



Video Captioning Basics

Perhaps the most discussed aspect of accessible video is closed captioning, but misinformation about captioning runs rampant! To ensure you're using and creating accessible video using the best methods, it's important to understand closed captioning guidelines so you know exactly what need to do.

What are closed captions?

First, it's important to clarify the language. Closed captions are added to a video to ensure all auditory material, including music and sounds, are perceivable to someone who is hearing impaired. Closed captions can be turned off and on using the "cc" button on the video player. Open captions, on the other hand, are part of the video, and cannot be turned off and on (these are called "burned in"). Either will satisfy the Section 508 requirement, though closed captions are preferred to provide choice.

Who benefits?

While some argue that closed captions require a lot of time and effort to meet the needs of a few students, it turns out that many students will choose to view captions for a variety of reasons. According to a recent study of student use of captions, conducted by the Oregon State University's Ecapus Research Unit, 98.6% of students find captions helpful ([National Research Study: Student Uses and Perceptions of Closed Captions and Transcripts](#)). If you're wondering why, here's a short list of the most common reasons students use closed captions:

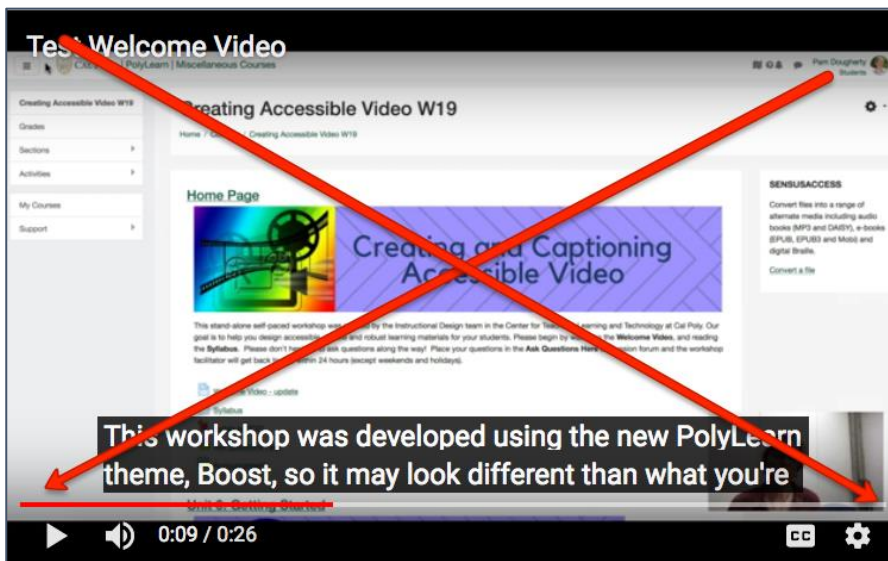
- They have a hearing impairment
- They are listening/viewing in a public place
- They are listening/viewing at work
- Captions help with studying

Five Basic Guidelines

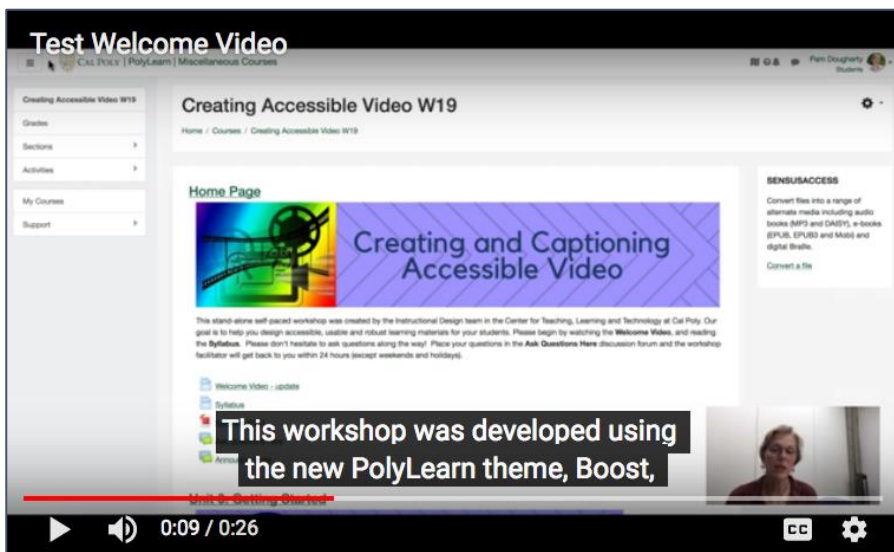
While creating captions can be labor intensive, there are tips, techniques, and shortcuts that can help! Here are the five basic guidelines for captioning outlined by [3PlayMedia](#):

1. Captions must be complete, which means the video must be captioned from start to finish, including noting opening music and background noises, when intentional.
2. Captions must be 99% accurate. This means, literally, word-for-word, including grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
3. Captions should display synchronously with the audio, running neither too fast or too slow, and they should be on-screen an adequate amount of time to allow careful reading.
4. Caption placement should not obscure other important information. Usually, captions are placed at the bottom of the screen.
5. Each caption frame should hold 1 to 3 lines of text onscreen at a time, viewable for a duration of 3 to 7 seconds. Each line should not exceed 32 characters

Example of captions with too many characters/words per line, covering up presenter's face:



Example of video with correct number of characters/words per line (try to keep under 35):



Ambient Sounds

Additionally, captions should include ambient sounds such as music, wind, birds singing, bells ringing, etc.. especially if they add meaning to the content. These are noted in brackets: [birds singing]. For instance if your video begins with music, then add [music] to the first slide before speaking begins.

