

# Digital Accessibility

**Are you ready for 2026?**

**Kristin Roberts**

**Natalie Williams**

Institutional Compliance & Privacy

**Mark Bransby**

OIT

**Barclay Bentley**

Office of Accessibility



# 1. DOJ's Updated Regulations



# Background on the Requirement

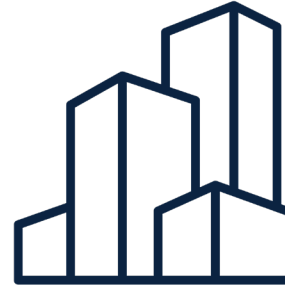
- DOJ published Final Rule for Title II of ADA on April 24, 2024
  - Applies to government entities and public institutions that fall within Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
  - Mandates that all web content, mobile apps, and digital resources, including course materials and administrative services, adhere to WCAG 2.1 AA standards
- Ensures those with vision, hearing, cognitive, or manual dexterity disabilities can access and use university content and materials



# Compliance Deadline



**April 24, 2026**  
for **large** institutions  
(pop. of 50,000+)



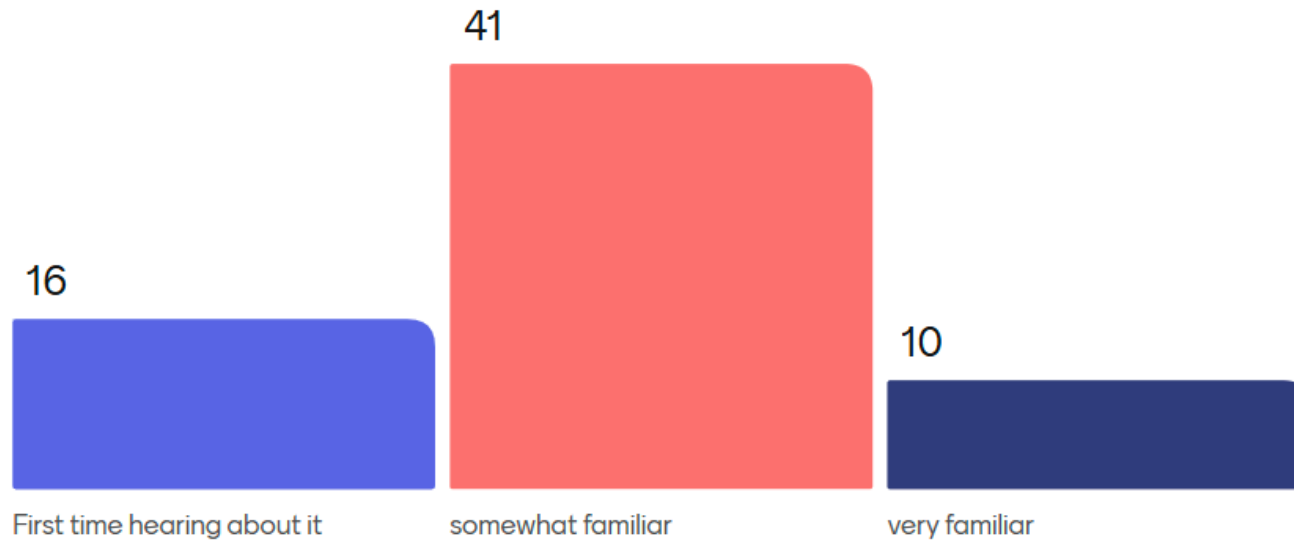
**April 26, 2027**  
for **small** institutions  
(pop. less than 50,000)

Population based on population served. At a minimum  
Auburn University serves the entire state.

