KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY

Faculty Guidebook for Digital Teaching and Learning

Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
Digital Learning Advisory Committee (DLAC)
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I. Introduction

Dear Online Teaching Faculty,

Thank you so much for your willingness to step out of the type of classrooms you have always known and into a new space with and for our wonderful KSU students. Taking on a new challenge is not always easy, but we are glad you are here and look forward to offering support. We know that you're a faculty member who cares passionately about students, and we know that you have your own pedagogical strengths and experiences. Our goal here is to help you translate what you already do best in the classroom into the digital space, no matter what modality, without losing who you are, the content and skills you care most about communicating to students, and the rich relationships that can develop between teachers and students who are engaged in learning together.

You may be wondering why some instructors at KSU choose to teach online, what they enjoy about it, and what the particular challenges are. You may also wonder about ways to overcome those challenges and really thrive. (You can! We promise!) And, you may also be wondering who KSU online students are demographically and why they want and/or need to learn online. While providing complete and thorough answers to these questions may go beyond the scope and intention of this Guidebook, we can offer a list of what we have heard over the years from other faculty members like you, and some comments received from online students that might help you imagine what the online classroom can be like:

After Teaching Online, Faculty Often Say:
- *Online learning can lead to even deeper conversations and connections because students have more time to think about the questions we ask versus being limited to an hour and 15 minutes or 50 minutes in the classroom.*
- *Online learning provided a new pedagogical challenge for me that really revived my interest in how to solve intricate problems in teaching. Teaching online has helped me become a better classroom teacher, too.*
- *It is deeply rewarding for me to be able to meet the needs of students who may not be able to achieve a college degree any other way if we weren't here for them in the digital space: students whose disabilities make coming to campus difficult, students serving in the military who are deployed around the world, working adults, new parents, and many others.*

After Taking an Online Course, Students Often Say:
- *"Our face-to-face meetings supported our online learning. Hybrid learning provided me with space and time needed to process and learn new concepts on my own. The extra time to problem solve and think critically helped me put a lot of what we learned to memory; versus listening to the professor say it in a face–to-face class."*
- *In a hybrid course, "I like that you get the best of both worlds. You get the face-to-face instructions from the professor, and can work through assignments on my own time, and can be open to taking more hours at my job."*

- *"When I decided to go back to school one of the main things I was concerned about was the ability to take care of my child and still work while learning and advancing my degree. When I learned that Kennesaw State University had offered a completely online MAT program for Special Education, I felt that it was an answer to my prayers. I was able to work as a full time teacher, take care of my daughter, and not stress about driving to campus to take courses. Not only did I receive a great education, but I received incredible support from both my peers and professors and developed lifelong relationships that have continued after graduation."*

This guide contains descriptions and ways to access KSU's own well-developed support systems of offices and resources that can help you. It also is here to help you understand the policies around online learning at KSU so that you'll feel comfortable with things like legal requirements around accessibility, expectations around professors' engagement with students. We also hope the many links you see here will lead you to explore a lot of online resources and tools that might benefit your students depending on your disciplinary goals.

Additionally, we have included a bibliography on the last page of teaching and learning books and journal articles that explore online teaching from both professors' and students' perspectives from many different disciplines.

Thank you again for the time and energy you are investing in engaging with KSU's online students. Having worked with them, we know you will enjoy getting to know them and supporting them in meeting their unique needs. Additionally, we think with time and the individual pedagogical strengths and experiences you already bring to the table, you will find that some of the aspects that you might have worried about losing by teaching online, will be retained and strengthened in new and exciting ways. Our goal is to help you find not only competence in teaching online but also the same type of excitement that perhaps drew you to the classroom in the first place. Please let us know how we can assist.

Laura Davis, Ph.D.
KSU Professor of English & Interdisciplinary Studies
Department of Interdisciplinary Studies

KSU Outstanding Online Teaching Award Winner, 2013
KSU Outstanding Teaching Award Winner, 2016-2017

It's All Here

This Guidebook is intended to serve as a resource for faculty who teach students in all modalities: fully online, hybrid, or face-to-face. If you are new to KSU, new to teaching online, or both, you will find access to a myriad of resources and support for digital teaching and learning here.

In this Guidebook are descriptions of and links to tools and software, guidance about how to use these tools effectively, and important information as to why you should use them to facilitate your course design, development, implementation, assessment, management, and accessibility.

Whether you seek support for teaching fully online or if you simply want to enhance your face-to-face instruction - or anything in-between – KSU has the resources, and they are listed here. The various sections of the Guidebook will introduce you to and/or to deepen your knowledge of and skills with tools and software, link you to online tutorials, microlearning, and professional development, and point you in the direction of one-on-one and/or group support and guidance.

If you've ever wondered exactly what resources and support are available from Digital Learning Innovations (DLI), from KSU Library Services, and from the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), your questions will be answered in the Guidebook. You will also find terminology and information about KSU's policies regarding online and hybrid instruction, as well as online programs and the scheduling of courses.

The Faculty Guidebook for Teaching and Learning was developed by the following members of the Digital Learning Advisory Council, who each contributed their expertise and experience.

It's all here! Let us know how we can help!

