Canvas Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT)

This Voluntary Product Accessibility Template, or VPAT, is a tool that administrators and decision-makers can use to evaluate Canvas' conformance with the accessibility standards under Section [508 of the Rehabilitation Act](#) and the Act WCAG 2.0 AA Standards.

WebAIM.org, a third party authority in web accessibility, has evaluated the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) by Instructure and certifies it to be substantially conformant with Level A and Level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.0. A representative sample of system views was evaluated for accessibility. This sample included calendars, quizzes, and communication tools.

WebAIM cannot verify the conformance of content that is changed after October 17, 2016. However, based on our interactions with Instructure, WebAIM is confident in their ability and willingness to maintain a substantially conformant LMS.

Canvas LMS Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) Checklist

This Voluntary Product Accessibility Template, or VPAT, is a tool that administrators and decision-makers can use to evaluate Canvas' conformance with the WCAG 2.0 standards, level AA.

> ## Principle 1: Perceivable
> Information and user interface components must be presentable to users in ways they can perceive.

GUIDELINE 1.1 TEXT ALTERNATIVES
PROVIDE TEXT ALTERNATIVES FOR ANY NON-TEXT CONTENT SO THAT IT CAN BE CHANGED INTO OTHER FORMS PEOPLE NEED, SUCH AS LARGE PRINT, BRAILLE, SPEECH, SYMBOLS OR SIMPLER LANGUAGE.

Criteria	Supporting Features	Remarks and Explanations
1.1.1 Non-text Content: All non-text content that is presented to the user has a text alternative that serves the equivalent purpose, except for the situations listed below. (Level A)	Supports	Instructure provides text descriptions, labels, ETC., for images, form elements, and other items which blind and visually impaired users might find difficult to understand and/or use. We also allow course creators to add alternative text to content areas, such as adding alt attributes to images and captions to tables.

GUIDELINE 1.2 TIME-BASED MEDIA
PROVIDE ALTERNATIVES FOR TIME-BASED MEDIA. (*continued on next page*)

Criteria	Supporting Features	Remarks and Explanations
1.2.1 Audio-only and Video-only (Prerecorded): For prerecorded audio-only and prerecorded video-only media, the following are true, except when the audio or video is a media alternative for text and is clearly labeled as such: (Level A)	Supports	Instructure does not directly provide any prerecorded media through Canvas. Instructure provides tools to assist course creators in creating captions, descriptions, and/or transcriptions for their own media.
1.2.2 Captions (Prerecorded): Captions are provided for all prerecorded audio content in synchronized media, except when the media is a media alternative for text and is clearly labeled as such. (Level A)	Supports	Instructure does not directly provide any prerecorded media through Canvas. Instructure provides tools to assist course creators in creating captions, descriptions, and/or transcriptions for their own media.
1.2.3 Audio Description or Media Alternative (Prerecorded): An alternative for time-based media or audio description of the prerecorded video content is provided for synchronized media, except when the media is a media alternative for text and is clearly labeled as such. (Level A)	Supports	Instructure does not directly provide any prerecorded media through Canvas. Instructure provides tools to assist course creators in creating captions, descriptions, and/or transcriptions for their own media.
1.2.4 Captions (Live): Captions are provided for all live audio content in synchronized media. (Level AA)	Supports	Instructure does not directly provide any prerecorded media through Canvas. Instructure provides tools to assist course creators in creating captions, descriptions, and/or transcriptions for their own media.

1.2.5 Audio Description (Pre-recorded): Audio description is provided for all prerecorded video content in synchronized media. (Level AA)	Supports	Instructure does not directly provide any prerecorded media through Canvas. Instructure provides tools to assist course creators in creating captions, descriptions, and/or transcriptions for their own media.

GUIDELINE 1.3 ADAPTABLE
CREATE CONTENT THAT CAN BE PRESENTED IN DIFFERENT WAYS (FOR EXAMPLE SIMPLER LAYOUT) WITHOUT LOSING INFORMATION OR STRUCTURE.

