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### **ASSURE: “A” - Analyze Your Learners**

Due to my work with non-academic online courses at the Center for Distributed Learning, I am interested in developing training that would enable first-time non-academic course owners to create effective, accessible courses in training. The inspiration for this course came from CDL’s professional development course Essentials of Webcourses@UCF, which is geared to educate new Canvas users on Canvas features that will help them develop their courses in the learning management system. Since I have taken over the responsibility of non-academic online courses, I have seen a need for training that is specifically tailored for non-academic course owners at UCF. The unit I have chosen to create for this course is a unit on accessibility in the online course environment. One of the largest issues I find with online courses pertains to the course’s lack of accessible content. Through this unit, I hope to improve the accessibility of non-academic online courses created at UCF.

The primary topics I want to cover in this accessibility unit are color contrast, alternative text, text formatting, and video captions. These four topics contribute to a large number of accessibility issues I encounter, and I’m interested in developing a unit that would raise awareness and educate non-academic course owners about the importance of adhering to accessibility standards. For color contrast, I intend to cover the proper color contrast ratio for online content, the reason why the color contrast ratio is important, and suggestions for how to verify an acceptable color contrast ratio. Next, I will define alternative text, highlight its importance, and provide tips on how to write alternative text for images in an online course

environment. On the subject of text formatting, my primary focus is on the use of header text. Header text is often misused or forgotten in document formatting, but it's an important part of online accessibility. Finally, I'll give an introduction to accessible video captions, what does not constitute as acceptable captions, and tips for creating caption files.

For this unit, experiential learning fits best. When talking about accessibility, especially with able-bodied users, the importance of accessibility is often missed. With experiential learning, a bridge can be made between accessibility standards and concrete examples of applied accessibility strategies. Because the overall goal of my course is to build a better non-academic online course, a lot of the assignments will focus on creating tangible content to be used in an online course. Therefore, any assignments for this unit will be grounded in reality, encouraging learners to envision their assignments in a very real-world context, which will accomplish the learning objectives created in step two of the ASSURE model. With the hands-on approach of experiential learning, learners will have the opportunity to create content that meets accessibility standards, which in turn will promote a better understanding of the topic. An added bonus of the experiential learning style is the potential to re-use the content created in my online training for their own non-academic online courses.

The learner population for this course includes faculty and staff in higher education. Because non-academic online courses vary in purpose, many non-academic course owners have not been trained to teach online. Some never have accessed the learning management system. Therefore, any content in my course needs to apply to both the experienced online teacher and the average staff member interested in creating online training. With the scope of this population, the prerequisite skills for my course will be minimal. Learners will need to know how to operate a computer and navigate a website, but knowledge of the learning management system and

online education will not be required. The motivation of the learners will stem from the desire to create better non-academic online courses. For individuals who have no experience with online education or the learning management system, I predict the motivation to complete my course will be much higher than learners with prior experience.

## References

Hanley, M. (2009, June 24). ASSURE model: discovering instructional design 18. Retrieved from <http://elearningcurve.edublogs.org/2009/06/24/assure-model-discovering-instructional-design-18/>

**ASSURE: “S” - State Learning Objectives**

- In a sandbox course, learners will demonstrate knowledge of proper color contrast ratios according to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).
- In a sandbox course, learners will write accurate alternative text for a series of images.
- In a sandbox course, learners will construct a content page with correct heading text and document formatting.
- With a sample video, learners will create accessible captions with an accuracy of 90%.

## ASSURE: “S” - Select Instructional Methods, Media, and Materials

### Videos

- 113 - Rich Content Editor: <https://vimeo.com/71970883>
- 520 - Pages Overview: <https://vimeo.com/72307216>
- Introduction to Web Accessibility and W3C Standards: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=20SHvU2PKsM>
- Using the Amara Subtitle Editor (Playlist): <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjdLzz0k39ykXZJ91DcSd5IIXrm4YuGgE>

### External Resources

- WebAIM Contrast Checker: <https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/>
- WebAIM Alternative Text: <https://webaim.org/techniques/alttext/>
- HTML Headings: [https://www.w3schools.com/html/html\\_headings.asp](https://www.w3schools.com/html/html_headings.asp)
- Amara: <https://amara.org/en/>
- Ultimate Guide to Closed Captioning: <https://www.3playmedia.com/resources/popular-topics/closed-captioning/>

