Accessibility Standards

The Accessibility Standards for Cleveland State University are developed to inform our staff and faculty on what constitutes an accessible product for people with disabilities participating in services and activities at our university. These standards are developed to give direction for how to evaluate mandates in the Accessible EIT Policy. These standards are to be used when developing web pages, documents, video, purchasing software, and development of other media. This is work that is not only being done at Cleveland State but is part of a nationwide trend in institutions of higher education.

These standards were not developed specifically by Cleveland State. Most of the standards listed were adopted from federal standards like the Section 508 guidelines and the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Many of the resources that will be found in these standards is also gathered from the efforts of other universities and groups like WebAIM.

There are sections of this document that will specify accessibility standards for different types of documents and media. Accessibility of documents and media can also vary by context. The Accessibility Guidelines will specify which accessibility standards need to be observed when using content for those contexts.

General Accessibility Standards

Cleveland State University will follow the technical requirements set forth by the Information and

General Standards for Accessible Documents

The requirements for accessible documents are very similar to the requirements of the WCAG 2.0 standards used for webpages. Webpages are just a specific type of document. The following standards were adapted from the WCAG 2.0 Level AA criteria which were applicable to preparing electronic documents.

1. Text based description will be provided for all non-text elements like images, charts, and graphs.
   a. An alt tag must be applied to the image
   b. A text based description of the text can be provided in the body of the document
   c. Any math, science, or foreign language characters must be represented with proper symbols and not presented by images.
   d. If the image is immaterial to the content and not contextually important it should be given a "null" alt attribute or marked in the document editor as an artifact or background so that it is not identified by assistive technology.
   e. Color alone cannot be used to identify status. Some form of markup must identify the status intended.
2. Document structure and organization are consistent to provide comparable access when changing document layout and styles.
   a. Form fields are properly labeled
   b. A Proper reading order is established by the document
   c. The document contains proper heading tags for titles of segments and may contain book marking for ease of navigation
   d. Contains properly marked up tables
   e. Has consistent and predictable use of document structure
3. Make it easier for users to see content including separating foreground from background.
   a. Contrast ratios are used for color combinations that are at least a 4.5:1 ratio for regular sized fonts or 3:1 for font sizes larger than 18pt.
   b. Text size can be adjusted up to 200 percent without loss of content or functionality.
   c. Text not be embedded in images unless contained in a logo.
   d. Font size and color scheme can be adjusted by the user of the document.
4. All content be accessible by keyboard navigation.
   a. All form elements have tab indexes
   b. All elements that change the page be keyboard navigable which would mean having a tab index if it is not a link.
5. Provide ways to help users navigate, find content, and determine where they are.
   a. Provide proper nested headings
   b. Provide row and column headings in tables
   c. The purpose of a link can be determined by the text in the link. (Click Here links are nondescript)
6. Make text content readable and understandable
   a. There must be a primary reading language set for a document
   b. Any switching between reading languages must be identified within the text by applying proper attributes in the document.
7. Make documents appear and be organized in predictable ways
   a. Use templates or style sheets for formatting

b. Use similar formatting for headings and titles throughout the document
c. Use consistent spacing and page layout
8. Help users identify and correct mistakes
a. Identify required fields in forms (Many required fields have an * in the label)
b. Setup validation for form fields where possible.
c. Provide clear and concise instruction

Minimally Accessible Documents

One. All Documents have underlying text that a screen reader or text-to-speech engine can access and is correctly recognized

Two. All images have alt tags the describe the purpose of the image

Three. Forms can be filled out independently by the user using assistive technology

Four. Videos have closed captions and audio files have transcripts

Five. If a foreign language is used it has proper language attributes and not just embedded into images or set to English

Web Accessibility

General Standards for Web Accessibility

One. Provide alternatives for time based media
    a. Provide access to controlling the pace of playback
    b. Provide transcripts for audio files
    c. Provide closed captioning for videos with audio
    d. Provide audio description for A/V media
    e. If there is a video file without audio and the content of the video is described sufficiently in the content of a webpage no audio description is required

Two. Controls for media players used for posting A/V media online must
    a. Be keyboard Accessible
    b. Sufficiently contrast the background
    c. Be labeled with text descriptions for assistive technology

Three. Any Interactive Media must Meet the standards for Accessible web content by complying with WCAG 2.0 Level AA criteria

Minimally Accessible Media

To be considered minimally accessible by our standards the media must:

1. Contain at least a caption for video or transcript for audio
2. Have playback controls that are accessible to assistive technology

Software Accessibility

Software obtained or developed in-house by Cleveland State University will gage conformance based on both the Section 508 standards and the WCAG 2.0 Level AA standards. In the version