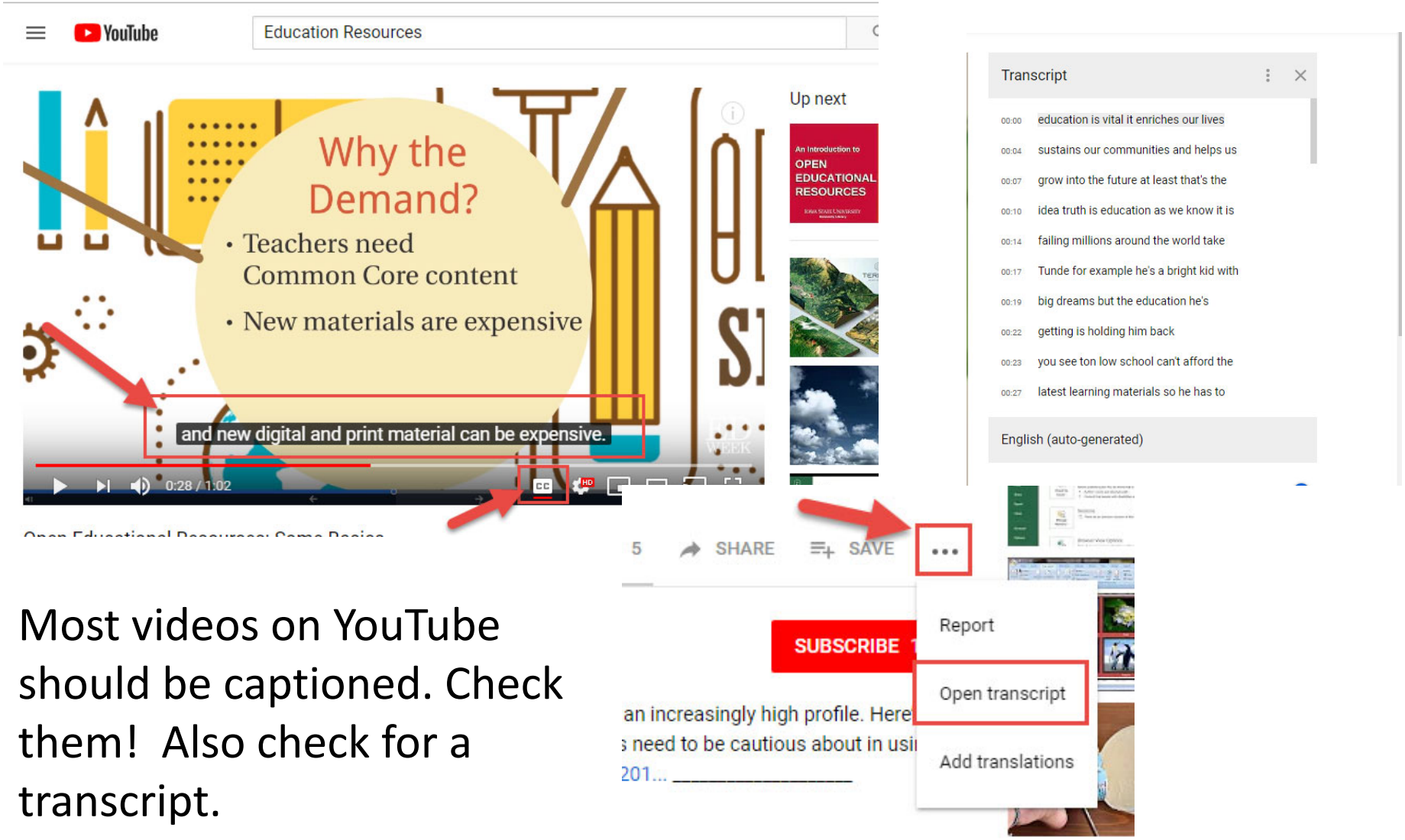






TechSmith caption editor automatically has ADA compliance guidelines built into their editing.

Video Files – YouTube



Most videos on YouTube should be captioned. Check them! Also check for a transcript.

Digital Images

Alternative Text is a meta-property for images that allows a screen-reader to describe the image to a learner that cannot visually see it. When creating alternative text, it is important to create GOOD alternative text!