Criteria	Supporting Features	Remarks and Explanations
1.3.1 Info and Relationships: Information, structure, and relationships conveyed through presentation can be programmatically determined or are available in text. (Level A)	Supports	Instructure uses standard HTML markup for headings, form labels, links, buttons, tables, lists, ETC. when possible. When not possible, ARIA and/or descriptive text is used to indicate the various types of content and controls, and the relationships between them.
1.3.2 Meaningful Sequence: When the sequence in which content is presented affects its meaning, a correct reading sequence can be programmatically determined. (Level A)	Supports	Instructure strives to keep all content in a meaningful order within the DOM. When ordering is potentially confusing, structural data such as list or table markup is added to help clarify how such content should be read.
1.3.3 Sensory Characteristics: Instructions provided for understanding and operating content do not rely solely on sensory characteristics of components such as shape, size, visual location, orientation, or sound. (Level A)	Supports	When sensory characteristics are used to convey meaning, additional information is also provided in an alternative form.

GUIDELINE 1.4 DISTINGUISHABLE
MAKE IT EASIER FOR USERS TO SEE AND HEAR CONTENT INCLUDING SEPARATING FOREGROUND FROM BACKGROUND.

Criteria	Supporting Features	Remarks and Explanations
1.4.1 Use of Color: Color is not used as the only visual means of conveying information, indicating an action, prompting a response, or distinguishing a visual element. (Level A)	Supports	When color is used to convey meaning, additional information is also provided in an alternative form.
1.4.2 Audio Control: If any audio on a Web page plays automatically for more than 3 seconds, either a mechanism is available to pause or stop the audio, or a mechanism is available to control audio volume independently from the overall system volume level. (Level A)	Supports	Instructure does not autoplay audio by default, though it may be possible for content creators to do so. However, when when embedding uploaded audio through the Rich Content Editor, audio should be fully controllable and should not autoplay.
1.4.3 Contrast (Minimum): The visual presentation of text and images of text has a contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1, except for the following: (Level AA)	Supports	Instructure maintains a minimum contrast ratio across the Canvas product and also offers a High Contrast mode for users who require it. The use of customized CSS and/or JavaScript in the UI theme has the potential to have a negative impact on the accessibility of Canvas, and should be avoided if possible. These modifications are not covered by this VPAT.
1.4.4 Resize text: Except for captions and images of text, text can be resized without assistive technology up to 200 percent without loss of content or functionality. (Level AA)	Supports	All content in Canvas can be zoomed by the browser up to any size the browser supports.

Principle 2: Operable
User interface components and navigation must be operable.

GUIDELINE 2.1 KEYBOARD ACCESSIBLE
MAKE ALL FUNCTIONALITY AVAILABLE FROM A KEYBOARD.

Criteria	Supporting Features	Remarks and Explanations
2.1.1 Keyboard: All functionality of the content is operable through a keyboard interface without requiring specific timings for individual keystrokes, except where the underlying function requires input that depends on the path of the user's movement and not just the endpoints. (Level A)	Supports	Instructure strives to ensure that all of Canvas is accessible without the use of a mouse.
2.1.2 No Keyboard Trap: If keyboard focus can be moved to a component of the page using a keyboard interface, then focus can be moved away from that component using only a keyboard interface, and, if it requires more than unmodified arrow or tab keys or other standard exit methods, the user is advised of the method for moving focus away. (Level A)	Supports	Instructure strives to ensure that all elements can be entered and left via the use of a keyboard.

GUIDELINE 2.2 ENOUGH TIME
PROVIDE USERS ENOUGH TIME TO READ AND USE CONTENT.

Criteria	Supporting Features	Remarks and Explanations
2.2.1 Timing Adjustable: For each time limit that is set by the content, at least one of the following is true: (Level A)	Supports	All timed activities, such as quizzes, can have their deadlines adjusted by Instructors, administrators, or other custom roles who have the proper permissions in the given course.
2.2.2 Pause, Stop, Hide: For moving, blinking, scrolling, or auto-updating information, all of the following are true: (Level A)	Supports	Canvas has no areas utilizing blinking or scrolling information. Areas that auto-update, such as the Files component, provide aria-live alerts.