List contributing DLAC members:
- Bagwell College of Education: Melissa Driver, Julie Moore, Chair
- Coles College of Business: Radwan Ali, Justin Cochran
- College of Architecture and Construction Management: Christopher Welty, Hussein Abaza
- College of Computing and Software Engineering: Sarah North, Svetlana Peltsverger
- College of Science and Mathematics: Joy Brookshire, Rajnish Singh
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- Radow College of Humanities and Social Sciences: David Johnson, Tamara Powell
- Southern Polytechnic College of Engineering and Engineering Technology: Greg Wiles, Margaret "Lori" Lowder
- Wellstar College of Health and Human Services: Margot "Lisa" Hedenstrom, Kandice Porter
- Chairs and Directors Assembly (CDA) Representative: Jim Wright (Advisory)
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- Registrar's Office: Connie Stone (Advisory)
- University Information Technology Services (UITS): Veronica Trammell (Advisory)
- Interim Faculty Director of Digital Experiences: Kimberly S. Loomis

II. Challenges of Teaching and Learning in the Digital Space

Faculty new to teaching and learning in the digital space may identify with many of the challenges associated with learners, content, and teaching as categorized and discussed by Kebritchi, et al (2017) in their review of the literature:

- **Challenges with Learners -** Faculty expect learners in the digital space to have certain qualities, such as strong self-motivation, appropriate skills using technology, favorable attitudes toward online learning and the Internet, and effective time-management skills. Faculty also expect learners to engage in the online learning environment by frequently accessing content and participating in online discussions by making posts that indicate thoughtful consideration of that content.

  It's challenging to make sure that learners are engaged effectively so that they feel that they are a valued part of the online community. That means that the instructor must project a consistent presence in the course, even if the course is offered asynchronously, and they must create opportunities for students to feel like they belong, that they are intellectually and emotionally safe to make significant contributions to shared knowledge building, and that of course, all the content, activities, and resources in the course must be culturally relevant and accessible to them.

  Meanwhile, faculty might be concerned and challenged by learners' expectations as well. Because of the electronic platform of online learning, some learners might expect immediate response to emails and a quick turnaround for grading and abundant feedback.

- **Challenges with Teaching –** With a move to online instruction, not only is the faculty member responsible for designing courses to engage and support learning, but they must also possess the knowledge and skills for translating and delivering the course effectively in the digital space. In effect, the instructor's role changes from being a lecturer or content transmitter to being a learning facilitator and guide. To be successful in this changing role, faculty must be aware of how students learn, know how to transfer instructional materials and strategies into a digital format, and know where and how to get support for all of this.

  Additionally, faculty might be concerned with what they perceive to be the loss of the opportunity to develop relationships with their students like they would have in a traditional classroom. Instructors can take cues from students' facial expressions and body language that they can use to inform instruction when teaching face-to-face. And, as mentioned previously, students might be frustrated that in an online environment, they don't get that immediate feedback that they can expect in a classroom.

Finally, another significant challenge or concern for faculty might be the requisite knowledge and skills necessary to design, deliver, and manage an online course, the significant time investment required for all of it, and even their overall comfort level with technology.

- **Challenges with Content** – Instructors may believe that the content they are to teach in a course cannot be represented as effectively online as it can be in a face-to-face learning environment. There might also be the misconception that for the content to be online, it must be simplified or that online content is limited to video recordings of lectures because there are not enough suitable materials available for online use.

  Finding multimedia and online resources and alternatives as well as tools and software that can replicate face-to-face instruction and interactions may be difficult and time-consuming, and they may still fall short of the learning experience desired by the instructor. Creating online content takes knowledge, skill, and time, and may not be additional compensation for the work that is invested.

  There are ways to effectively address these concerns and challenges in the digital space. It may require modifying your ideas about role as an instructor and putting in some thought, time, and effort, but the good news is that there are resources and support to make your class effective and accessible, no matter the modality. You can improve any learning environment by using even the most basic elements of a Learning Management System (LMS) to complement your face-to-face course. Resources in this *Guidebook*, instructional designers, experienced colleagues and mentors are here to support courses designs that present and represent the content, experiences, activities, relationships, engagements, pedagogies, and assessments simply or more extensively, but all in ways that promote active student engagement and learning online.

Kebritchi, Mansureh, Lipschuetz, Angie, and Santiague, Lilia. (2017, August 8). Issues and challenges for teaching successful online courses in higher education: A literature review. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems 46*(1) 4-29. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047239516661713

III. Getting Started

A. Definition of Modalities

This section provides definitions of the modalities of digital learning offered at Kennesaw State University (KSU). **It is important to note that courses in all modalities require sustained instructor interaction and that course content must be accessible to all learners**. Regarding sustained interaction, the USDOE notes that

- Sustained interaction between instructors and students must be scheduled and predictable.
- Instructors are expected to monitor each student's engagement and substantively engage with students on the basis of that monitoring.
- Instructors must be responsive to students' requests for instructional support.

Making all content accessible to all learners will be addressed in more detail in Section IV.B. of this Guidebook.

Face-to-Face (F2F) Learning

Courses delivered in a traditional in-person classroom setting at scheduled dates and times are taught face-to-face. Teaching is conducted synchronously in a physical learning environment, meaning that "traditionally," the students and instructor are in the same place simultaneously. Course content and information may be supplemented with additional resources provided online in the Learning Management System (LMS, as D2L BrightSpace).

Online Learning

"Online learning is a form of distance education in which a course or program is intentionally designed, in advance, to be delivered fully online and asynchronously. Faculty use pedagogical strategies for instruction, student engagement, and assessment that are specific to learning in a virtual environment." (DLI at KSU)

- 100% online courses are those that do not require any on campus visits or proctored exams. Courses designated as 100% online cannot require any on campus meetings.
- 95% online courses are those with one on-campus face-to-face meeting requirement, typically for an orientation or exam. A proctored exam alternative is made available for students at a geographic distance of 50 miles or more from campus. It is the student's responsibility to obtain proctor approval from the instructor prior to scheduling a proctored examination.

Hybrid Learning

The Online Learning Consortium defines hybrid learning as online activity that is "mixed with classroom meetings, replacing a significant percentage, but not all required face-to-face

instructional activities." There are various distributions of F2F vs online activities in hybrid courses. Hybrid course designations may include

- 50% Hybrid. Course activities are 50% online and 50% face-to-face.
- 66% Hybrid – Course activities are 66% online and 33% face-to-face.
- 33% Hybrid – Course activities are 33% online and 66% face-to-face.