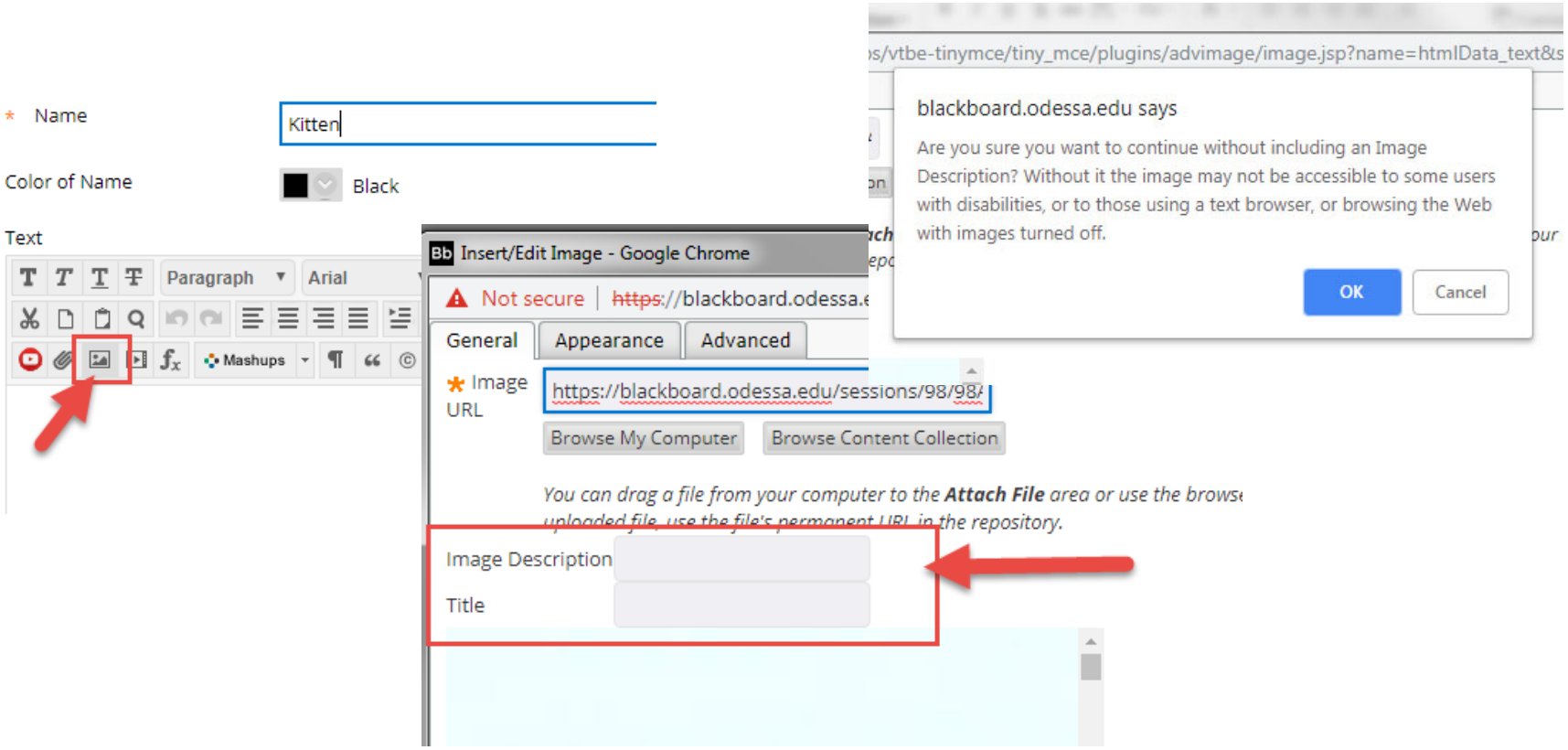
Bad Example:
Alt Text = "*People spending an afternoon at the park*"

Good Example:
Alt Text = "*Image of the painting Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte, painted by Georges Seurat in 1886. Demonstrates the pointillism technique.*"

*Note: Alternative text **should not** be included on decorative images.*

Digital Images

Blackboard has made it easy for users to add alternative text to their images. When you insert an image into any content area of a course, you will see available fields for Image Description and Title. Both should be filled out.



Text

Text Size and Text Contrast MATTER!

It is important that you always consider the size and color of text that you use when creating course content. Some students may have issues where they are unable to see certain colors. Some students may not be able to read really small text. Some students may not be able to distinguish text from background color if they have problems with seeing low contrast.

WCAG 2 Level AA requires a contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1 for normal text and 3:1 for large text, and a contrast ratio of at least 3:1 for graphics and user interface components (such as form input borders). Level AAA requires a contrast ratio of at least 7:1 for normal text and 4.5:1 for large text.

Large text is defined as 14 point (typically 18.66px) and bold or larger, or 18 point (typically 24px) or larger.

