PROJECT 2: ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT (150 PTS)

Before you develop your own accessible digital content, you need to practice identifying and problem-solving accessibility issues. This process of identifying issues is sometimes referred to as an **accessibility audit**. That audit is informed by accessibility testing steps and procedures, referred to as **protocols**, which are meant to facilitate an accessibility audit. Testing allows professional writers to understand how users experience the documents, software, and products that we design. It allows us to work toward disability justice by prioritizing access and eliminating barriers for disabled users, which makes content more accessible for everyone.

For the second project, you will read about web accessibility guidelines and develop a customized accessibility protocol that can be used to evaluate the content and design of digital texts. You will first create a protocol for assessing the accessibility of a website or mobile app, then conduct an accessibility audit.[1] You will present your results and make recommendations in a 2-page report.

GUIDELINES

1. **Accessibility Assessment Protocol.** Based on accessibility principles (and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines: http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/), you will design a protocol to evaluate the accessibility of digital texts and projects. This often takes the form of a checklist or table.

   This protocol should comprise a minimum of 15 generic (i.e., adaptable) questions to which specific project-related details can be added. The users of these protocols are other accessibility testing administrators seeking models for testing the accessibility of digital content with real or simulated users.

   Consider content, context, and design as you draft your protocols:
   - **Content.** Your protocol should include both qualitative (rhetorical) and quantitative (technical) aspects of testing, and the questions should be grounded in the readings about accessibility. Consider the wording of your questions and the effectiveness of other visual cues in your protocols.
   - **Context.** Each protocol must introduce the context: its purpose, who should use it, how to use it, what tools the user needs to complete the audit, etc.
   - **Professional Design.** Your protocols should be legible, usable, and accessible. Use design principles, headings, and accessible formatting to guide readers through steps and chunk information.

   Deliverable: 15-question protocol (.docx)

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[1] I do *not* recommend conducting an audit on a multiple-page website. I would choose an organization's social media profile, the homepage of a website or mobile application, or a landing page.

2. **Informal Report.** After designing your testing protocol, you will conduct an accessibility audit on a web or mobile application. After conducting your audit, you will synthesize and reflect on the results in a 2-page informal report. Reports should include the following components:

   - **Header.** To/From/Date/Subject
   - **Introduction.** State the purpose of the report, key findings, and recommendations.
   - **Discussion.** Synthesize and reflect on your results: What design elements were accessible? What accessibility issues emerged? Who might those affect? What should the designers and writers of the web or mobile app consider moving forward?
   - **Recommendation(s).** Note any action that should be taken to make the web or mobile app more accessible. If you have multiple suggestions, use a numbered list to indicate priority.
   - **Appendix.** Include the completed accessibility audit at the end of the report.

   Deliverable: 2-page report (.docx or PDF)

SUBMISSION DETAILS

There is no page limit for protocols, but they need to include a minimum of 15 questions. Reports should be two pages and employ block formatting.

You will submit a full draft of your accessibility assessment protocols for feedback on Friday, February 24th. We will workshop these in class.

Project 2 is due to Canvas by the start of class on Friday, March 3rd.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Project 1 is worth 150 points total: 100 points for the accessibility assessment protocol, 25 points for the audit, and 25 points for the report.

Assessment protocols will be assessed holistically, based on the following criteria:

Content (75 points)
- Clear introduction to the document's purpose and uses
- Thorough, thoughtful selection of assessment criteria informed by the readings
- Combination of content and design questions
- Logical organization of questions
- Applicable to *most* digital texts/projects
- Clear, concise, and precise questions

Design (25 points)
- Usable: use of headings and subheadings to facilitate readability, formatting that provides space for someone to type answers

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- Accessible: correct, consistent application of Styles formatting
- Overall professionalism (i.e., professional font pairings, consistent formatting)

Audits will be assessed as complete/incomplete. If you complete an audit of a web/social media app using the protocol you've designed, you will receive full credit.

Informal reports will be assessed holistically, based on the following criteria:
- Clear and concise synthesis of accessibility audit
- Evidence of critical thinking and reflection
- Logical organization of ideas to facilitate readability and understandability
- Thoughtful recommendations
- Adherence to report formatting: block formatting, strategic use of headings and lists, clearly labeled and captioned media elements

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