

Designing IT Accessibility Training in Postsecondary Institutions

[00:00:00.08] JACLYN LAZZARI: Welcome. Thank you for joining today's session, "Designing IT Accessibility Training for Multiple Stakeholders in Postsecondary Institutions." My name is Jaclyn Lazzari, and I'm on the marketing team here at 3Play. All right. With all that taken care of, I'll happily pass it off to our speaker today, Sheryl Burgstahler, who has a wonderful presentation prepared for you. Off to you, Sheryl.

[00:00:28.13] SHERYL BURGSTAHLER: Thank you. So our topic today, "Designing IT Accessibility Training for Multiple Stakeholders in Postsecondary Institutions--" I have found in my past, it's easy to put together a training with all the stuff you want to share. It's harder to figure out how to tailor it to a specific audience. And in some cases, like today, you don't want to tailor too narrowly because you're expecting a mixed audience, as far as their responsibilities on the job and otherwise.

[00:00:56.45] So I'm Sheryl Burgstahler, and my email address is up here. So that means that you're welcome to send me email. sherylborgstahler@outlook.com. And that'll be put in chat as well, so you can catch it there. And it'll also be presented on my last slide.

[00:01:20.66] So I'm the founder and director of the DO-IT Center. I actually retired in 2024. I'm sort of getting used to it now. But as you can see, I have retired from my career. I'm still doing presentations, and I teach a few classes and so forth. But I retired from my full-time job at the University of Washington.

[00:01:36.61] My group also include the IT accessibility team-- ran out of little space here. But that's the group that would give outreach to campus and help make sure that the IT that we procure, develop, and use is accessible to faculty, students, staff, and visitors with disabilities. The DO-IT Center, some people recognize that in association with me than the other-- does many of the same things as the IT accessibility state program.

[00:02:06.76] But it's focused internationally and nationally and regionally and local. But we're funded by about \$50 million worth of grants over the years with our partners, many partners, to increase the success of people with disabilities-- and particularly in college and careers. So we have a lot on our website regarding that program.

[00:02:30.88] I'm now an affiliate professor here at the University of Washington and City University of New York and teaching topics similar to this one today. So I've been keeping very, very busy. And I am actually surprised at how well I am adjusting to retirement, though. I can now go through a whole day without feeling guilty-- or maybe just a little bit guilty-- if I don't really accomplish anything.

[00:02:51.04] So anyway, we'll see how long that lasts. I guess I was ready for retirement, but I do like keeping my toe in the water, just to do some of the things that I really like to do. And I like to teach, and I like to look at topics like this and talk to colleagues like yourselves.

[00:03:08.11] So our topics today are challenges that some individuals with disabilities face when trying to access computers, digital documents, and other technologies. That will be woven through the whole thing. I am going to focus on the Department of Justice rule because everybody seems to be interested in that. And it's about digital accessibility for state and local governments, including postsecondary institutions and K-12 that are public institutions.

[00:03:33.28] And then relevant content for stakeholders, and tips for training, and then discussion-- so at any time, if you want to put something in the chat, you can put a question. And those will be presented at the end of the talk. But also, you can put an idea about training of IT, particularly about what a specific stakeholder group might need, like disability services providers.

[00:03:58.31] What are some specific things you've found that they need as you provide them with training? Or maybe you're from that group and you want to say, don't forget, they need this type of training.

[00:04:09.86] So I don't think this is new to anybody in this group, but I like to start at the beginning and what an accommodation is-- and that most institutions take an accommodation approach to access to digital materials. So the accommodation approach is to adjust an existing product or environment for a specific person. This could be remediating inaccessible web pages, documents to make them accessible, and captioning videos.

[00:04:37.52] The captioning videos part, this is assuming that the videos are not captioned in a class. And so the disability services office needs to provide captions in remediation. And the first one there assumes that there are documents in an existing class that's being offered now, and the documents are not designed in an accessible format. And so if a student who is blind or has a learning disability or others that need an accessible document, that has to be remediated-- so after the fact.

[00:05:09.79] And that's just how things work today. More and more people are thinking proactively, though, I think. But that is a different approach. And so rather than just being reactive-- wait 'til the student with a disability shows up-- being proactive can be called universal design.

[00:05:27.32] People do use other words, like inclusive design, but I think that's a narrower application. Plus, inclusion is very much a K-12 thing and requires that you totally change your class, if you need to, to accommodate a student with a disability. Where in higher education and most of K-12, you really are just providing alternative ways for students to access the content that you're delivering to a class.

[00:05:51.78] So universal design is a framework with a lot of principles and guidelines and so forth that has a fairly long history, which is another advantage of using that as a framework-- so the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

[00:06:13.29] So as an umbrella for everything we're talking about today, universal design says we're doing these things proactively rather than waiting until a student with a disability shows up in a class or in some other capacity.

[00:06:24.02] You can look at the triangle that's on this slide if you can see that. You'll see that universal design is composed of three types of design. Accessible design-- I'm using that term to mean primarily for people with disabilities and technical standards, to make them accessible-- doesn't always mean they're usable, though.

