

USAonline Accessibility

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Why must USAonline courses be accessibility compliant?**
 - Federal law, i.e., Section 504, Section 508 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), require all people with disabilities be provided accommodation to allow them, as reasonably possible, equal access/experience to course content.
- **What are the three basic University requirements for accessibility compliance for USAonline courses?**
 - The three basic requirements are:
 1. All PDF documents be optical character recognition (OCR) compliant which allows screen reading software to recognize and articulate the text.
 2. All video and audio files be captioned.
 3. All still images contain alternative text.
- **Do all instructional methods of USAonline courses (i.e., web only, web blended and web enhanced) have to be accessibility compliant?**
 - Yes, regardless of instructional method, these requirements apply because a person with a disability may be enrolled in any of the three.
- **If there are no disabled students in a course, does it still have to be accessibility compliant?**
 - Yes, just as physical infrastructure such as ramps, disabled parking spaces, accessible restrooms, etc. must be constructed for all buildings to meet Federal accessibility laws, courses must also be "constructed" with accessibility compliance.
- **If an image is embedded in a course PDF or PowerPoint, is alternative text required?**
 - Yes, but if not available, alternatively, an accompanying caption or surrounding text to explain the image may be used.
- **Is assistance available for instructors who need help captioning videos for their courses?**
 - The Innovation in Learning Center doesn't offer captioning services; however, Panopto software is available for all faculty and students at South. This software features "auto-captioning," which can be applied to existing videos. [Here is the how-to guide for applying auto-captioning in Panopto.](#) **NOTE: In order to be accessible, all videos must have captions.**
- **If an instructor makes frequent changes to course content, how soon does it have to be accessibility compliant?**
 - It is generally a best practice to avoid modifying course content in the middle of a semester, but if changes are necessary, the modified content should be made accessible in as timely a manner as is reasonably possible.