ILLINOIS
Gies College of Business

eLearning Office
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Designing Courses for Everyone

What Is Accessibility?

"A person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use." – the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights

Office of eLearning Goal

Proactively make courses more inclusive and flexible as a team, regardless of the delivery format, and provide useful resources and training for faculty and staff who create content for their courses.

Major Legislation

- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
  - The elimination of discrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities by entities with federal financial support
- Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1998
  - Telecommunications and online classrooms to offer equal opportunities

Basic Accessibility Principles

- Use different levels of heading and a clear format to better separate and structure information.
- Provide text description for visuals.
- Provide a meaningful text description for a web link.
- Caption video and transcribe audio.
- Designate table headers and ensure the data cells are associated with the headers.
- Avoid using PDFs that are just image scans.
- Check accessibility compliance for e-textbook and apps/software.
- Make content and navigation accessible using keyboard alone.
- Ensure sufficient contrast between text and background; do not use color alone to convey important information.
- Allow enough time to read and use the content.

Accessibility in Course Design

- **Plan:** You will be provided with an accessible syllabus template that has been specially prepared to meet the accessibility and program requirements. If you prefer to work on your own document syllabus, you can pass it to eLearning for format checking.

- **Develop:** It is legally required to provide alternative text for visual objects for those who cannot see them. **You are responsible for quality text descriptions** for any important visual objects used in your lecture videos and course materials. The eLearning Media team will guide you through the pre-recording, recording, and post-recording processes to make sure that all the videos are created with accessible features.

- **Run:** For format check, you are required to send a weekly slide file to the eLearning team **48** hours prior to your first live session. When you are running a live session, any important visuals shown on screen need to be appropriately elaborated.

Inclusive Design Checklist for Faculty

- Provide clear instructions and expectations.

- Define new terms and acronyms.

- Allow access to learning materials and resources from the start of the course.

- Prioritize the information in a logical sequence.

- Provide feedback on important stages in projects and assignment.

- Provide learners with a practice opportunity.

- Make examples relevant to a wide range of learners from various backgrounds.

- Check if the publishers have digital textbooks and if accessibility is checked for readings.

- Check if apps and software are accessibility checked.

- Present content in multiple ways (text, audio, video, and graphic representations).

- Consider multiple assessment types (projects, presentations, role play, debates, discussion forums, and portfolios).