[00:06:46.08] A standard can say, oh, yeah, technically, this person can use this. But it's impossible for them to navigate the website to find what they need to access. So accessible design is a narrower in scope than universal design.

[00:06:59.45] I already mentioned the-- inclusive design's on this list too. Inclusive design means everybody's using the same product, everybody's in the same room, and so forth. But many inclusion efforts don't really make it possible for that person that needs inclusion to fully be able to participate side by side with their peers.

[00:07:17.83] And then usable-- I mentioned that already, but usable design is, can you use it? Can you navigate somewhere? Can you get the job done that you're trying to do? And this is from the Center on Universal Design in North Carolina State University and a lot of other websites too-- universal design.

[00:07:33.40] So the universal design practices, then, embrace a social model of disability, which requires that we look at the environment. We look at the things we're already producing first before we start making accommodations for a specific student. We've already thought about these things before the student shows up.

[00:07:50.24] Also embraces disability as a diversity issue-- that may not be a good idea right now in our current administration, but still. It is a characteristic of people. It is not an, oh, so special, different thing than having other characteristics that make you part of an underrepresented or underserved group.

[00:08:09.20] It's all about civil rights. People with disabilities have a right to access to the things that we're doing that we're providing for the public. And then intersectionality is embraced as well. Sometimes people will look at a student who's blind, and they just think them as a one-dimensional person. They may have multiple disabilities, or other characteristics could impact their access to IT in the case we're talking about today.

[00:08:35.15] So I want to bring up this rule. It gives us an umbrella for part of what we're talking about too and a focus. If you're not working in an entity that must be compliant with this rule, then still, the idea is the same. And you might be in a situation someday where you have to. So the final rule came out last year, April 24. And the official title is "Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability, Accessibility of Web Information and Services of State and Local Government Entities."

[00:09:08.81] OK, so it's all about IT accessibility. It's under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, including its 2008 Amendments. So it's not a law. It is standards that are attached to a law that exists already. Some people think that the stuff in this rule is all new. No, it's not. As soon as the ADA was passed in 1990, we were responsible for making sure that what we offer is accessible to people with disabilities.

[00:09:39.77] And even before that, there's a Section 504 in 1973 that also required that but is little known. But we had to comply with it at public educational institutions nevertheless. So it clarifies then the obligations of state and local governments. The obligations you already had now are clarified because they provide standards.

[00:10:03.06] It ensures that no person with a disability is denied access to government services, programs, activities offered to the public, and mandates compliance with technical standards. So there, the technical standards are the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1.

[00:10:19.82] And the guidelines for 2.2 are already posted. But I can't speak for the Department of Justice, but I think they were too new. And we have so many resources on our campuses that comply with 2.1. That's our standard. So I think they didn't want to rush things. And so they put 2.1. I assume it'll be updated at some point. And it advances the ADA's promise of more inclusive society, that we're just including people in whatever we do.

[00:10:48.73] So what a rule is then-- it's a regulation that includes a set of requirements issued by a federal agency or laws passed by Congress. And so, again, this is just a bunch of requirements, some the standard itself but other things as well. So who has to comply with this?

[00:11:07.70] Well, pretty much everyone that's providing some kind of public service, like state and local government offices that provide benefits or social services, like food assistance, health insurance, employment services, police departments, courts, election offices-- so a lot of government-type services.

[00:11:29.23] And then public entities-- school districts, community colleges, universities, hospitals, health clinics, parks and recreation programs, libraries, and transit agencies. So there's just a lot of people that this law applies to.

[00:11:45.74] So what does accessible mean? I think the description that is given by the government about what accessible means is more like-- what I've been talking about is universal design. It goes beyond just strictly IT accessibility.

[00:11:58.47] So accessible means a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use.

[00:12:19.73] That gets into that usability I mentioned. You can't just say, well, it's technically accessible. It doesn't matter. No, a person needs to have the same ease of use as other people

have using that product. The person with a disability must be able to obtain the information as fully, equally, and independently as a person without a disability-- so pretty straightforward.

[00:12:39.18] Now, some people talk about, this is a very high standard. But when you read it, it basically is saying provide people with disabilities what you provide to other people, which is pretty simple. And then it reinforces it with some of the other comments in there. So that's what we're shooting for, always. We don't always reach that target, but that's what we're shooting for.

[00:12:58.84] As far as basics, I'm still kind of in that part of the presentation. What does WCAG 2.1 ensure access to? Well, access to courses, documents, videos, other things we provide on the internet, and even hardware that we use in our institutions-- and software, of course. And so I always recommend people think of some specific individuals with disabilities when they're designing products, including IT products.

[00:13:27.38] And I have four here that I know. And some of you have seen this slide before, so I'll go through it quickly. But you can borrow these friends of mine if you choose. Zayn is deaf. So that's why we need to make sure that those videos are captioned and that audio file files are transcribed in some way, because she's not going to be able to hear what you're sharing-- pretty straightforward.

[00:13:52.46] Most of the guidelines are straightforward. Getting into the technical details, the part-- well, how do you do that? How do you caption a video? That can be more difficult. But the first step in this whole process and basics is to have an idea of why you're doing whatever you're doing.

