Accessibility Statement
2017-18

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The Learning Management System (LMS) is dedicated to ensuring all users of its electronic and information technology systems, including those with disabilities, have full access to the systems. The LMS is regularly monitored to ensure that it meets or exceeds all requirements of Section 508 Standards for Electronic and Information Technology.

The policy focuses on online courses and includes the following components:

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Goals

It is the goal of the company that all course material be as accessible as possible to all students. The purpose of the Accessibility Policy is to provide guidelines regarding the proactive design and development of robust courses in a format that is easily accessible to online students. The goal of proactively creating accessible courses is to minimize the need for individual accommodations as students with disabilities complete online courses.

Laws Related to Accessibility

Key federal legislation related to online courses in education include the following:

- Rehabilitation Act passed in 1973 made it unlawful to discriminate against persons with disabilities in all federally assisted programs, services, and employment.
- Section 504 stipulates that "no qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall be excluded from, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity that receives federal financial assistance."
- Section 508 is a 1998 amendment to the Rehabilitation Act that requires electronic and information technology developed, procured, maintained, or used by federal agencies to be accessible by people with disabilities.
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is civil rights legislation enacted in 1990 that prohibits discrimination based on a student's disability. The ADA Amendments Act of 2008 clarifies the definition of "disability" and broadens the number of individuals who are eligible for the protections of the ADA, including accommodations for temporary disabilities.

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the following terms are defined:

- Disability – a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
- Accessibility – students with disabilities can perceive, understand, navigate, interact, and contribute to their Web-based courses.
- Universal Design – the proactive design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.
- Accommodation – necessary and appropriate modifications to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to Web-based course materials. Examples of accommodations include extended time on exams, note takers, sign language interpreters, and electronic print materials.
- Assistive Technology – any piece of equipment that is used to enhance the functional capabilities of students with disabilities. Examples of assistive technologies include screen reading, text magnifier, or speech recognition software.
- Learning Management System (LMS) – the online learning management portal used by students, teachers, and administrators to access course content. The LMS is the tool through which content is managed and delivered to the student and through which the student experiences and interacts with content.

Online Course Design Practices for Accessibility

Learning Management System (LMS) – Courses are offered in an accessible learning management system (LMS).

Course Website Design – Online course sites are inclusively developed and maintained in conformance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines – Version 2 (WCAG 2.0) Level A. The WCAG 2.0 was published in December 2008 by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), an international community of experts that work together to develop Web standards. The WCAG 2.0 guidelines are based on the principles that content and controls should be perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust enough to function with a variety of assistive technologies. Each principle includes one or more guidelines for practice. For a brief explanation of each of the guidelines, please refer to the Appendix of this document. For a complete explanation of how to conform to WCAG 2.0, please consult "How to Meet WCAG 2.0" on the W3C *Web Accessibility Initiative* Web site. For an introduction to the guidelines, refer to the W3C's "Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Overview." An explanation of the four principles can be found at "Introduction to Understanding WCAG 2.0."

Supplemental Web Sites – When links to external Web sites are provided to students within an online course, the portion of those external sites intended for student viewing should be reviewed for conformance with the guidelines listed above.

Supplemental Course Documents – Some online courses include multiple documents and files in addition to the HTML content that makes up course Web pages. Examples of such documents include Adobe® PDF files and Microsoft® Office® files (e.g., Word®, Excel®, PowerPoint®). Sometimes referred to as "second generation" documents, these materials should conform, where appropriate, to the guidelines listed above.

- Documents created by Microsoft® Word®, Excel®, or PowerPoint® make appropriate use of heading styles to assist a screen reader in presenting material in a logically structured manner. Both Word® and PowerPoint® 2010 include an Accessibility Checker that identifies and repairs accessibility issues. For accessibility information on Microsoft® products visit: http://www.microsoft.com/enable/default.aspx
- Adobe® PDF files are character readable, i.e., text is searchable. For information on Adobe® accessibility visit: http://www.adobe.com/accessibility/index.html

Roles and Responsibilities - Online courses are developed in a team approach consisting of the curriculum development team and production team.

- The curriculum development team consists of a subject matter expert, a project editor, coding specialists, media specialists, instructional designers, and a curriculum manager. This team develops course content and materials within the guidelines of the LMS and course templates. These templates take into account accessibility.
- The production team ensures that each course meets company standards and functions effectively within the LMS framework. This team is also responsible for ensuring that the LMS provides tools and functionality to meet accessibility guidelines.

Accessibility Tools in the LMS

The LMS includes several tools within each lesson that provide accessibility support for all students.

- <u>Transcripts</u> for instructional videos with image descriptions are provided. These transcripts can also be highlighted and read aloud by the text-to-speech tool embedded in all lessons.
- A <u>Speak As</u> button on the toolbar allows students to highlight text or transcripts within the lesson and select one of six voices to speak the text.
- <u>Alt-tags</u> are provided for images within lessons and are compatible with screen readers.
- A <u>Reference</u> button on the toolbar allows students to highlight a word in the lesson text and look up the definition of that word.
- A <u>Print</u> button on the toolbar allows students to print out a lesson and their lesson notes.
- A <u>Translate</u> button on the toolbar allows students to highlight text in the lesson and have it translated into one of 22 languages. This button initially translates text in written form but can also be used in conjunction with the Speak As button to speak the text in the translated language.

Disability Services

For technical support related to accessibility, contact Technical Support at (877) 251-6662, Mon. - Fri. 7 a.m. – 11 p.m. (CT) and Sat. - Sun. 1 p.m. – 7 p.m. (CT). For learning accommodations related to an IEP or 504 Plan, please contact your teacher or school of record.

Accommodations

Students with disabilities are not required to self-identify unless they are requesting an academic accommodation. The proactive design of online courses is expected to minimize the need for student accommodations. Accommodation policies and procedures for online courses are to be provided by the student's school of record. Students requesting an accommodation are required to submit documentation of their disability to their school of record. The process of determining reasonable accommodations is collaborative among the student, the parent or guardian of the student, and the staff responsible for making accommodations at the school of record.

Additional Information

Adobe® is an industry leader in accessibility. Its accessibility Web site contains product information, case studies, examples, tutorials, and other resources on accessibility. Adobe® has several products to address Web accessibility, including Adobe® Acrobat® Professional®, Soundbooth®, Premiere® Pro®, Flash®, and more. URL: http://www.adobe.com/accessibility/index.html

Microsoft® Corporation has developed many products with accessibility in mind. Its accessibility Web pages include accessibility information about its products as well as other resources on accessibility. URL: http://www.microsoft.com/enable/default.aspx

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of physical or mental disability by a school that receives federal funds (includes state colleges and universities). URL: http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc/sec504.htm

The Universal Design organization provides information on accessibility, universal design, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. It has publications on various topics and sponsors national and international conferences and events. URL: http://www.universaldesign.com/

The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) is an international organization that leads the development of Web standards. The W3C Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) was launched to promote Web functionality for people with disabilities. URL: http://www.w3.org/