GUIDELINE 2.3 SEIZURES
DO NOT DESIGN CONTENT IN A WAY THAT IS KNOWN TO CAUSE SEIZURES.

Criteria	Supporting Features	Remarks and Explanations
2.2.1 Timing Adjustable: For each time limit that is set by the content, at least one of the following is true: (Level A)	Supports	All timed activities, such as quizzes, can have their deadlines adjusted by Instructors, administrators, or other custom roles who have the proper permissions in the given course.
2.2.2 Pause, Stop, Hide: For moving, blinking, scrolling, or auto-updating information, all of the following are true: (Level A)	Supports	Canvas has no areas utilizing blinking or scrolling information. Areas that auto-update, such as the Files component, provide aria-live alerts.

GUIDELINE 2.4 NAVIGABLE
PROVIDE WAYS TO HELP USERS NAVIGATE, FIND CONTENT, AND DETERMINE WHERE THEY ARE. (*continued on next page*)

Criteria	Supporting Features	Remarks and Explanations
2.4.1 Bypass Blocks: A mechanism is available to bypass blocks of content that are repeated on multiple Web pages. (Level A)	Supports	Canvas offers "skip to content" links at the top of all pages and also offers headings and ARIA landmarks to aid with rapid navigation to desired content.
2.4.2 Page Titled: Web pages have titles that describe topic or purpose. (Level A)	Supports	The titles of web pages in Canvas are meaningful and relevant to a user's current location within the application.
2.4.3 Focus Order: If a Web page can be navigated sequentially and the navigation sequences affect meaning or operation, focusable components receive focus in an order that preserves meaning and operability. (Level A)	Supports	Instructure works to ensure that the tab order of all web pages is intuitive and logical.
2.4.4 Link Purpose (In Context): The purpose of each link can be determined from the link text alone or from the link text together with its programmatically determined link context, except where the purpose of the link would be ambiguous to users in general. (Level A)	Supports	Instructure strives to give all links a label which is meaningful, even when read out of context.
2.4.5 Multiple Ways: More than one way is available to locate a Web page within a set of Web pages except where the Web Page is the result of, or a step in, a process. (Level AA)	Supports	Canvas offers breadcrumb and contextual navigation to help users locate the screen or content they are seeking.

2.4.6 Headings and Labels: Headings and labels describe topic or purpose. (Level AA)	Supports	Instructure strives to make all headings and labels meaningful, even when read out of context.
2.4.7 Focus Visible: Any keyboard operable user interface has a mode of operation where the keyboard focus indicator is visible. (Level AA)	Supports	Instructure strives to ensure that the focus indicator is always visible and contrasts well with the surrounding content and background.

Principle 3: Understandable
Information and the operation of user interface must be understandable.

GUIDELINE 3.1 READABLE
MAKE TEXT CONTENT READABLE AND UNDERSTANDABLE.

Criteria	Supporting Features	Remarks and Explanations
3.1.1 Language of Page: The default human language of each Web page can be programmatically determined. (Level A)	Supports	The default language is set on the html tag of all pages in Canvas. The language of the Canvas Interface can be set at the Administrative, Course, or User level.
3.1.2 Language of Parts: The human language of each passage or phrase in the content can be programmatically determined except for proper names, technical terms, words of indeterminate language, and words or phrases that have become part of the vernacular of the immediately surrounding text. (Level AA)	Supports	Canvas works with translators to ensure that all text in the User Interface is displayed in the default language of the page (see 3.1.1).

GUIDELINE 3.2 PREDICTABLE
MAKE WEB PAGES APPEAR AND OPERATE IN PREDICTABLE WAYS.