[00:14:09.38] Then there's Anthony, who has multiple physical disabilities, and he cannot use a mouse. He doesn't have enough fine motor skill to do that. He does not have a usable voice. And he uses a joystick on his computer to access characters on a large-print screen-- kind of see that there. And so he has quite a few challenges physically-- and even speaking.

[00:14:40.01] But when it comes to designing your course or website or something, the main thing to know is, Anthony cannot operate a mouse. And there are people who have physical disabilities like his that can't operate a mouse. And so whatever you create in designing your website or whatever else you're designing, make sure that you can operate it using the keyboard alone.

[00:15:03.83] So his technology allows him to operate using the arrow keys on a keyboard, and that allows him to move around the screen. You might think that's kind of slow, but it isn't slow to Anthony. That's what he's used to doing. And so, again, make sure that when you have a pulldown menu or something, you make sure that somebody could pull down that menu without using a mouse.

[00:15:24.14] For really technical people, that's not really hard to do. For most people, you wouldn't have a clue of what to do, but you should be able to articulate what needs to be done. And that's part of this conversation today about training-- is a lot of people need to know what I just said about Anthony. They don't have to be experts on assistive technology. But they need to

know that there are some people who cannot fully operate a mouse. And so we need to make sure that we have operation with the keyboard alone.

[00:15:52.57] How does he do that? You don't have to worry about that. He has assistive technology that allows him to have the function of all the keyboard buttons. So if you have a key on your keyboard, then he would be able to use that with his assistive technology.

[00:16:12.04] And then there's Jesse. She has multiple learning disabilities-- makes it hard to read, makes it hard to understand printed materials. And so she needs documents that have access to the text for her, text-based system that can read the text that's on the document out loud so she can understand it better.

[00:16:35.20] But also, she needs to be able to get her thoughts down on the keyboard. And so when you look at what we need to do-- she can get her thoughts down on the keyboard because she has sight and she's capable.

[00:16:50.20] She does use some assistive technology that it makes it easier for her to do that because of dyslexia, one of her disabilities. But back to the document itself, if you have a PDF file that's just a scanned-in image-- like, maybe it's a syllabus in a course-- that's not going to work for Jesse because her text-to-speech software only understands characters that are actually text based.

[00:17:13.13] And often, a scanned-in image of PDF, it looks like there are characters there, text characters. But they really are just pictures of characters. And so it will just see a big image, including the text.

[00:17:26.14] Hadi, remarkably, has similar accessibility issues to Jesse and to Anthony. He is blind. He can actually use a mouse. But it's not very effective because he's blind. He can't see where the cursor is on the screen and so forth. So in that sense, he's kind of like Anthony. You need to make sure that he can use the keyboard alone.

[00:17:45.97] But then he can't see the characters, kind of like Jesse. But different than Jesse is, he can't see the formatting even in the documents, see how long it is and the hierarchical structure of the headings and things like that.

[00:18:00.46] So Hadi has something great, with more capability than text to speech, he has a screen reader. The screen reader will read the text to him on the screen. But also, it provides information about the heading structure. It'll say, well, this is heading 1, and heading 2, and heading 3, and heading 3 again, and back to heading 2. It will read that aloud to him when he uses a screen reader.

[00:18:22.06] And so he can get a sense of how the paper is organized-- really important, particularly in academic life, to be able to see that organization. Plus, he can get an outline of the topics and realize, for example, if he's not interested in that article at all without reading it like it's just one long sentence. So he needs that technology.

[00:18:42.50] OK. So the point of this-- I like show this slide because the point is always that we need to listen to people with disabilities. But that isn't necessarily something everybody has the luxury of doing with our programs. There are a lot of people with disabilities that we knew.

[00:18:57.47] But that's not the position you're probably in, unless you're in disability services or some very specific group like that. And so if you just think about people that are deaf and blind and have learning disabilities and significant physical disabilities, make sure what you're doing is accessible to them. That's good. It'll be accessible to almost everybody else.

[00:19:20.53] So we talked about WCAG 2.1. This was developed by the World Wide Web Consortium. They've been developing the WCAG guidelines for many, many years. They're very much accepted worldwide as at least guidelines, if not standards-- so many countries and so forth. And so that's why, in part, the Department of Justice points to those standards. It didn't want to just go out there and, from scratch, develop new standards. They didn't feel that was needed.

[00:19:49.35] And so what are some of the standards? Are things like captioning videos, including alternative text for images-- that's for Hadi. So if he encounters an image, his screen reader will read aloud the description you have given-- you have to do that-- for that image-- a nice, short description.

[00:20:05.97] In my PowerPoints today, I describe visuals that I thought were important for the topic. Because I don't know, some of you may be blind or you want to share the PowerPoints with someone who is. So all that descriptive text is in there. But if you have sight, you don't see it on the screen. But your screen reader will find it.

[00:20:28.87] And then the formatting-- headings, I mentioned-- and formatting lists so Hadi can get warned that there is a list of seven items coming up next, and tables so you can keep track of the headings structure vertically and also horizontally. So all those things are for Hadi so he can navigate the content that's on the page that he's reading.

