

Developing a campus-wide online accessibility infrastructure: a tale of two institutions

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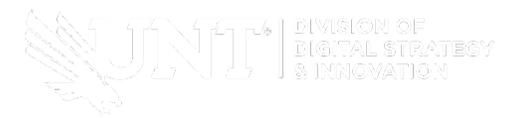
Accessing Higher Ground (AHG) 2022 – November 17, 2022



DIVISION OF
DIGITAL STRATEGY
& INNOVATION

Our collaboration and mentorship

- Marc and Tania worked together at Illinois to optimize campus digital accessibility
- Supporting online faculty
- Cross-departmental trainings
- Global Accessibility Awareness Day workshops
- MOOC: An Introduction to Accessibility & Inclusive Design
- Tania applied many of Marc's teachings after moving to UNT



The UNT story: Who we are

- Part of an Accessibility and Copyright Compliance team
 - 1 half-time manager
 - 4 full-timers
 - 2 half-timers (students or recent graduates)
 - 1 student intern
- Based in the campus Teaching and Learning Center
- Serving *all* faculty at UNT designing and teaching online and hybrid courses

What we do

- Assist faculty in the development of online and hybrid courses.
- Review courses for accessibility and copyright compliance at key development milestones (provisional and final review).
- One-hour consultations with faculty and librarians.
- Accessibility review of third-party software or platform.
- Deliver faculty training and workshops.
- Create and curate web resources for faculty e.g., clear.unt.edu/ally

Internal partnerships

- We work closely with:
 - Instructional Designers
 - Media Production
 - Office of Disability Access (student facing; accommodations)
 - Librarians
 - Office of Faculty Success
- Students (Student Advisory Committees)
- Senior Administration
- Student Services (Career Center/Student Employment; Financial Aid)
- Institutional Equity, Diversity, and Access Division
- Web Developers

Helpful external partnerships

- Listservs; online communities
- Professional associations
- Colleagues at other institutions

Partnerships make this happen

- Enable wider reach
- From reactive to proactive
- “Oh s***” moments transition into “shift matters” conversations
- The number of students with disabilities is increasing (over 3x as many since 2019), more diverse populations
- Faculty/staff are tasked with supporting student access beyond just online academic courses
- We can’t do it all by ourselves!

Organizational & Logistical Challenges

- Understanding organizational structure and responsibilities
 - From where is authority (if any) derived?
 - Flat vs. Tall
- Internal Consistency
- Soft Expectations may lead to hard failures
- Loose lips sink ships

Whatever Floats your Boat

MARC 21 008 fixed field structure & examples for Set 2 types

Books workform:

15 subfields shown in green apply to all Set 2 types of items;

13 subfields shown in red apply to some Set 2 types of items

Books		Rec stat	n	Entered	20211101	Replaced	20211101
Type a	ELvl ■	Srce d	Audn	Ctrl	Lang ■■■		
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Continuing Resources workform:

Continuing Resources		Rec stat	n	Entered	20211101	Replaced	20211101
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Top: screenshot of the fixed field in the NEW bibliographic record for sound recordings (table form with subfields and their data values shown; required subfields with placeholder code that must be replaced are highlighted in yellow)

Bottom: screenshot of the fixed field in the NEW bibliographic record for Scores (table form with subfields and their data values shown; required subfields with placeholder code that must be replaced are highlighted in yellow)

- 1 Slide Number Placeholder 4: 6
- 2 Slide Number Placeholder 4: ...
- 3 Title 1: 008 fixed field structur...
- 4 Picture 2: MARC logo
- 5 Rectangle 2: Books workform:
- 6 Picture 22: screenshot of the fi...
- 7 Rectangle 2: Continuing Res...
- 8 Picture 2: screenshot of the fix...
- 9 Rectangle 2: 15 subfields sho...
- Picture 18: Decorative
- Picture 13: Decorative
- Picture 14: Decorative

Accessibility vs. Academic Freedom

- Expect faculty to be hesitant/defensive/scared
- Accessibility can be a stipulation of academic freedom
 - Read your institution's policy on accessibility and accommodation

"Authors have a responsibility to design online courseware that will meet the reasonable needs of students who will enroll in the course, including those needs recognized in UNT Policy 16.001, (Disability Accommodation Policy for Students and Academic Units), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)"

