

Blackboard Accessibility Overview

ALT Text for Images

Alternative Text or “alt text” is used to textually describe an image for those who are unable to see it. When using a screen reader, it will dictate that an image is present followed by the alternative text. If an image is used for decoration or contains no information, a setting can be enabled that will skip over the image.

Key Points:

- ✓ Alt text should be added on every image and should explain the function and purpose of the image.
- ✓ Alt text allows visually impaired users to understand the content of the image by using a screen reader or other assistive technologies.
- ✓ Keep Alt text brief.
- ✓ Images without function (decorative/background images) have a single space or the word ‘null’ in the field provided.

NOTE: To create an “alt” tag when adding an embedded image in Blackboard (Bb), click the image icon in the text box editor, and browse for image file. In the Image Description options box that appears, enter a description of the image. In the Title option box enter a title of the image, then click submit. The image description option is so the screen readers can describe the image.

For further information on Alt Text, please visit the poster [Alternative Text](#).

Hyperlinks

When adding a link to your content, be sure to describe the website. Students who are using a screen reader have the ability to jump from link to link. By using “click here” they are unable to identify where the link will take them.

Do your hyperlinks have?

- ✓ A recognizable name and are underlined.
- ✓ High contrast between text color and background.
- ✓ Set links to open in a new window.

Note: All links within the text should always be intuitive.

Examples:

- ✓ Correct: For technical assistance, please submit a help desk ticket via [eLearning Support](#).
 - *If the student jumps to this link, they’ll know what website they’re about to access.*
- Incorrect: For technical assistance, please [click here](#) to submit a ticket.
 - *If the student jumps to this link, they’ll not know what website they’re about to access.*
- Incorrect: For technical assistance, please visit <http://utrgv.edu/coltthelp>.
 - *It is important to note that screen readers read each character. In this example, the screen reader will announce “h-t-t-p-colon-forward slash-forward slash, etc.”*

Text: Size, Color and Font

Does your text have?

- ✓ Sufficient contrast between foreground/background colors, as well as the written text.
- ✓ A standard font-size and style – Bb default is Arial, size 3 (12 pt.)
- ✓ Minimal use of color (overuse of many colors can be confusing to the viewer).

Recommended Fonts in Blackboard :

- Arial
- Book Antiqua
- Comic Sans MS
- Georgia
- Courier New
- Tahoma
- Times New Roman
- Trebuchet MS
- Verdana

NOTE: Screen readers do not recognize color.

Audio and Video

Text alternatives should be provided to make audio and video content accessible to those with a hearing impairment. When a script is provided a screen reader has the ability to read it aloud.

Does you audio and video have?

- ✓ A transcript for all content.
- ✓ Synchronized captions for video content.
- ✓ The ability to be paused.

★ COLTT offers a service from CaptionSync for online and hybrid courses to assist in transcribing your videos. For additional information, please contact our office.

Brownsville Campus	Edinburg Campus
Rusteberg 108	Education Complex 2.202
956-882-6792	956-665-5327

For further information on captioning, please visit the poster [Captioning on Tegrity and Blackboard Collaborate Ultra Live Closed Captioning \(CC\)](#).

Do’s & Don’ts

DO’S

- Use the lists tool, either ordered or unordered, instead of typing in numbers or using dashes.
- Left-align text as right or centered text slows down the reader.
- When saving files, use dashes (-) instead of spaces and underscores (_) between words.

DON’T

- Use blinking or moving elements
- Use underlined text in Blackboard – this suggests a hyperlink. This can confuse those with visual disabilities
- Use color to emphasize points in your content.
 - **NOTE:** Example, avoid the use of “all items in RED are required”
- Use yellow-blue or red-green combinations
 - **NOTE:** Color blind students will not be able to read these combinations

Blackboard Ally

“[Blackboard] Ally is a revolutionary course content accessibility service that integrates closely with the Learning Management System. Ally is designed to help institutions gain greater insight into the accessibility of their digital course content; to provide guidance to teachers about how to improve the accessibility and quality of their content; and to provide students of all abilities with immediate access to content in formats that may be more suited to their specific needs.”

Features:

- ✓ Alternative Accessible Formats
- ✓ Instructor Feedback
- ✓ Institutional Reports

Interested in piloting Blackboard Ally? Email EOLC@UTRGV.edu for more information.

Headings

Headings should be added using the content authoring software to assist screen readers in creating an outline of the page. This allows the user to easily navigate between headings.

- *Heading 1* most important (title page or main content)
- *Heading 2* major section headings.
- *Heading 3* subsections of the hierarchy.

Note: Do not use formatting such as font size or bold to give the visual appearance of a heading as a screen reader will not recognize this. Use the actual headings styles available in the software.

Tables

When creating data tables it is important to include a caption and identify the row and column headers. Identifying these two types of headers is critical for the screen reader to properly announce the table.

Do your tables have?

- ✓ A summary included
- ✓ Row and Column headers identified.

Example:

Course Schedule by week indicating the readings and assignments due by the end of the week.

Week	Readings	Assignments Due
September 5	Chapter 2	Homework #2
September 19	Chapter 3	Homework #3

References

- [Blackboard Accessibility Checklist](#) [DOC]. (n.d.). UTRGV COLTT.
- Blackboard accessibility community. (n.d.). Retrieved January 31, 2017, from <https://community.blackboard.com/groups/accessibility>
- Fronteer LTD. (n.d.). Ally - making course content accessible. Retrieved January 31, 2017, from <http://ally.ac/>
- Fronteer LTD. (n.d.). Fronteer. Retrieved January 31, 2017, from <http://fronteer.io/>
- Silva, E. A. (n.d.). Creating accessible content. Retrieved January 31, 2017, from <https://ericasilva.me/accessibility/creating-content/>
- The University of North Carolina at Charlotte. (n.d.). File naming guidelines. Retrieved February 16, 2017, from <http://teaching.uncc.edu/learning-resources/articles-books/best-practice/web-accessibility/file-naming-guidelines>
- TxVSN. (n.d.). Accessibility guidelines [PDF]. Texas Education Agency.
- WebAIM. (n.d.). Semantic structure. Retrieved January 31, 2017, from <http://webaim.org/techniques/semanticstructure/#contentstructure>
- WebAIM. (n.d.). Fonts. Retrieved February 16, 2017, from <http://webaim.org/techniques/fonts/>
- WPBeginner. (2014, November 04). Image alt text vs image title in WordPress – What’s the Difference? Retrieved January 31, 2017, from <http://www.wpbeginner.com/beginners-guide/image-alt-text-vs-image-title-in-wordpress-whats-the-difference/>



Speech Impairment



Cognitive Impairment



Hearing Impairment



Visual Impairment