Captions vs Subtitles for Foreign Languages

Captions differ from subtitles in that captions include all auditory content, not just speech. Subtitles are designed for a hearing audience, so they do not include any information about sound other than speech. Slamming doors, barking dogs, laughter, and other important sound effects are all included in the text descriptions in closed captions but may be missing from subtitles.

Subtitles on foreign films are not the same as captions. Some argue that translations are sufficient for classroom purposes, if the translation is the target language. Others, however, note that the loss of other sound cues renders subtitles subpar. If you are going to use a subtitled foreign film in your course, seek the advice of your campus alt media specialist in the Disability Services office.

Please note that some screen-casting tools and hosting platforms, such as YouTube, sometimes refer to captions as subtitles; however, it's important that you know the difference!

Captioning Exceptions

Because captioning can be labor intensive, many instructors wonder, "Do I have to caption everything?" The following short list outlines exceptions, though these special cases should truly only be used as exceptions to the rule:

Raw footage is exempt

Raw footage is defined as materials that are for a single, restricted use and are not archived. An example might be student videos. If the only audience for the video is the instructor, the students would not need to caption their work. However, let's say that the instructor makes student videos a part of a class assignment, and each student needs to view and write a reaction to a given video. In this case the student videos must be captioned. In other words, the status of the video's creator as a student does not mean it should or should not be captioned; rather, the status of the video as **required instructional material** determines whether it should be captioned.

Another example might be a longer video from which only clips will be taken. If the collection of clips is archived and reused, then these would need to be captioned; however, the original from which the clips were taken would not need to be.

Feedback to students is exempt

Video feedback to your students would be considered "raw" footage, and thus does not have to be captioned. There is a caveat to this strategy; however. In an online course, students do not need to self-identify as hearing impaired. Before providing video feedback to students (which is a terrific feedback form that many students love!), let your students know you will send video feedback, and allow them to "opt out" if they would like written feedback.

Captioning in YouTube



Important note: YouTube has a new interface, so many online video tutorials are out of date. Below you will find screenshots to guide you.

Preparing to Caption

There are two ways to approach captioning:

1. Preparing for captioning by using a script to record your video
2. Creating captions after recording

There are pros and cons to both approaches. Working from a script will allow you to be more focused and professional, but it may sound scripted. In this method, your work is front-loaded, and with a good script, you'll be ready to caption as soon as you upload your video. This method is preferred as it saves time and effort.

For a more natural feel, you may be more comfortable speaking "off the cuff," but you will also run the risk of mis-speaking and rambling. With this method, you'll be spending more time transcribing and editing your video, so be sure to plan time to carefully review the video to create your transcript.

Creating Closed Captions in YouTube

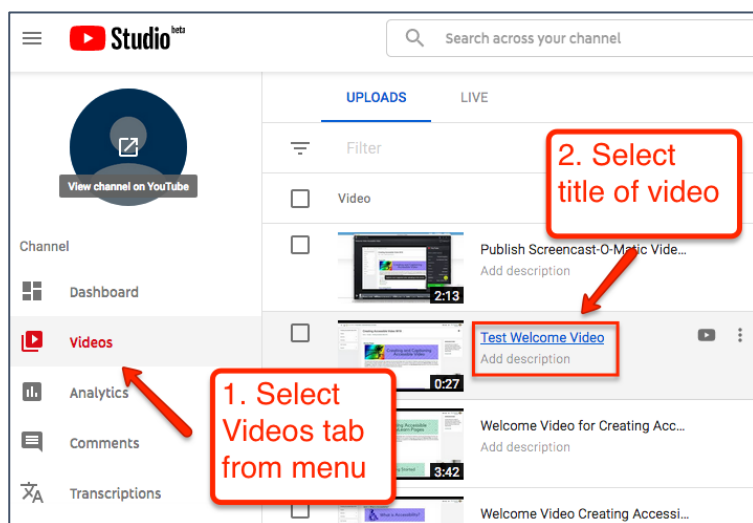
For videos you create and upload to YouTube, YouTube will generate automatic captions, which you can review and edit for accuracy. It is not sufficient to depend upon automatic captions since they are not precise and do not include punctuation. If you used a decent microphone when recording your video, this doesn't generally require much work on your part except for occasional corrections of discipline-specific terminology, proper names, or punctuation. Most videos between 5-10 minutes can be cleaned up with 30 minutes of work on your part. If you created a transcript for your video, you can simply upload the transcript and YouTube will set the timings for you.

YouTube has a new interface, so all of the online video tutorials are currently out of date. Below you will find screenshots with steps to add captions in YouTube. YouTube provides the following methods for adding captions to your videos:

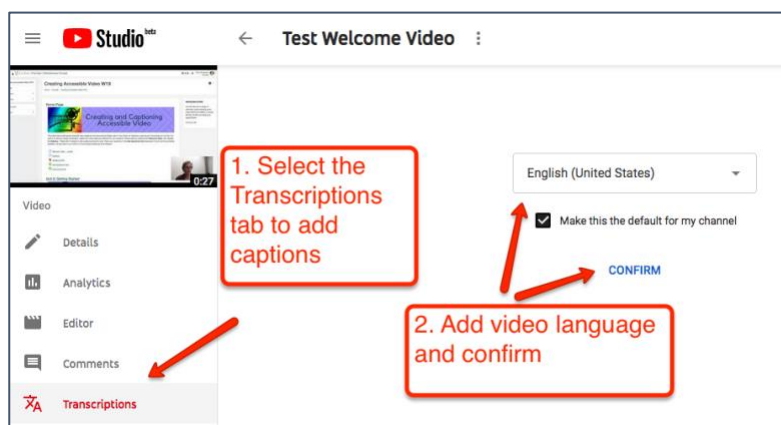
1. Editing automatic captions that are generated by YouTube
2. Uploading a transcript file and setting the timing
3. Transcribing and auto-syncing (placing all text in one field, then YouTube sets the timings)
4. Creating new captions (placing text in fields with timings)

