Making Library Help Guides Accessible: Our Experiences at the UTM Library

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Evolution of Handouts
2013 – 2020

• Pilot project with a handful of handouts

• Creation of Reference & Research LibGuide

• Used reference statistics to determine need for new guides

• Handout statistics determined rota and whether to retire
• U of T moved to Alma and Primo (LibrarySearch) – all new guides needed

• Pandemic messaging changed many guides

• Approval from senior management to transfer & convert handouts to accessible format

• Staff accessibility training - “WebAIM Accessible Documents: Word, PowerPoint & Acrobat”

• Audit of Current Handouts
• Launch of the handouts at reference desk with QR code pilot project

• Consultations with Web Accessibility Specialist

• Living documentation guide on how to create future born accessible handouts (and shared with other departments in library)
Accessible Training & Tools
Training

• “WebAIM Accessible Documents: Word, PowerPoint & Acrobat”

• “Empowering Everyone: Best Practices for Creating Accessible Documents” - a workshop
  • U of T Division of People Strategy, Equity & Culture
  • Weekly drop in with AODA office

• “Creating Accessible Word Documents”
  • D.G. Ivey Library
**Resources**

- WebAIM Resources
  - Word and PowerPoint Evaluation Checklist
  - Infographic: Web Accessibility for Designers
  - Web Accessibility Principles
  - Testing for Web Accessibility
  - Centre for Teaching Excellence - Accessible Documents & Universal Design

**Tools**

- Microsoft Word & Adobe Acrobat
- WebAIM Tools
  - Accessibility Evaluation Tools
  - Color Contrast Checker
  - Color-reliant Link Contrast Checker
  - CommonLook PDF Plug-in for Acrobat
- WAVE – Web Accessibility Evaluation Tools
- NVDA Screen Reader
  - Deque University – Shortcuts for NVDA
Example 1

- Both accessible & visually pleasing
  - Applied accessible font, sizes, colour contrast, headings, alt text, etc.

- Used accessibility checkers & screen reader to review

- Format is not applicable to all handouts. Content dependent (i.e. citation style guides)
Example 2

- All our citation guides looked like this (print & online)
- Not accessible & bad for screen readers
- Big challenge: many citation guides and content is text heavy
Example 2

- APA citation style help guides – pilot for creating accessible versions
Example 2

- Final template for citation style guides
Example 3

• Special cases:
  Journal of Forensic Sciences citation style
Example 3

Journal of Forensic Sciences Citation

This guide provides examples on how to in-text and format references according to the Journal of Forensic Sciences. More rules can be found at the Author Guidelines page. Below are general rules to guide you:

The heading of the reference list is labeled References in bold following the body of your paper.

References are assigned a number in parentheses in the order that they are used. So, your first reference is [1], your second is [2], and so forth. Whenever you want to cite a source that you have previously used, you will use the reference number that is assigned to it. You can combine multiple previously cited references to support a later point, so for instance [2, 15, 18] would refer to your second, fourteenth and nineteenth citations.

Journal titles are abbreviated in your References section. For instance, Journal of Forensic Sciences is abbreviated as J. Forensic Sci. To find the abbreviation for a particular Journal, use the National Library of Medicine Journal Search. Simply type in the journal name. You may need to scroll to find the correct name.

List all authors up to six names for a reference you are citing; if there are more than six author names, list the first six followed by et al.

If the author is an organization, then supply organization name as the author; if there is no author given at all, then use the title of the article as the author.

Provide a DOI number if available for web only journals. Ideally, provide a plain DOI without permalinks or embedding. For instance, DOI: 10.1111/1556-4029.14374 is preferable to https://doi.org/myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/10.1111/1556-4029.14374. You can usually find the plain DOI without the permalinks if you downloaded and opened the PDF of the article.

Journal Article with One to Six Authors (Print Journal without DOI)

Template Example

1. Author AA. Title of article. Abbreviated Journal Title Year:Volume(issue): pages of article.

Real Example


Journal Article with Seven or More Authors (Print Journal without DOI)

Template Example

2. Author AA, Author BB, Author CC, Author DD, Author EE, Author FF et al. Title of article. Abbreviated Journal Title Year:Volume(issue):pages of article.

Real Example


Journal Article with DOI

Template Example

3. Author AA, Author BB, Author CC, Author DD, Author EE, Author FF et al. Title of article. Abbreviated Journal Title Year:Volume(issue): pages of article. DOI:

Real Example


Book

Template Example

4. Author AA. Title of book. City of publication, State/Province: Publisher, Year: page numbers referenced.

Real Example


Chapter in an Edited Book

Template Example


Real Example


Conference Proceeding

Template Example

6. Author AA. Title of article. In: Title of proceedings. Month Year (where the conference took place). City, Province/State, Country (where the conference took place). City, Province/State: Publisher, Year:page numbers referenced.

Real Example

Challenges

• Time consuming

• Required a lot of training as we are not accessibility specialists

• Requires a lot of coordination – internal & external
Next Steps

• Continue to update all our handouts to have an accessible version
• Update our reference help website
• Goal: complete by September 2023
Thank you for joining us! Any questions?

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