### **ASSURE: “U” - Utilize Media and Materials**

For my unit on online accessibility, I wanted to retain focus on creating accessible content for non-academic online courses. The first two videos I chose are Canvas Guide videos which explain how to use Pages and the Rich Content Editor. From my experience, most of the content created for non-academic online courses results in the form of content pages or other Canvas tools that utilize the Rich Content Editor. Highlighting how to use Pages and the Rich Content Editor provides a framework before delving into the topic of creating accessible content. The third video I chose (“Introduction to Web Accessibility and W3C Standards”) provides a clear introduction to online accessibility and its importance. The short 4-minute video briefly covers the topics I plan to introduce in this unit: color contrast, alternative text, headings, and captioning. For an in-depth topic such as online accessibility, I believe my learners will benefit from a short introductory video rather than jumping straight into strict content.

When reviewing color contrast, I’ve chosen the interactive Contrast Checker from WebAIM to provide learners with a hands-on opportunity to explore color contrast. This tool not only gives learners an idea of what proper color contrast looks like, but it also serves as an excellent resource for when the learners build their own online content. I also chose WebAIM’s information on alternative text for this unit because it thoroughly covers the importance of alternative text and provides clear examples for learners to refer back to. Alternative text can be a difficult concept to grasp, but the examples provide valuable context.

In keeping with the interactive element of my chosen media, I chose W3Schools tutorial on headings. Headings are an important part of document and wiki page formatting, so the interactiveness of the tutorial allows learners to explore how to use proper HTML headings. This tutorial will supplement any written content explaining the importance of proper heading tags.

Finally, for captioning, I first chose to provide 3Play Media's "Ultimate Guide to Closed Captioning." This extensive resource provides thorough background on the importance of captioning, captioning laws, and captioning costs. 3Play Media is a leading advocate for closed captioning on the web, so I saw extreme value in referencing their guide in my unit on online accessibility. Beyond the guide, I chose to expand on a popular free DIY captioning editor, Amara. Amara is relatively simple to use, but I also included a playlist on how to use the Amara Subtitle Editor for learners who prefer visual step-by-step instructions. Because one of the objectives of this unit is for learners to write accessible captions for a video, covering Amara will give the learners the confidence needed to write their own captions.

The media and materials I chose support the content I intend to deliver in this unit. Instead of choosing too many resources, I wanted to make sure the materials that I chose were carefully curated, providing valuable insight rather than additional work for my learners. Since I chose experiential learning as a primary learning method for this unit, I made sure most of my media and materials contained an interactive element to them. The interactivity element not only increases learner engagement, but it encourages the learner to experiment with the topics covered in this unit before creating their own course content.

### ASSURE: “R” - Require Participation

Learning Objectives	Materials/Media	Activities	Assessment Strategies
<b>Module 3</b>			
<p>Demonstrate knowledge of proper color contrast ratios according to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">Introduction to Web Accessibility and W3C Standards</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">WebAIM Contrast Checker</a></li> </ul>	<p>For this learning objective, I think it’s really important to let the learners be involved in the lesson. Color contrast ratios can be hard to understand, especially without a vision disability. It’s easy to say things like “Avoid red text on a yellow background,” but until it’s put into practice, the information may not stick. Even moreso, color contrast is a continuous skill learners will need throughout their career whenever designing for the web. Access to the WebAIM Contrast Checker will encourage learners to bookmark the tool for later. As an activity, I would like my learners to complete a game, such as an interactive widget on Materia, to better understand the importance of color contrast ratios.</p>	<p>The assessment strategy for this activity will be an authentic assessment. I don’t expect learners to regurgitate information about color contrast ratios. Instead, I want learners to thoroughly engage with the material and find tangible connections to the real world in their assignments. To test their knowledge and fulfill this learning objective, learners will create a digital infographic to post in their course. Learners can create the infographics from scratch using programs like Photoshop or Illustrator, or from websites such as Canva or Piktochart. The images can be of any nature, though they must demonstrate proper color contrast ratios in whatever infographic they create.</p>
<p>Write accurate alternative text for a series of images.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">WebAIM Alternative Text</a></li> </ul>	<p>Learners will play a matching game to match corresponding alternative text descriptions with the correct images. This will</p>	<p>Following the Creating category of Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy, learners will write alternative text for a</p>