[00:20:51.83] And then also including descriptive text for hyperlinks-- and so when Hadi goes to a website there, he can ask his screen reader to skip from heading to heading or just the descriptive text in the links. And when he does that for the links, it's usually because he's gone to a website that he hopes has the resources he's looking for, but he's not sure. And so he can do that one of two ways.

[00:21:20.90] If the person designed it--

[00:21:22.16] AUTOMATED VOICE: Unknown caller.

[00:21:24.56] SHERYL BURGSTHALER: What? As he wants to go through all these hyperlinks, if you said for those hyperlinks, click here, click here, click here, that's what he's going to hear. So it doesn't distinguish between them. But if you have DO-IT website on one of them and maybe 3Play Media on another one and ADA requirements, those links, he could go down there and say, oh, yeah. Here it is. I want ADA requirements.

[00:21:56.16] And provide keyboard access-- we talked about that with Anthony but also with Hadi as well-- and using adequate contrast. You can see on my slides today I have very much contrast. And so that makes it easier for people with visual impairments to read what's on the screen. And I also have pretty large text. I usually will have in my headings either 36 point-- or sometimes 32 if they're long-- and 32 font size on the text here, and sometimes 28 if I have to go down.

[00:22:32.86] And this makes it really easy for someone who has a visual impairment can read the screen. So that's why I do that. It's also important to have good color contrast and to be careful about using colors that people who are colorblind can't distinguish. And so I never make color alone for you to require you to understand something I'm saying.

[00:22:59.96] So if I had two buttons, for instance, on the screen right now, one red and one green, which are commonly confused for people who are colorblind, I would make one of the buttons a square and one circle. So I could actually say then, select the circular red button or the square green button. I give you two things that characteristics, but you don't need to be able to do each one.

[00:23:32.13] OK. So when do the covered entities have to comply with the DOJ rule? Well, if you have less than 50,000 people, then April 26, 2027. But those of us at larger schools, like the University of Washington, they have to comply by April 2026, so that's a very short timeline. So let's just talk about some tips for addressing this rule but also related to training that you're doing.

[00:24:00.51] Looking at compliance with the Department of Justice rule on accessible digital accessibility is not just a lot of work. Sometimes it's hard to look out a brighter view. And that may be what it looks like for some people, but always putting the accessibility stuff as an opportunity. Even these rulings, the requirements is an opportunity to take steps that will mean that you have a more inclusive institution and community and society.

[00:24:35.87] So it helps to just look back every once in a while to think about, why are we doing this? If it was really easy do and didn't take any work, it probably would have been done. But that shouldn't stop us. Also, you can do things incrementally. You don't need to do everything all at once.

[00:24:51.94] Another tip, though-- tip 2 I have-- is, promote digital accessibility within the context of social justice. That's sort of a legal word, but that people with disabilities have a right to the content we're providing and should be able to access it like anybody else. Seems like that's a simple thing, but many people push back on that.

[00:25:16.00] And so we want an inclusive campus, and we can adopt a universal design framework. You may have a different word for that or a different framework. But the universal design framework has been filled out by me and others.

[00:25:27.83] But I think that it has a scope. Like this, IT would be your scope. A definition-- we already talked about the definition-- has principles, and guidelines, and practices, and process by itself, separate from the DOJ ruling that's been out there for a long, long time. And some of you

are familiar with parts of universal design. The seven principles of universal design have been around a long, long time.

[00:25:50.29] But then the three universal design for learning principles-- not quite so long, but it really zeroes in our instruction, brings in pedagogy and curriculum design. And so you need the basic principles, but then you also need universal design for learning to cover everything. And then there are these four Web Content Accessibility Guidelines principles. The Web Content Accessibility Guides have principles and guidelines and then very specific checkpoints where you can see if you're doing a very specific thing-- gets very, very deep.

[00:26:26.32] So in a nutshell, to design IT is to think about multiple ways for participants to learn-- especially if it's an online class, but even if it's a website where people are expected to learn something by going to your website-- to demonstrate what they have learned-- in other words, different ways to test what they've learned-- and to engage.

[00:26:46.00] And then the second principle is to ensure that all the technologies, facilities, services, resources, and strategies are accessible to people with a wide range of disabilities.

[00:26:57.85] So universal design and attitude-- a framework, a goal, a process-- promotes best practices that does not lower standards, that in this understanding of some people, you can make things accessible without lowering your standards. It's is proactive, can be implemented incrementally. It benefits everyone-- at least, that's its goal-- and minimizes the need for accommodations and supports diversity, equity, and inclusion, if you have those efforts going on in your campus still.

[00:27:27.12] Tip number 3 is to organize and hire staff who regularly engage with one another. This is on the institutional level, things that you can do-- and an IT accessibility team, like at the high level, and then the ADA coordinator for digital accessibility, teaching and learning center staff, IT support staff with campus units. And so this gives you a partial lift of the stakeholders we're going to talk about when we talk about designing training. Different people need to know different things. So keep your mind on that.

[00:28:01.14] Create a structure for long-term engagement of key stakeholders. So your high-level advisory board meets regularly, and they write reports and so forth. And then you might have a task force where they actually get things done and an IT accessibility liaisons and special interest group, where people that just want to learn about accessibility and promote it on campus can do that. And sometimes people have actually people assigned to represent different departments on the IT accessibility.