Criteria	Supporting Features	Remarks and Explanations
3.1.1 Language of Page: The default human language of each Web page can be programmatically determined. (Level A)	Supports	The default language is set on the html tag of all pages in Canvas. The language of the Canvas Interface can be set at the Administrative, Course, or User level.
3.1.2 Language of Parts: The human language of each passage or phrase in the content can be programmatically determined except for proper names, technical terms, words of indeterminate language, and words or phrases that have become part of the vernacular of the immediately surrounding text. (Level AA)	Supports	Canvas works with translators to ensure that all text in the User Interface is displayed in the default language of the page (see 3.1.1).
3.2.3 Consistent Navigation: Navigational mechanisms that are repeated on multiple Web pages within a set of Web pages occur in the same relative order each time they are repeated, unless a change is initiated by the user. (Level AA)	Supports	Canvas offers a consistent navigation order across the site.
3.2.4 Consistent Identification: Components that have the same functionality within a set of Web pages are identified consistently. (Level AA)	Supports	Instructure strives to ensure that controls with similar functions work consistently across the site.

GUIDELINE 3.3 INPUT ASSISTANCE
HELP USERS AVOID AND CORRECT MISTAKES.

Criteria	Supporting Features	Remarks and Explanations
3.3.1 Error Identification: If an input error is automatically detected, the item that is in error is identified and the error is described to the user in text. (Level A)	Supports	Instructure uses automatic error focusing and/or ARIA live regions to inform users about detected input errors.
3.3.2 Labels or Instructions: Labels or instructions are provided when content requires user input. (Level A)	Supports	Instructure uses standard HTML or ARIA markup to associate a text label with all input fields, buttons, and links.
3.3.3 Error Suggestion: If an input error is automatically detected and suggestions for correction are known, then the suggestions are provided to the user, unless it would jeopardize the security or purpose of the content. (Level AA)	Supports	When possible, errors are automatically detected, and users are informed of these errors in an accessible manner.
3.3.4 Error Prevention (Legal, Financial, Data): For Web pages that cause legal commitments or financial transactions for the user to occur, that modify or delete user-controllable data in data storage systems, or that submit user test responses, at least one of the following is true: (Level AA)	Supports	Before performing irreversible or potentially serious actions, users are presented with a confirmation box, to ensure that they truly wish to perform the requested action. Before performing irreversible or potentially serious actions, users are presented with a confirmation box.

Principle 4: Robust
Content must be robust enough that it can be interpreted reliably by a wide variety of user agents, including assistive technologies.

GUIDELINE 4.1 COMPATIBLE

MAXIMIZE COMPATIBILITY WITH CURRENT AND FUTURE USER AGENTS, INCLUDING ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGIES.

Criteria	Supporting Features	Remarks and Explanations
4.1.1 Parsing: In content implemented using markup languages, elements have complete start and end tags, elements are nested according to their specifications, elements do not contain duplicate attributes, and any IDs are unique, except where the specifications allow these features. (Level A)	Supports	Instructure strives to ensure that all markup is valid, and follows best practices whenever possible.
4.1.2 Name, Role, Value: For all user interface components (including but not limited to: form elements, links and components generated by scripts), the name and role can be programmatically determined; states, properties, and values that can be set by the user can be programmatically set; and notification of changes to these items is available to user agents, including assistive technologies. (Level A)	Supports	Instructure strives to ensure that the name, role and value of all user interface elements are available to assistive technologies via HTML or ARIA.

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act

SECTION 1194.21: SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS AND OPERATING SYSTEMS – DETAIL
VPAT™
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Criteria	Supporting Features	Remarks and Explanations
(a) When software is designed to run on a system that has a keyboard, product functions shall be executable from a keyboard where the function itself or the result of performing a function can be discerned textually.	Supports	We strive to make sure all sections of Canvas can be navigated and controlled with only a keyboard.
(b) Applications shall not disrupt or disable activated features of other products that are identified as accessibility features, where those features are developed and documented according to industry standards. Applications also shall not disrupt or disable activated features of any operating system that are identified as accessibility features where the application programming interface for those accessibility features has been documented by the manufacturer of the operating system and is available to the product developer.	Supports	Canvas does not interfere with any operating system or browser shortcuts. Accessibility features such as sticky keys, magnifiers, screen readers, cursor sizes and virtual keyboards are not disabled or disrupted by Canvas.

