Cal Poly SLO Course Accessibility Checklist

This checklist serves as a guide for faculty to ensure your courses are fully accessible for students with disabilities at Cal Poly. This checklist assumes you are using Cal Poly supported course technologies such as Canvas, Office 365, Microsoft Stream, Zoom, etc. For questions about this checklist or for further guidance in making your courses accessible, contact Pam Dougherty, Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology, at padoughe@calpoly.edu.

☐ Adopt your textbook early: Contact the University Store to identify textbook and course pack selections at least six weeks before classes begin. This allows time for materials to be converted into alternate formats if needed. Academic Senate Resolution AS-654-07.

☐ Request an electronic version and additional hard copy of your textbook to facilitate conversion into alternate formats if needed. California law requires publishers to provide electronic copies of textbooks.

☐ Use the Electronic Course Reserve Process to make reserve items available to students in accessible formats in Canvas.

☐ Provide access to your syllabus and course materials in Canvas before the first week of class, so students can plan ahead to convert materials into other formats before class begins.

☐ Make sure your syllabus includes an Accessibility Statement (Sample syllabus statement). Invite students to reach out to you privately to share their needs or concerns regarding access to course materials and activities.

☐ Make sure all files, documents, and presentations posted in Canvas are fully accessible. You have access to online Accessibility Resources and Tutorials to assist you in creating and converting electronic materials into more accessible formats.

☐ Use only captioned videos and have captions added to existing videos before using them in the classroom or online. If you don’t have access rights to caption a video, visit Cal Poly's Media Captioning page and scroll down to Automatic Sync Technologies.

☐ Provide transcripts for audio-only presentations and materials such as podcasts.

☐ Make sure third-party internet resources (e.g. websites, blogs, wikis, quizzes, etc.) you use in class are accessible to all students: WebAIM Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool.

☐ Avoid posting PDF scans in Canvas. Scanned PDFs are often inaccessible. Instead, try to locate alternatives, such as electronic versions of the information from online textbooks or direct links to library references or academic journal sites.

☐ If your class has field trips, site visits, or unique kinds of specific physical activity (e.g., trips to museums, theatre events, hiking, collecting samples, etc.) provide advance notice so students with disabilities may request accommodations.

☐ Use the Canvas Accessibility Checker to ensure your Canvas content is fully accessible.

☐ Use the Ally Accessibility Report in Canvas to check all course materials for accessibility issues. Ally provides step-by-step tutorials for fixing inaccessible content.

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Next Steps

☐ Provide students with alternative methods to receive lecture materials, e.g., post lecture notes online, provide transcripts, allow students to record class lectures, etc. In your syllabus invite students to let you know privately if they require alternative methods.

☐ Consider adopting an Open Educational Resources (OER) textbook to make learning more affordable for your students: Cal Poly Affordable learning Solutions.

☐ Include a note in your syllabus or elsewhere in Canvas encouraging students to explore Ally Alternative Formats and Immersive Reader in Canvas to improve comprehension.

☐ Address the diverse learning needs of your students by providing a variety of learning materials, multiple instructional methods, and alternate ways for students to demonstrate mastery of course concepts. CAST UDL and UDL-Universe.

☐ Create accessible email, so your students and colleagues can fully access your communication content equitably. Make your Outlook email accessible.

During Class Meetings

☐ Play videos displaying accurate captions that include punctuation.

☐ Face the class while speaking for students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

☐ Use microphones in large classrooms.

☐ Describe images, charts, and graphs in detail during lectures and presentations. Avoid using words like "here" and "there." This provides an equitable experience for students who are blind or low vision.

☐ Provide materials before class when possible, so students with learning disabilities or cognitive disorders have time to process and prepare for in-class discussions or in-class assessments.

☐ Do not use flashing lights/strobes unless directly connected to curricular content. Make a statement to the class before using flashing lights to warn those with photosensitive epilepsy.

Additional Resources

☐ Cal Poly CTLT Access for All
☐ Cal Poly Disability Resource Center
☐ MN.gov Accessibility Quick Cards
☐ HHS.gov Accessibility Checklists
☐ Section 508 Video Trainings (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, PDF, Web)
☐ WebAIM Document and Media Accessibility: PowerPoint; Word; Excel; PDF