Integrating Accessibility into the Online Course Development Process

ACCESSIBILITY

Another Piece of the Puzzle

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Building an Accessibility Initiative

What pieces of the puzzle do you start with?

1) Understanding the Business Cases and Requirements of projects;

2) Regular meetings with the key players working on the projects;

3) Create easy-to-use documentation to help ease accessibility into the project.

4) Build testing into the processes that are already being used, rather than creating new work.

5) Be a support to the key players as well as manage the overall progress of the overall project.

Working Together

- Understanding the people you work with, the hurdles in which they may run into and finding common solutions that benefit multiple areas.
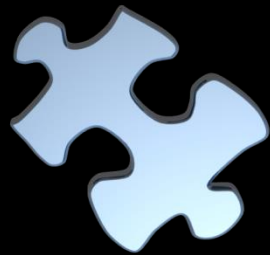
  - Accessibility
  - Mobile Design
  - SEO
  - Universal Design
  - ESL

Document areas from various groups to create a Bridge Document showing where accessibility can be achieved versus areas of difficulty and why.
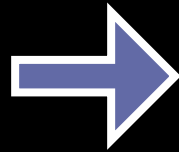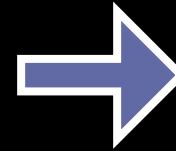
Roles and Responsibilities

It is never just one person's job to ensure accessibility

- Accessibility Support helps to outline roles and responsibilities within accessibility.

  - An Accessibility Group, Guidelines, Consistent Communication with Key Stakeholders, etc.

- Upper Management support.

- Defined requirements through policy and procedure.

- Overall support of an Accessibility Plan.

- Hands-on Individuals (Developers, Content Managers, etc.) need consistent communication to create accessible projects .