"Faculty members are expected to promote...inclusive learning and working environments free from harassment, discrimination, or bias on the basis of culture, national origin, race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, age, religion, family structure or relationships, economic status, veteran status, or intellectual point of view"

Common Arguments Against Accessibility

- Direct from the faculty:
 - "I've never had a blind student before in my X years of teaching."
 - "A student that is deaf would never take my music class."
 - "This course was already approved by your office previously..."
 - "I'm reporting you to my chair/dean/mom"

Finding Your Champions

- Faculty-to-faculty interactions promoting accessibility are worth their weight in gold
 - Peer Mentors
 - Departmental Grants
 - Testimonials
- Take part of welcome week
- Community Outreach
 - Lunch and Learns
 - Reference Resource Development
 - Leveraging students

Sharing Perspective: The New Girl



What was it like to be new to accessibility?

- Joining an existing team that had worked together
- Starting in a new field completely
- Learning from the “Ground Up”
 - Desk Rides/Shadowing
 - YouTube learning
 - Free webinars and tutorials from vendors
 - Easing into reviews

Initial Feelings

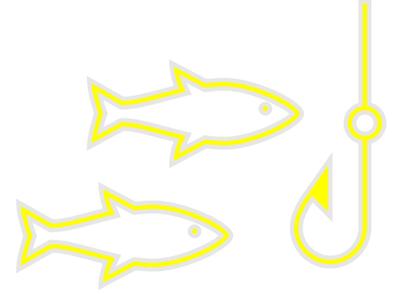
- Must know how to do it all perfectly to be effective
- “Just Do It” for the professor
 - It will be easier and quicker than a consult
 - This way you prove you know it
 - This way they will not argue or fight the message

Lessons Learned and Takeaways from being the “New Girl”

- Give yourself time
 - Lean on supportive teammates
 - Get help from native non-visual learners
 - Allow ample time for learning tools—
 - screen readers, math editors, etc.
 - Manual checks are important as well
- Empathize with professors
 - They may well feel like the “new person” too!
 - new to your University or to online ed
 - learning new concepts and solutions
 - Approach all with partnership and grace



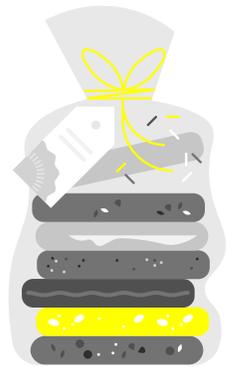
More Takeaways



- BUT - Don't do it all for them – teach them to fish
 - Give them the resources
 - Give them opportunities to connect in any format
 - It's OK to show them – one demo per item if needed
 - They need to learn skills just as you once did
 - You can't do it all... for all of them! So don't start...
 - You can reach more courses by not “doing it all” – and that helps more students
 - Doing too much for one professor can backfire

Report Tips

- If your process includes written reports after a course review (*good idea*)
 - Brevity in the report can help you not overwhelm the professor – no one likes 5 pages of “this is wrong”
 - Compliment sandwich if you can!
 - Link out to resources to help
 - Provide an example of each issue and where you found it... and caution them to review for more
 - Consider a “side list” of additional examples to discuss during a consultation or for your next review.



Personal Interaction Tips

- Professors aren't subject matter experts in Accessibility
- They have their own other personal and professional deadlines
- Don't make assumptions regarding intent/omission of accessible features
- A professor mastering one skill does not mean they have mastered all
- Discrete issues will trip up even "expert professors"
- Solutions for the overwhelmed – is there departmental help available, what can your library do, are there alternative forms of the same information to swap out, instead of piles of remediation?

Final Thoughts

- Remember as well – YOU are not an expert in their area!
- Respect their learning objectives - Your comments should not dilute their goals but enrich and expand ways of reaching their goals.
- Impossible items? Your suggestions may be better received as suggested “alternatives” instead of replacements
- Speak in terms of universal design - “the way people learn is as diverse as their fingerprints”
 - Flexible and accommodating design to help those students with needs will assist all students





University of Illinois:

The Evolution of an Accessibility Infrastructure



History

- Timothy Nugent (1948) → Jon Gunderson (present)
- 2015 - IADP Professional Certificate Program
- 2017 – Technology Accessibility Review Committee
- 2018 - Campus EIT (ICT) Policy
- 2019 - IT Accessibility Liaisons
- 2019 - MOOC: An Introduction to Accessibility & Inclusive Design
- 2022 - New UDL Team in Center for Innovation in Teaching & Learning



