Good Design Choices and Accessible Materials Promote Student Engagement

Thoughtful Beginnings

- Accessibility is a shared responsibility across campus
- Good design requires us to be intentional with our design decisions
- Good design makes documents easier to use
- Good design supports access for all learners, including learners with disabilities and multilingual learners

Accessibility goes beyond accommodation. Accessibility takes into account from the beginning of the design process "the multiple ways in which our users might need to interact with our resources" while accommodation requires users to ask for special adjustments to be made *after* the resources have already been created (Jennifer Turner & Jessica Schomberg, "Inclusivity, Gestalt Principles, and Plain Language in Document Design." *In the Library with the Lead Pipe).*

Guiding Questions to Consider

- What is the purpose of the design choice I am making?
- What will make the document more useable for my students?
- What format is best for the task at hand?
- Am I providing information in multiple modalities?

- Will students be able to navigate the document easily to find relevant information and use it to accomplish specific goals?
- Are acronyms and jargon explained?

Readability of Documents

- Use a succinct, clear, and active voice
- Use descriptive headings and subheadings
- Use bullets and lists

- Be concise and use white space
- Break up text into smaller paragraphs
- Run Optical Character Recognition (OCR) on scanned documents and correct any errors that result

www.uscupstate.edu/accessibility

Readability of Fonts and Colors

- Use a 12-14 point sans serif font with mainly straight lines such as Arial, Verdana, or Tahoma
- Avoid All Caps or All Bold for large amounts of texts
- Avoid using color alone to convey meaning

Images, Graphics, Maps, and Animations

- Provide descriptive alternative text for information presented visually
- Move from general description to specifics to allow readers to choose whether to go further and deeper
- Describe complex images and graphics in surrounding text or in a caption

Video and Visual Presentation Materials

- Search for and use captioned media
- Provide written transcripts or captions for all videos and audio clips, including narrated PowerPoints

Accessibility Checkers

- Check accessibility of Microsoft Office documents with Microsoft Word and PowerPoint Accessibility Checker
- Ask someone who has not seen the image to review the alternative text
- Use a browser-based checker such as WebAIM WAVE accessibility add-on to the Firefox browsers

Campus Resources

- Faculty Access Advocates and Access Committee
- Disability Services
- Distance Education
- Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
- Learning Technologies

Online Resources

Accessible Syllabus https://accessiblesyllabus.tulane.edu/

Best Practices for Accessible Print Document Design http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/best-practices-for-accessible-print-document-design/54921

Effective Practices for Description of Science Content within Digital Talking Books http://ncam.wgbh.org/experience_learn/educational_media/stemdx

Inclusivity, Gestalt Principles, and Plain Language in Document Design http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2016/accessibility/

Plain Language and Inclusive Document Design http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/plain-language-and-inclusive-document-design/62414

Universal Design for Learning on Campus http://udloncampus.cast.org

Web Accessibility Guidelines http://www.pcc.edu/resources/instructional-support/access/documents/WebA11Y-HB2_Print-HiRes.pdf

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