

Instructional Materials Accessibility

ATI Technical Assistance Workshop
October 30, 2006

Welcome

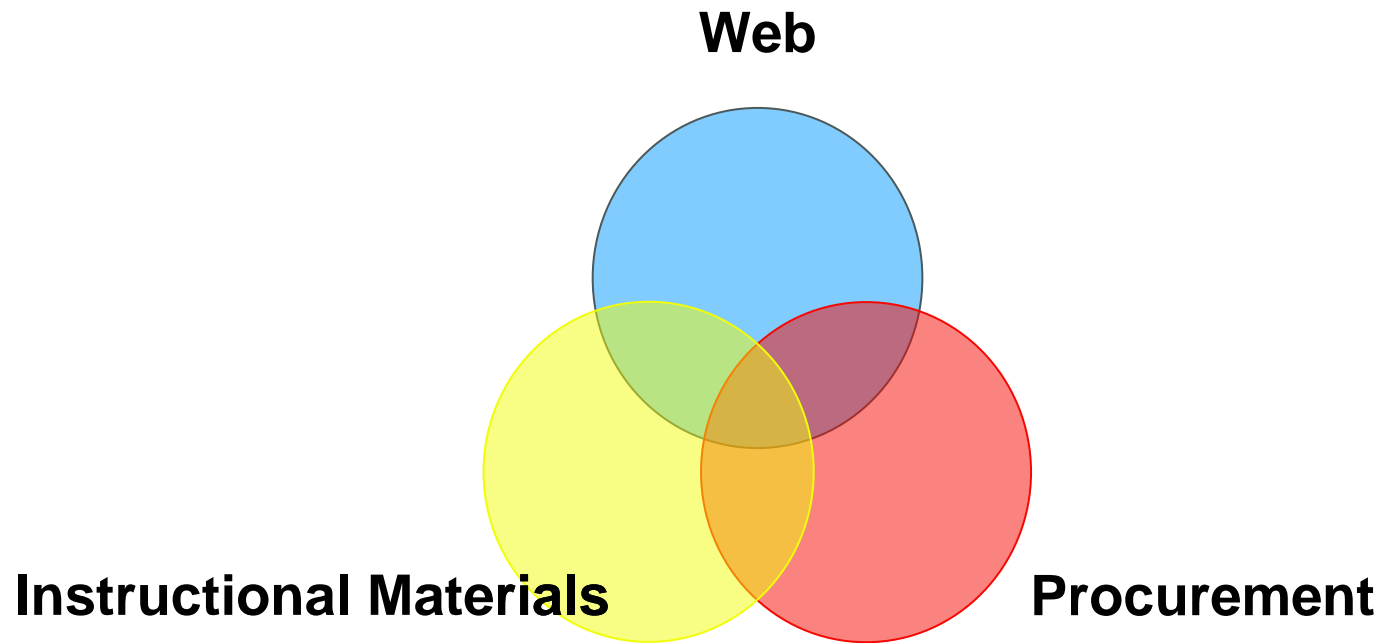
- **Introductions**

- Mark Turner, Director, CSU Center for Accessible Media, CSU Office of the Chancellor
- Jeff Senge, Coordinator, Information and Computer Access Program, CSU Fullerton