Text

Tools:

WebAim Color Contrast Checker and Colorzilla Browser Extension

- https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/
- http://www.colorzilla.com/chrome/

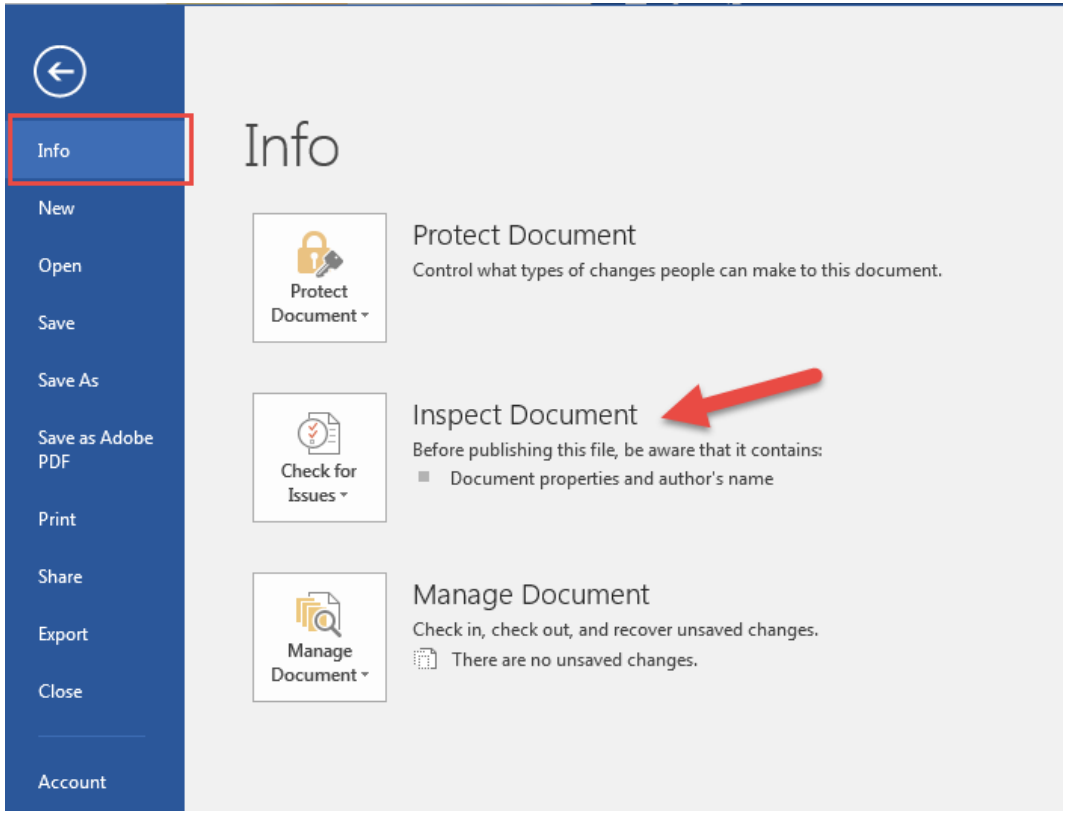
File Attachments

The three most common file attachments that are attached in Blackboard are documents (.docx), powerpoints (.pptx), and PDF files.

It is important to check all files for accessibility BEFORE adding them to Blackboard. Most programs have a built in Accessibility-Checker that should be run before you save the final version of the document.

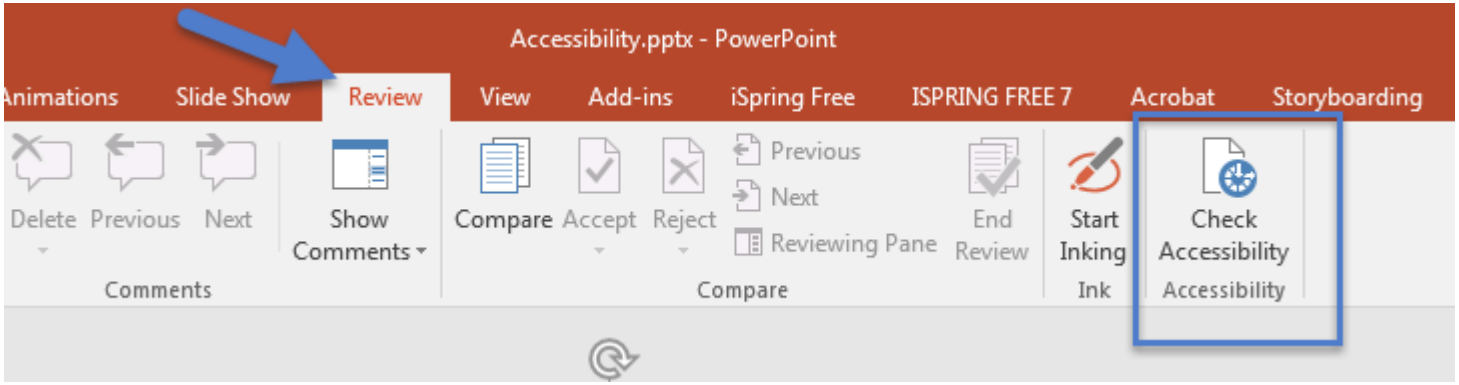
See the Chat Area – I will post links to specific articles on how to make DOCX, PPTX, and PDF files accessible.