[00:28:28.88] So either direction-- you can have grassroots effort, or you can have assignments. It's easier to get the grassroots efforts going because you can just start tomorrow on that. Getting people assigned to this is more difficult and can bring in some negative energy in the departments because they don't want to do it. Or if they do it, they think they should get paid more. And maybe they should. But it gets complicated.

[00:28:51.31] At the University of Washington, they have an IT accessibility liaisons group. So they have the informal. And it's a very energetic group. And it's because people that are there really want to be there.

[00:29:03.22] And then we want to purchase licensing tools or an enterprise web accessibility checker, PDF remediation software. So have some of those tools available too. And they would be shared in the training-- another good thing to share in the training. And then make sure you have a comprehensive website with legal issues, policies, guidelines, resources. At the University of Washington, they have one, uw.edu/accesstech.

[00:29:28.74] And I point that out in the-- I know back in the day-- and they continue to do so, I assume-- we made sure that much of what we provide up there can be used by other institutions. And so, especially, small institutions would have a difficult time putting these resources together. They can just link to them. They're in the public. And so you have a right to them, like how to design an accessible PDF, how to design videos that are accessible, things like that.

[00:29:52.00] And there are other large institutions and organizations that provide some reliable information, like WebAIM, for example. And then offer incentives and rewards, and that can be built into your training-- capacity-building awards, centrally funding captioning for high-impact videos, and competitions for captioning all the videos under a person's responsibility and so forth.

[00:30:21.86] And 8, encourage faculty in computing and IT departments to teach students about accessibility. Sometimes this is overlooked. See if you can get those people that actually teach students to include accessibility. And one way you can do that-- by getting them involved in the Teach Access Initiative, which is that teachaccess.org.

[00:30:43.94] And that was founded by Microsoft and Google and large technology companies. And they invited large institutions like the University of Washington to be members, which we are. But they provide training and really encourage faculty members to develop a skill set in accessibility.

[00:31:02.15] And so our IT, more and more of them are getting trained every year and venturing out and teaching students about accessibility. The goal, by the way, is every student that is in an IT or computing program at an institution should learn about accessibility somewhere along the line.

[00:31:20.85] Offer different types of training-- so, again, more specific, as far as the training. Some of the ways, on site or online-- there are advantages for each. I tend to recommend both-- and hybrid as well. And some people will be more inclined to go to an onsite program. Some will be more inclined to do it online-- and finding that to be true more and more. I think it's a result of the pandemic and people being comfortable with online whatever.

[00:31:49.48] And so if it's online, you can do synchronous or asynchronous. And then you can post them on your website. The University of Washington posts some recordings of one-hour presentations we offer for training for anyone on campus, but the recordings are available to

anyone on off of our website. And there, you'll find designing accessible online learning, creating an accessible PDF document, how a screen reader works and demonstration, and all of those things.

[00:32:22.13] You can do the recording of a video of the first time you present that. And then it can be used by more and more people. And so think about doing something like that. A one-hour presentation or a longer workshop are two other ways. Do you want to just have a presentation or a longer workshop? We'll talk about some of that when I get into the actual content.

[00:32:46.70] But if you are only going to do a one-hour presentation, the key is, don't include what you would do in a four-hour workshop and just condense it. Think about what's really important for that person, that stakeholder to know. And then a recorded presentation, we mentioned that. You can just do a recorded one without the webinar, what I was talking about earlier.

[00:33:10.24] And then engage with a specialist and others to improve specific website techniques and so forth. And you can have informal drop-ins, such as a cafe-- terminology used at the University of Washington. So a lot of different ways to think about the ways you can teach it-- and with the audience, who would want to come for these different ways of learning this content?

[00:33:35.61] So who are the stakeholders? Students with disabilities and their allies. IT's designers and developers and integrators-- so the real hardcore IT people that might be designing some products that you're going to deploy on campus. Or you're integrating one technology with another using commercial products.

[00:34:00.78] Instructors of computing and IT courses-- I mentioned them earlier. They need to know basic information-- but then also teaching their students that basic information. IT managers and directors, disability services staff, teaching and learning professionals, administrators and other leaders, IT procurement staff, and also ADA accessibility manager or compliance officer.

[00:34:28.82] So now we get to the content. So here are some basic things. Actually, I developed a course that's going to be offered in April here at the University of Washington. It's a noncredit course. It's not an academic course. It's for a certificate program in IT accessibility. So this is what I wrestled through. But then we'll talk along the way about what content you'd provide for some of these stakeholders that are mentioned on a previous slide.

[00:34:50.70] And so disabilities and IT access issues-- access to IT, of course. I think that's something that would be offered in any course. But you might have more content in some stakeholder meetings than others. So you might, for example, talk about the history of people with disabilities that would fit under this disabilities category. But think very seriously about whether you want to teach that or not and say too much about it.

[00:35:20.37] Some of you have seen talks I've given before, and I have this one-minute history lesson. And the main point is, we've gone past accommodations and now we're looking at

proactive design or universal design, to do that first and then provide any accommodations that might still be required for a specific student.

