Canvas Accessibility Tips from the CTLE

UHD Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence

In alignment with our UHD values of cultivating inclusive online learning environments and enhancing student success, this resource provides practical tips to boost accessibility within the Canvas LMS

Canvas Navigation Tips

UHD's implementation of Canvas enhances accessibility with simplified navigation and consistent user experience. However, the design choices you make in structuring your course will significantly impact the accessibility of information and learning for your students.

To improve Navigation Accessibility:

Utilize Modules
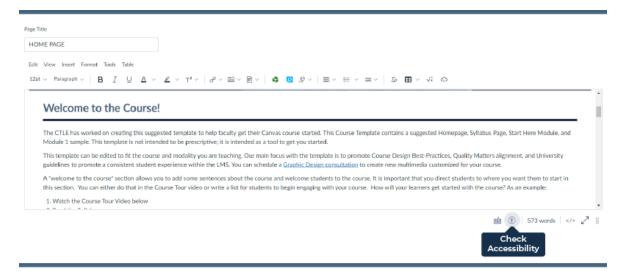Organize course materials effectively to provide a clear overview of upcoming content.

Create Clear Pages
Consolidate weekly information, including content, videos, and assignment links, for easy access.

Emphasize Syllabus
Guide students through the course structure, utilizing accessible content creation options and highlighting the assignment schedule for clarity.

Canvas Organization Tips

Organize Weekly or Unit Modules
Structure modules to reflect the course progression, aiding students in navigating content effectively. Describe the course and content structure clearly for student understanding.

Manage Files
Hide unnecessary files and ensure PDF documents are accessible by making them selectable, searchable, properly tagged, and in accurate reading order. Consider linking to accessible online resources instead of scanned PDFs.

Direct Students to Modules
Link from the homepage to well-organized modules to facilitate quick navigation for students.

Canvas Communication Tips

The Provost Office's LMS Requirements handout for UHD faculty is a great start for communication accessibility. These include a homepage featuring a welcome message, contact details, initial course instructions, and clear assignment and grading criteria in the Syllabus. Be sure to maximize all those opportunities for communication through:

Transparency
Be clear about how students will be assessed. Provide a grading rubric in advance of all assignments and exams. Write clear instructions within the Assignment rich content editor.
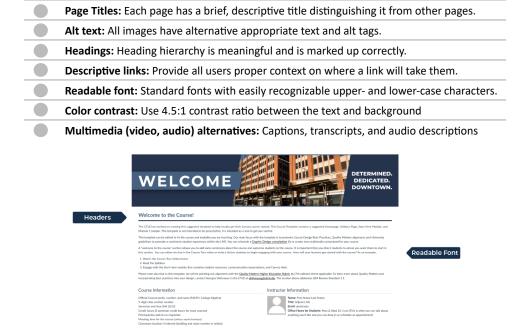
To Do list and Calendar tools
Set important deadlines as assignments with due dates so that they show up in your students' "to do" list.

Feedback tools
Take advantage of Rubrics, SpeedGrader multimedia comment tool, and Announcements to provide valuable, timely and specific feedback on their work.

Quick Checks to improve your accessibility score:

Check List Item
Page Titles: Each page has a brief, descriptive title distinguishing it from other pages.
Alt text: All images have alternative appropriate text and alt tags.
Headings: Heading hierarchy is meaningful and is marked up correctly.
Descriptive links: Provide all users proper context on where a link will take them.
Readable font: Standard fonts with easily recognizable upper- and lower-case characters.
Color contrast: Use 4.5:1 contrast ratio between the text and background
Multimedia (video, audio) alternatives: Captions, transcripts, and audio descriptions

Learn More

To learn more on making your course accessible, visit our website which includes for instructions for access to CTLE's subscription to the Magna Publications library of teaching and learning topics and Accessible Course strategy tips from UHD faculty in Learning Continuity Project. Webpage link: bit.ly/ctlecat