# Other ADA Considerations

# Use of Color

Because visually-impaired and colorblind students can’t determine colors at all or certain color combinations, you’ll need to examine your materials for how you use color.

## Color to Convey Information

Ideally, you do not use color or emphasis (such as bold, underlining, or italics) to convey important course information (e.g., assignments in bold red text are due on Wednesdays). Screen readers to not read the color of text, nor do they acknowledge if you have electronically highlighted text. If you plan to use color to convey important information, make sure that you have an alternative way to share this information with students who may not be able to see it. For example, have a schedule with due dates rather than a color coded schedule.

## Color Contrast

As was mentioned in the Blackboard tutorial, make sure you use color combinations that are easy for everyone to read. For example, course menus should be careful of both color combinations and patterns in the course menu if you choose to use buttons for your navigation. Below are examples of bad and good color combinations.

The picture below is of a Blackboard menu with poor color contrast. This menu is difficult to read for those with good vision and may be impossible to read for those with color blindness or low vision.



The picture below is of a Blackboard menu with good color contrast that should be easier to read.



The buttons in the picture below from Blackboard are another example of coloring that might be hard to read. The patterns can make it hard for any student to read the text.



The buttons in the picture below from blackboard are an example of easy-to-read button styles. The “striped” buttons with a light background would be good to use with black text to be readable for a wide audience.



# Acronyms

The use of acronyms in course materials is part of a circuit court decision for our region and not part of the federal ADA law. Most people practice sharing what an acronym stands for before stating just the acronym, and this is fine (e.g., National Basketball Association, or NBA). Another option is to include a list of all acronyms that will be used in a class somewhere in course materials. The important idea here is that students know what acronyms stand for-- the court case revolved around a faculty member not wanting to provide that information.

# PDFs

Many faculty members scan journal articles and other artifacts to include in their courses. However, unless you use an OCR scanner, these scanned documents are simply images rather than files readable by screen readers. You do, however, have options of what to do to provide such materials to your students in an accessible manner.

1. Use the OCR Scanner in the Visual and Performing Arts Library (VPAL), which is located on the second floor of Cravens Graduate Center. Make sure you have permissions or the use falls under the Fair Use Act before doing this, however, to avoid copyright violation.
2. If the document is a journal article, assign students to find it in the library databases to help them practice their information literacy skills.
3. If the document is a journal article, you can find the article on the databases and post a perma-link for them.

Many faculty also like to save their documents and presentations and share them as PDFs in their courses. However, PDFs do not maintain the same level of accessibility as DOCX and PPTX files do. This is especially true of documents and presentations created on a Mac. With this in mind, you should avoid sharing PDFs in your courses.