

Center for Faculty Development

Toolkit for Creating Accessible Instructional Materials

In general, these are the most important steps to follow when creating or retrofitting instructional materials for accessibility:

1. Distribute instructional materials in an electronic format created using Word, PowerPoint, PDF, etc., so that students using assistive technology can effectively access the information contained in these materials. Faculty can distribute instructional materials electronically by sending the materials as attachments to an e-mail, by distributing them on a CD or DVD, or by posting the materials on an accessible web site, such as the Spartan Web Wizard (<http://www.sjsu.edu/webservices/services/spartanwizard/>) or a Blackboard (formerly WebCT) Campus Edition 6 (CE6) shell (<http://online.sjsu.edu/>).
2. Provide electronic instructional materials in a character-readable and editable format so that assistive technology can be used. For scanned documents, ensure that they are accessible by scanning them using optical character recognition (OCR) software. Trained staff in the Center for Faculty Development Lab (IRC 202) are available to assist faculty and staff in the use of scanners and OCR software from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Friday. Please call 924-2884 for more information.
3. For instructional materials with images (e.g. pictures, diagrams, clip art, etc.), provide a written description of the image (this is often called "alt text" or "alternative text"). The instructions to create alternative text for images are the same for both Word and PowerPoint documents. These instructions can be found in the tutorials for creating Accessible Word documents and Accessible PowerPoint documents at http://www.sjsu.edu/cfd/docs/accessible_word_tutorial.doc or http://www.sjsu.edu/cfd/docs/accessible_ppt_tutorial.doc.
4. Instructional materials, such as Word and PowerPoint documents, should be created using built-in formatting styles (i.e. headings, subheadings, slide layouts, etc.) to create a logical document structure. By using these built-in features, students using assistive technology will be able to manipulate long documents and will be able to access the information contained in a PowerPoint presentation more effectively. The instructions to use and manipulate the built-in features to create headings and subheadings (also known as "hierarchical headings") in Word can be found in the Accessible Word tutorial at http://www.sjsu.edu/cfd/docs/accessible_word_tutorial.doc. Instructions for using the built-in styles in PowerPoint can be found in the Accessible PowerPoint tutorial at http://www.sjsu.edu/cfd/docs/accessible_ppt_tutorial.doc.

The Center for Faculty Development offers instructional sessions and one-on-one consultations. Trained staff in the Center for Faculty Development Lab (IRC 202) are available to assist faculty and staff from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Friday (924-2884). The calendar of session can be found at <http://www.sjsu.edu/cfd/events>. Resources for developing accessible instructional materials can also be found on the Center for Faculty Development web site at <http://www.sjsu.edu/cfd/resources/instructional/accessibility.shtml>.