Breaking down information is always helpful

Web Accessibility

Your Roles and Responsibilities ▼

- **Research and Academic Faculty**

- **Web Developers/Content Managers**

- **Administrative Staff**

- **Purchasing and Procurement**

- **Students**

Web Accessibility Testing

Your Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone in the Mason community has some responsibility when it comes to accessible web content. The role of the ATI is to help you understand what your part is and to work collaboratively with units throughout the University to provide resources and training. Our responsibility is to hold ourselves accountable to the standards in which we ask the Mason community to follow regarding web content and documents. Our goal is to provide a university-wide awareness of what web accessibility is and how it may affect yourself, a student or a co-worker.
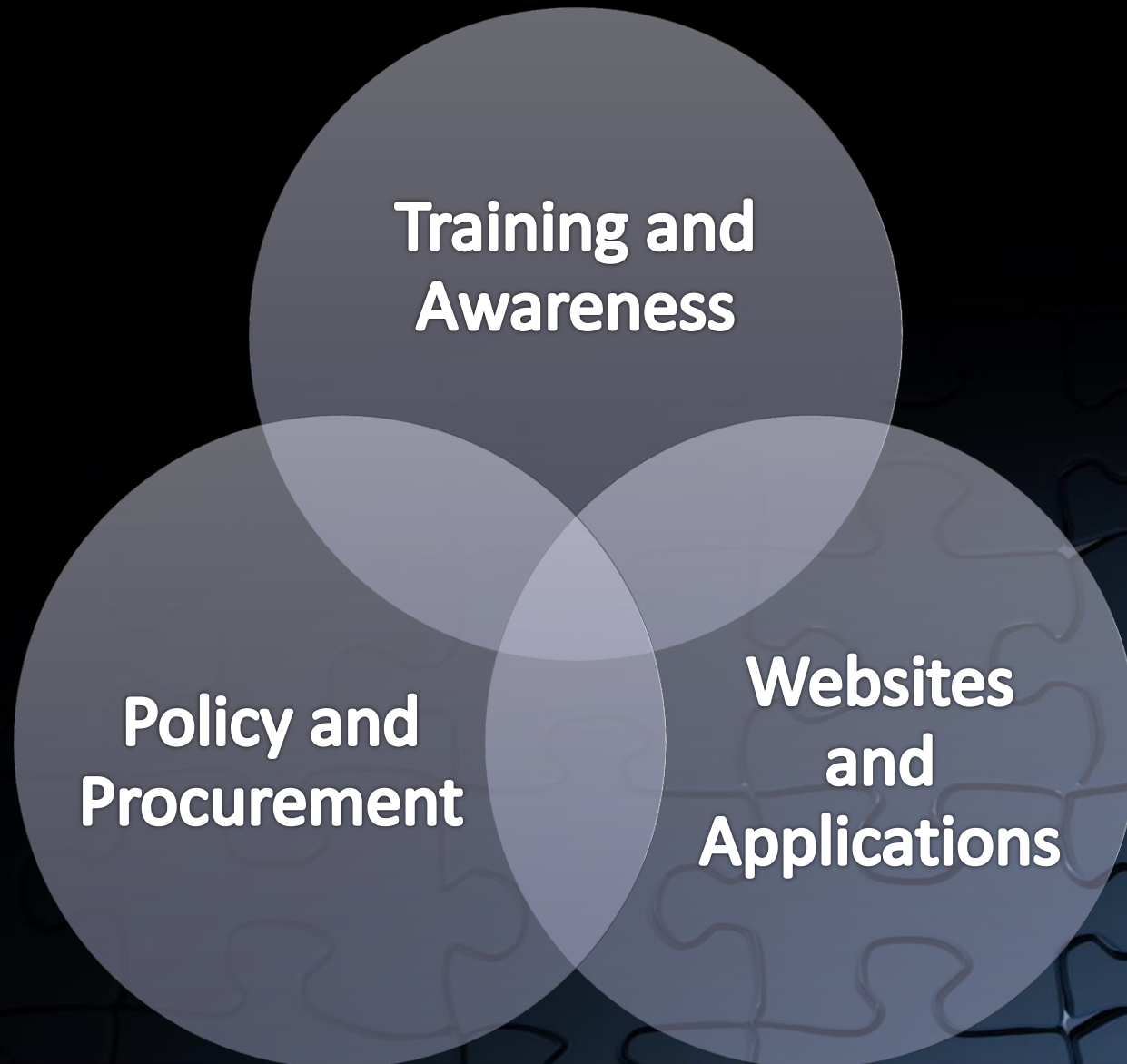
High Impact/High Priority

The higher the impact the higher the priority.

Finding low effort areas
that also have a high impact
are essential for easy wins.

While working on some of the
high impact, high effort areas
may be more long term projects.

Areas of Accessibility

Training and Awareness

Policy and Procurement

Websites and Applications
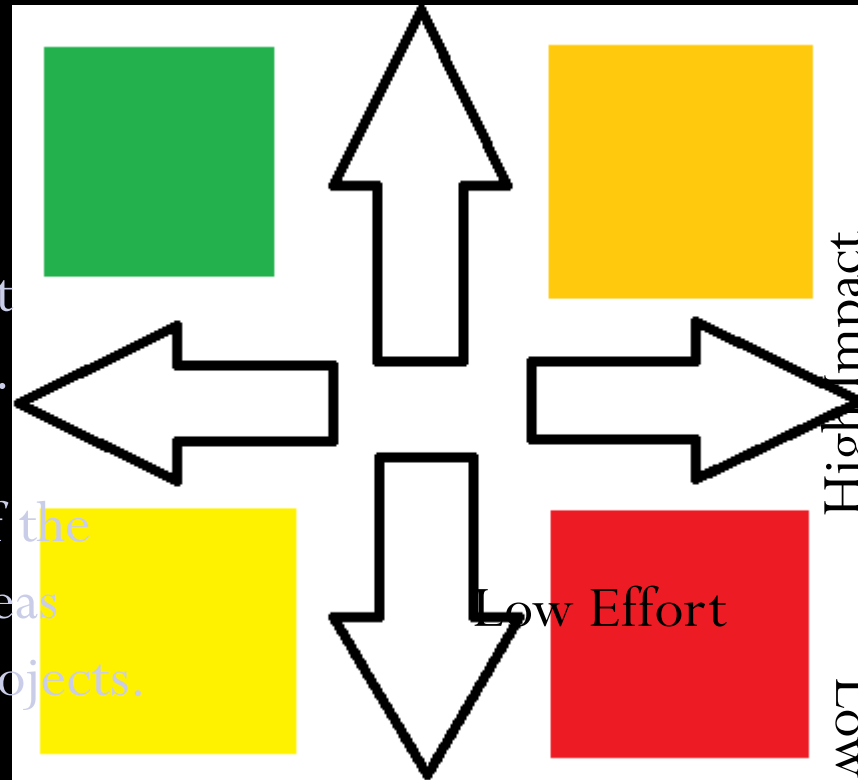
Examples of Accessibility in Higher Education

