

## SSD Accessible Material Frequently Asked Questions

Q: When discussing course materials, what does "ADA-compliant" or "accessible" mean?

A: Essentially, "ADA-compliant" and "accessible" mean that any course materials you distribute to your students (whether in-class or online), and which are essential to the student's success in class, must be usable by all students in your class, regardless of ability.

Q: What are course materials?

A: Course materials are generally defined as the following: course packets, course handouts, PowerPoint presentations, syllabi, articles, assignments, tests, quizzes. Any materials distributed to students are considered course materials. This includes textbooks, but faculty are not responsible for making textbooks accessible (although faculty do have responsibilities with regard to textbooks (see below)).

Q: I don't use PowerPoint or Blackboard to distribute notes or to lecture. How do I make my course materials accessible?

A: Good news: making your course materials accessible just got much easier. If you are not posting on Blackboard or passing out in class PowerPoints, or copies of lecture notes to your students, you don't need to do anything. Students with disabilities are required to take their own notes, or make arrangements through the SSD office to find a note-taker for them. So if your lectures consist of chalk and a blackboard, then you needn't do a thing as far as the lectures notes are concerned. That is only, however, for lecture notes/PowerPoints. If you post any other materials on Blackboard, or pass out any other materials in class, those must be accessible. So, to reiterate: anything you distribute (i.e., post on Blackboard or pass out in class) to your students, whether in-class or online, in hard copy or electronic format, must be accessible.

Q: What formats are accessible to screen-readers (i.e., programs which read the text on computer monitors aloud to students)?

A: More good news: Microsoft Word documents and Adobe PDF documents are generally universally accessible documents (with some exceptions). You do not need to use strange formats or special programs to make your materials accessible.

Q: How do I make PowerPoints accessible?

A: Without giving a full answer (please attend one of TRC or ODL's workshops on this subject), PowerPoints can be converted (easily) to Word documents. A few minor modifications later, and they're accessible.

Q: How do I make Word documents accessible?

A: Great news! They're probably already accessible! Attend one of TRC or ODL's workshops to learn about accessibility in Word documents.

Q: How do I make PDF documents accessible?

A: If you've created a PDF document from a Word document, it's probably already accessible. If you've copied an article from a book, and scanned it into your computer, and created a PDF from that scan, then it's not accessible. Attend one of TRC or ODL's workshops to learn about accessibility in PDF documents.

Q: Can materials in a hard-copy format be accessible?

A: Generally speaking, no. Most students with disabilities require hard-copy documents to be converted to electronic documents for use with screen-readers.

Q: If I have guest speakers in my class, must their materials be accessible?

A: Without making a blanket statement on this topic, the answer is yes. If materials are distributed to the student, and if those materials are necessary for understanding the speaker's topic, they must be accessible. The good news is that it is a simple matter to obtain accessible documents: if the guest speaker has created the documents in Word, receiving the electronic files from them and passing them along to the student fulfills your obligation. If the speaker is passing out handouts, getting them in advance and making them accessible yourself is a very good idea.

Q: I've heard of a number of different technologies which will automatically make things ADA-compliant. What can you tell us about these technologies? Should I purchase one? Should the university purchase licenses?

A: In a nutshell, probably not. Most course materials fall under the Word/PDF/PowerPoint umbrella, and making these materials is usually not complicated, and not necessarily time-consuming. In general, "revamping" courses to be compliant may take a little longer than creating new course material, but at no time should it require specialized software or skills to do this (with a few exceptions - captioning videos or DVDs). Faculty are not responsible for making their textbooks accessible, and this is the only area where making materials accessible would be an "undue burden". Faculty are expected to assist SSD in making the textbooks accessible to students by doing the following: submitting book information to the bookstore on time; responding to SSD's communication regarding students with disabilities in their class; and making copies of their syllabi available to SSD roughly two weeks before the beginning of the quarter.