Scheduled course meetings must maintain the designated face-to-face vs online percentages throughout the semester.

Synchronous Learning

Synchronous learning happens in real time online. Instructors and learners log in at the same time on a set class schedule. Instructors in a synchronous environment may take attendance, and there is real-time interaction between students and instructors. Instructors may use web conferencing, teleconferencing, live-chatting, and live-streamed lectures that must be viewed in real time.

Asynchronous Learning

Asynchronous courses are defined as online courses where the instructor, the learner, and other participants are not engaged in the learning process at the same time. In a 100% asynchronous course, there is no real-time interaction between students and instructors, and the content is created and made available for later consumption. Learning is self-paced, and learners learn and complete assignments during their own time. The instructor provides online learning through a Learning Management System (for example, D2L Brightspace), and instruction may include pre-recorded lectures and scheduled assignments for students. Courses designated as "asynchronous" cannot require any synchronous meeting unless specified in advance on the course schedule.

B. Blended Learning Models

While there are several scheduled modality options available at KSU, faculty are encouraged to incorporate **blended learning** into all their courses. Blended learning occurs when a course design intentionally integrates and leverages the strengths of both the face-to-face and online environments. Class time is often modified with the integration of asynchronous or synchronous activities and offline activities. Blended Learning offers a more flexible course format with more possibilities for content delivery and increased access to digital tools and resources.

If you employ a blended approach with your teaching, the [Distance Learning Innovations (DLI) Blended Learning](#) site offers support in choosing a model, planning the design, and implementing your blended course. Be sure to consider the following [Blended Learning Rubric](#) for aspects of course integration, alignment, student engagement, and the role of technology and your D2L site navigation.

Although many types of blended learning models exist, here are just a couple of examples of the most referred to types of blended learning:

Flipped Classroom

A flipped classroom introduces students to new concepts and skills online and provides students time to practice and answer questions during class time. It differs from traditional approaches to instruction and learning because students are given access to new material before class begins (via video lectures, for example), allowing scheduled class time to be used for in-class activities that focus on application of new concepts and skills. In other words, the way students and faculty spend their time (during and outside of class) is flipped.

HyFlex Model

The HyFlex Model (short for "hybrid flexible") is a multi-modal solution that centers around the student's choice. A HyFlex course is offered in a combination of face-to-face and fully online modalities.

The defining characteristic of this student-centered model is that students can choose which modality to participate in on a class-to-class basis. For one class meeting, they could attend class on campus, the next class meeting, they may want or need to join from a laptop. For another class meeting, they could forego any synchronous activities to work through content asynchronously. It is the instructor's responsibility to have a fully developed F2F course and a fully developed online course in D2L. The instructor does, however, get to choose whether to have a synchronous online (Teams, Zoom) component. But it is highly recommended they find some way to incorporate what happened in the classroom for students who attend asynchronously.

Beatty, B. J. (2019). *Hybrid-Flexible Course Design (1st ed.)*. EdTech Books. https://edtechbooks.org/hyflex

C. Digital Teaching and Learning Guidelines

Your content, course learning outcomes, teaching style, student demand, university scheduling policies and a myriad of other factors will influence the modality of a course. Once the modality is determined, you should attend to university guidelines and best practices in your course development.

This section provides an overview of digital learning guidelines at KSU. Please also check with your individual college for all relevant policies and guidelines.

Begin with Planning

1. Identify the **learning objectives** for your course. What do you want your students to know and be able to do as a result of successfully completing the course? Remember that the

course activities and assessments should align with these objectives. The objectives for your course should be measurable. Check out this website: Using Bloom's Taxonomy to Write Effective Learning Objectives.

2. Develop a **course outline**. In what sequence should the content and skills be taught? How much time should be devoted to each of objectives so that students are introduced to the information and then have time to process and practice it to achieve the objective?

3. Develop and sequence course modules according to your course outline. Consider developing learning objectives for each module. When and how should students be assessed on their progress with and achievement of the objectives?

4. Identify your students. Who are they? What needs to they have that require support. What pre-requisites did they take? What prior knowledge and skills do they have? This information should impact many aspects of your course design such as selecting resources, selecting activities, designing assessments, providing accessibility, and determining due dates.

5. Engage the help of an instructional designer. Instructional designers (IDs) can help translate your course content, materials, activities, and assessments into the online environment. It's important to establish communication with your ID early on so that you can meet with them to begin planning process for designing and developing your course.

6. Identify training to help with your course development that might be available through the university or your college and take advantage of it. Check with Digital Learning Innovations, Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, University Information Technology Services, and your college's Distance Learning Coordinator.   See Section IV of this *Guidebook* for information on professional development opportunities.

7. As you are considering implementing this course in subsequent semesters, be sure to check for errors or outdated content and broken links BEFORE a module is released to students.

Consider Course Design

1. Develop your syllabus and provide all required and necessary course policies. Consult these resources and check with your college and department for additional required syllabus components:
   - Required Syllabus Information
   - Syllabus Template from Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Office
   - Accessible Online Syllabus Template (and other resources from DLI)
2. Develop a clear, consistent structure for your course that includes:
   - Clear, detailed instructions, due dates, and grading criteria for student activities, assignments, and interactions.
   - Multiple media formats for learning materials.
   - Opportunities for interactivity. This may include the use of discussion forums, VoiceThread, group projects, blogs, Twitter, etc. See the Toolbox section of this *Guide* for more ways to engage your students in the digital space.

3. Design for [accessibility](#): Use headings/styles in all documents, provide alternative text for all images, and caption all videos. See Section V of this *Guidebook* for ways to make your course content accessible and use [Ally](#) to review courses for accessibility.
4. Review the course from a student's perspective.