- Web Compliance
  - Ex: NC State Global Accessibility Awareness Day Website Challenge
- Policy
  - Ex: Example policies in higher education
- Procurement
  - Ex: George Mason University Procurement – ASC Review Board
- Training/Awareness
  - Ex: University of Wisconsin-Madison Web Accessibility 101
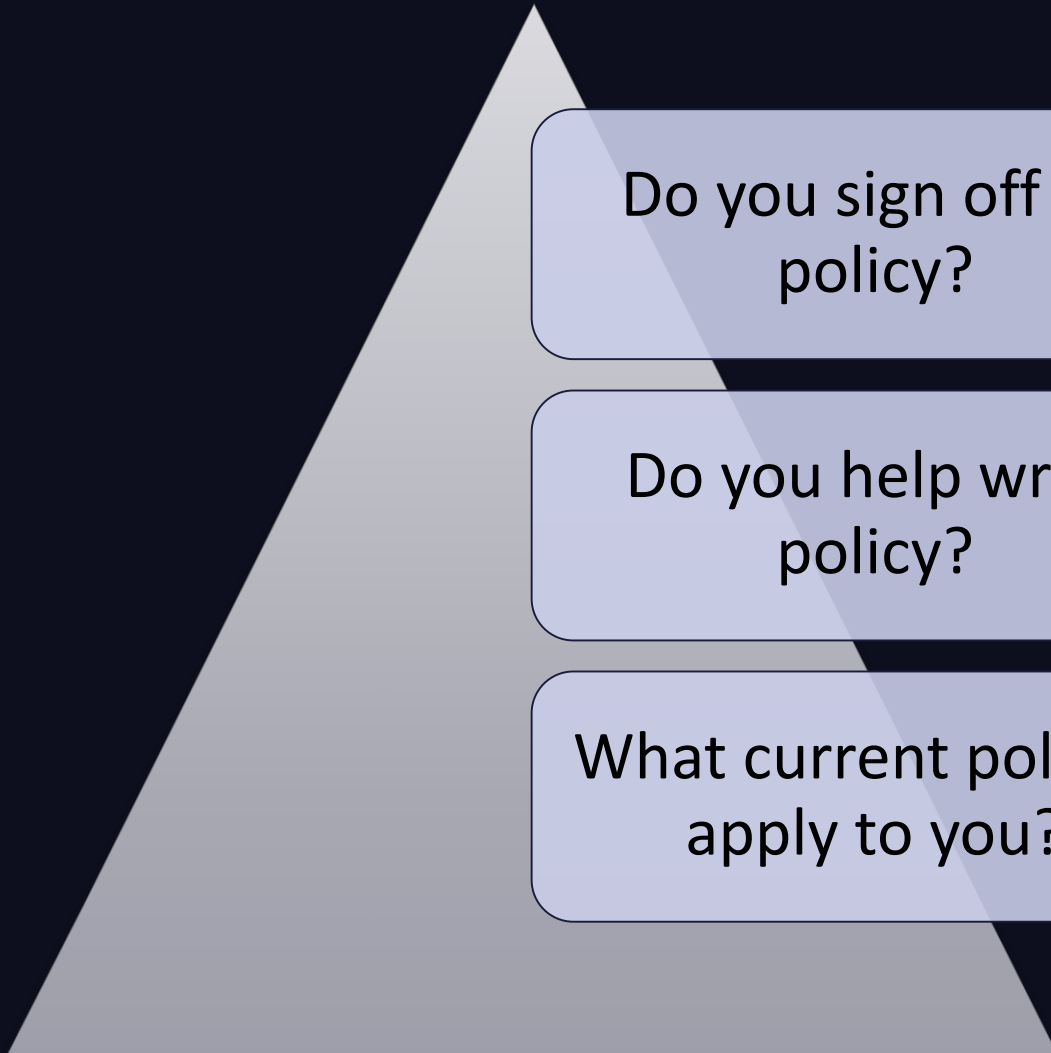- Buy-In
  - Ex: Are you the next example?

