



Accessibility Training 2021-22

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- Key Concepts
- Wichita State Policy
- What you need to know about Service Animals
- Accessibility in the Remote Classroom
- The Exceptions Process
- Supporting the effort



Key Concepts



What Is Accessibility (recap)

- Accessibility is proactive
- Accessibility makes content available to all users
- Accessibility targets populations, not individuals
- Accessibility is less complicated than Accommodations, but the scope of the challenge means it requires everyone's contribution; we all must own the responsibility for our own content.

For example: *A textbook that is available in a screen reader accessible PDF format is accessible.*



And so Accommodations are

- Accommodations are reactive
- Accommodations make content available to one specific person
- Accommodations target individuals
- Accommodations are often more challenging, but are supported or provided by the Office of Disability Services

For example: *providing a sign language interpreter for a student with a hearing disability is an accommodation for that one student.*



Accessibility, by definition, requires access **at the same time**

- Examples

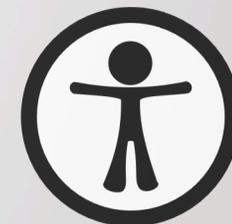
- Live Captions for live video
- Textbooks in formats that can be read by screen readers

Alternative versions available at the same time

- Can rely on user technology (smartphones, etc) to deliver alternatives



Wichita State Policy



What Our Says (Policy 8.11) (1/3)

“All University owned or contracted content, interfaces, and navigation elements to be used by WSU faculty, staff, students, or other WSU constituencies will be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and will be accessible to people with disabilities.”



“All instructional materials, co-curricular materials, Electronic and Information Technology (EIT), LMS's, and online courses created or used by a WSU department or instructional staff with any WSU academic course offering will be accessible to students with disabilities, and at the same time as they are available to any other student enrolled in that setting, to the best of WSU's ability.”



What Our Says (Policy 8.11) (1/3)

Any educational materials or content that is required, optional, or for enrichment for any WSU student will be accessible or an equally effective alternate access will be provided.



And about Exceptions? (Policy 8.11) (1/3)

Any non-accessible instructional materials required, optional, or for enrichment must be approved in writing by the Provost and Senior Vice President or designee prior to ordering.



In rare situations, conformance to WCAG 2.0 AA guidelines may be an “undue burden” due to the nature of the content, purpose of the resource, lack of accessible solutions, or an unreasonably high administrative or financial cost necessary to make the resource meet that goal. These difficulties do not relieve WSU programs and activities from meeting applicable legal obligations to provide reasonable accommodations to users in regard to access to the content and services provided.



In cases where undue burden is determined, WSU programs and activities must provide content and/or services in a suitable alternative format (for example, electronic text file or audio description) or manner upon request. In cases where there is an undue burden, WSU should seek to provide auxiliary aids and services if possible. An exception based on an undue burden must be approved in writing by the Provost and Senior Vice President or designee.



Important Takeaways

- Our policy is that we provide accessible instruction
- Our policy concedes that exceptions will be necessary, but they should be rare
- Exceptions to accessibility can be granted, but require the approval of the Provost or his designee.



What you need to know about Service Animals



What is a service animal?

- A service animal is trained to perform a specific function or support for a person with an impairment
- Service Animals are almost always dogs*
- Support animals (emotional support animals, etc.) are NOT service animals, and do not have the same protections



Where Can Service Animals Go?

- Service animals must be permitted to enter any location that their person can enter without special safety equipment
 - So, restaurants, hospitals, university campuses
- They may be excluded only in very sensitive spaces (like an active operating room)
- Service animals must be under the owner's control



The Two Questions

- IF it's not obvious what service a service dog provides, you are only permitted to ask these two questions about a service animal:
 - Is this a service animal required because of a disability?
 - What is this service animal trained to do for you?

Other questions, like “what is your disability” are violations of the person’s privacy.



What if?

- The only situations in which a service animal can be excluded or ask to be removed are:
 - If the animal is not under control of the owner
 - If the animal is not housebroken

To read more, check out the [ADA's page on Service Animals](#)



Accessibility in the Remote Classroom



- We have a variety of instructional methods, and we need to ensure that all of our methods meet accessibility standards.
- Adding online/remote elements to instruction introduces new accessibility challenges



Durable vs. Temporary Instructional Content

- Durable resources must be accessible
 - Exceptions can be requested
- Temporary content needs to meet the needs of current users
 - If temporary content is ever re-used, it must be treated as durable content, and be made accessible



Textbooks and 3rd party content

- Textbooks and Publisher content should already be accessible unless exceptions have been requested
- Newly adopted texts should also be accessible



- Instructor-generated materials
 - Meet accessibility standards for primary delivery method
 - If students are provided documents as part of normal operations, those documents should be accessible
 - Meet accommodations needs of students if delivery is forced online by events



- Video (Zoom, Panopto, Youtube, etc):
 - Live: Captions are not necessary if you do not have a student who requires them.
 - Recorded: Captions are not required, but most platforms will add automatic captions for you
 - These captions need to be edited for accuracy if they are re-used, or if you have a student who requires them in the class in which the videos were generated



Other Materials/Methods

- Remote/Temporary instruction gives us a little flexibility
- That only applies if we know the *entire* audience who will use a resource will not need the resource to be made accessible
- The recommended practice is to make all resources accessible



Making an exception

What should be considered?



