

1. Ask Participants What They Need to Participate

o Create a culture that encourages participants to identify what would be most helpful to ensure their ability to fully participate.

- If people are registering ahead of time, include a question in the registration link about accessibility.
- Start each meeting or class with an invitation to let you know how to improve their experience.
- Example: ask “Is there anything that we can provide ahead of time or during the presentation/meeting that would make this experience most accessible for you?”
- Utilize affirming language around accessibility, neurodiversity, different learning and processing styles, and different physical needs and ways of being.

2. Provide All Agendas, Presentation Slides, and Other Relevant Materials and Information Prior to the Start of the Meeting

o Why?

Giving participants access prior to the meeting or class allows the individual to adjust the document to their specific accessibility needs. It also gives people a sense of what to expect.

o When?

- Ideally 24 hours in advance.
- Close of business the day prior at minimum

3. Build in Time for Processing New Content

o Why?

- Gives people an opportunity to process, think, and brainstorm before engaging in a group discussion.
- Maximizes time in discussion.
- Minimizes language and processing barriers.

o How?

- Allot a specified amount of time for reading or thinking. Give options for how this time could be utilized (alone, in pairs, etc.).

4. Record

o When possible, record meetings and class sessions, and make a video available afterward.

o Why?

- Having a video means your meeting is now accessible to anyone who couldn't attend.
- Allows participants to rewatch important parts of the meeting, take better notes, and clarify anything they didn't understand the first time.
- Participants can change the audio speed accordingly

o **Note:** If confidentiality or anonymizing discussion is important, consider community expectations, only recording didactic content vs. discussion, focus video on the instructor or presentation content rather than participants.

5. Positional Freedom

- o Schedule breaks for long meetings.
- o Allow participants to move, stand, and engage physically in ways they are comfortable (or turn off their camera during virtual classes or meetings).
- o In-person consider seating that meets a variety of physical needs (e.g. body size, stability, etc.).

6. Ensure Closed Captioning is Enabled

- o Why?
 - For people who have difficulty following along by listening, closed captioning provides an additional mode for getting the content of the meeting through reading.
- o How?
 - All virtual platforms (zoom, voice thread, PowerPoint, YouTube, Google meet) have this ability.
 - Google instructions if you are unsure of how to enable cc.

7. Speak Clearly, Slow Down, and Repeat Important Information

- o Why?
 - Participants will be able to hear you more clearly and better process the information.
 - Closed captioning will be more accurate.
 - **Note:** It is always helpful to share especially important information in several different formats that appeal to different senses and learning styles (graphic, text-based, audio or video, etc.).

8. Presentation Best Practices

- o When emphasizing content, do so without relying on color or italics. Bold or underline important text instead.
- o Font size: should be a minimum of 24 points.
- o Font style: use an easy-to-read font such as Arial or Calibri (sans serif).
- o Minimize distractions like competing sounds, animated or flashing graphics, etc.
- o Use high contrast text, images and design (e.g. black text on a white background is high contrast, yellow text on a white background is low contrast).
- o If using a video platform like Zoom, center your face and neutralize or blur your background.

9. Add Alternative Text (Alt Text) to Images in Presentations

- o Why? Alt Text allows screen readers to describe what the image is to someone who cannot otherwise see the image. This should include any text included on the image.
- o How?
 - [Instructions here.](#)

10. Offer Choice Whenever Possible

- o Why?
 - People have many different ways of learning, engaging, perceiving, and communicating. Choices of formats, activities, assignments, etc. validate diverse needs and allow everyone to contribute.
- o How?
 - Allow participants to contribute by unmuting or commenting in the chat.
 - Allow individual or group processing.

Additional Resources:

- [Educational Support and Disability Services \(umaryland.edu\)](#)
- [IDEA Team for course accessibility](#)
- [The Full Campus Compliance Checklist](#)