

WEB ACCESSIBILITY BASICS

Defining Web Accessibility

When we talk about web accessibility, we are talking about the degree to which a website or app is usable by as many people as possible. Accessibility does not just benefit people with obvious disabilities (i.e. low or no vision, difficulty hearing, limited mobility, etc.) It benefits everyone. For example, captions on videos are helpful for someone who is deaf and cannot hear. But captions are also helpful for someone working in a crowded office environment who wants to watch something on Facebook but doesn't want the whole rest of the office to hear it.

VIDEO: [Introduction to Web Accessibility and W3C Standards](#)

If you have any role in maintaining content on the web, accessibility is part of your job. Below are some top tips and things to consider when ensuring your content, and the entire St. John Fisher College website, is as accessible as possible.

Benefits of Web Accessibility

- Making your content accessible means that it can reach the largest audience possible
- Accessible content benefits people both with and without disabilities
- Search engine optimization (SEO)
- Accessible code is generally cleaner and more efficient than non-accessible code
- We are required to provide accessible content under Section 508

WCAG 2.0 and 2.1

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI), was published in 2008 and is a globally-recognized set of guidelines and standards to help make web content accessible.

WCAG has 12 guidelines, divided into four principles (which create the acronym POUR)

- **Perceivable** - Can everyone perceive this? (provide text alternatives for non-text content, caption videos, etc.)
- **Operable** - Can everyone operate this? (all functionality is available via keyboard, enough time is allowed for reading and understanding content, etc.)

- **Understandable** - Can everyone understand this? (content is readable and understandable, users are able to avoid and correct mistakes, etc.)
- **Robust** - Can everyone use this? (compatibility with current and future tools)

Each guideline can be tested against success criteria at three levels of increasing priority: A (base level), AA (intermediate), and AAA (most stringent).

WCAG 2.1 (published in 2018) builds on the foundation of 2.0 and adds additional success criteria around three main areas:

- Mobile accessibility
- People with cognition and learning disabilities
- People with low vision

For more information, refer to the [Web Accessibility Content Contributor Guide](https://www.sjfc.edu/services/training/) at <https://www.sjfc.edu/services/training/>.