(c) A well-defined on-screen indication of the current focus shall be provided that moves among interactive interface elements as the input focus changes. The focus shall be programmatically exposed so that Assistive Technology can track focus and focus changes.	Supports	Where possible, Canvas uses default browser focus styles. Where those styles are overridden, Canvas provides distinct focus styles.
(d) Sufficient information about a user interface element including the identity, operation and state of the element shall be available to Assistive Technology. When an image represents a program element, the information conveyed by the image must also be available in text.	Supports	Provided by the browser.
(e) When bitmap images are used to identify controls, status indicators, or other programmatic elements, the meaning assigned to those images shall be consistent throughout an application's performance.	Supports	Canvas uses icons to help depict the purpose of certain interface elements, such as "+" add buttons. The use of these icons is consistent throughout the site. Whenever a single graphic is used, such as a lone "+" graphic, alt text or CSS text replacement is used to enable screen readers to read the purpose of the link/button to the user.
(f) Textual information shall be provided through operating system functions for displaying text. The minimum information that shall be made available is text content, text input caret location, and text attributes.	Supports	Provided by the browser.

(g) Applications shall not override user selected contrast and color selections and other individual display attributes.	Not applicable	
(h) When animation is displayed, the information shall be displayable in at least one non-animated presentation mode at the option of the user.	Not applicable	
(i) Color coding shall not be used as the only means of conveying information, indicating an action, prompting a response, or distinguishing a visual element.	Supports	Canvas does not use color alone to distinguish the importance of a visual element.
(j) When a product permits a user to adjust color and contrast settings, a variety of color selections capable of producing a range of contrast levels shall be provided.	Supports	The interface of Canvas has been styled with CSS to comply with Section 508's contrast and color settings. Institutions may be able to theme Canvas for institutional branding, but Instructure monitors the process to ensure that color and contrast remain compliant.
(k) Software shall not use flashing or blinking text, objects, or other elements having a flash or blink frequency greater than 2 Hz and lower than 55 Hz.	Supports	Canvas does not use flashing or blinking text.
(l) When electronic forms are used, the form shall allow people using Assistive Technology to access the information, field elements, and functionality required for completion and submission of the form, including all directions and cues.	Supports	Canvas and all forms in the application work well with screen readers such as JAWS or VoiceOver.

SECTION 1194.22 WEB-BASED INTERNET INFORMATION AND APPLICATIONS – DETAIL
VPAT™
VOLUNTARY PRODUCT ACCESSIBILITY TEMPLATE®

Criteria	Supporting Features	Remarks and Explanations
(a) A text equivalent for every non-text element shall be provided (e.g., via "alt", "longdesc", or in element content).	Supports	Meaningful images in the Canvas user interface have alt-text descriptions. Non-relevant images have no alt-text.
(b) Equivalent alternatives for any multimedia presentation shall be synchronized with the presentation.	Supports	Canvas does not contain built-in multimedia presentations. Users upload their own content and are responsible for ensuring the accessibility of the uploaded content.
(c) Web pages shall be designed so that all information conveyed with color is also available without color, for example from context or markup.	Supports	Canvas does not use color alone to distinguish the importance of a visual element.
(d) Documents shall be organized so they are readable without requiring an associated style sheet.	Supports	A user or screen reader can read and understand pages in Canvas with the associated style sheets disabled.
(e) Redundant text links shall be provided for each active region of a server-side image map.	Supports	Canvas does not use server-side image maps.
(f) Client-side image maps shall be provided instead of server-side image maps except where the regions cannot be defined with an available geometric shape.	Supports	Canvas does not use server-side image maps.

