What is web accessibility?

• Ensuring that all users – including users with disabilities – can access and navigate your web content
  – Including users using screen readers and other assistive technologies
  – Visual enhancements
  – Keyboard-only or voice-controlled navigation
Some types of disabilities that may impact web use

- **Visual**
  - Blindness, low vision, color-blindness, contrast sensitivity

- **Auditory**
  - Deafness, hard-of-hearing

- **Motor**
  - Inability to use a mouse, slow response time, limited fine motor control

- **Cognitive**
  - Learning disabilities, distractibility, inability to remember or focus on large amounts of information

https://webaim.org/intro/#people
Why is web accessibility important?

• We cannot and should not exclude users with disabilities
  – Part of our mission, and our commitment to diversity and inclusion
  – Not good for business, not serving our stakeholders as well

• Seattle U is required by federal law to meet minimum web accessibility standards

• Web accessibility benefits all users, not just people with disabilities
Laws Governing Website Accessibility

- **Section 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974**
- **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990**
- **Section 255 Telecommunications Act of 1996**
- **21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010**
Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

- Developed by Worldwide Web Consortium (W3C)
- **WCAG 2.1** published June 2018
- 12 guidelines grouped around four principles:
  - Perceivable
  - Operable
  - Understandable
  - Robust
- Three different levels (A, AA, AAA)

- Our goal is 100% compliance with WCAG 2.1 AA
Dual responsibility for accessible content

• MarCom Web Team
  – Most recent design refresh instituted significant improvements in our website accessibility
  – Build accessible page layouts, content types
  – Staying up-to-date with new accessibility laws and guidelines
  – Training and support for content editors

• Content Editors
  – As subject-matter experts, content editors have primary responsibility for updating page content
  – Responsible for meeting web accessibility guidelines to the best of your ability
    • CODE USERS: You have additional responsibility for ensuring the accessibility of your code
What should I do in TerminalFour to make my Seattle U website more accessible?
Use plain language

- Content should be clearly written, easy to read
  - Write as concisely as possible
  - Check your spelling and grammar
    - T4 text editor has spell check button
    - Browser add-ons or extensions like Grammarly
  - Minimize use of slang, jargon, acronyms, abbreviations
    - If they are necessary, provide definitions
  - Flesch-Kincaid Readability Test to measure readability
- See our Web Content Guidelines and Writing for the Web pages for more on best practices
Proper use of headings

- Organize content into a structure using headings that convey meaningful hierarchy
  - Pages should be divided into parts labeled by headings
  - All text that *looks* like a heading should be marked up as a heading
‘Alt’ description for images

• All images **must** have a short ‘alt’ description
  – Read to users by screen readers and must convey the meaning of an image to someone who cannot see it (or see it well)
  – Add ‘alt’ description to image in the T4 Media Library or in the content item
Accessible alternatives for text-heavy images

• Avoid images with a lot of text in them
  – If you decide to use a text-heavy image, you must provide an accessible alternative
    • If it’s short, put the text in the ‘alt’ description
    • Put the text straight on the page instead of within an image
    • Use an accessible, relevant content type, like “Infographic”
    • Post an accessible PDF version
    • Code-users:
      – ‘longdesc’ or caption
Provide captions/transcripts for all video, audio content

• How do you add captions to your videos?
  – YouTube
    • Transcribe and Auto-sync feature (very easy to use), or automatic captioning
  – Arc
    • Video management system integrated into Canvas with automatic captioning
  – Vimeo
    • Upload previously created caption file
    – Paid transcription or captioning services

• Automatic captioning must be reviewed for accuracy and corrected in order to meet legal standards
Post accessible files

• If you post PDFs or other documents to your website, you need to make them accessible
  – Create and verify PDF accessibility (Adobe)
  – Make your Word documents accessible (Microsoft)
Use links appropriately

• Make sure they’re working correctly
  – Fix broken links!

• Link text should be short, descriptive of where it will take you, and make sense out of context
  – Avoid uninformative phrases like “click here” and “read more”

• Links should be the only thing on the page that are underlined

• As link text is read aloud by screen readers, don’t use a URL as link text unless it’s human-readable
Use tables appropriately

- Tables should present tabular data only
  - Do not use tables to control layout
- Use T4’s accessible table tools
  - Do not copy and paste tables into T4 from an external source – tables need to be marked up correctly
  - Add column and row headings to help users derive meaning from table data
  - Table caption and summary
Mindful use of color and contrast

- Use the color options built into the content types
  - Content types built to meet accessibility standards
- Don’t rely on color alone to convey meaning, direct navigation or differentiate between items
- Contrast ratio between the text color and the background color
  - 4.5:1 for normal text, 3:1 for large text
  - https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/
Other things

• Type text into T4 in sentence case
  – Do not type your content into T4 in all caps; some screen readers will read letters individually

• Avoid flashing, flickering, blinking or otherwise animated images

• Make sure your carousel allows enough time for users to read text on each slide

• If you’re embedding a form or widget from a third-party site, it must be accessible, or you must provide an accessible alternative
Tools to help

• MarCom Web Team
  – www.seattleu.edu/web/content/accessibility

• Siteimprove
  – Free training videos and interactive modules
  – Easy way to find and fix accessibility issues on your Seattle U website
  – Email Web Team to get started with Siteimprove

• Increase your understanding of the experience of people with different types of disabilities:
  – Use a screen reader and listen to your website
  – Check out some user story videos from W3C

• WCAG Guidelines and Accessibility Principles
Questions about accessibility or suggestions on topics for future web forums?

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