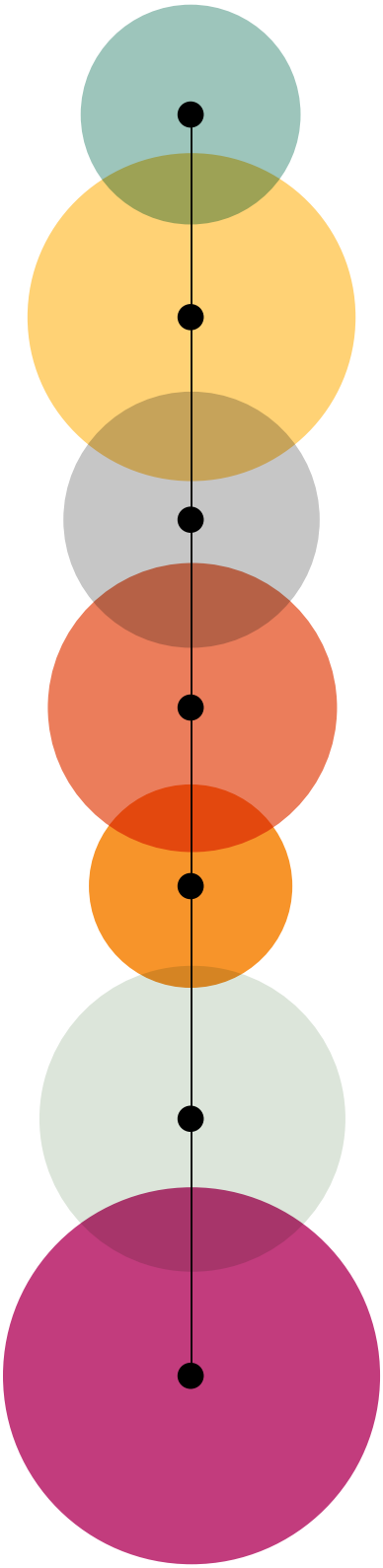
What Does Accessible Content Mean?



01. Captions and Transcripts

All video and audio should have closed captioning or access to a transcript.

02. Color Contrast

Text should be high contrast and shouldn't rely only on color to communicate information.

03. Alt-Text

Use alt-text to describe images and other visual-only content

04. Font Size and Style

Choose fonts that are large and easy to read.

05. Hyperlinks

Use self describing and meaningful names for hyperlinks.

06. Document Headings

Use software formating options to properly assign and create document headings, footers, tabs, tables, and sections.

07. PDFs

Tag PDFs to create a structure and logical reading order. Convert scanned PDFs of text documents into text files using OCR software.

Learning new skills takes time. Focus on making content accessible as it is created, which can be less daunting than going back and updating. Most importantly, remember that accessible content helps everyone.

01. Captions and Transcripts

All video and audio must have closed captioning or a transcript.

- Since summer 2025, videos uploaded to studio.youtube.com or Google Drive have captions that are generally acceptable. It is much easier to edit captions in YouTube than in Google Drive.
- To edit captions in YouTube:
  - Open the file in the YouTube Studio and click “subtitles” on the left navigation bar.
  - You can edit auto-generated captions, type your own, or import a transcript.
  - Pay particular attention to names and specialized vocabulary.
  - Be sure to identify speakers and include non-spoken audio in brackets: [laughter, music].
- Older videos must have the captions uploaded or enabled.
- Change the language settings for your YouTube channel on individual videos to enable captions.
- Re-upload videos to Google Drive to generate captions.
- If you are using a platform that does not allow captions, you must provide a transcript or consider changing platforms .

Watch the video tutorial on captions

tinyurl.com/GCC-closedcap

02. Color Contrast

To ensure sufficient color contrast, we recommend always selecting colors that exceed 7:1 when creating text and 4.5:1 when creating images

- Use a Color Contrast Checker extension for checking colors in Google Chrome. We recommend tinyurl.com/WCAGcca
- You can also request the Desktop Support team install the "**Colour Contrast Analyzer"** on your computer.
- To ensure sufficient color contrast in Gmail messages, be sure to **bold** and underline any linked text.
- Outline blocks in graphs or charts to create more visual contrast.

