



Creating an online course accessibility database at a large institution



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Who We Are and What We Do



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Overview

- Introduction and problem
- Online course accessibility at UNT
- Our study
- Methods
- Results
- Policy implications and next steps

Introduction and problem

- Hybrid teaching and working is gaining popularity post-pandemic, raising digital accessibility concerns (Rice & Dunn, 2022).
- Most literature focuses on practitioner-oriented perspectives; lacks University system examples (e.g., Lomellini et al., 2022).
- Approximately one-third of U.S. disabled population resides in the South (Kelly & Wilson, 2023).
- How is a Southwestern University handling it?

Online course accessibility at UNT

Our process

Our process

- Campus teaching and learning center's accessibility and copyright team.
- Native assistive technology users; compliance officer/lawyer.
- Team reviews all courses with 50% or more online content.
- Faculty submit course content for provisional accessibility reviews (first 2 weeks of content), then make necessary modifications.
- Final accessibility reviews (16 weeks of content) are conducted before course goes live.
- 12 major checkpoints, based on WCAG 2.1 and Quality Matters 8.

Our checkpoints

- Keyboard navigation
- Headings, lists, tables
- Text and links
- Responsive design
- Color contrast
- Graphics
- Captions/transcripts
- Auto-play
- Electronic documents (Word, PPT, PDF, XL)
- Existing conformance report for third-party



Accessibility Compliance Check

Course: Click or tap here to enter course name.

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

URL: Click or tap here to enter URL.

Check Type: Choose a check type.

Length: Click or tap here to enter number of weeks.

The table below contains the results of our checks for accessibility compliance. The *Standard* middle column states the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and Quality Matters (QM) standards that your online course should adhere to and links out to resources about each standard. Please see *Comments & Further Instructions* below the table.

Checkpoint	Standard	Status
Keyboard Navigation & Responsive Design	QM 8.1 & 8.6 / WCAG 1.4.10, 2.1, & 2.4.3 Learn about keyboard navigation accessibility.	NO ISSUES FOUND
Headings, Lists & Tables	QM 8.2 / WCAG 2.4.6 & 1.4.10 Learn about headings, lists, & tables accessibility.	SEE DETAILS BELOW
Text	QM 8.2 & 8.3 / WCAG 1.4.12 Learn about text formatting for accessibility.	NO ISSUES FOUND
Links	QM 8.2 & 8.3 / WCAG 2.4.4 Learn about creating accessible links.	NO ISSUES FOUND
Color Contrast, Shapes & Texture	QM 8.2 / WCAG 1.4.3. & 1.4.1 Learn how to test colors for accessibility. & see examples of accessible charts and graphs.	NO ISSUES FOUND
Graphics & Alternative Text	QM 8.4 / WCAG 1.1.1 Learn about accessible images and alternate text.	NO ISSUES FOUND
Captions & Transcripts for Video/Audio & No Auto Play	QM 8.5 & QM 8.6 / WCAG 1.2.2 & 2.2.2 Learn how to caption.	NO ISSUES FOUND

Electronic Documents (Word, PPT, PDF, XL)	QM 8.3 / WCAG 2.1.1 Learn how to check PDFs and create accessible PDFs .	SEE DETAILS BELOW
Third-Party Software or Publisher Content	QM 8.7 / WCAG 2.4 Learn how to select accessible third-party content .	NO ISSUES FOUND
Other	This will be selected if the concerns encountered do not fit within any of the above categories; details will be available below.	SEE DETAILS BELOW

Comments & Further Instructions after cursory review – modules reviewed:

Issue Title – Review common feedback fragments document for guidance on completing this section.

Kudos! – Your course is in great shape! Keep the above tips in mind as you continue developing the course.

Note on homemade videos – if you are creating homemade lecture videos, we encourage you to [submit a consultation request](#) as early as you can, to ensure that the content is following best practices for accessibility and copyright.

Amendments from final review addressed on: MM/DD/YYYY

Thank You!

Thank you for taking the time to review this accessibility report of your course. If you have any questions, please reach out via email at CLEAR.Compliance@unt.edu, or [submit a consultation request](#), and we will be happy to assist you. For legal advice, please contact the [Office of General Counsel](#).

Our study

What did we do, find, and learn from it

Research questions (RQs)

1. Most common accessibility issues across online courses at our institution?
 - I. Differences in issue frequency depending on subject discipline?
 - II. ... depending on course level (e.g., high-enrollment undergraduate vs. low-enrollment graduate)?
2. Impact of early feedback to faculty on a subsample of course content?
3. Differences in number of issues identified between faculty who had gone through the online course development process at least once before vs. novices?

Methods

- 374 accessibility reports analyzed, completed between March 2022 and January 2023.
- Quantitatively assessed the 12 checkpoints (met vs. unmet). Didn't look at qualitative feedback, yet.
- Categorical factors i.e., faculty status, course level, and review type (provisional vs. final), were used to analyze accessibility checkpoint compliance.

Results (RQ 1)

- Half checkpoint types (6) unmet more than 10% of the time.
 - Electronic documents and links most frequently unmet, followed by text, headings, lists & tables, graphics, and captions & transcripts.
- Others unmet 4% of the time at most.
- 'Electronic documents': graduate courses more likely to meet standards.
- 'Graphics': lower met rates in the Arts; 'electronic documents': higher met rates in Business

Results (RQ 2)

- Type of review (final vs. provisional) significantly influenced pass rates for various checkpoints.
- Final reviews likely to have more checkpoints met, except for captions/transcripts.
 - Much more media later; faculty over relying on auto-captions?
- For 'graphics', final reviews nearly 3x as likely to meet standard, compared to the provisional assessments.

Results (RQ 3)

- ‘Veteran’ faculty:
 - Twice as likely to meet accessibility requirements for electronic documents.
 - About 1.5 times more likely to create accessible links.



So what? And what's next?

Implications and next steps

Implications & recommendations

- Findings suggests need for support, training, and early guidance for faculty:
 - Provide early feedback
 - Promote early interventions
 - Focus on specific challenges (electronic documents; link formatting; captions)
 - Allocate limited resources wisely

Limitations

- Provisional reviews may miss later issues (new: midpoint check-ins.)
- Some issues overlap categories (new: edited checkpoints.)
- Issue frequency and magnitude in a course not explored.
- Focus on course development, not teaching.
- Qualitative feedback and conversations during course development not included, yet.

Next steps

- Edited reports and checkpoints to measure anecdotal trends we are seeing (e.g., third-party materials not a checkpoint before but seems a frequent issue.)
- Offering targeted training (e.g., PDF accessibility) based on study results and website analytics.
- Working on an online course accessibility database/data warehouse to be available to internal staff, faculty, chairs, and deans.

References

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Thank you!

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