Course Implementation and Facilitation

1. During course implementation, adhere to the grading timetable specified in the syllabus. Update LMS gradebook accordingly.
2. If your course includes major exams that must be proctored, such as a final exam, the [KSU Testing Center](#) offers a proctored environment:
   - **Proctoring Service:** Faculty may request a proctored environment for KSU students to take course exams for online, hybrid and on campus courses. Students must take prior approval from faculty before making an appointment.
   - **Final Exam Service:** KSU Academic Testing Services features an online application for faculty members teaching online courses to submit requests for the testing staff to proctor computer-based Final Exams at the testing center. Please note the procedures for requesting testing services for Final Exams. [Click](#) for more information:
3. Manage the discussion forums and other engagement venues to provide instructor presence and engagement. Facilitate and monitor appropriate interaction among students.
4. Adhere to the percentages published in Owl Express for face-to-face, synchronous, and asynchronous course. (See Section I.) Publish dates for each type of meeting in the syllabus.
5. Two or three weeks after the start of the semester, provide a quick survey (three to five questions) about course effectiveness and logistics. Modify inconsistencies or difficulties with course set up, navigation, or requirements according to student responses.

Prioritize Communication

1. Communicate with your students regularly and often using the announcement tool, Learning Management System (LMS) email, or discussion boards.
2. Maintain communication records within the KSU mail systems (LMS or KSU email).
3. Adhere to an email response time that is specified in the syllabus.
4. Contact students who are not adequately participating or who may be earning a C or below. (See the [professional learning on Intelligent Agents](#) for ways to automate this process.)
5. Provide virtual office hours for instructor-student communication.

IV. Getting Help and Support

A. Digital Learning Innovations (DLI): Resources and Services

DLI Services

One-on-One Instructional Design and Development
Faculty can work with the instructional designer aligned to their college for more in-depth design, development, and facilitation of a course. Use [this form](#) to request this service.

DLI provides one-on-one services where faculty work with an instructional design expert on course design, development, implementation, assessment, and management. Use [this form](#) to request this service.

Course Reviews
The DLI team provides instructional design assistance to review online course design using various rubrics ranging from Quality Matters, KSU checklist or your college specific quality standards document. Faculty can complete [this form](#) and get in touch with the college-dedicated instructional designer for a course review.

DLI Resources

Online Teaching and Learning Pedagogy Resources
DLI has prepared guides to a variety of topics below that represent best practices in online teaching and learning. Visit the [DLI Online Teaching and Learning Pedagogy](#) page for information on the following topics.

- Active Learning Techniques
- Constructivism
- Seven Teaching Principles
- Online Accessibility
- Flipped Learning
- Instructional Scaffolding
- Blooms Taxonomy
- Assessments Strategies
- Universal Design for Learning
- Transparency in Teaching and Learning
- Engagement
- Communication
- Prior Knowledge
- Gamification
- Open Educational Resources

Resources for Instructional Design Models

To learn about the following instructional design models and strategies, please [visit this DLI Instructional Design Models page](#).

- Teaching and Learning Model
- Backward Design Framework
- ADDIE (Analyze, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation)
- Hybrid Synchronous with Distance Learning Measures
- Online Learning Vs. Remote Learning
- Successive Approximation Model
- The Hyflex Model

Professional Development (PD)

DLI offers an array of professional development courses both in the instructor-led and self-paced formats. Instructor led, asynchronous, online workshops for faculty assist them in the design, development, and delivery of an online or hybrid course, and faculty earn a badge once they complete these workshops.

Faculty complete self-paced, professional development courses on their own time and earn a certificate. Microlearning lessons are self-directed lessons designed to give faculty an overview of a topic in fifteen minutes. Visit the DLI [Professional Development](#) page.

Instructor Led Workshops

- _**The Online Course Facilitation Program (OCFP)**_**:** The Online Course Facilitation Program is an interactive, three-week asynchronous workshop that is designed to provide participants with the necessary competencies to facilitate an online course by balancing both technical and pedagogical aspects.
- _**The Online Course Design Workshop (OCD):**_ This is a 3-week, online, asynchronous workshop designed to provide participants with the technical and pedagogical skills for designing and developing their online course and using effective pedagogical practices.
- _**Accessible Teaching Essentials (ATE) Workshop:**_ This workshop is designed for faculty who are new to the topic of accessibility. The workshop introduces them to accessibility issues at stake, provides an approachable structure for making their course content accessible, shows them how to check course content for accessibility, and provides training and resources for creating accessible course content.
- _**The UDL Experience (UDLEX) Workshop**_**:** The UDL Experience (UDLEX) is a three-week workshop designed to give Kennesaw State faculty an opportunity to collaborate on applying UDL principles to course lessons, content, activities, and assessments.

DLI offers the following self-directed courses that are intended to be viewed in one sitting. Each course introduces faculty to a model or modality of teaching and provides resources for digging deeper and implementing the concept.

- Flipped Classrooms
- Hybrid Classroom
- Blended Learning

Microlearning Lessons are self-directed lessons designed to give you an overview of a topic. If you have 15 minutes, then you have time to learn something new! Dive right into this DLI created content and when you are ready to learn more, just check the resources provided.

- Building Teaching Presence with Intelligent Agents
- Introduction to Ally
- Seven Teaching Principles
- Universal Design for Learning
- Assessment Strategies in D2L
- Introduction to KSU Zoom
- Setting up a Gradebook in D2L
- Introduction to Learning Analytics

B. Academic Web Accessibility Services (AWA Services) Resources, Policies and Regulations

Get started on making your course accessible by accessing the quick-reference, on-demand resources designed to support you in adjusting your course to accommodate all learners. Please visit the [Academic Web Accessibility](#) web page for various resources, regulations and policies regarding the American Disability Act, Accessibility, Accommodations, and Universal Design for Learning.