Join at menti.com | use code 2431 9439

Mentimeter

# How familiar are you with the new DOJ Rule updating Title II of the ADA?



67 / 67



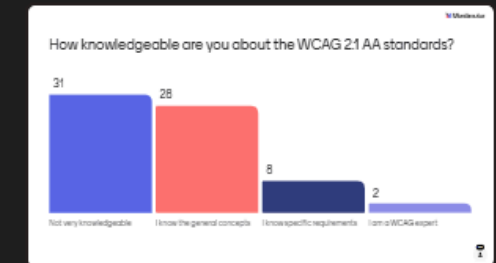
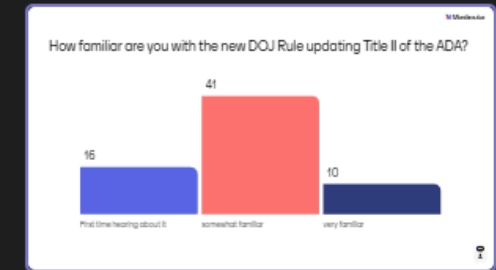
KR

Menti

Digital Accessibility



Choose a slide to present



# SCOPE



Websites



Courses



Presentations



Email



Registration Systems



Applications  
& Software



E-Newsletters



Social Media



# Included in Scope

- Websites/Web applications
- Mobile apps
- Third-party tools
- Social Media posts
- Email / e-newsletters
- Lectures / course materials
- Presentations
- Ticketing / applications / forms
- Digital Signage





# Exclusions/Exceptions

1. **Archived** web content (must be in an area clearly marked as "archived")
2. **Preexisting** conventional electronic documents
3. Content posted by a **Third Party** (not under a contractual relationship)
4. Individualized documents that are **password protected**







# Legal Implications

- Lawsuits (legal fees, compensatory damages, injunction)
- Fines & Penalties
- Loss of Federal Funding
- Reputational harm



Must make accessible except where:

1. would **fundamentally alter** the service, program or activity, or
2. would cause **undue** financial and administrative **burden**

\*written statement by head of public entity required

## 2. Background on Accessibility





# Universal Design























Automatic Doors



Curb Cut



# Accessibility Needs for Everyone

Accessibility Needs	 Touch	 See	 Hear	 Speak	 Cognition
Permanet	 One Arm	 Blind	 Deaf	 Non Speaking	 Learning Disability
Temporary	 Arm Injury	 Cataract	 Ear Infection	 Laryngitis	 Sick
Situational	 New Parent	 Distracted Driver	 Bartender	 Quiet Space	 Distracted



# Have you ever used...



## **Good Grip Tool**

Invented in 1990 for a person with arthritis



## **Electric Toothbrush**

Invented in 1954 for people with limited motor skills



## **Audiobooks**

Invented in 1932 to allow people with visual impairments to read



## **Typewriter or Keyboard**

Invented in 1608 for a person with blindness who could not write



## **Speech-to-Text**

Invented in 1990s to help people who could not physically write their thoughts



# Benefits



Productivity



Innovation  
& Creativity



Retention



Engagement



Reputation



# The Standard for Digital Accessibility



World Wide Web  
Consortium (W3C)

Web Accessibility  
Initiative (WAI): **AA**

Web Content Accessibility  
Guidelines (WCAG): **2.2**



# 3. Designing for Digital Accessibility



# Technical Requirements of WCAG 2.1 AA

1. Text readability (font size & color contrast)
2. Use of Color for meaning
3. Lists (ordered/sequential and unordered/bulleted)
4. Links (descriptive text, not “click here”)
5. Headers & templates
6. Alternative text for images (Alt Text)
7. Captioned videos & transcripts
8. Tables (row and column headings, captions)
9. Forms (form input and form validation)
10. Documents (PDFs, Word, Excel, PowerPoint)





# Font Choice

1

*All of us do not have equal talent,  
but all of us should have an equal  
opportunity to develop our talent.  
- John F. Kennedy*

2

All of us do not have equal  
talent, but all of us should  
have an equal opportunity to  
develop our talent.  
– John F. Kennedy