[00:35:40.44] A civil right to digital access, legal issues-- so who needs to know about that? Well, your ADA accessibility manager sure does. And so that person, if they were taking training, they'd need to learn about that. But assume they already know about that. They need to think about, well, what training could they provide to other people who need to know a lot about the rulings and the ADA and Section 504?

[00:36:08.04] Also, another issue is your state laws. We have a state policy that we provide accessible IT points to Section 2.1 of the WCAG Accessibility Guidelines as well. So we've had a lot of practice at the university in addressing that policy that came out in 2017. So some of you may have, in your institutions, a policy. But also, in your state, you might have a policy you have to comply with.

[00:36:35.52] And so making sure that those people that know about those rights know them-- it's good to slip a little in, I think, to just let people know that this is required. Some people think, well, this is just a voluntary thing. You don't really have to do this. The ruling, I think, has drawn a lot of attention. So people will maybe get that message from that.

[00:36:55.14] And then the universal design framework, as I said, you don't necessarily have to adopt that particular framework. But I challenge you to find a framework out there that you don't have to develop from scratch, because there's so many years of practice in different environments. Universal design's a good one because it even covers physical environments.

[00:37:15.22] And so in the case of IT, you're the physical makeup of your computing lab where people are using technology-- for example, making sure there are adjustable table heights so a person in a wheelchair or a very large person or a small person can get the table height at the right level. And you're not going to hear a lot about that in UDL. That's kind of a UD thing, the basic UD. And so we need to think about all of that in the framework that we adopt.

[00:37:46.35] Assistive technology and the universal design of IT, those two go hand-in-hand a lot of people with disabilities-- I mentioned with Anthony. And how do you use assistive technology? And so knowing something about that is really important. Otherwise, people think, well, this person is blind. How do they even use a computer? Well, just talking about a screen reader and how it works can be important.

[00:38:11.42] For people that have a depth of IT experience and are providing an IT role, they're going to need more than just the basics on that. They're going to need to actually do it, do some practice with a screen reader, and understand how difficult it is sometimes to determine accessibility if you're not a good IT, very experienced IT screenreader user.

[00:38:34.64] And that's what helps out, having standards and guidelines, because they are built in. And many people who are blind and have other disabilities were helpful in coming up with the WCAG Accessibility Guidelines.

[00:38:49.67] And so another person that would need to know about assistive technology is the disability services office, because they're kind of on the front line. And many would ask a student when they're getting accommodations, what assistive technology are they using? And they may be using that technology already.

[00:39:05.77] But the disability services offer it because they know maybe there are other things they should consider. And hopefully there's an access technology center over in the IT side of the house with those IT specialists that has those products on display-- and can try things out. So the disability resources for students has to have that type of expertise as well.

[00:39:29.32] And then guidelines and standards and rulings that promote the universal design of technology-- I think there's a basic information people need to know about what I talked today about, that the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines exist and have done so for many years and provide guidance for the United States but also for other countries, so very well accepted as guidelines on IT accessibility.

[00:39:53.16] And so people need to know there are guidelines here. You might have a staff person who is your website manager. Those people in those positions could easily push back and say, oh, that's really hard. We're not really doing that. Well, you as their manager should know that there are guidelines, standards to which they can apply to their website and learn more. Maybe there's a group, like our liaison group, that they could actually go to meetings, so forth.

[00:40:24.86] And the ruling too, it's good to throw that in because it is important, of course. And we have to get on this. We're maybe not moving-- most of us are not moving at this pace that the government would like us to. And have a basics on that ruling. And so managers, for instance, need to know because they may have IT people who work for them. And so they need to share that information or have someone and share it with them. That's an important part of their training.

[00:40:53.97] And then there's just a whole lot of things, like accessible or universal design of digital content in general. The basics is on the slide in this list. What I think is, everyone should have the basics. The basics of what?

[00:41:08.50] Well, what are some accessibility guidelines? I talked about captioning videos. I talked about not relying on the keyboard alone. There's a relatively short list of things that you should know about that give people an understanding of, accessibility guidelines, what do they look like?

[00:41:27.93] And so they need to have some examples but using examples that everyone can understand. Like, using the keyboard alone, you can understand that basic idea. You might be shocked to learn that Anthony and others who have physical disabilities can use all those keys on the keyboard, but they can't. And so you can accept that. So then there are some details more in the documents, websites, video and audio, online courses, trainings, meetings, conferences, social media, AI, and future technologies.

[00:41:57.50] And those is kind of a mix for you. I think everyone should know about designing an accessible online meeting and the PowerPoints or other slides that you're going to distribute.

[00:42:08.69] Anytime anyone's going to deliver a meeting, anybody who might deliver a meeting-- that could be a faculty member or someone that just gives presentations like this one today. And they should know if you're going to distribute those slides, which we do in this program, you need to make those accessible for people with disabilities-- with the contrast, with the alternative text when needed, and so forth.

[00:42:33.44] And so that's really important, but that's the basic ideas there. And then for trainings, of course, people that do trainings need to know about accessibility. And the designers may have a role in all those trainers. We've got the faculty here, the instructors, but then you have the designers.

