# Improving Course Accessibility with Blackboard Ally

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# Ally

- Ally automatically rates the accessibility of your Blackboard content and shows you how to fix accessibility issues.

- The accessibility scores are low(red), medium (yellow), high (green), and perfect (dark green).

- You want to fix content that is low or medium scoring.

- Items with a high score can usually be easily fixed.

- You can view the score directly in your content areas, content collection, or Course Tools > Accessibility Report.

# Common Accessibility Issues

- Document does not have headings
- Image does not have alternative text
- PDF is a scanned image of text
- PDF has no title
- Document has tables that are missing headers

# Headings

- Use the Styles in the Microsoft Word toolbar
- Use Heading 1 to break the document into sections
- Use Heading 2 for sub sections

# Image Alternative Text

- Short description of the essential information conveyed by the image

- If the image is purely decorative it a can be denoted as so.

- In Word/PowerPoint right click on the image and select Edit Alt Text...

- Alt text can also be adding using Adobe Acrobat

- [Web Accessibility Tutorial - Images](#)

# PDF is a scanned image of text

- Since this is just an image of text it can not be read using a screen reader (an assistive technology used by people with vison-based disabilities)
- Avoid scanning book pages and instead make a request to the library to get a pdf copy to put in e-reserves.
- If you must use a scanned document, make sure it is clearly readable and use OCR (Optical Character Recognition) in Acrobat or Word.
  - Adobe Acrobat's EDIT PDF tool uses OCR to recognize and convert text images to text.
  - Opening the PDF in Microsoft Word will also use OCR to convert to text.
  - The conversion will most likely have mistakes.

# Table missing Headers

- Add a header row to the top of your table
- Right click with the cursor in that row > Table Properties… > Row > Repeat as header row at the top of each page > OK

# PDF has no title

- In Word: File > Properties > Summary > Enter Title > OK
- In Adobe Acrobat: File > Properties > Description > Title > OK

# Accessibility Checkers

- Microsoft Office and Adobe Acrobat have accessibility checkers that you can use to check for issues before uploading to Blackboard.

- Make use of the Microsoft O365 suite of tools which have accessibility tools.

# Accessibility Report Dashboard

- Located under the Blackboard Course Management menu Course Tools > Accessibility Report
- Easily find content with accessibility issues

# Ally Alternative Formats

- Instructors and students can download content in other formats that can be more accessible for certain needs.

- Ally does the conversion

- The formats include: HTML, ePub, Electronic braille, Audio (MP3), and BeeLine Reader.

# More Information about Ally

- [Blackboard Ally Tutorials on Instruction@UH](#)
- [Blackboard Ally - UH Equal Opportunity Services (EOS)](#)