Web Compliance

- Accessibility of websites
- Content
- Documents
- Videos
- Applications
- E-learning

Policy

Do you sign off on policy?

Do you help write policy?

What current policies apply to you?

Procurement

Do you sign off on purchases?

Do you make suggestions for purchases?

Do you participate in RFP or other contract meetings?

Training and Awareness
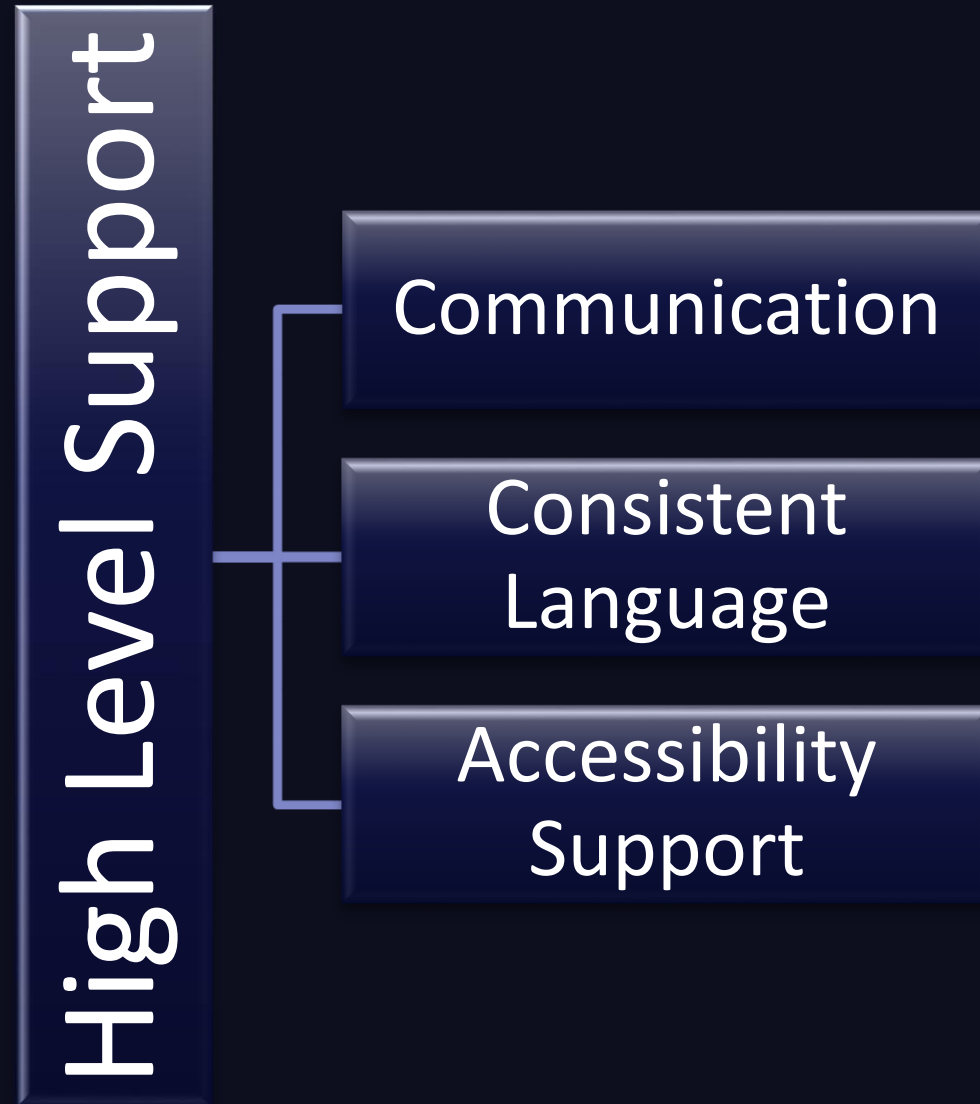
What does accessibility mean to you?