Adding Captions to Your Video

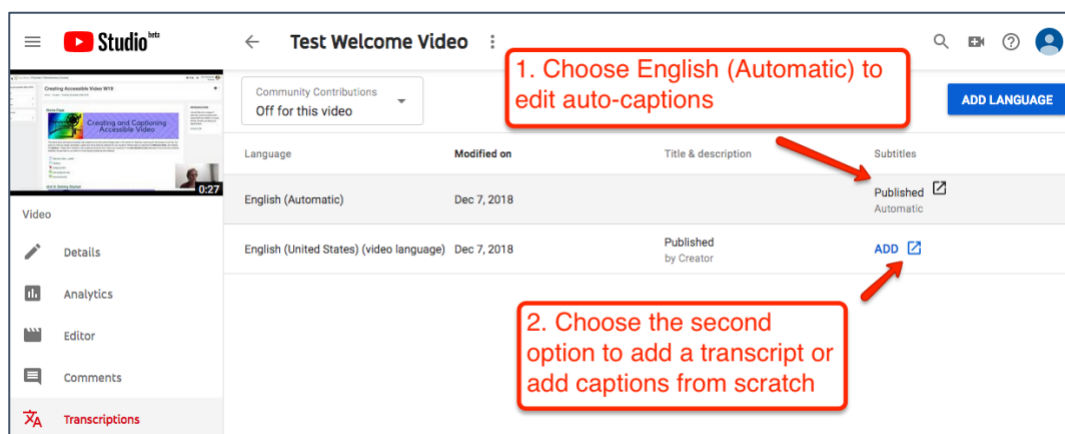
Step 1: Select your video from the Videos tab on the left side menu. Then select the title of the video you want to edit.



Step 2: Select the Transcriptions tab from the left side menu, set your video language in the field that opens, then confirm.

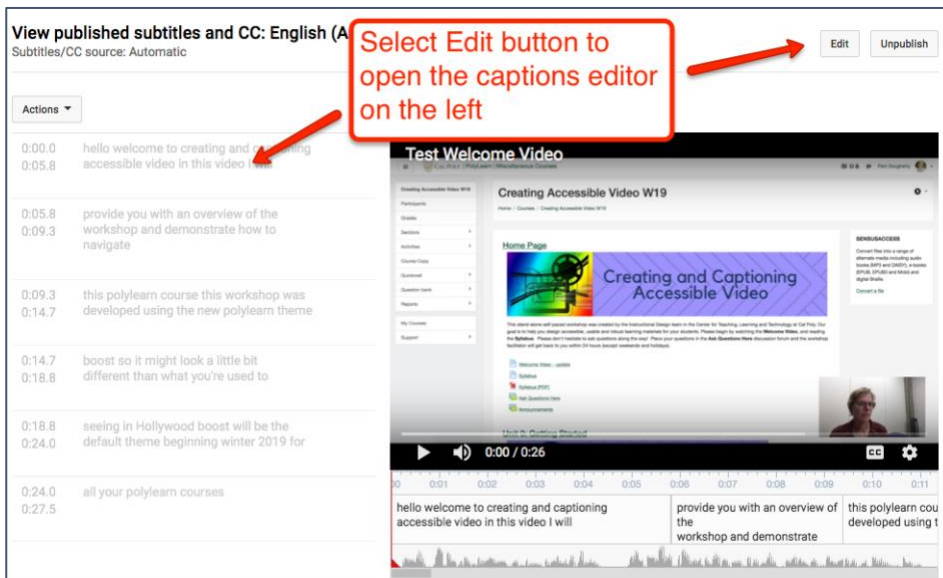


Step 3: Choose one of two options to add captions, by selecting the arrows on the far right of the selection. Then, depending on your choice, follow the instructions below.

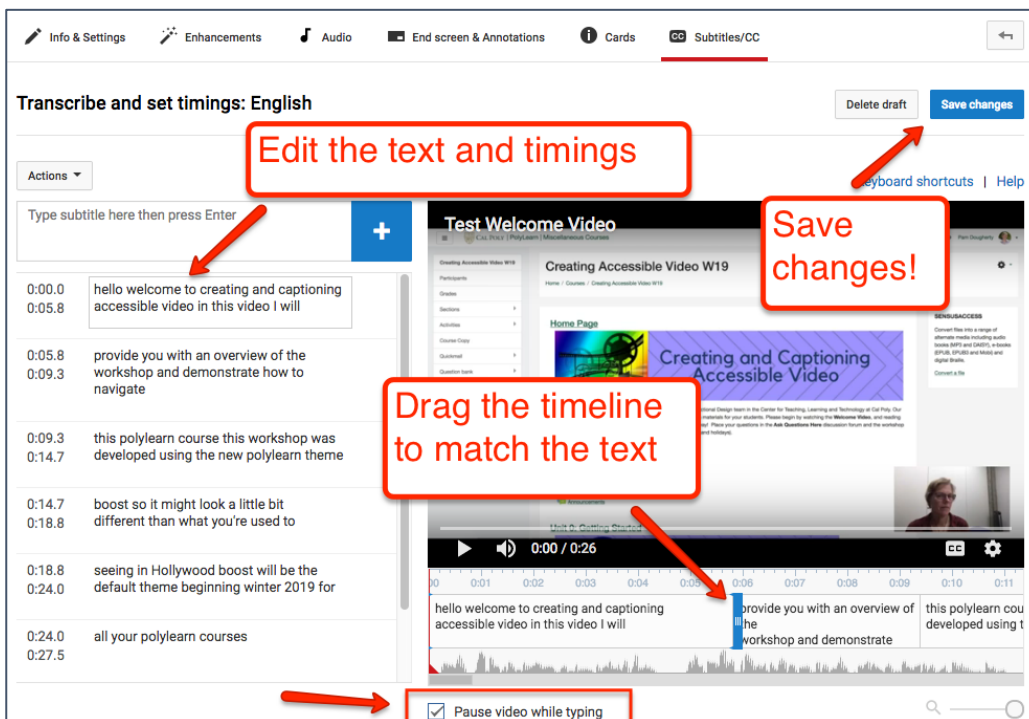


Option 1: Edit Automatic Captions

If you choose the first option above, Automatic captions, an editor will appear to the left of the video. Select the Edit button at the top to open the editor.