Word



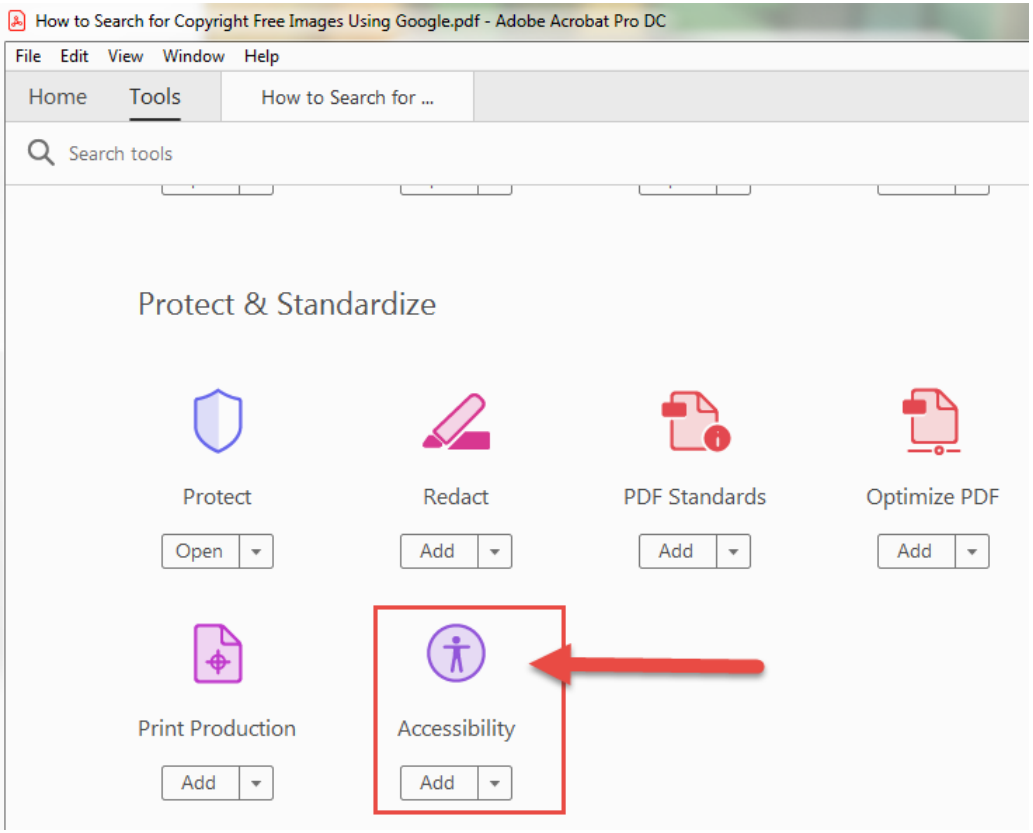
Accessible Word : https://support.office.microsoft.com/en-us/article/Creating-accessible-Word-documents-d9bf3683-87ac-47ea-b91a-78dcacb3c66d?CorrelationId=c97f7c89-ea17-490c-9f34-85382f69c99e&ui=en-US&rs=en-US&ad=US