✗ Serif

✓ Sans Serif



# Font Size

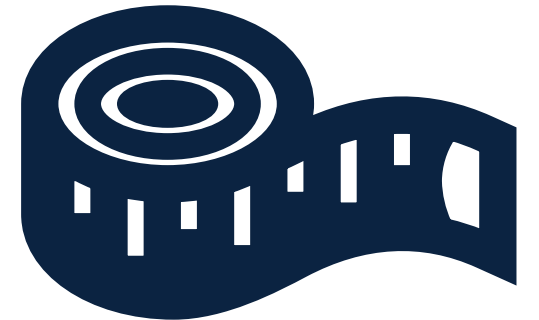
12 point minimum for **Digital Text**

14 point minimum for **Bodies of Text**

18 point minimum for **Headings**

24 point minimum for **Presentations**

32 point = Bigger is Better





# Alignment & Spacing

- Left aligned text
- 1.5 line spacing
- Short, concise, and “chunked”

We are convinced that UDL has enormous promise. We have seen countless discouraged, unmotivated learners catch fire when given ways to learn that are optimized for their particular strengths and weaknesses. We have seen classrooms become exciting, collaborative hotbeds of learning for all students.

We have seen students with dyslexia or other “print disabilities” read and write complex material in digital learning environments. We’ve witnessed students with significant intellectual disabilities learn to read and improve their comprehension skills when few thought it was possible.



# Emphasis

- Use **bold**
- Do not use:
  - *Italics*
  - Underline
  - ALL CAPS



# Hyperlinks & Lists

- Give links context - avoid using “click here”
  - Correct examples:
    - Begin the application process.
    - Check out our compliance website for more information.
  - **How to:** Highlight phrase, right click, insert link
- Use tools built into programs
  - Use the **Underline** tool to underline hyperlinks
  - Use the **Bullets** or **Numbering** options for lists



# Headings & Templates

- Use built-in templates
  - Reading order established
- Use headings: (it provides an outline)
  - **Heading 1 for Titles**
  - Heading 2 for sub-titles
  - Heading 3 for sub-titles of sub-titles
  - Paragraph for body text







# Color Contrast & Light Sensitivity

- Adjust text color
- Adjust background color
- Required contrast ratio (AA)
  - Normal text is 4.5:1
  - Large text (18+) is 3:1

Good contrast ratio

Good contrast ratio

Bad contrast ratio

Bad contrast ratio



# Color Matrix

AAA

Pass, AAA (7:1+)

AA

Pass, AA (4.5:1+)

AA18

Pass, Large Text Only  
(3:1+, 18pt or 14pt bold)

DNP

Does Not Pass

	Text	#FFFFFF	#E86100	#FFAC00	#4E8020	#00A597	#0093D2	#0B2341
Background								
White #FFFFFF		Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text
		AA18 3.4	DNP 1.8	AA 4.7	AA18 3	AA18 3.4	AAA 15.7	
Auburn Orange #E86100	Text		Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text
	AA18 3.4		DNP 1.8	DNP 1.3	DNP 1.1	DNP 1	AA 4.6	
Sunkissed Yellow #FFAC00	Text	Text		Text	Text	Text	Text	Text
	DNP 1.8	DNP 1.8		DNP 2.5	DNP 1.6	DNP 1.8	AAA 8.3	
Campus Green #4E8020	Text	Text	Text		Text	Text	Text	Text
	AA 4.7	DNP 1.3	DNP 2.5		DNP 1.5	DNP 1.3	AA18 3.3	
Never to Yield Teal #00A597	Text	Text	Text	Text		Text	Text	Text
	AA18 3	DNP 1.1	DNP 1.6	DNP 1.5		DNP 1.1	AA 5.1	
Bodda Getta Blue #0093D2	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text		Text	Text
	AA18 3.4	DNP 1	DNP 1.8	DNP 1.3	DNP 1.1		AA 4.5	
Auburn Blue #0B2341	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text		
	AAA 15.7	AA 4.6	AAA 8.3	AA18 3.3	AA 5.1	AA 4.5		