[00:42:53.39] So looking at their roles, my experience is that the designers need to know more about accessibility than the faculty. If the designers are designing that course, it's really important that they know how to make it accessible. And that takes that burden away from the faculty or trainers that you're using.

[00:43:12.04] As far as documents and websites and so forth, I think it's easiest for people [INAUDIBLE] basic things to choose something that's fairly easy. Word documents, Microsoft Word-- that's fairly easy, to make that document accessible-- and PowerPoints as well. And that overlaps with trainers that need to learn about making your slides accessible. It's harder to do in Google. And so if you want to make it easy on yourself, maybe stick with PowerPoint.

[00:43:42.22] It's easy to go out on the web too, especially with the AI that Google uses now. You get a pretty reasonable response in asking, I'm using this type of computer. How do I design an accessible document in Word? Things like that. So people that are not in the IT world very deeply at training might need to see some demonstrations of this accessibility.

[00:44:11.13] But we need to be assured that they don't need to learn a lot of the details unless they want to go to the next step. Then you can provide training on that. But I never object to people learning more than they actually need to know. And some people are moving toward different jobs. And so when you get to things like websites, it's good to know at least some parts. I've already given you some guidelines they can look at. And you can show them how to show the text that underlines an image and so forth. And so you do that.

[00:44:40.20] But also, there are accessibility checkers for documents, like Word documents, and also websites and so forth. And so those can be taught to people that don't have a lot of technical expertise. But it lets them know there are some ways to learn about accessibility of a website where you're not actually the creator of that website.

[00:45:02.38] Some campuses have standardized on accessibility checkers. The University of Washington has. I'm not mentioning those tools because it's not like I'm endorsing them, but I think they're pretty good. Anyway, if you go to the website at the University of Washington, you'll find that information. It's very detailed on what checkers they're using.

[00:45:23.77] Video and audio-- sometimes a person's in a position to just tell their staff that's doing the video or audio they need to include captions. And sometimes it's as simple as posting your videos on YouTube, but realizing that those captions that you are automatically created by the computer are just drafts. And so people need to go in, and they need to edit those drafts to make them accurate.

[00:45:49.77] Many people just laugh at how silly some of the captions are, like, this one I saw yesterday. Well, then I want to know, if you can contact the owner, that's the tricky part. If you know who the owner is, they can make those changes. But you can't. So that's really important. It doesn't have to be really hard to do to be worth learning about it.

[00:46:11.76] And some of the information about online courses, of course, faculty need to know in depth, including pedagogy. It's not just IT. It's in conjunction with the pedagogy they're using. And so you should have that together. For instance, if you look at universal design for learning, says there are multiple ways, for instance, to gather content.

[00:46:34.17] Well, maybe you use a video and you're going to use a document to teach that content. That would be a good example. But you need to make the content in the handout accessible and design the video to have accurate captions in order for it to be a full universal-design implementation.

[00:46:54.58] And then conferences, that's more specialized. And so it's not something I would get into with many groups that I talk to. But sometimes you'll find a specific group that that's what they do. We've given presentations over the years to people that put all the materials together for graduation. There are a lot of opportunities there to make things accessible to people with disabilities or not-- and includes physical spaces and includes technology and other things as well.

[00:47:22.42] And then there are new technologies. Social media's not all that new, but AI certainly is a good one to look at. And then give people a thought on what to think about when something comes out, like AI. Some of the questions I would ask is, can it be used by-- let's say generative IT, like ChatGPT? Can it be used by people with disabilities? Is it biased in the responses that it gives? And there's some research out there that says yeah. Big surprise, right?

[00:47:53.96] And then are there some special things that AI can provide for people with disabilities, some assistive technologies that can then make their life more usable and inclusive? And so, yeah, thinking about what the basic questions are whenever a new technology comes along-- so it's important to have that in there as well. And then administration of accessible digital technology-- they need to know what the ADA ruling is all about. And make sure the people that need to know that do the things that they need to do.

[00:48:32.45] OK. And then I'm going to conclude here. We're going to go back, and we'll have some discussion of the things I just talked about. But this is my final slide on resources. If you want to look at that Department of Justice rule, just look at ada.gov. And I would encourage you to look around there. It won't be hard to find the fact sheet. Start there. It's just a few pages long.

[00:48:54.25] And then, of course, the final rule is there in all of its glory, but it's very long and quite technical. But it's good to skim through it to just see what it's all about, regardless of what your role is. And if you're implementing it-- you're one of those IT accessibility experts-- you need to read it word by word, as the ADA compliance officer will, and some others.

[00:49:16.33] But everyone should be able to understand it correctly, the idea of it, by just looking at the fact sheet. So think about what category you're in or the people that are going to be at your presentation, what category they're in.

[00:49:29.23] I mentioned several times Accessible Technology at the University of Washington uw.edu/accesstech. There are other resources out there. I mentioned WebAIM. But do some googling. You'll find some others. I think you'll find the most resources at large institutions, but there are some smaller institutions that have good resources as well.

