ACCESSIBILITY IN A NUTSHELL

by Cynthia Alexander

I know that all of the information on accessibility sounds confusing. However, it really isn't all that bad. Here are the things you need to know as an instructor to create an accessible Canvas page:

1. Add captions to videos. Essentially, if you own the video (meaning you created it), then caption it. If it is not something you created, then you have a couple of options which are to use Amara and create a caption "overlay" file and the other is to contact Bernice Watson and ask her to start the very long process (usually takes at least 3 months) to try to obtain permission to have the video captioned and if she cannot obtain it, then she goes to the next step which is to send the video through the DECT grant.

2. Add a transcript to all audio files. Simply create a page in Canvas with word-for-word what is said on the audio file and add the link to the page before the audio file.

3. Add headings. To do this, highlight the topic and then click on the drop down arrow next to Paragraph on the Rich Content Editor and select the proper header. Remember that you cannot skip headings and that Canvas automatically makes the title of the page Header 1 so your first heading should be Header 2.

4. Use bulleted lists or numbered lists options from the Rich Content Editor when "listing" information. Do not simply use something like a hyphen to designate a list.

5. "Name" hyperlinks rather than indicating a URL. For instance, if you want to include a hyperlink to the Cerritos College Home Page, then simply highlight the words "Cerritos College Home Page" and then using the hyperlink icon on the Rich Content Editor paste in the URL. Something you might want to do as an alternative is to highlight the words and then use the keyboard shortcut (CTRL +Kor on a Mac, CMD + K) to have a popup window appear where you can paste in the URL and indicate for the hyperlinked page to open in a New Window. Do NOT use the words "Click Here" or "Link" as the name for your link.

6. Add alternative text to all images. On the Canvas Rich Content Editor tool bar, click on the image icon and add in the "alt text" for the image. Remember that "alt" text should be no more than 7-10 words. If you need to use more words, then describe the image in your text before the image but be sure to still include a short alt text.

7. Make sure there is sufficient color contrast if you use color in your text. You can use the Web Aim Color Contrast Checker to check for color contrast. To determine the hexadecimal color code, simply go into the HTML editor and find it by searching for the# key (CTRL + For CMD + F for Mac is the keyboard shortcut for "find"). Copy that number and paste it into the contrast checker. A hexadecimal color begins with the# key and then has a combination of 6 letters/numbers.

8. Ensure that you use a header row on all tables. First, if you have included a title inside your table, remove it. Then, in Canvas, highlight the first row of the table and use the drop down arrow next to the table icon on the Rich Content Editor. Select Row, then Row Properties and then change the Row Type to Header.

That's all there is to do. Don't use Word documents or PDFs but rather copy the information from them and add that information to a Canvas Page.

Finally, there ls an icon on the Rich Content Editor at the end of the second row that is a man inside of a circle. That is the Canvas accessibility checker. Do not rely on it (or any accessibility checker) entirely because it does not catch every error. However, it will catch some (actually many) and will help you make corrections.