ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: 1/10/2025
Time: 10:00am-11:00am
Facilitator: Colin Dory

In Attendance

Colin Dory, Wen Zhao-Pliske, Brian Umpstead, Seth Anderson (ASG Representative), Aubrie Swain, Beth Reichenbach, Michelle Earthwright, DeAnne Hamilton, Madeleine Porter

1.) Ally

Ally is a tool in Canvas designed to present an easy-to-understand report on accessibility issues in Canvas, such as documents that cannot be accessed or images that lack a description.

The Ally report separates issues into three different categories—severe, major, and minor. Some issues are easy for instructors to fix on their own, but others will take more time, While the overall report presents a percentage of total accessibility, the focus should be on individual issues that could be barriers in teaching content.

Currently, accessing it is an admin only feature. Should we make this feature available to all faculty?

- Michelle has used Ally reports in the past and found them to be useful. Brian agrees that it would be another useful tool for faculty to have.

Colin will work on getting Ally expanded to all faculty members. Once it is enabled, the OLC plans to follow-up with some training and drop-in sessions to assist faculty fix issues identified by the report. Possible trainings include:

- A Professional Development Day break-out session, with a follow-up drop-in session the next day.
- Short video walkthroughs on how to fix common issues, such as image alt-text.
- More frequent guidance on tackling difficult issues, like replacing inaccessible PDFs.

2.) Document Remediation

One of the biggest issues tracked by the Ally report is documents in Canvas not being OCRed. An OCRed document is a document that has been scanned and converted into machine-readable text. This is necessary for screen-readers and other accessibility measures.

A challenge to OCRing documents is that they often have to be re-scanned or replaced entirely. Though the library has a scanner and we have resources like SensusAccess, this can be both difficult and time-consuming. What can we do to aid faculty in tackling this issue?

- Beth stresses that it's important for faculty to know about this issue, so reaching out about documents identified by Ally is vital. The real challenge is ensuring faculty members have the resources and knowledge to address it. She suggests coming up with a clear, step-by-step process for OCRing documents and potentially having a Professional Development Day session on it.
- Wen agrees that offering Professional Development Day sessions are a good idea, but ultimately we face the challenge of having limited staff and resources. This and other accessibility problems will have to be dealt with by faculty.
- Aubrie will look into the resources that SensusAccess provides. The college as a whole might need more resources for faculty on this issue.

3.) DSS Updates

Aubrie has been busy with the start of Winter quarter. The Professional Development Training for Faculty sessions in December that went well, and she would like to continue that momentum.

4.) Library Updates

For the last Professional Development Day for Faculty, the library did a session on the Accessibility Toolbox and how the library can assist with accessibility.

5.) Good of the Order

a. New Members – The Accessibility Committee could always benefit from new members, particularly from GenEd and other online-heavy programs. Members are encouraged to reach out to faculty who may be interested. Adjuncts can join the committee if interested, but they cannot be compensated for their time.
b. The next meeting will be held Friday, February 14th, 2025.