

## 8 Tips for Standard 8 *(This is an abbreviated tip sheet. For details, refer to the full handout on the conference materials site.)*

### Tip 1: Document Type

Ensuring you are using a document format easily readable and usable across multiple platforms helps you address Standards 8.1 and 8.4. Running documents you create through an accessibility checker helps you address Standard 8.1 (see annotation #4).

- In Word or PPT: Go to **File + Info + Check for Issues + Check Accessibility**.
- In Adobe Acrobat: Go to **View + Read Out Loud + Activate**.
- In HTML, try the **WAVE Toolbar** (<https://wave.webaim.org/toolbar/>) or **508 Checker** (<http://www.508checker.com/>).

### Tip 2: Document Structure

Using proper structure and chunking (such as use of Headings and Lists) within a document makes it more readable and more navigable, helping you with Standard 8.1 (see annotation #5), Standard 8.3 (see annotation #4), and Standard 8.4 (see annotations #1 and 3).

- Organize your content into a logical outline format.
- Place important information or instructions at the top, when possible.
- Use the built-in **heading** structure of your authoring tool (e.g., Word, SoftChalk, PDF, HTML, etc.).
  - Headings create bookmarks so that students can navigate through your document.
  - Use heading styles rather than simply bolding or enlarging text.
  - Use levels in the proper order. (Heading 1 for title, Heading 2 for main sections, Heading 3 for sub-sections)
- Use the built-in list styles for organizing and chunking content for sighted readers and proper tagging for those using assistive technologies.

### Tip 3: Document Format

Making the right color and font choices makes your course materials more readable. Readable course materials are addressed in Standard 8.4.

- **Use Sans Serif font** (e.g., Calibri, Verdana, Arial, Tahoma) for easy readability on computer and mobile devices. Serif fonts (e.g., Times New Roman, Bookman Old Style, Garamond, *Lucinda Calligraphy*) are used only if the content is to be printed (not read online). If your content is likely to be read both online and in print, choose sans serif.
- Use dark font colors on a light background (e.g., black text on white background).
- Avoid using color to distinguish between information, or as the only means to conveying the information.
- Use bold and italics to emphasize text when necessary, and use textures in addition to color when creating charts. Generally red-blue and yellow-blue color combinations are safe.
- Avoid overuse of all CAPS. Students with low vision issues might find words in all capital letters confusing and difficult to read.
- Avoid underlining words for emphasis. Reserve underlining for navigation links. Underlined text denotes a link to low vision readers and assistive technologies. Instead use styles, bolding, and italicizing where appropriate.

### Tip 4: Scanned Documents – Text or Image?

Ensuring your scanned documents are readable helps you further address Standard 8.4, but also Standard 8.3 (see annotation #5).

- Scan for OCR (optical character recognition). Each scanner/printer is different, but look for options such as selecting “optimize for text” rather than image.
- Check whether you can select & copy PDF text. If you can highlight, select, and copy the text, then you’ve successfully scanned as text.
- Select “Read Out Loud” using Adobe Reader. If the reader is able to read the text to you, you’ve successfully scanned as text.

## Tip 5: Descriptive Links

Properly formatted links help you work toward meeting Standard 8.1 and Standard 8.4.

- In text, use descriptive links rather than entire URL.
- Do not use “click here” as your descriptive text.

## Tip 6: Images

Adding ALT Text, descriptions, or captions to images in your course helps you meet Standard 8.3 (see annotation #2).

- Add alt text to all images. (In Word or PPT, enter alt text into the **Description** field).
- For complex images use a caption, add a description to surrounding text, or provide a link to supporting text.

## Tip 7: VPATS

Linking to VPATs within your course (either in the Syllabus or a separate document) helps you to address QM Standard 8.2.

VPAT (Voluntary Product Accessibility Template) is a vendor-generated statement that provides relevant information on how a vendor's product or service claims to conform to the Section 508 standards. To Find VPATs, check vendor websites, email vendor contacts, refer to your campus' instructional design/technology team, or try a Google search.

## Tip 8: Multimedia

Providing transcripts and captions for audio and video components in your course helps you to meet Standard 8.3.

Keeping videos relatively short helps you toward meeting Standard 8.5 (see annotation #5).

- For Audio content YOU create:
  - Start with a Script!
  - If you didn't start with a script, then some options include:
    - Manually transcribe as you listen.
    - Run the MP3 file through Dragon Naturally Speaking or YouTube.
    - Hire third-party transcription services.
- For Audio content someone else has created:
  - Check the website/vendor where you found the media; transcripts are often already available or can be made available by request.
- For videos created by someone else:
  - If captions or a transcript are not already available, consider contacting them to request an accessible version of the video or a transcript.
  - Search for videos already captioned. (In YouTube, search for human captioned videos by adding a comma and the letters 'cc' after your search term, i.e. classroom management, cc.
- For videos YOU create:
  - Start with a Script!
  - Keep them short!
  - YouTube offers multiple means for you to add captions videos you've uploaded MP4s into the Video Manager. The most useful options are Transcribe and Auto-Caption (<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2734796?hl=en>).
  - Camtasia and other video software usually allow you to copy/paste in your script, transcribe while listening, or have speech-to-text functions.