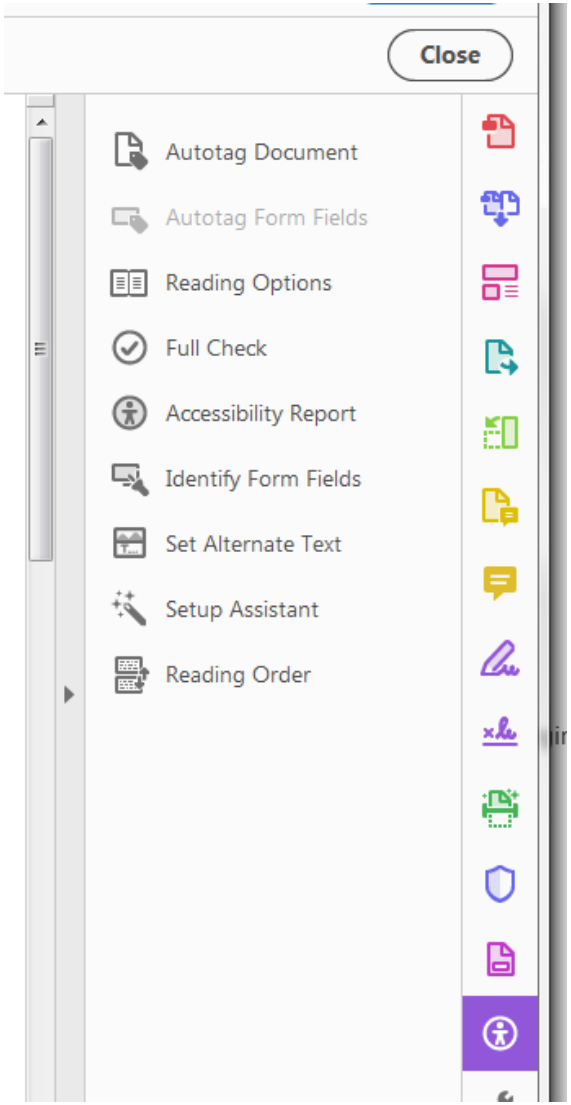
Powerpoint



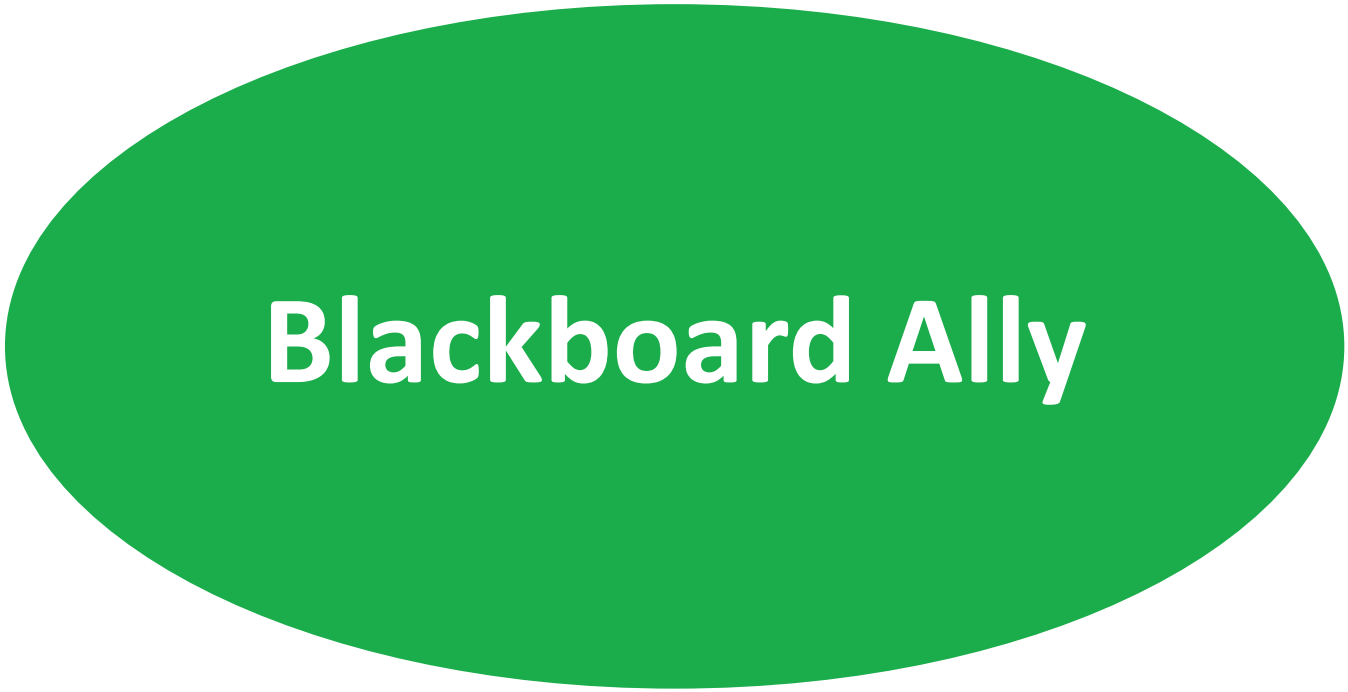
Accessible PPT: https://support.office.microsoft.com/en-us/article/Creating-accessible-PowerPoint-presentations-6f7772b2-2f33-4bd2-8ca7-dae3b2b3ef25?CorrelationId=ea321b3e-96bd-4f49-b9a8-a7ce83a8c5fd&ui=en-US&rs=en-US&ad=US

PDF





Accessible PDF:
https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/using/creating-accessible-pdfs.html

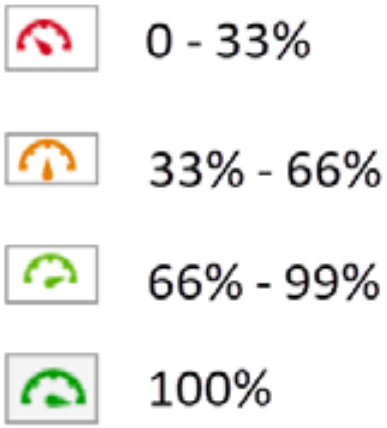

Blackboard Ally

What is Blackboard Ally?

