

Accessibility

Introduction to Web Accessibility



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO

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|---|----------|
| WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION..... | 1 |
| Overview | 1 |
| Prerequisites | 1 |
| Objectives | 1 |
| INTRODUCTION | 2 |
| What is Web Accessibility? | 2 |
| Disabilities | 2 |
| Assistive Technologies | 2 |
| ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES | 3 |
| Accessible Technology Initiative | 3 |
| Accessibility Technology Initiative Timelines | 3 |
| Accessibility Standards | 3 |
| Accessibility Guidelines | 4 |
| THE “THREE EASY THINGS” | 4 |
| RESOURCES | 5 |
| Faculty / Staff Resource Center | 5 |
| Getting Help | 5 |
| Campus Resources | 5 |
| References and Resources | 6 |

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

Overview

What is Web Accessibility? This workshop will show you how people with disabilities access electronic files. We will discuss what we, as information providers, are required to do to make our pages accessible. With SB 302, which mandates that the CSU adhere to Section 508, we are now required to create accessible Web sites. You will learn to make your pages compliant with these accessibility standards and legal requirements.

Prerequisites

Individuals taking this workshop should have a working knowledge of Web browsers, the Web and the ability to effectively work in the Windows or Macintosh OS environment.

Objectives

Participants attending this workshop will:

- Learn what Web accessibility is and who it affects.
- Understand why Web accessibility is important.
- Learn about accessibility standards and legal requirements.
- Test Web pages for accessibility compliance using online tools.

INTRODUCTION

Though numbers are difficult to estimate, recent studies have found that about one fifth (20%) of all people have some kind of disability. While not all disabilities affect a person's ability to use the Web, we must recognize that a significant portion of the population with visual, hearing, motor, or cognitive disabilities are unable to access the Internet by traditional means. As information providers, we are obligated, both ethically and legally, to address the needs of people with disabilities when putting content on the Web.

What is Web Accessibility?

Accessibility in terms of Web design generally refers to facilitating the use of technology for people with disabilities. Providing equivalent access to Web sites for all students, faculty, and staff at Sacramento State is required under Section 508 of the federal Rehabilitation Act, and specifically California State University (CSU) Executive Order 926 (EO).

Faculty, staff, and students who develop University-related Web pages need to become familiar with Section 508 to adequately address accessibility concerns. It is also helpful to understand how text browsers, screen readers, magnifiers, and other assistive technologies work.

Disabilities

Disabilities that affect a person's ability to use the Web include:

- Vision
 - Blindness
 - Low vision
 - Color-blindness
- Hearing
 - Deafness
- Motor
 - Inability to use a mouse
 - Limited fine motor control skills
- Cognitive
 - Learning disabilities
 - Inability to remember or focus on large amounts of information

Assistive Technologies

Making Web pages accessible requires creating Web pages that facilitate assistive technologies.

Assistive technologies include:

- Screen readers: [JAWS \(http://www.freedomscientific.com\)](http://www.freedomscientific.com)
- Text enlargers: [ZoomText \(http://www.aisquared.com\)](http://www.aisquared.com)
- Alternative input devices

- Adaptive keyboards and mice (e.g. one-handed keyboards)
- Voice-recognition systems
- Eye-tracking systems
- Mouth sticks and other mouth/tongue operated devices

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Accessible Technology Initiative

The CSU system launched a system-wide Accessible Technology Initiative (ATI) in order to develop the work plan, guidance, and resources to assist campuses in carrying out the accessible technology provisions of Executive Order 926 (EO):

"It is the policy of the CSU to make information technology resources and services accessible to all CSU students, faculty, staff, and the general public regardless of disability."



The Accessible Technology Initiative (ATI) Project at Sacramento State is a reflection of the University's ongoing commitment to accessible technology. For more information, visit the [Accessibility at Sacramento State](http://www.csus.edu/accessibility/) website at <http://www.csus.edu/accessibility/>.

Accessibility Technology Initiative Timelines

- [ATI Timeline for Web Accessibility](http://www.calstate.edu/accessibility/webaccessibility/deliverable_timeline.shtml)
http://www.calstate.edu/accessibility/webaccessibility/deliverable_timeline.shtml.
- Our campus [Web Accessibility Implementation Plan \(2007\)](http://www.csus.edu/accessibility/plans/WebAccessPlan.pdf) can be found at <http://www.csus.edu/accessibility/plans/WebAccessPlan.pdf>.

Accessibility Standards

Accessibility standards are defined in Section 508 of the federal Rehabilitation Act and all CSU campuses must comply. The CSU has created a website to assist campus Web developers in evaluating their websites for compliance to the federal standards. This address follows.