# Color Vision Deficiency

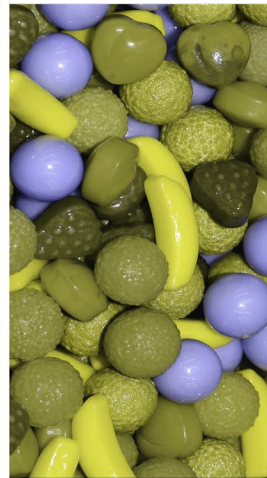
- Use color contrast analyzer
- Use color blindness simulator
- Print in grayscale



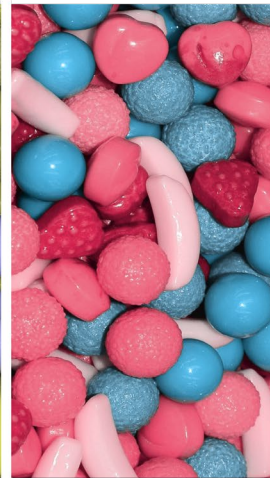
TYPICAL VISION



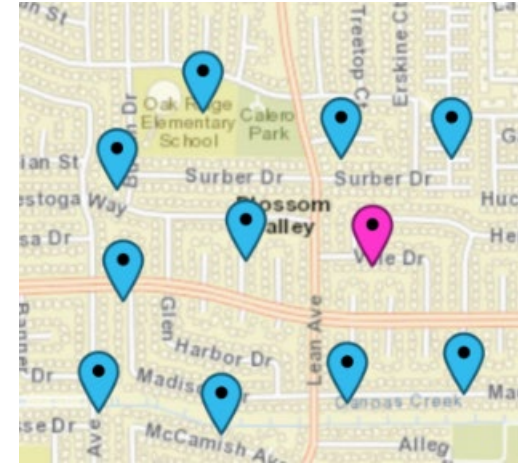
DEUTERANOPIA



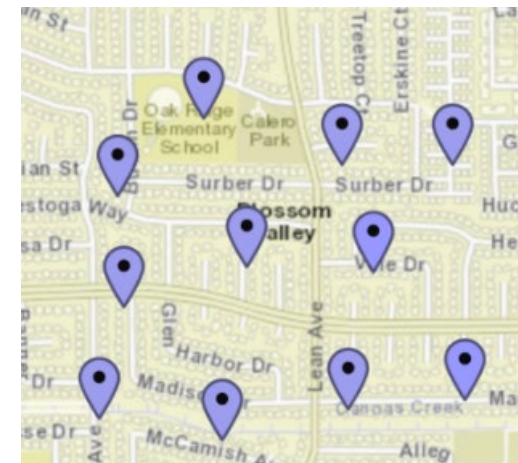
PROTANOPIA



TRITANOPIA



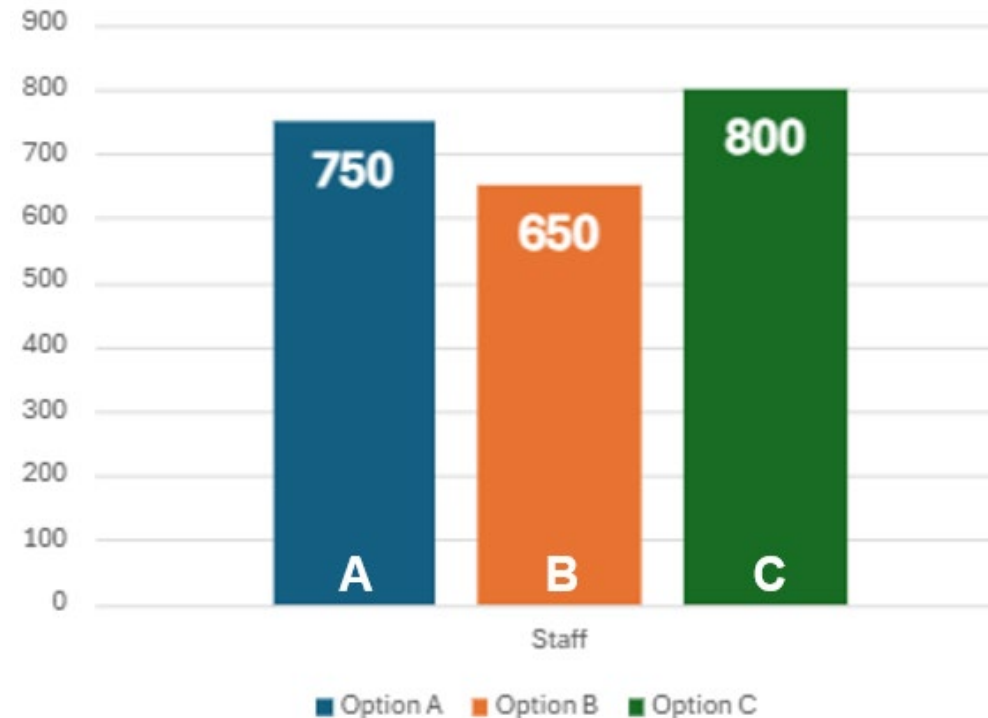
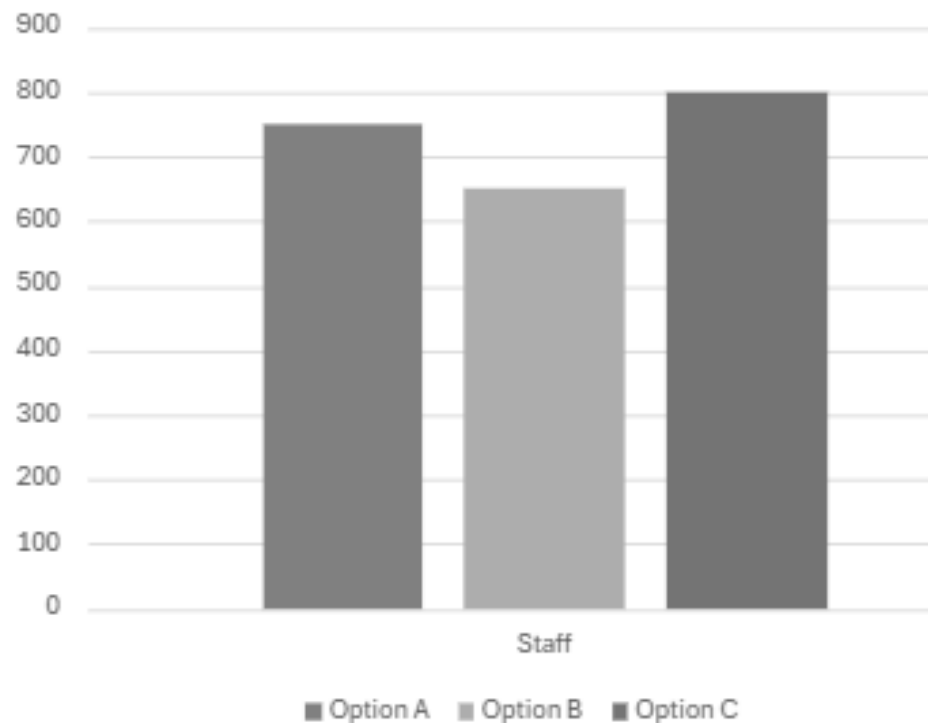
**Without**  
Color Vision  
Deficiency



**With**  
Color Vision  
Deficiency

# Color in Charts

- Use labels
- Add values as text



# Images

## ■ Decorative

- Do not communicate content
- Do not have a function; only decoration
- **Must be marked as “decorative”** (html: alt = "") or removed

## ■ Functional

- Provide content
- Can link out to other materials
- **Require Alternative Text (Alt Text)**

- **How to:** right click on image, add/view alt text



# Alt Text & Captions

## ■ Alt Text

- Keep short (think “tweet”)
- No need for “in this image”
- Context is important
- **Required** with text on image

## ■ Captions

- Provide additional context and information about an image



AU Alert: All Clear. The previous emergency has been resolved.