What needs exceptions

- For instruction:
 - Anything that is used in class for required activity, optional activity, or enrichment
- For non-instructional purposes
 - Anything that the public interacts with
 - Anything that students, faculty, or staff interact with as they interact with the university and its services



Evaluating Accessibility

- In general, we need to focus on the needs of three potential audiences:
 - A person who can't see the item
 - A person who can't hear the item
 - A person who can't operate the item
- For more guidance, go to wichita.edu/accessibility



What might require exceptions?

- Anything that is necessary to succeed in the class
 - Required materials
 - Class activities
 - Enrichment materials and activities



Who is helped by the exception?

- The instructor or service provider
 - With the exception they are now compliant with university policy
- Office of Disability Services
 - The Exceptions DB will provide a head start on identifying and accommodating problems for students with disabilities
- The University
 - Concrete data to demonstrate our efforts to improve accessibility
- The Students
 - Get accommodations faster and easier



Our Exception Process



A tip of the hat: Ohio State Univ.

- Ohio State University's Exceptions Process is the model for what we are implementing
- OSU is an important leader in Higher Ed Accessibility



Exceptions Request Includes:

- A. Rationale for exception
- B. Plans for accommodation
- C. Plans for communication
- D. Plans for future compliance



A. Rationale for Exceptions

- Compliance is not technically possible or feasible given current technology
- For third party and/or vendor delivered products, no accessible and equally effective alternative for the information or service exists
- The information or service is used by a limited audience which has no known need for accessibility features
- Making the Information or Service accessible would require extraordinary measures that constitute an undue burden to the university



Limited Audience: Very Limited

- The limited audience exception should only be used very sparingly
 - Not for content that will be used repeatedly
 - Not for audiences we don't know for sure (including most classes)



Undue Burden: A Very High Standard

- Citing an undue burden is not recommended
 - The burden is measured against the resources of the entire university
 - So, while it may be difficult and time consuming, it does not rise to the level of undue burden until it is an undue burden for the entire university to take on that challenge.



B. Accommodation Plan

- When an exception is requested, a plan for accommodation will need to be made
 - What will be done to accommodate students who enter the course and can't access the content or activity?
 - What resources are available? What resources will be necessary?



Example Accommodation Plans

- An audio version of the content is available as an accommodation
- An accessible PDF is available from the publisher on request in the case of a student with a disability
- The textbook is not available in a digital format. It will need to be scanned and OCR'ed.
- A student assistant will be provided to assist a student with a disability during the lab components of the course



C. Communication Plan

- Information about available Accommodations must be communicated to students
 - Will it be included in the course syllabus?
 - Will it be addressed in the introduction to the course, or the unit that involves the resource?



D. Compliance Plan

- Exception plans should include a plan that will lead to an accessible outcome in the future if possible
 - Some exceptions will be for resources or activities that will probably always need to be exceptions
 - Others will be temporary, and should address how they will work towards a future where the exception is not necessary.
- Your exception request will include a plan to reach compliance in the future
- Future exceptions will be expected to demonstrate progress or that progress was not possible



How to do this well

- Think carefully about the basis for your exceptions
- Get help writing your accommodations plans
 - IDA's Blackboard and Accessibility labs
- Think about how solutions will be most effective

Get Started: wichita.edu/accessibilityexception



Supporting the effort

- ARC 2020 - Recorded training and future events
- Blackboard and Accessibility Labs (weekly online at wichita.edu/idalabs)
- Blackboard Ally
- Aira Access
- KSARN.org



Thank You, Questions?

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Instructors Review Courses

- Self-Review of course
 - Resource Provided: Accessibility Self-Audit tool provided by IDA
 - Start here: wichita.edu/isthisaccessible
 - On-Demand self-review training
- Key Areas of focus:
 - Textbooks and textbook-related resources
 - Instructor-generated resources
 - Online components
 - Labs and learning activities



The Instructor Identifies a problem

- Is there a way to resolve the accessibility problem?
 - If yes, pursue that instead of the exception
 - If no, continue to request the exception by describing:
 - the way in which the resource or activity is not accessible
 - the rationale for requesting the exception



- First Step: Department Chair (or designee)
 - Ensure that the documentation is complete
 - Content or subject-matter-based evaluation of request is reviewed
 - If there are alternative textbooks that are accessible but in other ways inferior to the one being used, that evaluation needs to be vetted by the department
 - Review and evaluate that appropriate efforts are being made



Exceptions Approval: College Level

- Dean's office in each college collects the exceptions
 - Reviews exceptions
- This step provides the Deans with the opportunity to take additional action as they see fit



Exceptions Approvals: Review Committee

- Accessibility Exceptions Review Committee reviews and evaluates exceptions
 - Develop reporting and data gathering on exceptions
 - Compile vendor and publisher data as it becomes available
 - Submit Exceptions to the Provost (or his designee) for approval
- Provost Approves or denies exceptions; Deans, department chairs, and instructors are notified.



Why Exceptions?

- Need to continue to provide instruction while we work on solutions for complex accessibility problems.
- Document efforts to improve
- Document areas where accessibility is not possible

