

Speaker Notes for Introduction to Accessibility Part 1

Slide 1

Hello, my name is Brian Josephson and I would like to welcome you to the Introduction to Accessibility discussion.

Slide 2

Please click on the graphic in this PowerPoint slide to access a four minute entertaining and accessible “YouTube” video. It is called “**Web Accessibility WCAG Theme Song**” and was created by David MacDonald.

Slide 3

Today's presentation will cover the following: planting a seed for thought, providing information on how to get started, support for faculty and staff, and steps the college will take during the Spring 2009 semester. The presenters will also provide demonstrations, tools and answer questions regarding accessibility.

Slide 6

The purpose of the video is to provide information on what an instructor needs to know in order to get started creating accessible courses and materials, and where to find support when you have questions. We will also talk about the importance of complying with state and federal laws.

Slide 7

What is accessibility? The root word is obviously “access”. Accessibility gives access to all individuals, not just those with disabilities. Some examples of disabilities are vision and hearing impairments and cognitive and motor impairments. So, how is accessibility achieved? We use accessible design techniques that allow people with disabilities to have access to electronic communication and information that everyone else uses. Accessibility involves creating not only web pages, but all materials that facilitate multiple learning needs and interact with adaptive technologies.

Slide 8

So who is accessibility really for and do we want to create access to courses and materials only for students with disabilities? No! We want to use accessible design to create accessible courses and materials for students with as many learning styles as possible. All students do not learn the same way. Some students are visual learners, some are auditory learners, while others are tactile/hands on learners. We want to create courses and materials that cover as many learning styles as possible. Remember to take into consideration the college's demographics. Much of our student population is older, coming for training or retraining, veterans, have disabilities, and in many cases English is their second language.

Slide 9

Why do you, as an instructor, want to create greater access to your course and materials? First and foremost, because it is the right thing to do. Second, it is smart. Why is it smart? It allows you to increase access by all students, provide more learning options, reach more students, increase retention and student success. Most importantly, you take control of your course when you create your own materials. Someone else is not doing it for you and second guessing what you want. Finally, it is the law.

Slide 10

By clicking on the graphic provided in the PowerPoint, a six minute video will explain how a screen reader works. It will demonstrate how screen readers assist people who are visually impaired to navigate the web, access electronic pages, and more.

Slide 11

At this point in time, you might be wondering how to get started? The best place to start is in the design phase of your course and course materials. It is recommended that as your courses and materials are updated, you update their accessibility.

Slide 12

Let's discuss solutions on how to get training and assistance. First, there are workshops on and off campus. Materials can be downloaded from the High Tech Center Training Unit Website. Their web address is provided under resources at the end of this presentation. Another solution is to apply for grants and/or stipends to help offset costs or to look for interns or student workers. It is also important to only purchase materials that are accessible. If a publisher provides a course pack for Blackboard or you purchase a video, only do so if it is accessible. If the publishers' materials are not accessible, let them know you won't purchase their book.

Slide 13

Here are some good resources to learn more about accessibility, distance education guidelines and the law: the California Community College Chancellors Office, the Access Board, US Department of Justice, and the High Tech Center Training Unit.

Slide 14

Other good resources to learn about creating accessible courses and materials, along with online pedagogy include: WebAim, @One, University of Wisconsin – Madison, and the Teaching Online site created by our very own Tom Doyle. Thank you for listening.

Slide 15

This concludes Part 1 of our presentation. Please view Part 2 to find out how to get started making online materials accessible.