# Closed Captions & Transcripts

## ■ Closed Captions

- Text versions of audio content
- Can be **displayed while content is playing**
- Create with:
  - YouTube
  - Panopto

(if auto-generated— be careful!)

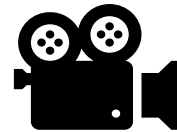
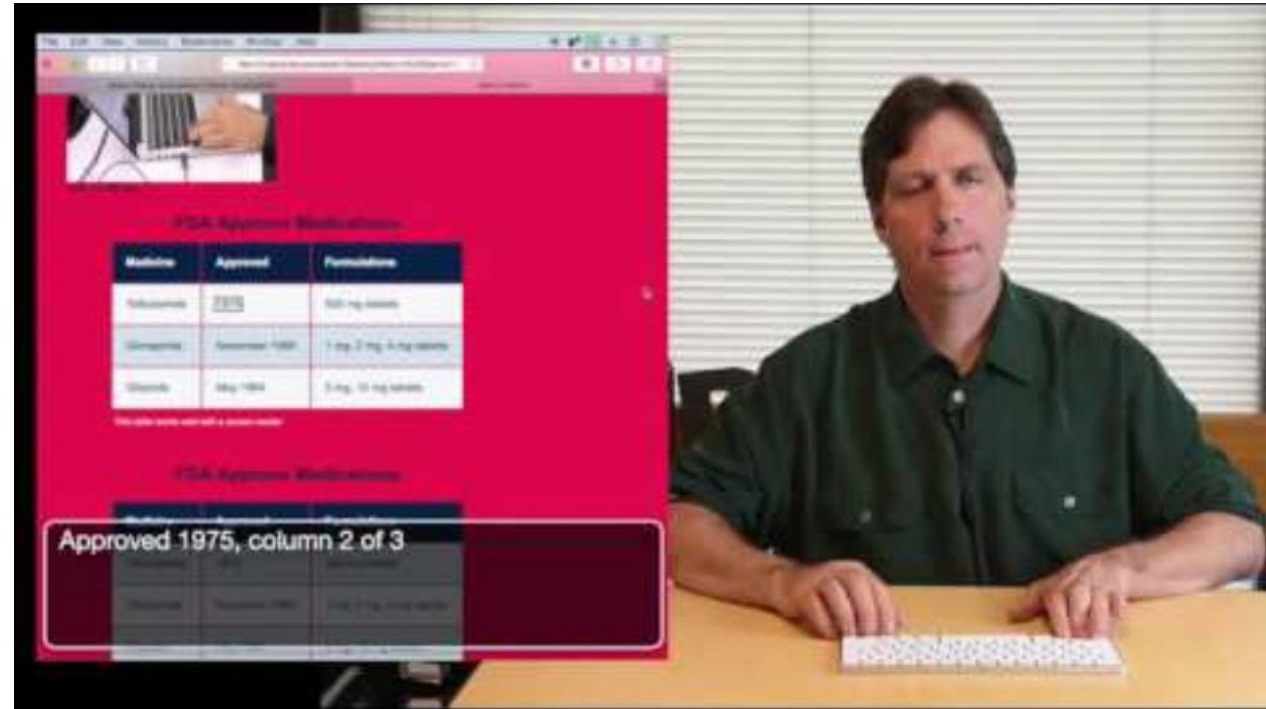
## ■ Transcripts

- Full-text documents of content
- Can be accessed **before, during, or after** content is accessed
- Create with:
  - Word document
  - Notes section in PowerPoint



# Closed Caption & Screen Reader Example

On your own, explore this video to experience using a screen reader and better understand the **importance** of formatting correctly in the beginning and the **impact** on the audience.