If you'd ask coworkers what accessibility meant, how many different answers would you hear?

When we share knowledge – we can all have a better understanding of accessibility.

Background, Stakeholders, Existing Models

UNDERSTANDING ONLINE COURSE DEVELOPMENT AT MASON

Critical Moments in E-Learning @Mason

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
• Participation on DE Council • SACS Accreditation (2009)	• Faculty Development Workshops for new online teaching faculty (IDs, Library, Faculty)	• Bb/Bb Collaborate • Supplemental Applications	• ITAG • Library Liaison (Accessibility)	• Implementation of ITAG Recs • Doc Accessibility Pilot	• DE Pilot	DE Review Adopted and completed Each Semester

Stakeholders
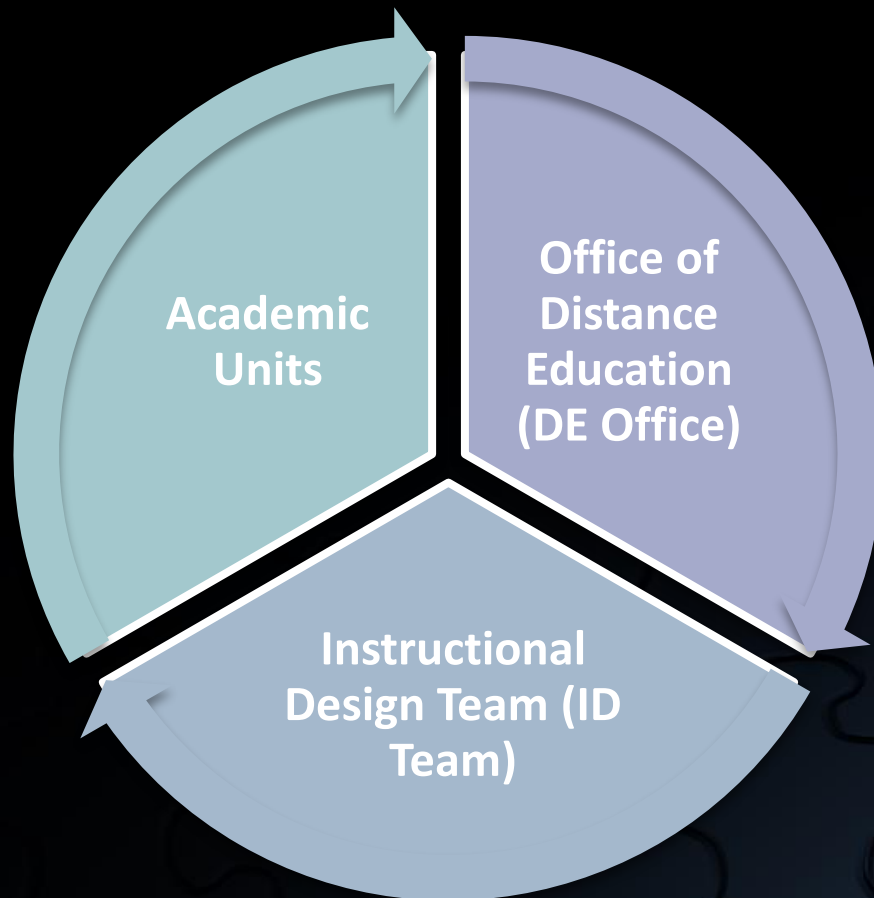
- University has **increased number of online courses and programs** by **~20% per year over the past 3 years** (DE Director, Personal Communication, May 2015).