		prepare them for writing their own alternative text in the assessment.	series of images. The learners will be scored based on their accuracy and the descriptiveness of the alternative text.
Construct a content page with correct heading text and document formatting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">113 - Rich Content Editor</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">520 - Pages Overview</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">HTML Headings</a></li> </ul>	Learners will be presented with a series of documents in image form in a game. They will be required to sort the document images by “proper” and “improper” document formatting. This little game will help the learners start to understand what good and bad documents look like in order to help them better understand the goal when creating their own documents.	Learners will be asked to write a content page for their course. The content page can be of their choosing, whether it be the syllabus, an introduction to a topic, or an assignment description. Learners will have to include proper heading and document formatting. A rubric for this assessment will include criteria for headings, paragraph format, text sizing, margins, and inclusion of materials/media to supplement the text. To build on the previous learning objective, learners will be required to add alternative text to any images added to the content page. In order to receive full credit, all of these elements must be included.
Create accessible captions with an accuracy of 90%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Using the Amara Subtitle Editor (Playlist)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Amara</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Ultimate Guide to Closed Captioning</a></li> </ul>	Learners will be shown a video with various types of captioning: a muted video with no captions, the same video with sound and incorrect captions, and the same video with sound and correct captions. The learners will be able to	Learners will find an uncaptioned video between three and five minutes long and will be asked to caption the video using the tool of their choice. A rubric will be used to grade the accuracy of their

		switch among the videos to examine effective and ineffective captioning. The interactive activity will give the learners a chance to understand why captions are important before writing their own.	captions. The rubric will include criteria for caption length, caption timing, spelling and mechanics, and descriptive text for non-verbal sounds (if applicable.)
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### **ASSURE: “E” - Evaluate and Revise**

To complete the ASSURE model, the final step is to evaluate and revise the course I've designed. As the course has not been launched yet, many of the questions I would ask during the evaluation stage are not applicable. In the initial launch of the course, I would like to include a feedback survey for the explicit purposes of evaluating and revising the course for the future. The questions for the feedback survey are included on the following page.

The goal of the feedback survey is to gain an understanding of how learners view the course. Because this course is self-paced, asynchronous, and mostly unfacilitated, the learner's perception of the course is very important. The feedback survey will also help determine whether the course material is appropriate, since the learners' experience with Webcourses@UCF varies from zero experience to skilled online instructor. Based on the feedback received from the feedback survey, the course can be revised to best suit the needs of future learners. Ultimately, the goal of the evaluation and revision stage is to create a better version of the course that suits the vast majority of learners.

In order to collect more feedback, I'd consider running a pilot of this course for learners who currently teach special programs courses to gain their perspective. The feedback these experienced special programs instructors could provide would be an additional evaluation worth gathering. For the best practices portion of the course, special programs instructors may want to volunteer their own best practices.

Finally, based on my own reflection through this ASSURE process, I stumbled into some trouble writing out the best practices module of this course when I storyboarded it. In combination with the pilot survey, I'd like to do more research into best practices for special

programs courses so that the development process isn't as difficult. Overall, the rest of the course wasn't as difficult, but the best practices section was hard to write.

### **Feedback Survey**

1. Which of the following statements best matches your experience with time flexibility during the course?
  - a. I encountered no obstacles to proceeding at my own pace.
  - b. I encountered few obstacles to proceeding at my own pace.
  - c. I encountered some obstacles to proceeding at my own pace.
  - d. I encountered many obstacles to proceeding at my own pace.
  - e. I was not able to proceed at my own pace.
  
2. Please rate the degree to which you felt in charge of your learning during the course.
  - a. Very much in charge.
  - b. Somewhat in charge
  - c. Indifferent
  - d. Somewhat not in charge
  - e. Not very in charge
  
3. How difficult did you find the content of this course?
  - a. Very difficult
  - b. Somewhat difficult
  - c. Indifferent
  - d. Somewhat easy
  - e. Very easy

4. Of all the activities in this course, which do you remember most positively? Please explain.
5. Of all the activities in Essentials of Webcourses@UCF, which do you remember most negatively? Please explain.
6. Please rate the overall effectiveness or ineffectiveness of this course as a learning resource for you.
7. How much time did you devote to the completion of this workshop? Please input your answer in the total number of hours.
8. Please provide any additional feedback concerning this course.