- **Logistics**

- Timeline
- Space availability
- Captioning/Recording
- Questions

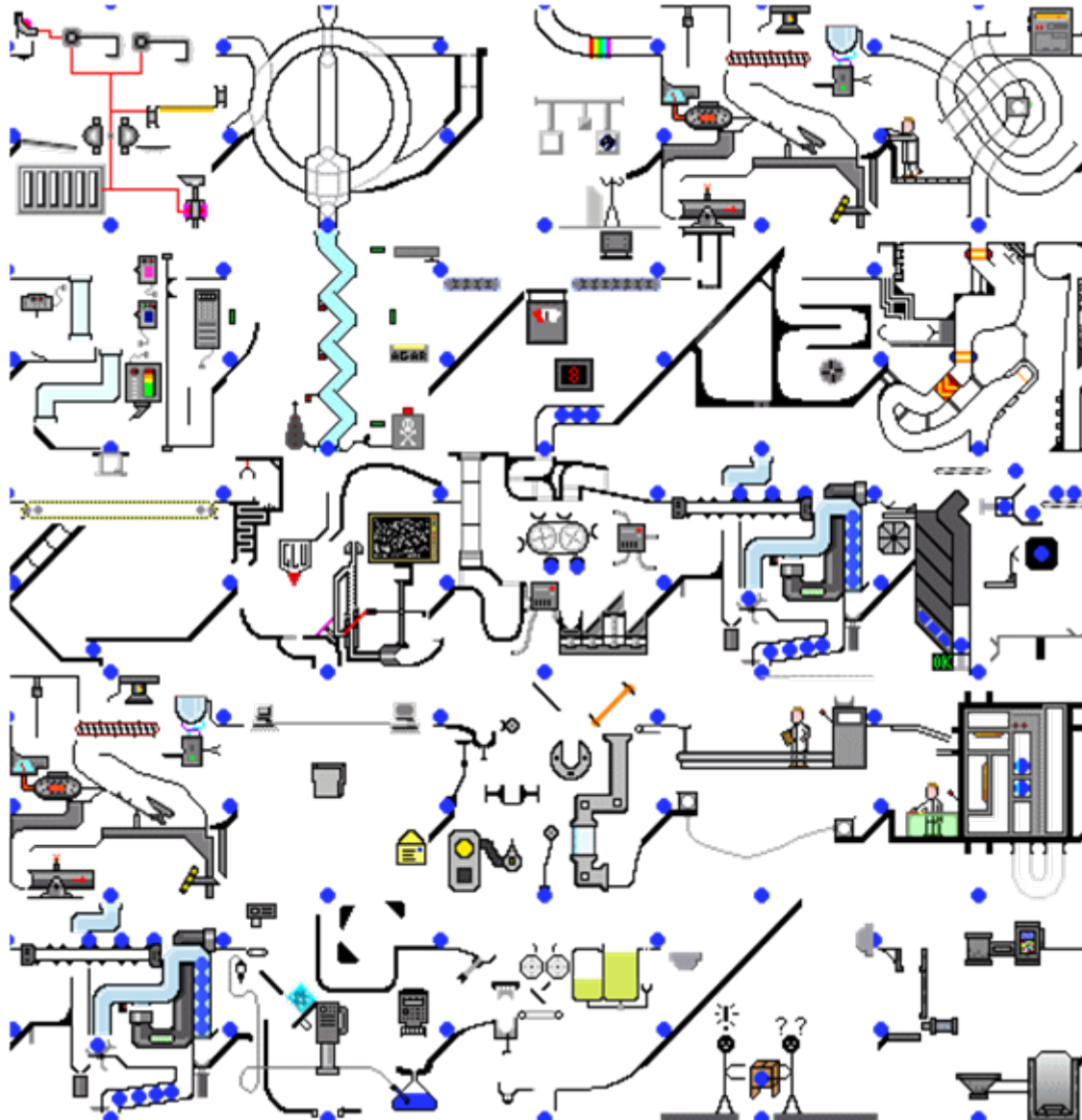
Three Accessibility Priorities



Session Goals

- Describe some of the qualities associated with accessible instructional materials (IM) and their impact on persons with disabilities
- Provide an overview of the current state of IM accessibility across the CSU system
- Explore some of the specific challenges associated with current approaches to IM accessibility
- Introduce a paradigm shift in how the CSU approaches IM accessibility
- Outline some promising practices to assist campuses with the development of an IM Development Plan

Accessible Instructional Materials—Production Process



IM accessibility—Our obligation

- Educational institutions are obliged to ensure their programs and services are accessible to persons with disabilities
 - Federal legislation, (e.g. Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended in 1998, Section 225 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996)
 - State legislation (e.g. CA Government Code 11135 of 2003)
 - CSU Policy (e.g. Executive Order 926 of 2005)
 - “It is the policy of the CSU to make information technology resources and services accessible to all CSU students, faculty, staff, and the general public regardless of disability.”
 - Dept. of Education’s Office for Civil Rights has specifically stipulated that we must provide equally effective communication as defined by
 - Timeliness of delivery
 - Accuracy of the translation
 - Provision in a manner and medium appropriate to the significance of the message and the abilities of the person receiving the material

IM accessibility—An overview

- There are nearly 11,000 students with disabilities registered with disability offices across the system
 - Functional impairments in the area of reading are among the most common and most significant academic struggles
 - Conditions which commonly impact reading include:
 - Sensory Impairments (e.g. blindness and low vision)
 - Neurological Impairments (e.g. learning disabilities, ADHD)
 - Physical/Mobility Impairments (e.g. quadriplegia, cerebral palsy)
- Requests for accessible IM have grown significantly in the past 5 years
 - More students with reading impairments have received supportive services in K-12 and community college settings
 - Upon matriculation to the CSU, they expect to make use of these same services
 - Others may not have used reading services previously but been drawn to them because of the significant increased reading load in the CSU

IM—A core educational component

- Working definition
 - Any informational content, independent of source or delivery location, that is required as a component for participation in curricular activities
 - Basis for most assigned readings, discussions, activities, and examinations
 - Effectively the raw material for curricular learning
- Representative examples
 - Paper-based print materials (e.g. books, reader packets, reserve readings, lab manuals, handouts, written exams)
 - Electronic print materials (e.g. web-based and LMS-based content; electronic reserves, book bundled etext, computerized exams)
 - Multimedia materials (e.g. web-based video/audio, commercial DVDs, material bundled with books, photographic slides or lab samples)

IM accessibility—Features

- **Perceivable**
 - Users are able to access the information contained in the materials by modifying its presentation
- **Operable**
 - Users are able to interact with and manipulate the content
- **Understandable**
 - Users are able to receive the content in a comprehensible manner
- **Robust**
 - Users are able to transform the content into formats that are more compatible with assistive technology