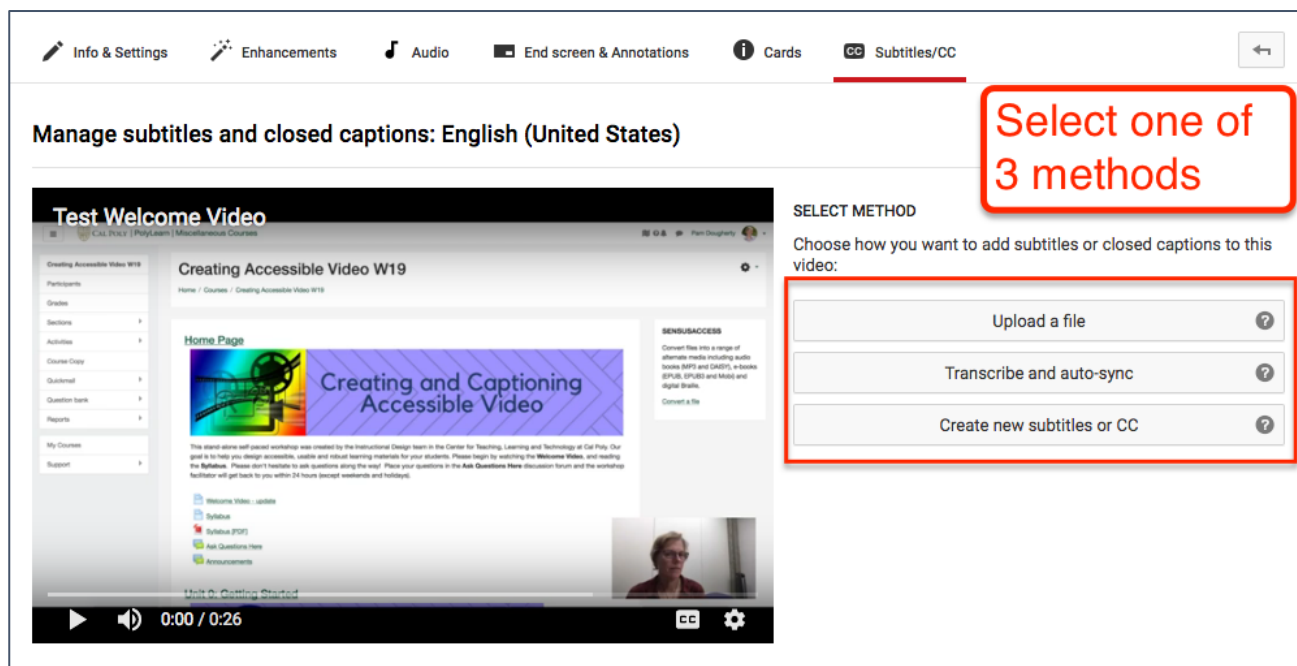


Check all captions for accuracy and punctuation. You can edit the text, as well as the timings. You can also drag the timeline at the bottom to adjust timings quickly. You can select the "Pause video while typing" option at the bottom of the video. After editing auto-captions, make sure you Save Changes!



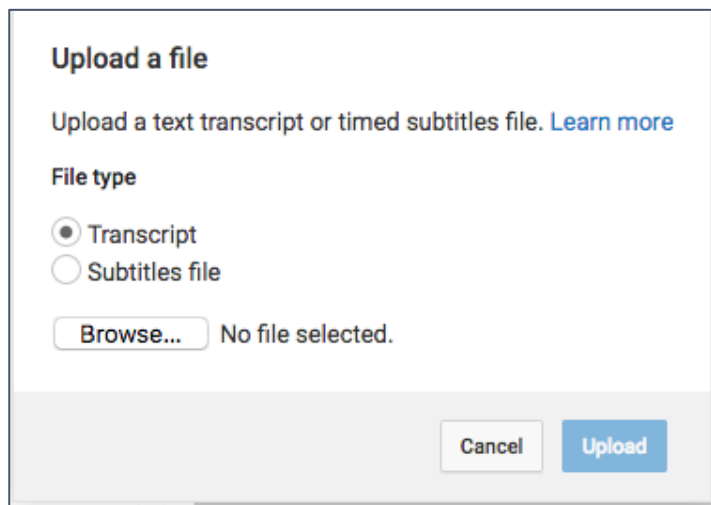
Three Methods Display if you do not choose auto-captions

If you choose the second option (see image in Step 3 above), a menu of methods will appear on right side of the video. Select one of these methods: Upload a file, transcribe and auto-sync, or create new subtitles or CC.



