CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LOS ANGELES

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

DATE: October 30, 2024
TO: Faculty and Staff
FROM: Berenecea Johnson Eanes, President
SUBJECT: Renewed Campus Commitment: Accessible Technology Initiative (ATI)

Cal State LA is committed to ensuring the success and upward mobility of our students. With the goal of advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) in our university, we strive to nurture a welcoming and inclusive campus where students, faculty, and staff thrive, and community is honored and cultivated.

To fully meet our DEIB goals, we must ensure our technology and information are accessible to all. The technology we use and the information we create must be accessible to our fellow community members with disabilities and those who may learn differently. Accessibility is an equity issue.

Accessibility is also law. Required by the federal government[1] and the state of California[2] (as well as CSU Executive Order 1111 and Accessible Technology Initiative Policy), all campus programs, services, and activities must be accessible to every student, staff, faculty member—as well as the public. This includes technology products used to deliver academic programs and services, student services, information technology services, and auxiliary programs and services. Recent U.S. Department of Justice final rulemaking on accessibility under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act sets a definitive date of April 24, 2026, for campus compliance.

Since 2007, the campus has engaged in the Accessible Technology Initiative (ATI). Guided by the ATI Steering Committee, as well as three working groups, Cal State LA established three priority areas:

- Web accessibility
- Accessible electronic and information technology procurement
- Instructional material accessibility

Over the past few years, the ATI process has evolved to advance accessibility in significant new ways. We successfully implemented Canvas as our new learning management system (LMS), with improved accessibility and usability. A revised *Information or Communication Technology Purchase Approval Process* holds vendors to high standards, ensuring the accessibility of hardware and software. Our university website has undergone substantial enhancements, aligning with web accessibility standards. New digital files and media services enhance instructional materials and video content with accessibility features such as closed captions. This work is to be commended.

This year, we launched the Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) for Student Success Initiative. The AIM campaign offers comprehensive support for instructional materials while recognizing the efforts of faculty and staff Accessible All-Stars. The Academic Senate also passed, and I signed, a revised version of the Accessible Instructional Materials policy, clarifying the shared responsibility among faculty, staff, and administration to ensure our materials are accessible.

[1] The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
[2] California Government Code 11135 applies Section 508 to state entities and to the California State University (CSU).

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As we embark on AY 24-25 together, let us renew our shared commitment to web, procurement, and instructional materials accessibility by setting the following ATI goals:

To all who work on our university website, including staff members in departments and colleges, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and ITS, I challenge you to renew your commitment to web accessibility. This coming year, work towards:

- Continuing to identify, repair, or replace inaccessible webpages and sites.
- Ensuring any new website or application is accessible.
- Continuing to train our campus community on web accessibility standards, raising awareness of its importance.

To all involved in purchasing or approving technology, including staff members in Administration and Finance, and ITS, I challenge you to renew your commitment to procurement accessibility. This coming year, work towards:

- Ensuring the campus continues to follow our *Information or Communication Technology Purchase Approval Process.*
- Training and conducting outreach for all ICT procurement stakeholders, emphasizing the importance of accessible products and services.
- Sharing resources and learning from other campuses about streamlined and efficient procurement processes.

To all faculty, department and college leaders, staff members in Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and ITS, I challenge you to renew your commitment to instructional material accessibility. This coming year, work towards:

- Making timely adoption decisions for instructional materials, selecting, and curating materials with accessibility in mind.
- Selecting and using accessible multimedia, interactive content, and emerging technologies.
- Continuing to use Canvas LMS to share accessible instructional materials with students.
- Taking advantage of help, support, and services to make instructional materials accessible.
- Monitoring and acting when materials are not accessible.
- Seeking out ways to design courses in support of universal design for learning principles.

I challenge you to become an Accessible All-Star. Make accessibility part of your daily routine. Help our campus meet these ambitious accessibility goals. Together, we can create an inclusive learning environment for all students. Thank you for your contributions in making Cal State LA equitable for all.