[00:49:50.18] But yeah, I tend to look at resources that have been around for a long time. And look at what their funding is. Because sometimes there's temporary funding that's used for these websites of resources, and there's no ongoing funding. And so it isn't very accurate anymore. So poke around a little bit.

[00:50:09.92] And then link to those resources if you don't have a lot of resources yourself. Don't come up with guidelines on making PDFs accessible. Look around. Pick out one that you think works best, and just link to that guideline. And if it's large institutions of higher education or also WebAIM and organizations like that, you can be fairly certain that they'll keep updating those.

[00:50:32.99] And then the online course I was mentoring is up here. It's on digital accessibility, starts in April. And the URL is tinyurl.com/2e3remfz. And again, I'll repeat my email address if you have more questions or just some comments as well. [sherylburgstahler-- all one word--@outlook.com](mailto:sherylburgstahler@outlook.com).

[00:51:03.04] So what I'd like to talk to you about is-- any of you that have put some ideas in the chat already, but specific things that you've learned that you need to teach particular stakeholder groups or you should include in all training.

[00:51:16.72] I keep learning every day. Back when I was in my full-time position, I did it. But even now, as I'm teaching online and giving presentations, I always have to keep looking back. And I always learn something from looking at what other people are talking about.

[00:51:29.50] 3Play Media offered so many webinars, and I'm at many of them. And it helps me look at what I teach from that perspective. And so I'm always learning something. So I haven't covered everything, but I've given it a good shot for this target audience that's quite diverse. So are we seeing anything in the chat, Jaclyn?

[00:51:52.22] JACLYN LAZZARI: Yes. Thanks so much, Sheryl. We do have time for a couple of questions. We have had some come through. So I'll ask the first one. Someone asked, what are some ways that you recommend engaging faculty and staff to buy into these trainings and to

make their documents and information more accessible, especially if some are more resistant to implementing those learnings?

[00:52:16.34] SHERYL BURGSTHALER: Well, I think the training, if it can be provided by colleagues, is really important. And the endorsement of administration is good as well. But one thing I find from faculty members that are pushing back-- I say, why are you pushing back? Kind of have to-- it's good to ask them in a very comfortable way.

[00:52:38.47] And sometimes it's like, well, I don't see why we have to do all this extra work for just a few students. Well, we do do extra work for a few students sometimes. All of us, when we're teaching a class, we don't provide the same support to every student in our class. You might find a student with a disability might require more assistance. But if you apply universal design, that will not be the case. It'll improve your class for everyone and so forth.

[00:53:03.37] The other complaint is, it just takes too much time to go through these classes and caption all my videos and make documents accessible and so forth. I tell those faculty-- and some of the administrators may not like this, but I tell them, well, if you really feel that that's beyond the scope that should be your requirement for you to do, I said, this is a good time for faculty of your department or the unit to start talking about that. Who could provide that service?

[00:53:29.45] We have, let's say, the business school as being part of our IT accessibility liaisons group. The liaison went back and said, I think we should caption all the videos for faculty. Business school's a huge unit. But that's automatically done. My husband teaches in that unit. And all of his videos are captioned. He doesn't really know how that happens. It just happens, like magic. So that's a good one.

[00:53:51.77] School of Social Work at the University of Washington for many, many years has provided remediation of documents, particularly PDFs, as a service to faculty. And College of Education-- another model is, they provide regular training to faculty, including an overview of accessibility, but then workshops with very specifics, many times hands on so they can all come in. And together, they work on making their class more accessible. So those are my tips in that regard.

[00:54:20.69] JACLYN LAZZARI: Great tips. Thanks, Sheryl. And then we have time for one more question. Someone asked if you had any training aids or tips for ensuring email accessibility.

[00:54:31.75] SHERYL BURGSTHALER: Well, that's a good question. It's a very good question. I think probably that should be in here as one of the areas. I don't have any special tips on that. But I think probably the most common ways email are not accessible is actually including links to resources that are not accessible. That's just off the top of my head. Don't send out email linking to resources that are not accessible to people with disabilities.

[00:54:59.50] And then also, the text in that link, of course, in your email message should be descriptive as well. Using sans-serif fonts, like Helvetica, they're good for people who have low

vision. So that would be good-- and the basic email message not being terribly small, just a little bit more than maybe you would otherwise.

[00:55:23.80] And I think another one in emails is, really look at your content of your email. I'm just frustrated the number of times that there's a message sent out, and when you look back on it, it's just like a draft. And it is, I think. Where they look through and say, is this going to make sense to somebody else? Sometimes I'll get a message from-- not anymore, I don't work at the UW in this capacity-- but a message to do something from our IT specialist or whatever.

[00:55:52.35] But it's like I'm just entering in the middle of a conversation. They don't describe the acronym that they just presented and things like that-- so having a good writing style that's easy to understand.

[00:56:03.42] JACLYN LAZZARI: Great tips. Thanks so much, Sheryl. That's all the time we have for questions. Thank you again, Sheryl, for the wonderful presentation and to our audience as well for engaging with us and asking great questions. Thanks, everyone, again. And I hope you all have a wonderful rest of the day.

[00:56:23.27] SHERYL BURGSTHALER: Thanks for coming.