- What is Accessibility?
- How to Read Your Accommodations Letter
- Basic Four of Accessibility
- Creating Accessible Content
- AWA Course Accessibility Checklist
- Americans with Disability Act (ADA)
- Sections 505 and 508
- USG and KSU Policies
- World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

- Web Accessibility in Mind (WebAIM)
- What is Universal Design for Learning?
- What are Assistive Technologies?

C. CETL Resources and Services

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) has many resources to support new and established faculty success. Among them are opportunities for support with teaching and learning:

- **Faculty Mutual Mentoring Groups Faculty Resources on Community, Leadership,**
- **Faculty Resources for Scholarly Teaching**
- **Scholarship of Teaching and Learning**
- **Faculty Success Learning Communities**
- **Faculty Coaching for Success**
- **Tenured Faculty Enhancement Programs**
- **Leadership Development Programs**

D. Library Resources and Services

Library Collections

The three facilities of the Kennesaw State University Library System house a robust collection including print and electronic books, periodicals, maps, government documents, and audio-visual materials access to which can be integrated into your course.

Library System Faculty Services Webpage

- **Online Library Orientations** - Modules that may be embedded into your D2L course.
- **Library Instruction –** You can "reserve a librarian" who will provide students with guidance on developing appropriate lines of inquiry, source selection, searing strategies, professional and scholarly communication, and discipline-specific information. This guidance can be provided via asynchronous learning materials and course integration.
  Course Reserves: KSU Library's Course Reserves service allows instructors to place physical or electronic items on reserve for their class for the duration of the semester.

Open Access / Open Educational Resources / Copyright Guides
- The Library System Open Access Guide
- The Library System Copyright Guide
- The Library System Open Educational Resources Guide

V. Making your Course Accessible

Because sections 504 and 508 of the [Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) and the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) in 1990 protect people with disabilities from discrimination and guarantee their civil rights, educational institutions that receive federal funding have a responsibility to ensure that every student, regardless of ability, has equal access to all services, resources, and academic content, including electronic content. Failure to comply with these laws can have drastic consequences for an institution. More importantly, however, ensuring our curriculum is *accessible* to all our students is *the right thing to do.*

One approach to accessibility is to simply wait until you have a student with disabilities in your course and you get a letter from Student Disability Services telling you to make accommodations. There are a few problems with this approach, however. One is that it can create a very stressful situation for you and for the student. Also, waiting until the last minute can often make accessibility feel like an afterthought—largely because it is! And, of course, failure to meet all accommodations can result in legal problems including discrimination lawsuits. Faculty and students are far better served by considering accessibility upfront, when initially creating content.

While these [regulations and policies](#) define what constitutes discrimination, it can be tricky to know how the digital content of your course meets the needs of students with disabilities. For this reason, the [Worldwide Web Consortium (W3C)](#) developed what has become a gold standard for digital accessibility: the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)](#), currently on version 2.1.   These 13 guidelines are organized along four principles which guarantee content is, Perceivable, Operable, Understandable, and Robust to all users. Each guideline has multiple levels of compliance, A (lowest), AA, and AAA (highest). Ideally, our goal is to meet at least AA compliance.

However, even the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines can feel overwhelming to try to navigate. In fact, much of what is outlined in WCAG 2.1 is very technical, outside of the scope of creating content in a course, and has already been done for you! The most important thing to do when it comes to creating an accessible course that keeps in mind the needs of people with differing abilities is to ensure that your documents and course content are readable and navigable to people who use assistive technology. Next, we'll help you get a handle on the simple things you can do to ensure your content is accessible.

Getting a Handle on Accessibility

Basic Four (or Faculty Four)

The [Basic Four](#) are four techniques you can implement to make the most impact in improving the accessibility of your course content for students with disabilities. However, these techniques are meant to be a starting point to address the most pressing accessibility concerns. Once you've mastered these, there is always more you can do to make your course accessible. Learn more at the [Basic Four site.](#) They break down to:

1. [Document Structure](#): In this case, by documents, we refer to many types of content such as Word docs, presentation files such as PowerPoint, HTML files such as D2L pages or Softchalk lessons, and even PDFs. Document structure includes:
    a. **Semantic Structure (Headings):** Labeling your document's section and subsection headings with the proper heading styles allows students using screen readers to browse documents the way sighted readers do.
    b. **List Styles:** Make sure your bullets and numbered lists are formatted properly.
    c. **Tables:** Make sure your tables have a heading row set and the reading order is true.
    d. **Color Contrast:** Setting proper text contrast ensures that students with limited vision will not miss key information.
    e. **Descriptive Links:** Long links that are generally skipped by sighted readers are read aloud to student using a screen-reader. Embed links in descriptive text.
2. [Alternative Text](#): Alt text typically allows the content and function of an image to be accessible to those with visual or cognitive disabilities.
3. [Video Captions and Audio Transcripts](#): All videos must have synchronized, equivalent, accessible captions, and audio files must have a transcript for deaf students.
4. **Accessible Third-Party Resources:** It is up to the instructor to make sure that resources such as third-party videos, publisher resources, or websites are accessible for their students. Resources for checking websites and other software providers are below.

Digital Learning Innovations at KSU provides many resources to guide you in their [Creating Accessible Content](#) page.

Checking for Accessibility

There are several ways you can check content you already have for accessibility! Some resources and links to additional information is below:

Office
Microsoft Office products such as Word, PowerPoint, and Excel all have integrated reports that will check your documents for accessibility issues and let you know what needs to be fixed! The Office documents featured in the [Creating Accessible Content page](#) include instructions on using these checkers.

D2L
For faculty who like to work with HTML pages directly in D2L, there is an integrated accessibility checker. Read to near the end of the [D2L Accessibility Instructions document](#) for instructions on how to use this checker.

