Section 508 Compliance and Web Accessibility

Our primary goal is to assure equal access to all aspects of the college experience for students with disabilities through reasonable accommodation.

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Section 508 Laws

In 1998, Congress amended the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to require Federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology (EIT) accessible to people with disabilities. Inaccessible technology interferes with an ability to obtain and use information quickly and easily. Section 508 was enacted to eliminate barriers in information technology, open new opportunities for people with disabilities, and encourage development of technologies that will help achieve these goals. The law applies to all Federal agencies when they develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology.

WCAG 2.0 Layers of Guidance

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) defines how to make Web content more accessible to people with disabilities and all users by providing principles, guidelines, testable success criteria, and sufficient and advisory techniques. Four principles provide the foundation for Web accessibility: perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust.

Principle 1: Perceivable - Information and user interface components must be presentable to users in ways they can perceive.

Examples:
- Non-text content (i.e. images) should include a text alternative that serves the equivalent purpose.
- Color is not used as the only visual means of conveying information or prompting a response.
- Except for captions, text can be resized without assistive technology up to 200% without loss of content.

Principle 2: Operable - User interface components and navigation must be operable.

Examples: Make all functionality available from a keyboard.
- Provide users enough time to read and use content.

Principle 3: Understandable - Information and the operation of user interface must be understandable.

Examples: Labels or instructions are provided when content requires user input.
- When any component receives focus, it does not initiate a change of context.

Principle 4: Robust - Content must be robust enough that it can be interpreted reliably by a wide variety of user agents, including assistive technology.

Example: In content implemented markup languages, elements have complete start and end tags.