IM accessibility—Accommodative model

- **The response of educational institutions to disability legislation**
 - The formation of a separate, specialized disability service system within the educational institution to address accessibility issues
 - Disability-related issues are usually addressed responsively by the disability service office through the use of accommodations
 - Disability offices have not been empowered to alter campus policies and procedures that may have contributed to the accessibility issue
- **Impact on IM accessibility**
 - Decisions regarding the selection, acquisition, and delivery of IM are made solely by academicians based on their goals and technical requirements
 - As a result most IM do not arrive to the campus in an accessible format
 - The disability office must then expend significant time and resources converting the IM into an accessible format

IM accessibility—Other efforts to date

- **CSU Accessible Technology Initiative**
 - CSU Center for Accessible Media
 - Pools accessible IM materials from all CSU campuses
 - Reduces redundant conversion work and associated costs
 - Reduces delays in delivering materials
 - System-wide committee work
 - Statewide Academic Senate, Consultation with Technology Steering Committee, Academic Technology Advisory Committee, Information Technology Advisory Committee, and others...
 - National collaboration
 - AHEAD E-Text solutions group, National etext standards and repositories, work with American Association Publishers
- **Campus-specific initiatives**
 - Shared purchase agreements for industrial scanners
 - Borrowing agreements with bookstores/graphics departments

IM accessibility—A Use Case

- Professor Smith selects “Introduction to Art History” for his ART 101 course.
- The textbook is ordered and received by the Bookstore
- A blind student requests an accessible version of the book from the disability office 3 weeks before the term begins
- The disability office confirms (via CAM) that another campus does not currently have this title in an accessible format
- The disability office requests an accessible electronic copy of the title from the publisher but is told one is not available
- The disability office requests a desk copy which arrives in 2 weeks
- The disability office then (1) debinds the book, (2) runs the book through a high-speed scanner, (3) corrects any errors in reading order, (4) corrects any character-recognition errors, (5) adds text descriptions of graphical elements, (6) delivers the title

IM accessibility—Remaining Challenges

- **Timeliness**

- Large numbers of requests are delivered late—often well after courses have begun—which can make it nearly impossible to keep up
- Common reasons include delays in adoption of IM by professors or departments, late accommodation requests by students, long delays in receiving files requested from Publishers, processing complex materials

- **Resource availability/efficiency**

- Many campus disability offices are often engaged in large-scale production of accessible IM outside of their training/expertise
- Common reasons include that disability office personnel are generally not experts in publishing or IT, and often lack expertise in specific curricular areas that are important for accurate conversion of content

- **Cost**

- Campuses still expend significant resources to retrofit IM rather than ensure that what is acquired meets campus accessibility needs

IM accessibility—Universal Design Model

- Working Definition

- The incorporation of accessibility considerations into the design of institutional programs and services from project inception

- Benefits

- Ensures usability by widest possible pool of users
- Less time and resource-intensive to retrofit a large, existing project than to include accessibility features early-on
- Reduced financial burden due to reduced labor costs
- Allows for persons with disabilities to gain access to IM at same time as non-disabled peers
- Reduces risk management because this approach demonstrates a systematic, rather than ad hoc approach to accessibility
- Often benefits other at-risk populations such as students with ESL issues, remedial coursework needs
- Facilitates the future repurposing of content

IM accessibility—Next Steps

- **System-wide collaboration**
 - Creation and maintenance of ATI Listservs
 - Exploration of system-wide licensing for hardware/software for accessible IM creation/conversion (e-documents and multimedia)
 - Authoring of workflow guidelines for accessible IM creation/conversion
 - Aggregation and dissemination of ‘promising practices’ across system
- **IM Accessibility Plan Components**
 - More descriptive than prescriptive with room for each campus to individualize their approach
 - Assessment
 - Stakeholder identification
 - Policy/Procedure formation
 - Purchasing
 - Capacity-building
 - Communication/Training
 - Evaluation/Monitoring

IM accessibility—Final Thoughts

- **Emphasis Areas**
 - Proactivity/prevention to improve service delivery
 - Process approach emphasizing logistics, not technical issues
 - Establishment of a flexible response system to accessibility
 - Including elements of both Universal Design and individual accommodations
 - Broad-based collaboration/communication across campus entities and stakeholders involved in all facets of IM
 - Selection
 - Acquisition
 - Modification
 - Delivery
 - Willingness to engage in a process of continuous quality improvement—adaptability over time as IM delivery formats and methods evolve

ATI Team

- Mary Cheng, Director, Accessible Technology Initiative, mary.cheng@csueastbay.edu
- Dr. Wayne Dick, Coordinator, Academic Technology Accessibility, wed@csulb.edu
- Mark Turner, Director, CSU Center for Accessible Media, mturner@calstate.edu



<http://www.calstate.edu/accessibility>