Blackboard Ally is one of the newer components of our Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS) that integrates seamlessly into current and past courses. It provides a variety of functions that help make your course content more accessible for learners.

Ally Symbols

If you turn Ally on for any of your Blackboard courses, you may start to notice some new icons appearing by certain files and file types. These are generated by Ally to let you know the "level" of accessibility the item meets and if you need to take any action for it.
(Students do not see these icons – only instructors!)



Color	Severity	Score Range	Description
Red icon	Severe	0 – 33%	The file is not accessible and needs immediate attention.
Orange icon	Major	33% – 66%	The file is somewhat accessible.
Green icon	Minor	66% – 99%	The file is accessible, but could be improved.
Dark Green icon	None	100%	The file has perfect accessibility. There is no action needed to further improve the file.

Ally Features

Alternative Accessible Formats

Ally provides alternative formats of the course files available to students and instructors. Ally uses these file types to make alternative formats: **PDF, Word, PowerPoint, OpenOffice/LibreOffice, and HTML**.

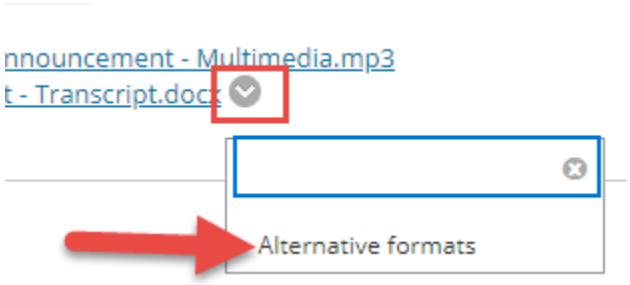
From those file types, Ally creates the following alternative formats:

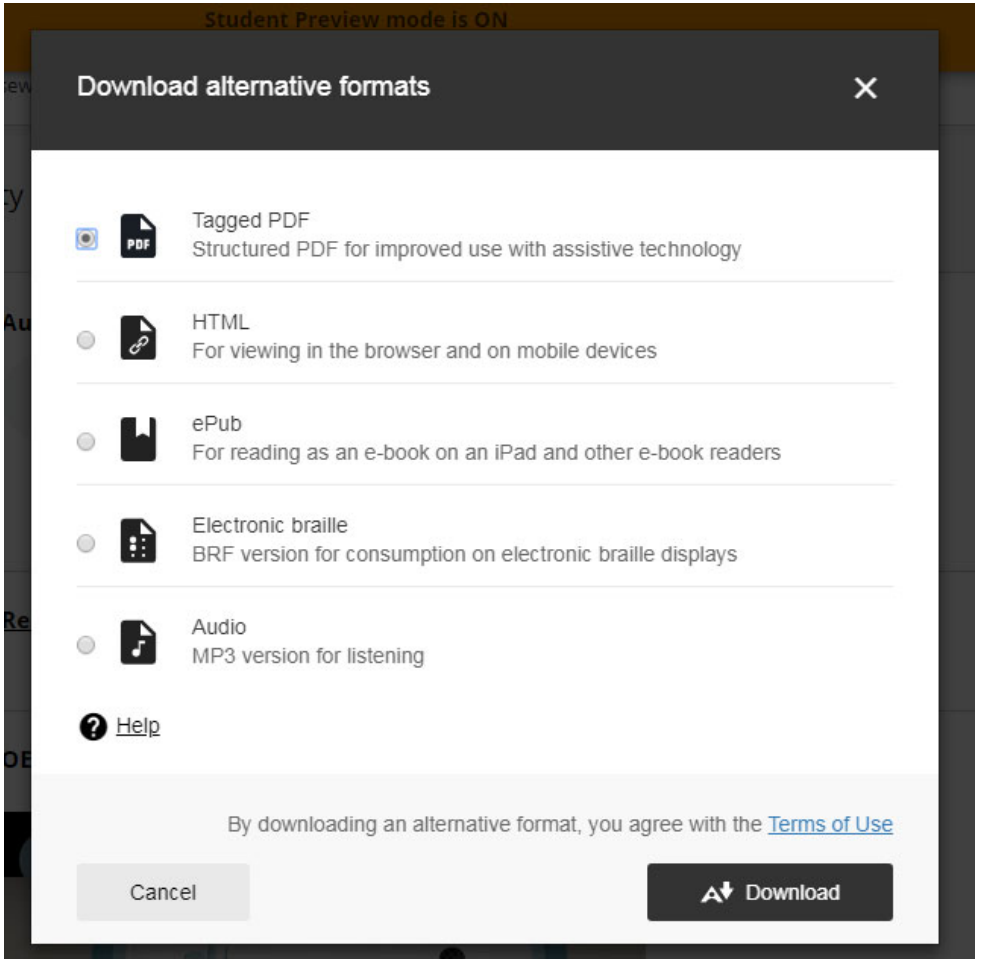
- HTML – Converts into a format that screen readers can read.
- ePub – If you have a mobile reader, you can open an ePub document on an iPad, Kindle, or similar device.
- Audio – Generates an mp3 version of the audio.
- Electronic Braille – Braille ready file format that works well with electronic braille embossers or electronic braille displays.
- OCR – Automatically OCR scanned documents.
- Tagged PDF – Converts Word, PowerPoint, and OpenOffice/LibreOffice files into a tagged PDF version.