Blackboard Ally
Integrated within D2L at KSU is Blackboard Ally, a powerful accessibility tool with two primary features:

1. Ally creates **alternative formats** of your content such as audio files, tagged PDFs, BeeLine Reader and even electronic braille for students.
2. Ally provides **accessibility reports** for faculty on every content item and even creates a course report to help you determine what to work on first.

For more information visit the [Blackboard Ally resource page.](#)

Websites
The internet is a nearly unlimited source of resources for your students, but not every page is built with the same attention to accessibility. [WebAim's WAVE Accessibility Checker](#) is a wonderful tool that can give you a report on any website's accessibility, allowing you to decide whether to include it for your students.

Third-Party Sources
If you are using third-party software or online publisher resources, you'll want to make sure they are accessible. Learning to read a [ccessibility statements and Voluntary Product Accessibility Templates (VPATs)](#) can help you determine whether a resource is appropriate.

Accessibility Checklist

A complete, downloadable, checklist for making sure your course is accessible is available at the [AWA Accessibility Checklist](#) site.

Accessibility Resources

There are many accessibility resources on campus that are available to help you!
1. Get help and learn more about accessibility at DLI's [Academic Web Accessibility page](#).
2. Get accessibility instructions at the [Creating Accessible Content and Checking for Accessibility page](#).
3. Explore training options at our [Accessibility Training page](#).
4. Explore the [Universal Design for Learning page](#) to see how UDL can help mitigate accessibility issues.
5. Meet [Academic Web Accessibility Team at KSU](#) or get direct help from an [Instructional Designer in Digital Learning Innovations](#).
6. Learn how you can get involved with the KSU [Presidential Commission on Disability Strategies and Resources.](#)
7. Explore resources provided by the commission at the [Disability Strategies and Resources.](#)

VI. But wait, there's more: Tools and Software!

Software	Description	How to access	Audience

Add Academic Level Videos to Courses

Software	Description	How to access	Audience
Alexander Street Press Video	Curated, discipline-focused, primary-source collections, websites, and streaming media for learning and research. All are captioned.	Access through the library. Provide link to video or embed in D2L Brightspace	Faculty
Films on Demand	Curated videos on a variety of topics. All are captioned and easily included in D2L course sections.	Use in D2L Brightspace	Faculty

Check D2L Items for Accessibility

Software	Description	How to access	Audience
Blackboard Ally	A tool that allows instructors to view how their course content could be improved for accessibility. Content is scored for universal design and instructors can see how they can make their course content accessible to how students learn best.	Instructor introduction to Ally on D2L.	Faculty/Students

Check for Plagiarism in Written Assignments

Software	Description	How to access	Audience
Turnitin	Turnitin provides students with an interactive means of understanding and applying citation	Enabling Turnitin in D2L	Faculty

	and referencing techniques in their work and provides online grading to academic staff.		

Conduct Peer Review in D2L

PeerMark	PeerMark is a peer review assignment tool. Instructors can create and manage PeerMark assignments that allow students to read, review, and evaluate one or many papers submitted by their classmates. For each assigned paper, students write reviews by responding to the free response and scale questions.	Used in creating assignments D2L Brightspace	Faculty

Create and Administer Surveys

Qualtrics	A powerful online survey tool that allows one to build surveys, distribute surveys and analyze responses from one convenience to online location.	Quick Start Guide Full Qualtrics Guide	Faculty

Create and Edit Animation

Character Animator	An application used to create interactive, high-quality, animations. Available only on desktop version of the Adobe Creative Suite.	• Download Adobe Creative Cloud Suite • Adobe Tutorial • Adobe YouTube Channel • UITS Quick Start Guides	Faculty/limited license for students

Create and Edit Audio

Audition	An application in the Adobe Creative Suite, used to capture, design and mix sound. Available on desktop only.	• [Download Adobe Creative Cloud Suite](#) • [KSU Creative Hub](#) • [Creative Resources-QuickStart](#) Videos • [Adobe Tutorial](#) • [Adobe YouTube Channel](#) • [UITS Quick Start Guides](#)	Faculty/limited license for students

Create and Edit Images

Photoshop	An application in the Adobe Creative suite used to create, edit and composite images, graphic, and art. Available on desktop only.	• [Download Adobe Creative Cloud Suite](#) • [KSU Creative Hub](#) • [Creative Resources-QuickStart](#) Videos • [Adobe Tutorial](#) • [Adobe YouTube Channel](#) • [UITS Quick Start Guides](#)	Faculty/limited license for students
Photoshop Express	An application in the Adobe Creative suite, used to create, edit and composite images, graphics, and art. Available on all devices with less features than Photoshop.	• [Download Adobe Creative Cloud Suite](#) • [KSU Creative Hub](#) • [Creative Resources-QuickStart](#) Videos • [Adobe Tutorial](#) • [Adobe YouTube Channel](#) • [UITS Quick Start Guides](#)	Faculty/limited license for students

| Illustrator | An application in the Adobe Creative suite used to create, edit and composite vector art and illustrations. (Vector art graphics are points, lines, curves and shapes that are based on mathemat (Kelly, 2021)ical formulas.) | • Download Adobe Creative Cloud Suite
• Adobe Tutorial
• Adobe YouTube Channel
• UITS Quick Start Guides | Faculty/limited license for students |

Create and Edit PDFs

| Acrobat DC | An application in the adobe Creative suite, used to create and edit PDF documents and Forms. | • Download Adobe Acrobat DC
• UITS Quick Start Guides | Faculty/limited license for students |