Screen Reader Demo  
for Digital Accessibility





# Audio Description

- **Verbal description of what is happening in a video**
  - Needs to be a distinct voice from those voices that are already in the video
  - Should fit between existing audio
  - The second audio track is available in Panopto.



# Forms & Labels

- Overall form instructions
- In-line instructions

– Within labels

**Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY):**

– Outside labels

**Date of Birth:**

MM/DD/YYYY

– Placeholder text

**Date of Birth:**

- Form validation

- Reading order is critical
- Adobe Acrobat Pro Accessibility Checker
- Choose “Save As” not “Print to PDF”
- Avoid PDFs when possible



# 4. Considerations & Coordination

# Partnership

- Office of Accessibility
- Biggio Center
- Institutional Compliance & Privacy
- Office of Information Technology
- Equal Opportunity Compliance
- Communications & Marketing
- Office of the General Counsel
- College of Liberal Arts





# Existing Efforts

- AU Digital Accessibility Working Group established July 3, 2024
- OCM [news announcement](#) about the Federal Accessibility Regulation published on September 13, 2024.
- Feb. 2025 Biggio acquired UDOIT Essentials for Canvas
- OIT published [statement](#) on June 9, 2025, reiterating the DOJ requirement.
- July 2025: presentations to groups, Accessibility toolkit ([aub.ie/a11ytoolkit](http://aub.ie/a11ytoolkit)), PAWS Before you Publish ([aub.ie/paws](http://aub.ie/paws)).
- Statement from leadership and AU webpage was published August 19, 2025



# Resources

- [aub.ie/digitalaccessibility](https://aub.ie/digitalaccessibility)
- [aub.ie/accessibility](https://aub.ie/accessibility) (Office of Accessibility tools & tips)
- [auburn.edu/eaccessibility](https://auburn.edu/eaccessibility) (OIT tools & tips)
- Biggio Center [biggio.auburn.edu](https://biggio.auburn.edu)
- Toolkits / checklists: [aub.ie/a11ytoolkit](https://aub.ie/a11ytoolkit)
- UDOIT (Canvas checker)
- Site Improve (website checker)





# Additional Canvas Tools Under Consideration

- Pope Tech
- YuJa Panorama
- UDOIT Advantage





# Enforcement

- Private lawsuits
- DOJ
- Biggio/Office of Accessibility checking Canvas courses
- OIT monitoring websites
- OCM evaluating social media
- Internal Audit – audit plan for 2027/28
- Supervisors – policy violations





# Why Comply?

- ADA Title II (state and local governments)
- 504 of Rehabilitation Act (receive federal funding)
- 508 of Rehabilitation Act (federal agencies and contractors)
- Private lawsuits (individuals and advocacy groups)
- European Accessibility Act
- Business advantage
- Exceptional Student Experience strategic goal
- Values: Integrity, Respect, & Excellence



# What Can You Do?

- Take AU digital accessibility trainings
  - CR504E: Accessibility 10-Day Challenge
  - CR503E: Accessibility for Instructional Designers
  - CR516E: Social Media Accessibility
  - CR519E: Document Accessibility 101
- Run accessibility checker in Word, PPT, Canvas, etc.
- Use SiteImprove or WAVE to check websites
- **Start creating accessible documents and content**



# Contact Us

## Kristin Roberts

Institutional Compliance & Privacy

[kristin@auburn.edu](mailto:kristin@auburn.edu)

## Natalie Williams

Institutional Compliance & Privacy

[nyw0001@auburn.edu](mailto:nyw0001@auburn.edu)

## Barclay Bentley

Office of Accessibility

[bentlbj@auburn.edu](mailto:bentlbj@auburn.edu)

## Mark Bransby

Office of Information Technology

[bransby@auburn.edu](mailto:bransby@auburn.edu)



AUBURN