IMPORTANT! The alternative format is only as accessible as the base document.

Ally Features

Alternative Accessible Formats

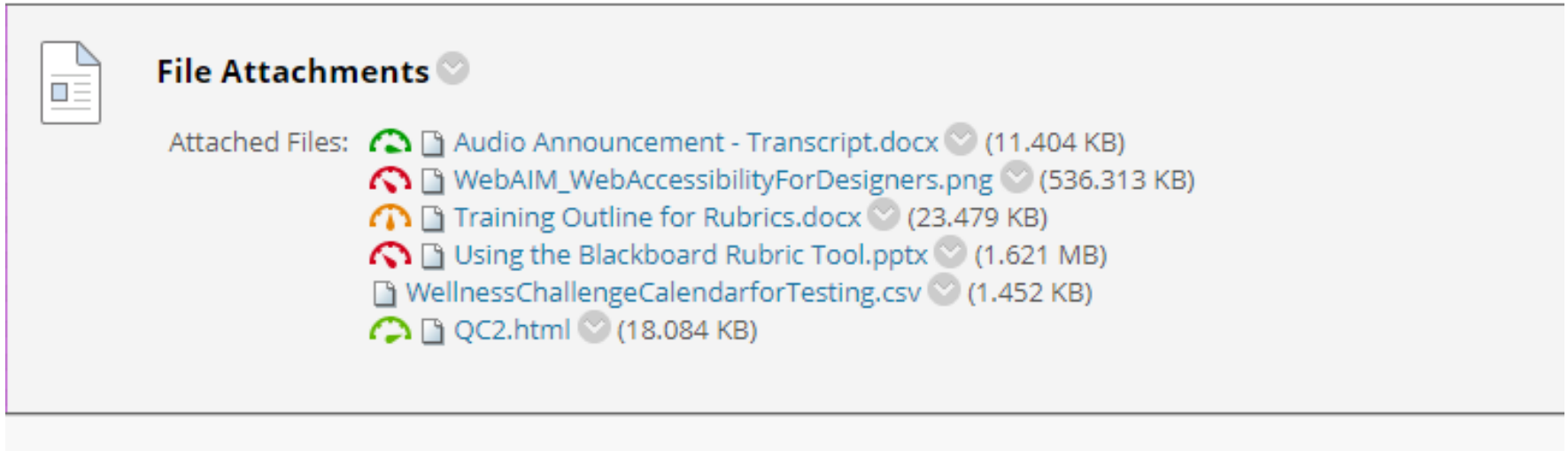




Ally Features

Attached File Accessibility

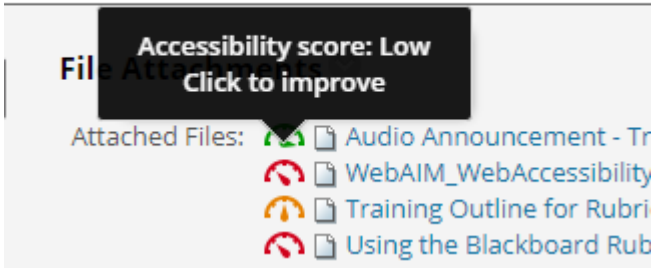
Ally will attempt to check any files you have attached to your course items to see if they meet accessibility requirements. An icon will appear beside attached files to indicate the level to which the file meets accessibility requirements.