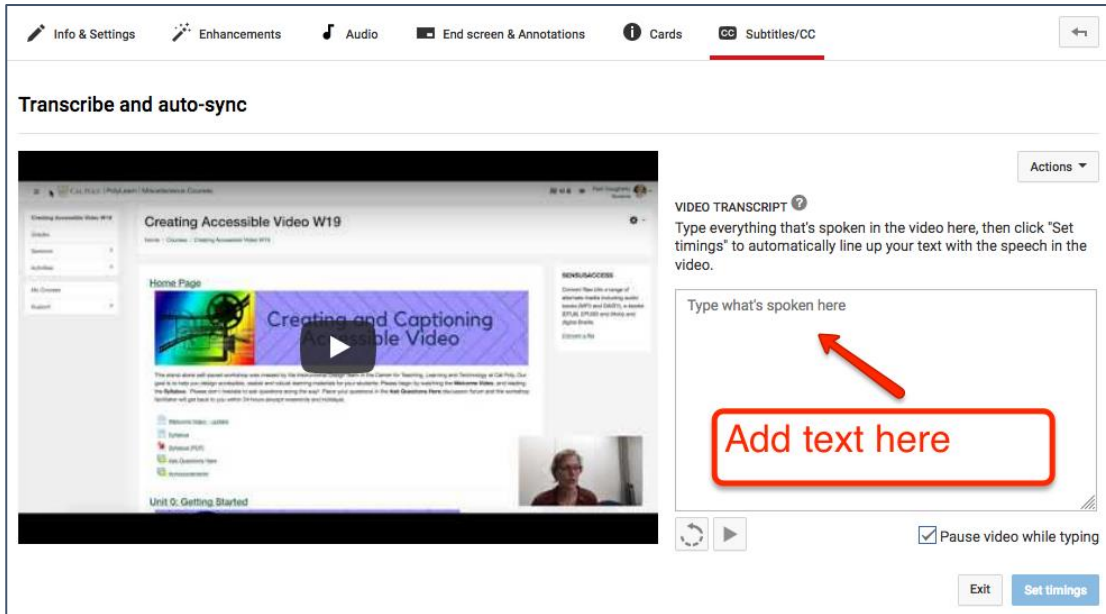
Option 2: Upload a Transcript File

If you choose the first method to the right of the video, upload a file, a window will open to all you to browse your computer for a plain text (txt) file, or caption (srt) file with timings set. If you have a transcript in a Word document, you can just save that as plan text, txt, then upload. After your file uploads, the captions editor will appear on the left side, to allow you to edit timings.



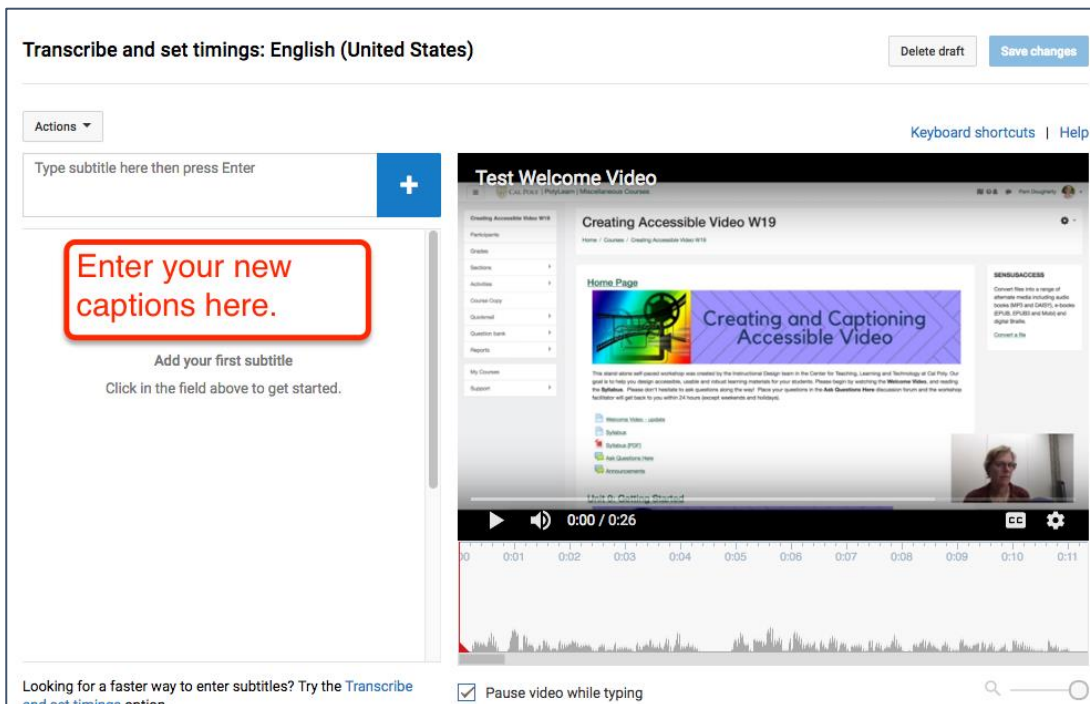
Option 3: Transcribe and auto-sync

If you choose the second method to the right of the video, transcribe and auto-sync, then a window opens to the right side of the video. Add your text here, then select the Set Timings button at the bottom. It may take awhile for your video to process! Come back later to refresh your page.



Option 4: Add new captions and set timings

If you choose the third method to the right of the video, create new subtitles or CC, then an editor will open to the left of the video, for you to add captions and set timings. Don't forget to save changes!



Final Steps for All Options

Regardless of which method you use to caption your video, after you save your changes, you will see a window that looks like the image below. Allow some time for your video to finish publishing, and then remove any other versions of captions that exist, otherwise, your students may access the wrong version of captions.

Step 1: Return to Studio Beta by selecting **Try Studio Beta** in the left side menu.

CREATOR STUDIO

HEADS-UP: Creator Studio is getting a makeover in 2019. Meet the new YouTube Studio, now with more tools, personalized insights, and a re-imagined dashboard. To

Info & Settings Enhancements Audio End screen & Annotations Cards Subtitles/CC

Manage subtitles and closed captions

Publish Screencast-O-Matic Video to YouTube

Subtitles published.