- *Key Offices:*
  - DE Office (Provost's Office)
  - ID Team (LSS/IT Office)
  - Academic Units (Colleges/Schools)

Existing Online Course Development Models

- *4 "P"s* – Proposal, Production, Pilot, and Portfolio (1-year)
- **OCDI** – Online Course Development Institute (6-week)
- Academic unit-specific Initiatives

OCDI

- Largely driven by LSS/ID Team
- Faculty/staff participate in a 6-week asynchronous cohort
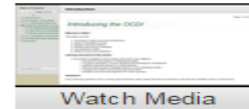- Viewed as a more scalable going forward.
- End result is **one fully developed module**.

Weekly Modules

Week 1: Introducing the OCDI

Watch Media
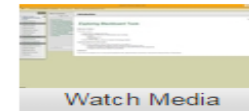
Video duration (3:23) | transcript_OCDI_Week_1.pdf
- Use blogs to share personal introductions
- Explore exemplary courses
- Analyze relevant research
- Identify best practice strategies
- Conceptualize needs
- Reflect on personal readiness
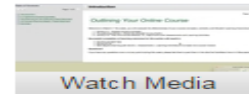
Week 2: Exploring Blackboard Tools

Watch Media

Video duration (4:23) | transcript_OCDI_Week_2.pdf
- Identify Mason support websites
- Explore affordances of Blackboard Learn
  - quizzes
  - discussion forums
  - assignments
- Review issues related to Mason's Assistive Technology Initiative

Week 3: Outlining Your Online Course

Watch Media

Video duration (3:09) | transcript_OCDI_Week3.pdf
- Concept map course topics
- Write strong student learning outcomes
- Plan and align the learning path for at least one course module

Week 4: Building Your Learning Module

Watch Media
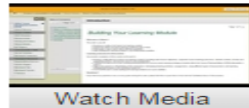
Video duration (3:42) | transcript_OCDI_Week_4_.pdf
- Develop an outline of at least one learning module
- Submit the draft of at least learning module for peer review
- Participate in peer review about learning module(s)
- Start building the learning module in your Blackboard sandbo

Week 5: Creating Accessible Files and Multimedia

Watch Media
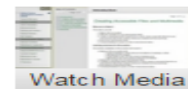
Video duration (:56) | transcript_OCDI_Week_5.pdf
- Make a file accessible
- Write the narration and create a storybord or two-column script for an instructional video
- Record an instructional video
- Provide feedback on peers' instructional videos

Baseline Design Considerations for Online Courses

- **Visual:**

  - Provide alternative text descriptions for all meaningful graphics (images, charts, graphs, SmartArt, objects)

  - Provide descriptions for videos where visual content is important to understanding subject matter.

  - Use styles in Office documents, headers to mark-up tables or frames (for websites)

  - Choose applications that support keyboard navigation and are compatible with screen readers

- **Hearing:**

  - Provide captions for all videos

  - For audio, provide transcripts

- **Cognitive, Neurological:**

  - Use consistent navigation, tab order, appropriate language level

DE COURSE PORTFOLIO REVIEW PILOT

Sample – *ATI Course Accessibility Checklist*

Includes a review of the following areas:

1. Syllabus and Course Readings
2. Bb Learn
3. Word
4. PPT
5. PDF
6. Multimedia
7. Supplemental Applications

ATI Course Accessibility Checklist (Internal Use Only)
Updated 5/28/2015

The following checklist verifies that the instructional documents, audio, and video content used in Mason's distance education courses are in accordance with Section 508 and WCAG 2.0 Level AA accessibility guidelines. While not a comprehensive review of all the areas covered by these guidelines, this checklist does examine areas that would have the most significant impact on the ability of assistive technology users to independently access their instructional materials (e.g., al text, keyboard navigation, captions, transcripts, etc.).

PLEASE NOTE: This is NOT a comprehensive review of the accessibility of the faculty member's course. The reviewers will examine snapshots (i.e., Course readings, LMS layout/structure, 2-3 documents of each type – i.e., Word/PDF/PPT, 2-3 videos, and supplemental applications) of the elements highlighted in the table below and provide feedback/guidance to the instructor on how to correct any accessibility issues that are identified.