MOOC:

An Introduction to Accessibility & Inclusive Design

- Launched July 2019
- Currently over 12,000 have enrolled
- 1,100 learners completed course for the certificate
- **Free to learners** (\$49 for the certificate option)
- Self-directed learning approach
- Four Weeks:
 - Disability & Assistive Technology
 - The Legal Landscape and the Workplace
 - Universal Design
 - Accessible Digital Materials
- Bridge to IADP program

coursera

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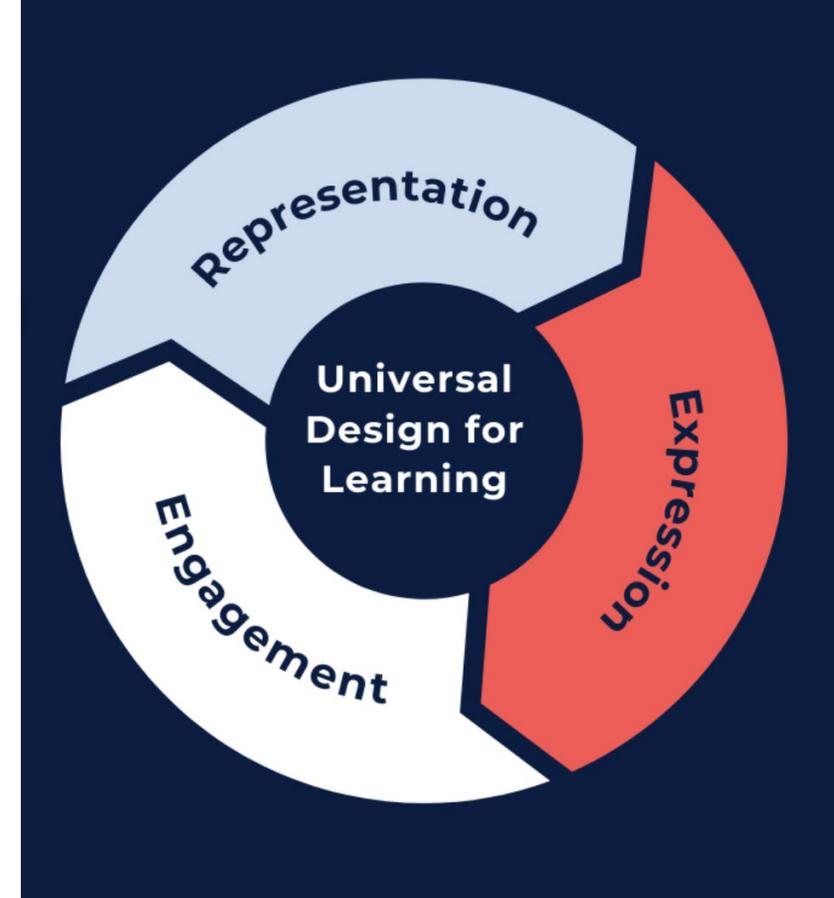
Information Accessibility Design & Policy (IADP)

- Professional Certificate program launched Fall 2015
- IAAP approved for CAEC Credit
- Three 8-week fully online, asynchronous courses
 - Understanding Disability & Assistive Technology
 - Creating & Procuring Accessible Electronic Materials
 - Designing Accessible Web Resources
- Cohort-based & highly interactive learning community
- Smaller class sizes (20-30 students)



CITL UDL Team

- Conceived in September of this year
- 4 high-demand teaching & learning services
 - Accessibility consulting in the teaching & learning space
 - Inclusive online course design
 - Course quality assurance
 - Targeted online course optimization through applied UDL
- Workshops, training, and faculty consulting
- Will function in coordination with
 - DRES (Disability Resources & Education Services)
 - Campus ADA coordinators
 - Campus Tech Services
 - Siebel Center for Design



Thank you!

Questions?

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Resources to Check Out

- **UNT Accessibility Resources**
Center for Learning Experimentation, Application, and Research (CLEAR)
<https://clear.unt.edu/ally>
- **Professional Certificate Program**
Information Accessibility Design & Policy (IADP)
<http://iadp.ahs.illinois.edu>
- **Free MOOC**
An Introduction to Accessibility & Inclusive Design
<https://www.coursera.org/learn/accessibility>