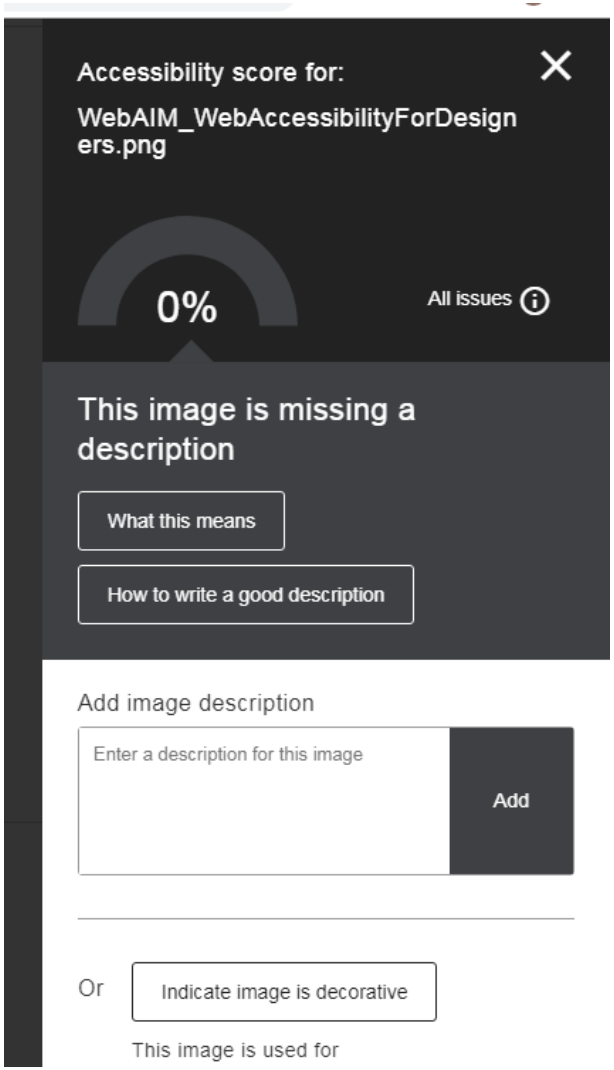


Ally Features

Guided Feedback for Correction

Ally will attempt to provide guided feedback for instructors on certain course items on how to improve their accessibility score.



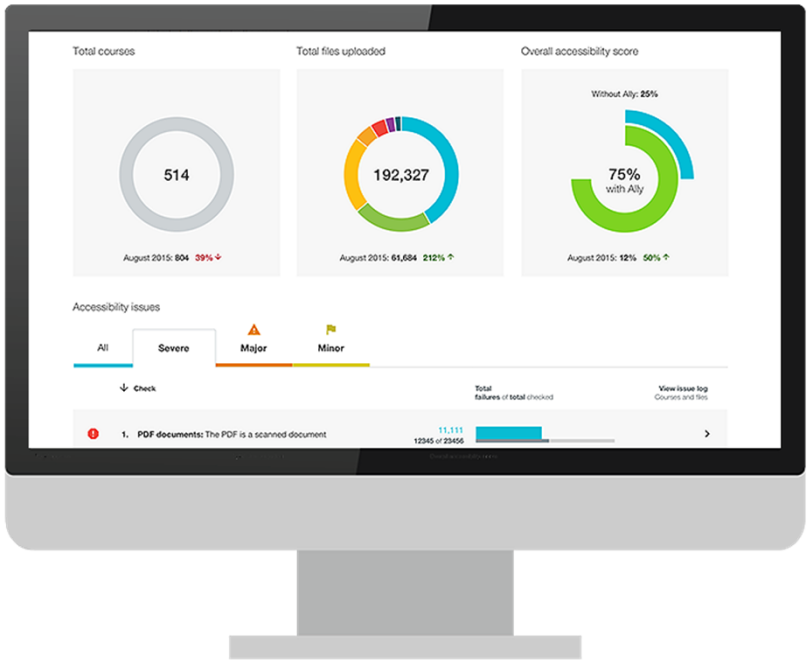


Ally Features

Institutional Accessibility Reporting

Ally provides an institutional report for a bigger picture of how we are doing overall, as an institution, when it comes to making content in our courses accessible.

(This is currently a work in progress!)



Why Can’t I See It?

Ally must either (1) be turned on for ALL COURSES system wide or (2) turned on for selected courses individually.

Currently we are leaving Ally as a function that can be turned on by request only on course-by-course basis.

If you have one (or more) courses that you would like to try out Ally in (past or current!) – send us an email with the course IDs and we’ll enable Ally in the selected courses for you.

Course Demo

QUESTIONS?

Thank you for Attending!

If you have any additional questions about this training or if you would like a copy of the video recording from today, please email me at jlee@odessa.edu !

A copy of this recording will be made available on our Click Here For More blog post titled ***First Friday 2018/2019.***