Add new subtitles or CC

PUBLISHED

English (Automatic)

PENDING PUBLISH

English (publishing... click to update)

Community contributions: Off Turn on
Video language: English (United States) Change language

Step 2: Select the option you want to unpublish, or delete draft.

Studio

Publish Screencast-O-Matic Video to YouTube

Community Contributions Off for this video

ADD LANGUAGE

Language	Modified on	Title & description	Subtitles
English	Dec 7, 2018	ADD	Published by Creator <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
English (United States) (video language)	Dec 7, 2018	Published by Creator	Draft by Creator

Step 3: Unpublish (or delete draft) of captions versions you no longer want displayed.

View published subtitles and CC: English

Subtitles/CC source: Pamela Dougherty

Actions

0:00.0 In this video I'm going to show you how to publish your Screencast-O-Matic video

0:04.9 to YouTube. Once you're logged into Screencast-O-Matic, select the Open Video Editor.

0:10.5 This little window will pop up with a screen recorder and you'll select

0:15.3

Publish Screencast-O-Matic Video to YouTube

Unpublish

Viewing Captions in YouTube

Playing Captions

Closed captions are turned on and off with a "decoder." Televisions (since the '80s) have decoders built in; however, not all computer software plays captions, though the most popular media players (YouTube, Windows Media Player, Real Player, and QuickTime, for instance) all have the capability to play captions.

Just like your television set the captions must be turned on to be viewed. In YouTube that consists of selecting the "cc" button on the player. If your students are not aware that course videos are captioned, they may miss the opportunity to turn captions on. We strongly suggest that your syllabus includes a notice that all videos are captioned. In addition it's important to add this information on the PolyLearn page where you embed your specific video for viewing.

The screenshot displays the PolyLearn interface for the course 'Creating Accessible Course Materials SP18'. The page features a navigation menu on the left, a central content area with a welcome message and a table of units, and a right sidebar with upcoming events and recent activity. At the bottom, a video player is shown with a red arrow pointing to the 'Subtitles/closed captions' button in the player controls.

Navigation

- Home
- Dashboard
- Courses
 - Creating Accessible Course Materials SP18
 - Participants
 - Badges
 - Competencies
 - Grades

Info Block

- My Courses
- Library
- PolyLearn Support
- PolyLearn Updates

SensusAccess

Convert files into a range of alternate media including audio books (MP3 and DAISY), e-books (EPUB, EPUB3 and Mobi) and digital Braille.

Home Page

Welcome to **Creating Accessible Course Materials**! This 4-week fully-online workshop was originally developed by @ONE for the California Community College Online Education Initiative. The Instructional Design team in the **Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology** here at Cal Poly revised this course for faculty on our campus. Our goal is to help you design accessible, usable and robust learning materials for your students. Please begin by reviewing the **Syllabus**, **Workshop Schedule** and **Unit 0: Getting Started**. Please don't hesitate to ask questions along the way! Place your questions in the **Ask Questions Here** discussion forum below. You can find quick links to each unit module in the table below.

Unit 0: Getting Started	Unit 1: What is Accessibility?	Unit 2: PolyLearn Accessibility
Unit 3: Accessible Document Design	Unit 4: Accessible Video	Final Project: Accessibility Action Plan

Upcoming events

- Workshop Expectations Quiz opens Monday, April 16, 8:00 AM
- Unit 1 Quiz: What is Accessibility? opens Monday, April 16, 8:00 AM
- Getting to Know You (Questionnaire Opens) Monday, April 16, 8:20 AM

Recent activity

Activity since Wednesday, April 4, 2018, 2:20 PM
Full report of recent activity...

COURSE UPDATES:

Updated File

Subtitles/closed captions

Transcripts

Transcripts are not captions. Captions appear on the video itself, whereas transcripts are written scripts or documents that can be provided in addition to captions. Transcripts can provide accompanying text that is not directly tied to the timing of the video. Transcripts for videos can be helpful, as they can provide quick access to much of the content, depending on the video. Transcripts are not required for videos; however, they are required for audio-only files such as podcasts. If you provide transcripts with your videos, know that you must still provide captions as well! Transcripts can be included as text directly on a PolyLearn page below the video, or added as a Word docx or PDF.

Viewing Transcripts with Timestamps in YouTube

YouTube has an important feature that allows users to view the captions as transcripts alongside the video, with captions highlighted next to the time stamps. Simply select the horizontal ellipsis (more options) menu, then select "Open transcript."

The screenshot shows a YouTube video player for a video titled "Course Navigation Video: Creating Accessible Course Material" by Pamela Dougherty. The video has 20 views and was uploaded on April 5, 2018. The video content shows a course navigation page for "Creating Accessible Course Materials SP18" with a sidebar navigation block and a main content area. A red arrow points to the horizontal ellipsis menu in the video player, and another red arrow points to the "Open transcript" option in the dropdown menu.

Once you enter the workshop, you will notice there is content

Course Navigation Video: Creating Accessible Course Material

Unlisted

20 views

LIKE DISLIKE SHARE

Pamela Dougherty

Uploaded on Apr 5, 2018

Category: Education

License: Standard YouTube License

Report

Open transcript

Add translations

Once you select "Open transcript," the transcript will appear on the right side, and captions will be highlighted next to the timestamp as the video progresses. This is a great feature to recommend to your students!

The screenshot shows the same YouTube video player, but now the transcript is open on the right side. The transcript content is highlighted, and the video player shows the video progress at 0:33 / 5:36. A red arrow points to the transcript content, and another red arrow points to the "Open transcript" option in the dropdown menu.