Create and Edit Text-Based Documents

| InDesign | An application in the Adobe Creative suite, used to create informational layouts for print and digital use. | • Download Adobe Creative Cloud Suite
• KSU Creative Hub
• Creative Resources-QuickStart Videos
• Adobe Tutorial
• Adobe YouTube Channel
• UITS Quick Start Guides | Faculty/limited license for students |
| Incopy | An application in the Adobe Creative Suite, that allows copywriters and editors to style text and track changes, and also to make layout modifications. Available on desktop only. | • Download Adobe Creative Cloud Suite
• Adobe Tutorial
• Adobe YouTube Channel
• UITS Quick Start Guides | Faculty/limited license for students |

Create and Edit Video

Premiere Pro	A professional video editing application in the Adobe Creative suite. Available for desktop only.	- Download Adobe Creative Cloud Suite - KSU Creative Hub - Creative Resources-QuickStart Videos - Adobe YouTube Channel - UITS Quick Start Guides	Faculty/limited license for students
Premiere Rush	An application in the adobe Creative suite, used to create, edit, and share videos. Application is available on all devices.	- Download Adobe Creative Cloud Suite - KSU Creative Hub - Creative Resources-QuickStart Videos - Adobe YouTube Channel - UITS Quick Start Guides	Faculty/limited license for students
After Effects	An application in the Adobe Creative suite, used to edit videos, creating motion graphics and visual effects.	- Download Adobe Creative Cloud Suite - Adobe Tutorial - Adobe YouTube Channel - UITS Quick Start Guides	Faculty/limited license for students
Kaltura MediaSpace	Kaltura/MediaSpace Capture is a desktop recording and capture tool for the easy creation of videos including Voiceover PowerPoints. Captioning available. Video Quiz creation.	- Kaltura MediaSpace Capture Desktop Recorder – Faculty Guide - Kaltura MediaSpace – Faculty Guide - Kaltura Mediaspace - Captioning - Katura MediaSpace Video Quiz – Faculty Guide	Faculty/Students

Create and Edit Websites

Dreamweaver	An application in the Adobe Creative suite, used to design, code, and publish websites and web applications using HTML, CSS, Javascript, etc. Available only on desktop.	• Download Adobe Creative Cloud Suite • Adobe Tutorial • Adobe YouTube Channel • UITS Quick Start Guides	Faculty/limited license for students

Create Content

Adobe Creative Cloud	A collection of applications by Adobe designed to facilitate digital content creation. KSU provides an enterprise license for Adobe Creative Cloud to faculty and staff.	• Download Adobe Creative Cloud Suite • Adobe Tutorial • UITS Quick Start Guides	Faculty/limited license for students
Lightroom	An application in the Adobe Creative suite, used to organize, edit, store and share photos across devices. It also manages workflow and edits to stored images. Available on all devices.	• Download Adobe Creative Cloud Suite • KSU Creative Hub • Creative Resources-QuickStart Videos • Adobe Tutorial • Adobe YouTube Channel • UITS Quick Start Guides	Faculty/limited license for students
Lightroom Classic	An application in the Adobe Creative suite, used to organize, edit, store and share photos across devices. It also manages workflow and edits to stored images. Available only on desktop version.	• Download Adobe Creative Cloud Suite • KSU Creative Hub • Creative Resources-QuickStart Videos • Adobe Tutorial • Adobe YouTube Channel	Faculty/limited license for students

		• [UITS Quick Start Guides](#)	
Bridge	An application in the Adobe Creative suite, used to select, organize, edit, and publish digital assets such as videos, PDFs, images, audio, spreadsheets, etc. that you have the right to use.	• [Download Adobe Creative Cloud Suite](#) • [Adobe Bridge User Guide](#) • [Adobe YouTube Channel](#) • [UITS Quick Start Guides](#)	Faculty/limited license for students
Dimension	An application in the Adobe Creative suite, used to generate 3D images for scene design and interactive scene content. Available on desktop only.	• [Download Adobe Creative Cloud Suite](#) • [Adobe Dimension Get Started Guide](#) • [Adobe YouTube Channel](#) • [UITS Quick Start Guides](#)	Faculty/limited license for students
[SoftChalk](#)	Content authoring tools that enable instructors to create an engaging online course curriculum. [Can be integrated in to D2L.](#)	Request an account through UITS at [ServiceNow](#) [SoftChalk Cloud & D2L Quick Guide](#)	Faculty

Create Forms for Classes

[Microsoft Forms](#)	Allows users to create a form, such as a survey or a quiz, invite others to respond to it using almost any web browser or mobile device, see real-time results as they're submitted, use built-in analytics to evaluate responses, and export results to Excel for additional analysis or grading.	https://forms.office.com	Faculty/Students

Create Word Documents and PowerPoints

Microsoft 365	Offers access to Office applications plus their productivity services such as Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneDrive, SharePoint, and more. Microsoft Teams is a collaboration app that helps your team stay organized and have conversations— all in one place. Users can discover channels to belong to or create their own. Inside channels, users can hold on-the-spot meetings, have conversations, and share files.	Access guides to Microsoft features here.	Faculty/Students

Engage Students Using Video and Voice

VoiceThread	Collaborative, multimedia slide show that holds images, documents, and videos and allows people to navigate slides and leave comments in 5 ways -using voice (with a mic or telephone), text, an audio file, or video (via a web cam). Can be integrated into D2L.	Faculty Guide to access through D2L Brightspace	Faculty/Students

Learning Management Systems

Desire2Learn Brightspace	D2L Brightspace is KSU's web-based learning management system (LMS) software system that allows our users to easily manage course work, assignments, and exams on campus, online, and around the world.	Access many helpful D2L BrightSpace Quick Guides here.	Faculty

Moodle	Learning Management System managed by UITS for off-semester and external participant courses	[Access many helpful D2L Moodle Quick Guides here.](#)	Faculty