UNDERSTANDING THE REVIEW PROCESS:

Reviewers examined selected examples of the elements highlighted in the attached checklist (i.e., course readings, LMS layout/structure, 2-3 documents of each type – i.e., Word/PDF/PPT, 2-3 videos, and supplemental applications) and provided feedback and resources for the instructor on how best to remediate any accessibility issues that were identified.

Tools used for testing accessibility:

· Website Accessibility Reviews – WAVE Toolbar
· MS Office Accessibility Reviews – Built-in MS Office Accessibility Checker

Term:
Professor:
Course Evaluated:
Reviewer:

0.0 – Syllabus and Textbooks/Course Readings (Required and Supplemental)				
ID	**Textbooks/Course Readings**	**Yes**	**No**	**N/A**
0.1	Is an electronic equivalent provided for all print reading materials?			
0.2	Do all web articles/readings have a PDF/Word version available?			
	Syllabus	**Yes**	**No**	**N/A**
0.3	Course syllabus includes disability statement?			
0.4	Instructor offers multiple formats/options for			

Sample – *ATI Course Evaluation Document*

Includes the following:

- Priority Recommendations and Resources
- Understanding the Review Process (i.e., testing tools used and process)
- Findings

ATI Course Accessibility Evaluation

As a part of the Office of Distance Education's *Open Call Course Portfolio Review* process, the instructional materials used in your course (i.e., documents, audio, video, websites, and web applications) were examined to determine if they are accessible and usable by Mason students, including those with disabilities, in accordance with University Policy 1308.

This is **not** a comprehensive evaluation of all the areas covered by this policy; rather this review focuses on those areas that have traditionally had the most significant impact on the ability of students with disabilities to independently access instructional materials (e.g., alternative text descriptions, keyboard navigation, captions, transcripts, etc.).
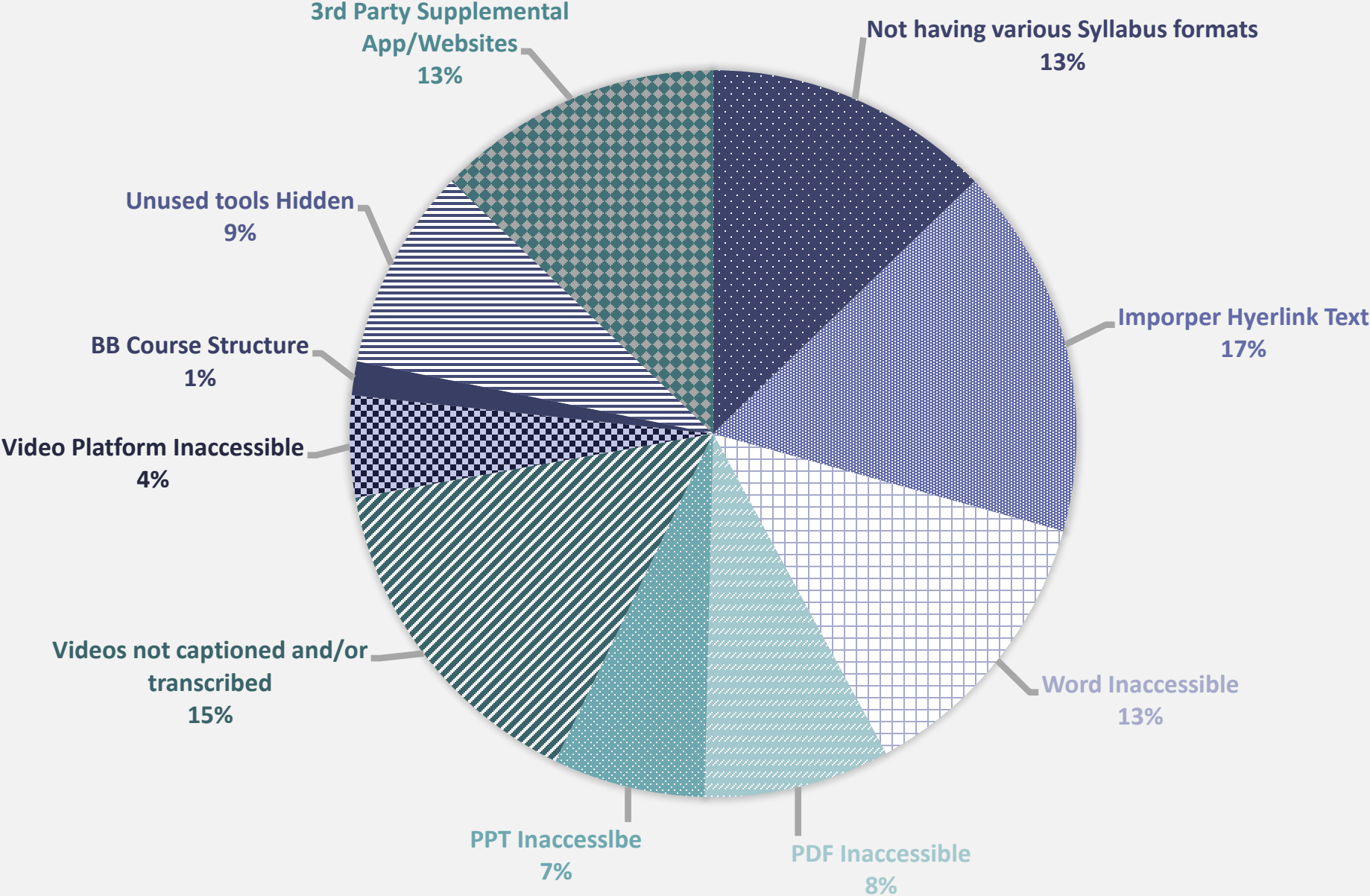
COURSE:

- **Term:** Spring 2015
- **Professor:**
- **Course Evaluated:**
- **Course Reviewer:**

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS and RESOURCES:

Priority Issue	Action Plan
Ensure all course videos have synchronized captions and/or transcripts.	Go to the ATI's Accessible Media Request page for information on requesting this service.
Ensure all course videos are streamed through an accessible video playback platform (i.e., Kaltura, YouTube).	Upload course videos using the "***Kaltura My Media***" link in MyMason\Courses Tab. For assistance, contact the ATI Office and/or Learning Support Services.
Ensure that PowerPoint Presentations and Word Documents are accessible.	Visit ATI's Guide to Creating Accessible Electronic Materials (PDF – Section 2: Part II and Part III). Visit ATI Website: Creating Accessible Documents

DE Course Review Findings

3rd Party Supplemental App/Websites
13%

Not having various Syllabus formats
13%

Imporper Hyerlink Text
17%

Unused tools Hidden
9%

BB Course Structure
1%

Video Platform Inaccessible
4%

Word Inaccessible
13%

Videos not captioned and/or transcribed
15%

PPT Inaccesslbe
7%

PDF Inaccessible
8%

Important Considerations

LEARN FROM OUR EXPERIENCES...

Where we are lacking

- Training on our services (FREE CAPTIONING) would take care of 15% of the issues.

- Training on Creating an Accessible Syllabus (covers multiple formats, proper hyperlinks and Word documents) would cover 43% of issues

- Working with faculty to educate about 3rd Party Supplemental material would cover 13%

- Total: 71% fixing of errors through Education and Awareness that can be implemented into other Office trainings

Things to consider...

Review Procurement of Supplemental Applications and/or Educate Faculty in determining Books

- Do Professors get to pick any book they want? Do they know to check for online versions?

Does anyone meet with the Publisher Sales Reps?

Identify your Strategic Partners

- Is your institution investing in online learning?

Do you have policies and procedures

- Accessibility training (i.e., captioning, document accessibility)

Is accessibility already integrated into the process?

- Quality Matters? OLC? Bb Course Rubric?

Build off of the platform…

- Canvas? Bb? D2L? Kaltura? Panopto?

Program evaluation?

- Do you have a process for determining success/failure?

Questions

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