Transcript

00:23 materials once you enter the workshop

00:26 you'll notice there's content in the

00:27 middle on the left and on the right the

00:33 left side includes a navigation block as

00:36 well as census access that's a handy

00:39 electronic file converter you'll learn

00:42 about in this workshop on the right side

00:44 you'll find a block for upcoming events

00:47 and recent activities any of these

00:50 blocks on either side can be docked to

English (auto-generated)

The left side includes a navigation block,

Embed Video in PolyLearn

Creating your own videos may be the most labor intensive aspect of using multimedia in your course. After all of your hard work, you want to make sure you are using the best method to post your video to PolyLearn for optimal access and viewing. You can include video in any activity in PolyLearn that uses the Editor, including Pages, Discussions, Quizzes, Assignments, and more.

Provide Context

Can you imagine walking into your face-to-face class, turning on a video, watching the video in absolute silence, turning off the video, and, without another word, dismissing the class? Probably not. In face-to-face courses, you likely state the purpose, set the context, and set up expectations for learning. You may connect the video to learning outcomes, resources and activities for the current week or topic. You may then follow with a discussion.

When your video is posted online, it's essential to provide purpose, context, and expectations for what you want your students to learn. The best option is to create a PolyLearn content page and add some instructions and context. You might provide a list of guiding questions, or a list of concepts or processes you want your students to identify or examine. Explain how the video is tied to specific learning outcomes. You can then embed your video directly into the page, below the instructions, for quick access and viewing. Don't forget to remind your students to select the "cc" button to view closed captions!

Steps to Embed Video into PolyLearn

Although you can simply copy the URL from YouTube and paste it into your PolyLearn page, we recommend embedding your video for several important reasons:

- The default option for size (560 X 315) is ideal for PolyLearn
- You can remove the suggested videos that will automatically display after your video finishes

Video (2.02): [PolyLearn: How to Embed YouTube Videos](#): This video will show you how to embed your video into a PolyLearn Page. Please note that YouTube has since updated, so view the screen-shots below for more up-to-date images!

Here are the steps to embed your video:

1. Find your video on YouTube and select **Share** at the bottom right of the video (Image 1)
2. Select the **embed code icon** from the options provided (Image 2)
3. Copy the embed code (Image 3)
4. Create your page where you will embed your video and select the **wheel icon** to **Edit Settings** (Image 4)
5. Make sure you give your **page a name** and describe the purpose of the video to your students (Image 5)
6. Select the **HTML button** in the editor (Image 5), then paste the embed code below or above your instructions to your students, then select Update at the bottom left (Image 6)
7. Select **Save changes** at the bottom of your page!

