Best Practices for Creating Accessible PowerPoints and Inclusive Presentations

Creating and delivering a presentation that takes into consideration the varied abilities of the audience will maximize participation for everyone. Use these simple guidelines to create a presentation that includes your entire audience and avoids issues during your presentation.

Diversity Awareness:

Be aware and open to the diversity in your audience. When planning your content understand that some of your audience might not be able to:
- See well or at all,
- Hear well or at all,
- Move well or at all,
- Speak well or at all,
- Understand information in some ways well or at all.

Your audience has both visible and invisible identities and accessibility needs.

Best practices for creating an accessible PowerPoint:

- Use a simple sans serif font (e.g. Arial, Veranda, Helvetica)
- Use a 28 point or larger font. Here is an example of font formatting:
  - Title Text: Arial 40, bold, centered.
  - Section Headings, (narrative text), Arial 36, bold, left-justified
  - Main text (narrative text), Arial 36, plain, left-justified
- On the intro slide provide a link to your presentation so participants can follow along on their personal devices. Consider using a QR code for fast access.
- Each slide should have a title for screen reader navigation. Slide titles do not have to be visible on the slide.
- Minimize the amount of text on slides.
- Check your color contrast with a contrast checker if using color combinations other than black and white. We recommend WebAIM’s color contrast checker with usage guidance provided by the Office of Disability Services.
- Use trusted JMU color combinations to avoid color contrast issues.
- Do not use color as the only method for distinguishing information, particularly on charts and graphs. Communicate data in both color and text.
- Make graphics as simple as possible.
- Provide alt-text for all images.
- Caption all videos. Learn more about captioning at JMU with Caption-On.
- Check your presentation for accessibility using the built-in PowerPoint Accessibility Checker.

**Best practices for inclusive presentations:**

- Speak clearly and slowly. Use a microphone if available.
- Be visible and in good light when you talk so participants can see your face.
- Have a printed version of your presentation available.
- Have a large print version of all materials and presentation available (at least 20 point).
- If there will be an ASL interpreter at your session, provide your content to them in advance. Explain acronyms, terms, names, etc. that you will use.
- Allow plenty of time for participants to read a slide. Cover all the visual information on the slide.
- Describe all images, graphs and charts.
- Provide a brief description of videos in advance of playing.
- Remember potential accessibility issues with participation activities including question and answer periods. Use a microphone if available and always repeat the question so everyone can hear.

**Additional resources and tutorials:**

- [How to Make Presentations Accessible to All - Web Accessibility Initiative](https://www.w3.org/WAI/presentation/accessible-presentations/)
- [PowerPoint Accessibility – WebAIM for Office 2016](https://webaim.org/office/2016/accessibility/powerpoint)
- [Make your PowerPoint Presentations Accessible - Microsoft Support](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-powerpoint-presentations-accessible-50f925f1-1bb7-4253-836d-8f71f08f3d67)
- [WebAIM Color Contrast Checker](https://webaim.org/colorchecker)