Watch the video tutorial on color contrast

tinyurl.com/GCC-colorcontrast

03. Alternative Text and Communicating Data

Alternative (Alt) text, is a description of an image, graph, chart, or other visual content. It typically differs from a caption by providing an explanation of the content, where the caption provides context. Alt text is not visible to sighted readers; it is attached to the image and read by a screen reader. All images in digital files need to have a description of the function or appearance, of images, charts, and graphs.

- Avoid decorative images when creating accessible digital files.
- On most programs, open the alt text pane by right clicking the image then adding the alt text to the box on the right.
- Alt text needs to be in all images, including those in email.
- To add alt text to images in your Gmail signature:
  - Open the image in Google Docs and add alt text there
  - Copy the image
  - Open your email signature settings in Gmail
  - Paste the image where you want it displayed
- A good strategy is to upload an image to Gemini and prompt it to create alt text for it.
- Avoid scanned text or WordArt and give complete descriptions (not alt text) of infographics.
- Ensure existing or CC images have alt text that meets your needs.
- For charts, graphs, or PDF calendars, include dates and data as a plain text list and include both versions.

Watch the workshop on alt text

tinyurl.com/GCC-alttext

04. Font Size and Style

Always choose fonts that are easy to read. On presentations make sure font size is >24 pt, unless the slides are to be read by one person on a display, then make it size 18 or greater. Body text should be 12-16pt (12pt is a widely accepted standard, 11pt is often the default for Word or Google).

- Always use the style to create numbered or bulleted lists.
- Traditionally, serifed fonts are better for paragraphs or printed text, and sans serif fonts for headers and digital text.
- Avoid using headers for formatting text, create a new style with a meaningful name.
- You can use the preset styles in Google or Microsoft, use a GCC branded template, or create your own preferred template to easily format your document headers.

Get more information from the GCC Marketing Guide

tinyurl.com/GCC-Brand

05. Hyperlinks

In accessible documents, including email message and calendar invites, hyperlinks should contain linked text not URLs. The linked text should tell folks what they will see there. Don't forget to bold and underline any text after you've linked it. Doing so makes it easier to quickly identify links.

Avoid This	Do This
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88010474840?pwd=4ovWyYWF90q3oba1tlbyWnyR0NbcYa.1	**Link to the April 24 Zoom meeting**
Click here	**Visit the GCC Web Page**
Closed Caption video: https://youtu.be/AqpVlQNh8WM?si=qZ5UeyUA8LCiYVTG	**Closed Caption video**
https://online.gcc.mass.edu/pluginfile.php/10819192/mod_resource/content/1/Lorem%20ipsum%20dolor%20sit%20amet.docx	*It depends*

Use a tiny URL and/or QR code when sharing digital content in a dynamic setting (large meetings, digital and print presentations, mobile/personal devices), as has been done in this handout.

06. Document Headers

Accessible documents use headings and unique slides titles to both make it easier for screen readers to navigate long documents and slide shows.

- Use the toolbars to insert headers.
- You can update the appearance of headers by editing it to the desired appearance, then updating the header to match the selected text.
- Ensure tables have header rows or columns. Avoid merged or empty cells in tables, which will fail an accessibility check. Instead, insert a header above the table, and fill empty cells with “no data” or “not applicable.”
- Make sure to use styles for numbered or bulleted lists.

Use the preset styles in Google or Microsoft, a GCC branded template, or create your own preferred template to easily format your document headers and styles.

07. PDFs

For text based PDFs, it is best to use the checker in the program you used to create the document (Grackle for Google, Microsoft for Microsoft). Adobe Acrobat is best for complex PDFs that have multiple charts, images, or are primarily graphics based documents. After making the updates recommended in steps 1-6, use the Adobe Acrobat application to run the accessibility checker and tag documents. The accessibility checker will not work if you are using the browser version of Acrobat.

Note: Acrobat is a very powerful program that can be very complicated to learn. We recommend using Acrobat only if you've exhausted all other options first, or already have a deep familiarity with the Adobe Suite.

- Adobe Acrobat should be installed on your computer. (Submit a Help Desk ticket if it is not.)
- Sign in with your GCC credentials.
- To launch the Accessibility Checker, search for it.
- Tagging is the most frequent need.

Review this quick guide for using the Adobe Accessibility Checker.

tinyurl.com/GCC-PDFguide