Image 1: Select "Share" below YouTube Video

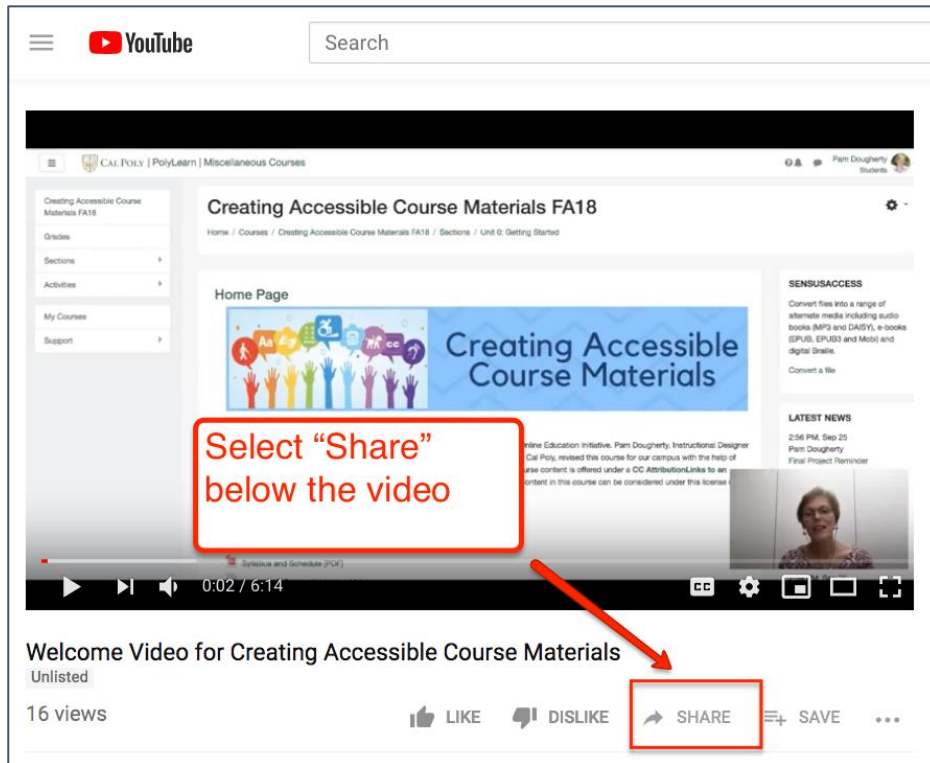


Image 2: Select the embed icon from the options provided

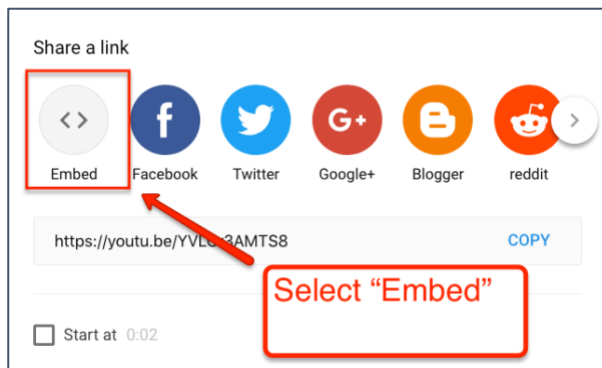


Image 3: Copy the embed code

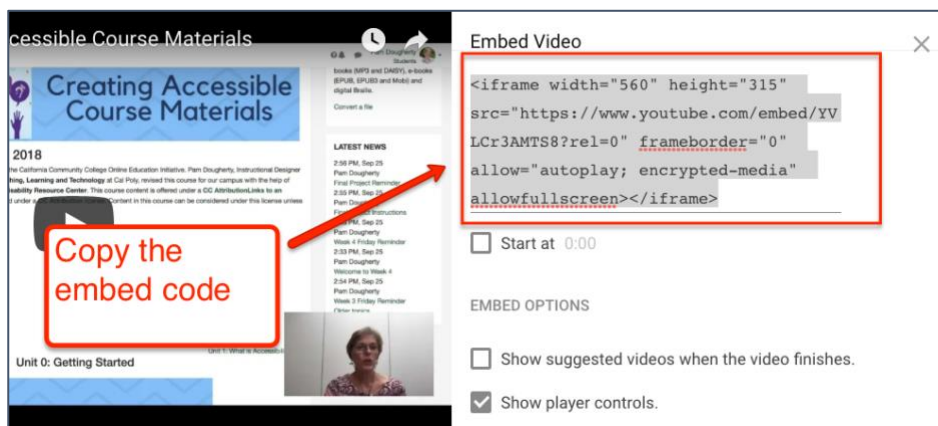


Image 4: Find the page where you will embed your video and select "Edit Settings"

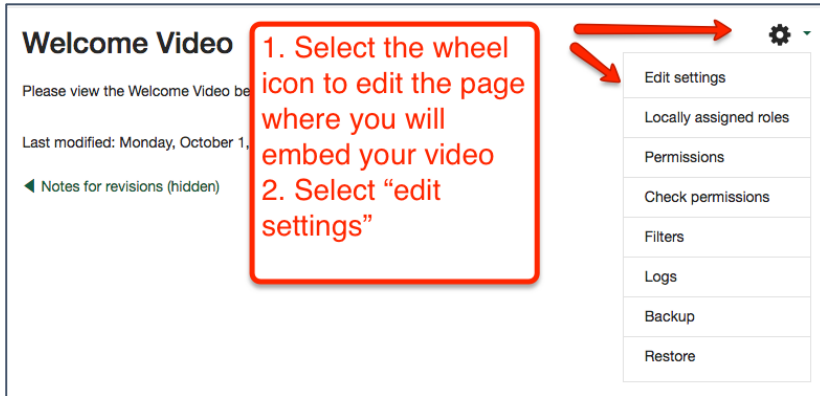


Image 5: Name your page, place a description of your video in the Content window, then select the HTML button in the editor

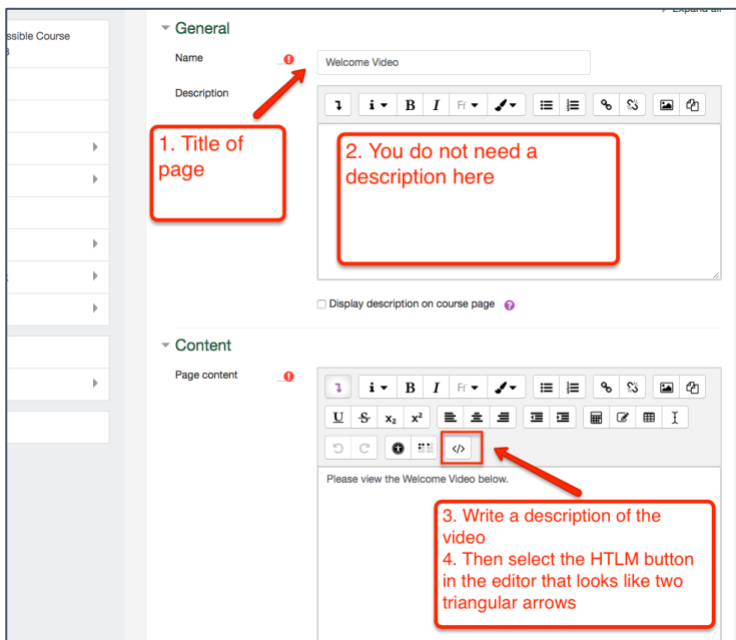
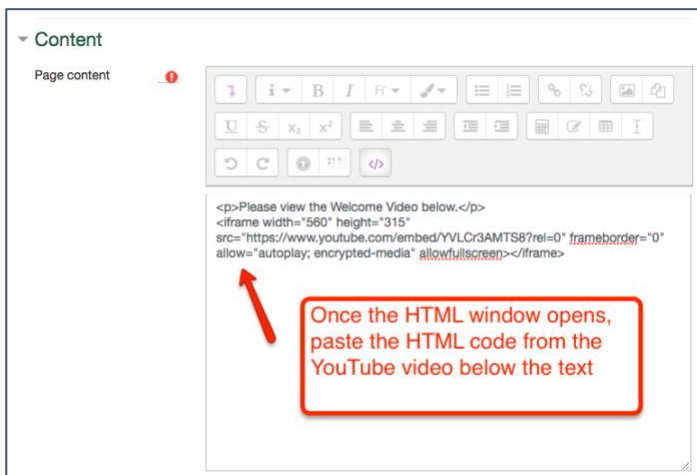


Image 6: Paste the embed code from the YouTube video into the window that opens



Make sure you select "Save and Display" at the bottom of the page!

Search for Captioned Videos in YouTube

There are many wonderful YouTube videos that others have created that you may want to embed in your course; however, it can be frustrating to discover that these may not be correctly captioned. Videos with corrected captions will have a “CC” icon underneath the video summary in search results. If you’d like search results to only show videos with captions available, enable this search filter:

1. Enter your keywords in the YouTube search bar
2. Click the Filter menu
3. Click Subtitles/CC (closed caption) from the Features list
4. A list of videos with closed captions will appear. Please review these for accuracy!

