

CourseSmart's Accessibility Commitment

- CourseSmart's mission is to provide anytime, anywhere access to digital content in Higher Education. Our mission is supported by the CourseSmart commitment to provide access to our website, products, and technologies for all users, including those with disabilities.
 - CourseSmart is committed to providing an equal opportunity for all to benefit from its low eTextbook pricing
 - CourseSmart seeks to maximize accessibility across the widest possible selection of titles
 - CourseSmart strives to reducing barriers to getting the educational materials needed on a timely basis

CourseSmart's Accessibility Goals

- CourseSmart's Near Term Goals
 - Meet or exceed industry accessibility standards
 - Improve usability for people with disabilities
 - Provide ready access to as many titles as possible
 - Serve the widest possible range of disabilities
- CourseSmart's Long Term Goals
 - Provide a low-barrier, commercial alternative for all higher education accessibility needs
 - Provide industry-leading access to all subject areas, including STEM
 - Go beyond access to providing study tools that assist all students

CourseSmart Addresses 5 Areas of Accessibility:

- **Website Accessibility:**
 - user finds, selects and acquires content
- **Application Accessibility:**
 - user interacts with content online or via a downloadable application
- **Content Accessibility:**
 - assures content will work with assistive technology
- **User Support:**
 - help users when accessibility problems arise
- **Publisher Support:**
 - help publishers work toward content accessibility

CourseSmart Website Accessibility

- CourseSmart Strives for WCAG 2.0 AA Conformance
 - CourseSmart regularly engages independent consultants to assess our compliance and suggest improvements
 - CourseSmart produces a new release of its website monthly, each release has accessibility improvements including WCAG 2.0 and Usability improvements
 - Each website release is tested by students with disabilities and feedback is used to plan out improvements by use case
 - CourseSmart plans to achieve AA conformance in April, 2011
 - VPATS are posted at www.coursesmart.com/go/accesshelp

CourseSmart Website Accessibility

- There have been many contributors to improving our website accessibility
 - NFB has been instrumental identifying areas for improvement and improving our accessibility development processes
 - American Foundation for the Blind Consulting has provided technical evaluation and technical solutions
 - Tech for All Consulting has assisted with WCAG 2.0 conformance testing
 - California State University Chancellor's Office has provided usability feedback
 - Students with disabilities have volunteered to test the website in real-world scenarios

CourseSmart Application Accessibility

- CourseSmart focuses on accessible reading via the web, where there are robust accessibility standards
 - CourseSmart's standard web-based print-fidelity format is excellent in classrooms where eTextbooks and physical books coexist
 - Print-fidelity is achieved with a graphical image of the page which is inherently inaccessible and presents challenges
 - To make the text available to assistive technology, CourseSmart has developed technology to extract the text from publisher PDFs and present it in HTML to screenreaders
 - Users of our accessible reader can access both the graphical page images and the HTML text

CourseSmart Application Accessibility

- CourseSmart's Offline & Device Strategy
 - CourseSmart's current offline solution has moderate accessibility, we are engineering better offline solutions
 - CourseSmart's device applications (iPad, Android) are not accessible due to technology limitations, although our web-based version is accessible on devices
 - CourseSmart is developing a new HTML5-based reader that will allow both online and offline access through a web browser
 - Our HTML5 solution should assure accessibility online, offline and on devices

CourseSmart Content Accessibility

- Publisher-supplied source files may or may not provide a good accessible experience
 - Publisher files lack structural tagging and image tagging and may have reading order issues
 - CourseSmart has engaged PDF engineers to devise methods to improve the accessibility of the source files through addition of tagging for reading order, structure and images
 - The tagging process is both automated and manual and designed to maximize the number of titles we can prepare
 - While not “artisan tagging,” this process can scale to thousands of titles

CourseSmart Content Accessibility

- The titles that have been tagged allow better navigation, better structure and image tags. Students have been delighted.
 - CourseSmart has funded the tagging of hundreds of its best selling titles
 - CourseSmart partnered with the Alternative Media Access Center (AMAC) to obtain a DOE grant to fund 1,000 more, as well as research and development and faculty and student outreach
 - CourseSmart selects titles for tagging based on sales trends, and history of requests from campus disability services
 - CourseSmart tags additional titles upon request from students and instructors
 - Currently it takes approximately 4 weeks to tag a book for a student request; we are working to reduce this to 2 weeks.

CourseSmart Content Accessibility

- Available Tagged Titles
 - Untagged titles are often accessible and are evaluated as a short-term alternative while titles are tagged.
 - CourseSmart has partnered with Alternative Media Access Center and PDF2ePUB to optimize and tag the PDF
 - Currently CourseSmart is not currently tagging STEM titles
 - CourseSmart and AMAC is doing research on STEM and will assemble a committee in the second quarter to address possible solutions
 - AMAC and CourseSmart continue to investigate short-term solutions for these titles
 - Ultimately, CourseSmart feels that ePub 3.0 with MathML will provide the best STEM solution

CourseSmart User Support

- CourseSmart does not make the accessible version of its reader available to everyone for DRM reasons
 - CourseSmart makes its accessible reader available to any student or instructor who requests it by contacting customer support or emailing accessibility@coursesmart.com
 - As part of the DOE grant, CourseSmart is working with AMAC to develop communications plans that will help students, instructors and disability services offices discover this service
 - CourseSmart welcomes feedback from users with disabilities and is using it to improve the website, the reader and the content
 - Feedback surveys will be coordinated with AMAC as part of the STEPP grant to gather student, faculty and DSS feedback

CourseSmart User Support

- CourseSmart does not make the accessible version of its reader available to everyone for DRM reasons
 - CourseSmart is authoring additional help articles for people with disabilities so they may use the eTextbook efficiently with assistive technologies
 - CourseSmart is working with AMAC to train our customer support representatives in understanding and responding to the needs of all of our customers, including those with special needs

CourseSmart Publisher Support

- CourseSmart is working with its publishers to improve access to educational materials
 - CourseSmart is making accessibility considerations part of its content submission guidelines
 - CourseSmart has developed publisher training on making PDFs accessible

Feedback

- CourseSmart is using Student Feedback to address the following areas:
 - General website usability
 - Improving tagging processes
 - Improving the conversion from tagged PDF to HTML
 - Improving the accessible reader experience
- CourseSmart is actively researching better ways to address learning disabilities, particularly in the areas of:
 - Text-to-speech
 - Text-to-mp3
 - Highlighted reading

Feedback

- *“I have looked at the online platform and from what I can tell so far, it is very accessible with Jaws 11...Voiceover in Safari [on the iPhone] works about as well as any other screen reader.” – S.M., Community College Disabled Student Services Staff*
- *“Wow! I am quite impressed. Readability, usability, accessibility, performance, navigation etc of alpha test page is light years better than, where it was when I last tried it using an older production version. Various heading navigation, links etc make it very nice.” –K. C., Student who is blind*
- *“It works very well. Thank you for being so prompt in your response...tagging the book would be helpful for people needing to use the book in future, but I can use the book as is.” – A.S., Student who is blind*

Customer Feedback

- *“I was able to find someone via Twitter, get them on Skype, have them JAWS Tandem and test CourseSmart.com with a Braille display. They were able to access the various parts of the page in Braille, from login to the book itself. This is great! Heading navigation, arrow, and tabs work well with JAWS. New production of CourseSmart.com works great with JAWS 12, Focus 40 Blue Braille display, Internet Explorer 9 Beta, and Windows 7 32-bit.” – K.C., Student who is blind*