Meet Online with Students and Coworkers

Microsoft Teams	A collaboration app that helps your team stay organized and have conversations all in one place. Users can discover channels to belong to or create their own. Inside channels, users can hold on-the-spot meetings, have conversations and share files.	• [o365.kennesaw.edu](#) • [Creating a Team Guide](#) • [Teams vs Zoom Comparison Chart](#)	Faculty/Current Students
Zoom Meetings	Cloud-based video communications app that allows you to setup virtual video and audioconferencing.	• [Access Zoom](#) • [Getting Started Guide](#) • [Teams vs Zoom Comparison Chart](#)	

Create an Online Virtual Whiteboard

Miro	Miro is a useful whiteboard application that allows teams to organize and collaborate. Instructors and students can interact in live collaborative sessions as if in a classroom.	• [Apply for education account](#) • [Quick Guide](#)	

Prevent Cheating on Online Exams

Respondus Lockdown Browser	Respondus Lock-Down Browser is a custom browser that secures (locks down) the testing environment. When students use LockDown Browser to access a quiz, they are unable to	[Using Respondus with D2L](#)	Faculty

	print, copy, access unauthorized URLs or applications, or close a quiz until it is submitted for grading.		
Respondus Monitor	Respondus Lock-Down Browser with Monitor is a fully automated proctoring solution. Students use a web cam to record themselves during an online exam. Afterward, flagged (suspicious) events and proctoring results are available to the instructor for further review.	Faculty Guide to access through D2L Brightspace, Faculty Guide	Faculty

Set up Automated Messaging Features in D2L

Intelligent Agents	Can be used to send automatic email notifications from D2L based on conditions the faculty member sets up. For example, you might use Intelligent Agents to email students based on their grades, login history, or activity completion.	Video Microlearning from DLI Faculty Guide	Faculty

Grading

Gradescope	Gradescope helps instructors grade assessments or exams online by speeding up the grading process. It also allows teachers to view statistics of the entire class and notify students once their work is graded	Faculty Guide	Faculty

VII. Technical Service and Support Infrastructure at KSU

Business Unit	Description of Services	Phone number	Email or Website
CIO Office	KSU Vice President of IT and Chief Information Officer	470-578-6620	Officeofcio@kennesaw.edu
UITS	The mission of **University Information Technology Services (UITS)** is to provide customer service excellence through technology leadership and expertise in support of the goals of the university while ensuring innovation and security through technology.	470-578-6620	https://kennesaw.service-now.com/sp?id=landing
UITS Communications	CIO Insight IT Connect Documentation Center	470-578-6620	https://kennesaw.service-now.com/sp?id=landing
Customer Support Service Department	**Customer Support Services (CSS)** offers technical support services to all Kennesaw State faculty, staff and students on all campuses. CSS provides a single point of contact for all IT-related issues and service requests via the KSU Service Desk. This team, in collaboration with Technical Support Specialists assigned to individual colleges, work to support the technology needs in classrooms, offices, and event spaces. Our Student Help Desks are available in multiple locations, and via phone and email to advise and train students on their technology needs. Our services also include support of all the multi-function copy/print devices across campuses, and reservations and checkouts of audiovisual equipment.	470-578-6620	https://kennesaw.service-now.com/sp?id=landing
Service Desk	**ServiceNow:** Customer Portal for submitting a service request	470-578-6669	service@kennesaw.edu
Technical Support Zones	TSS Zones show areas for which Technical Support Specialists are assigned to for service.	470-578-6669	https://kennesaw.service-now.com/sp?id=landing

Technology Outreach Department	The **Technology Outreach (TO**) team provides supportive services to the University through training, learning technologies administration and support, oversight of the university's web content management system, as well as communication regarding upgrades, outages, and technology maintenance.	470-578-6669	https://kennesaw.service-now.com/sp?id=landing
ITAC	The purpose of the **Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC)** is to advise the Chief Information Officer on planning and policy issues concerning use of information technology, increase/facilitate communication between the CIO and IT users and provide support for the teaching mission at KSU through appropriate use of technology to improve learning.	470-578-6620	https://itac.kennesaw.edu/
The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL)	The **Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL)** supports the integrated professional development of KSU graduate students, full- and part-time faculty, and administrators throughout their careers. The Center offers offer programs and services rooted in learning science, process education, human development, organizational development, and assessment theory.	470-578-6410	cetl@kennesaw.edu
Distance Learning Advisory Committee (DLAC)	The **Distance Learning Advisory Committee (DLAC)** is an advisory group to the Provost on digital learning matters. The Committee offers a forum for dialogue on digital learning that facilitates communication among the University stakeholders (Provost, faculty, and students). Its membership includes one elected teaching faculty representative from each degree-granting college with demonstrated expertise in digital learning from each degree-granting college (i.e., a Distance Learning Coordinator)	470-578-6023	dlac@kennesaw.edu

Digital Learning Innovations (DLI)	**Digital Learning Innovations (DLI)** at Kennesaw State University is a multi-faceted department that provides an array of services and resources related to distance and technology-enhanced learning. The DLI is a unit of the office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (CIA), including KSU's fully online degree, certificate and non-credit online programs, collaborative programs, eCore, hybrid or blended course development, and new learning models. Online Directors Instructional Designers	470-578-7550	dli@kennesaw.edu
Library	The KSU Library System encourages creative solutions and the utilization of new technologies and pedagogical strategies to improve our resources and services. We seek innovative ideas and approaches in our pursuit of continuous improvement in supporting student success and research with relevance.	470-578-7550	Library@kennesaw.edu
Curriculum Support Office	The **Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (CIA)** unit is at the heart of what we do at Kennesaw State University, as it encompasses the design, development, and evaluation of the academic degree programs for our students. Our offices facilitate the creation, evaluation, and enrichment our curriculum, ensuring compliance while increasing learning opportunities for students and enhancing the mission of Kennesaw State University.	470-578-6023	cia@kennesaw.edu

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