- [ATI Section 508 manual evaluation website](http://www.calstate.edu/Accessibility/webaccessibility/evaluation/index.shtml)
<http://www.calstate.edu/Accessibility/webaccessibility/evaluation/index.shtml>

Accessibility Guidelines

Your quick guide to understanding accessibility guidelines:

1. Review the document [Making a Web Site Accessible \(PDF\)](#).
<http://www.csus.edu/training/handouts/workshops/making-a-website-accessible.pdf>
2. Take the *Introduction to Web Accessibility* workshop.
3. Read the information from WebAIM at [Considering the User Perspective: A Summary of Design Issues](#) (<http://www.webaim.org/articles/userperspective/>).
4. Visit the [Center for Assistive Technology and Environmental Access \(cate\) Accessibility Learning Module](#) (<http://www.accesslearning.net/>).
5. Test your Web pages for accessibility using Dreamweaver or Cynthia Says:
 - a. Take advantage of the [accessibility tools in Dreamweaver](#).
<http://www.adobe.com/resources/accessibility/dw8>
 - b. [Test your Web pages using Cynthia Says](#), a free online service.
<http://www.cynthiasays.com>

THE “THREE EASY THINGS”

It is important to not get discouraged by all the confusing terms and requirements concerning Web accessibility. There are three easy things that can be done to make most Web pages more accessible.

1. **Alternative Text:** Provide “Alt Text” for every image on your page. Include captions with video. Provide text descriptions or transcripts of all audio. To synchronize your video with your transcripts you can use MagPie. See the [High Tech Center Training Unit’s Digital Captioning](#) document on MagPie.
(http://www.htctu.net/trainings/manuals/web/Digital_Caption_MAGpie2.pdf).
2. **Logical Table Structure:** Avoid using tables for layout purposes when possible. When using tables to define the structure of a page, keep your table structure simple and make sure elements on a page appear logically from left to right and top to bottom. Doing so will vastly improve the readability of a page by screen readers and text-only browsers.

3. Sufficient Testing Procedures:

- a. Test your website for accessibility with validation tools such as the Dreamweaver accessibility report, the Firefox Web Developer toolbar or Cynthia Says. For more information on these tools, please see the [Making a Web Site Accessible](http://www.csus.edu/training/handouts/workshops/making-a-website-accessible.pdf) document (<http://www.csus.edu/training/handouts/workshops/making-a-website-accessible.pdf>).
- b. View your pages with assistive technologies. Both JAWS and ZoomText are installed on all computers in the Faculty/Staff Resource Center (ARC 3012).
- c. Use a text-only browser such as Lynx to view your pages. If you don't have Lynx installed on your computer, you can use the online [Lynx viewer](http://www.delorie.com/web/lynxview.html) at <http://www.delorie.com/web/lynxview.html>.
- d. If appropriate, have a student with a disability test your site to see if it meets his or her specific accessibility needs.

RESOURCES

Faculty / Staff Resource Center

Located in ARC 3012. Assistance available on walk-in basis.

Open Lab on Fridays, 1-4 pm (Fall, Winter, Spring)

Open Lab on Thursdays 1-4 pm (Summer only)

[FSRC Website](http://www.csus.edu/uccs/fscenter/)

<http://www.csus.edu/uccs/fscenter/>

Getting Help

[University Help Desk](#)

(916) 278-7337 or helpdesk@csus.edu

[Academic Technology Consultants](#)

<http://www.csus.edu/atcs/contact.htm>

[Help Desk - Problem Reports & Contact Information](#)

<http://www.csus.edu/irt/helpdesk/contact.stm>

[Web Development Questions](#)

web@csus.edu

[Web Services Team \(IRT\)](#)

<http://www.csus.edu/irt/acr/web>

Campus Resources

[Training](#)

<http://www.csus.edu/training>

[Training Handouts](#)

<http://www.csus.edu/training/handouts>

Educational Tools

<http://www.csus.edu/atcs/tools>

Accessibility at Sacramento State

<http://www.csus.edu/accessibility>

References and Resources

WebAIM

<http://www.webaim.org>

Paciello, Michael G. *Web Accessibility for People With Disabilities*. CMP Books, 2000.

The California State University's Web Accessibility FAQs

http://www.calstate.edu/accessibility/webaccessibility/web_accessibility_FAQs.shtml

The California State University's Web Accessibility Deliverables and Timeline

http://www.calstate.edu/accessibility/webaccessibility/deliverable_timeline.shtml