(g) Row and column headers shall be identified for data tables.	Supports	Data tables, such as the list of assignments and their due dates in the "syllabus" page, are marked up with informative column and row headers.
(h) Markup shall be used to associate data cells and header cells for data tables that have two or more logical levels of row or column headers.	Supports	Canvas has no data tables with two or more logical levels of row or column headers.
(i) Frames shall be titled with text that facilitates frame identification and navigation	Supports	Canvas does not use frames.
(j) Pages shall be designed to avoid causing the screen to flicker with a frequency greater than 2 Hz and lower than 55 Hz.	Supports	Canvas does not cause the screen to flicker with a frequency greater than 2 Hz and lower than 55 Hz.
(k) A text-only page, with equivalent information or functionality, shall be provided to make a web site comply with the provisions of this part, when compliance cannot be accomplished in any other way. The content of the text-only page shall be updated whenever the primary page changes.	Supports	Canvas is compliant with all provisions of this section, so a text-only version is unnecessary.
(l) When pages utilize scripting languages to display content, or to create interface elements, the information provided by the script shall be identified with functional text that can be read by Assistive Technology.	Supports	Canvas uses javascript, WAI-ARIA and the most modern HTML5 techniques to provide feedback from interactive elements and to allow Assistive Technology such as screen readers to read and transmit information back to the user.

(m) When a web page requires that an applet, plug-in or other application be present on the client system to interpret page content, the page must provide a link to a plug-in or applet that complies with §1194.21(a) through (l).	Supports	Canvas is compliant with all provisions of this section, so a text-only version is unnecessary.
(n) When electronic forms are designed to be completed on-line, the form shall allow people using Assistive Technology to access the information, field elements, and functionality required for completion and submission of the form, including all directions and cues.	Supports	Canvas and all forms in the application work with screen readers such as JAWS, NVDA or VoiceOver.
(o) A method shall be provided that permits users to skip repetitive navigation links.		Canvas has a "skip to content" link at the top of every page that will bypass all site and course navigation. Canvas also uses semantic HTML5 elements such as <nav>, <aside> and <footer>, as well as ARIA landmark roles such as "navigation", "complementary", "main" and "contentinfo" to cue Assistive Technology.
(p) When a timed response is required, the user shall be alerted and given sufficient time to indicate more time is required.	Supports	Students are notified when elements are timed, and instructors can grant students additional time on timed elements on an as-needed, individual basis.

Note to 1194.22: Canvas interprets items of this section as consistent with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (WCAG 2.0) (December 8, 2008) published by the Web Accessibility Initiative of the World Wide Web Consortium: (a) 1.1, (b) 1.2, (c) 1.4, (d) 1.3 (g) 1.3, (l) 4.1, and (o) 2.4.

SECTION 1194.31: *FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE CRITERIA – DETAIL*
VPAT™ (***VOLUNTARY PRODUCT ACCESSIBILITY TEMPLATE***®) *(continued on next page)*

Criteria	Supporting Features	Remarks and Explanations
(a) At least one mode of operation and information retrieval that does not require user vision shall be provided, or support for Assistive Technology used by people who are blind or visually impaired shall be provided.	Supports, with exceptions	Canvas has been optimized to work well with screen readers such as JAWS or VoiceOver.
(b) At least one mode of operation and information retrieval that does not require visual acuity greater than 20/70 shall be provided in audio and enlarged print output working together or independently, or support for Assistive Technology used by people who are visually impaired shall be provided.	Supports	Canvas supports screen magnification and browser-provided zoom functionality.
(c) At least one mode of operation and information retrieval that does not require user hearing shall be provided, or support for Assistive Technology used by people who are deaf or hard of hearing shall be provided.	Supports	Canvas does not require hearing for operation.
(d) Where audio information is important for the use of a product, at least one mode of operation and information retrieval shall be provided in an enhanced auditory fashion, or support for assistive hearing devices shall be provided.	Supports	Canvas does not use any audio for its default operation. Users can upload their own content and are responsible for ensuring the accessibility of the uploaded content.

(e) At least one mode of operation and information retrieval that does not require user speech shall be provided, or support for Assistive Technology used by people with disabilities shall be provided.	Supports	Canvas does not require speech for operation.
(f) At least one mode of operation and information retrieval that does not require fine motor control or simultaneous actions and that is operable with limited reach and strength shall be provided.	Supports	Canvas does not require fine motor control or simultaneous actions. It is accessible via keyboard.

SECTION 1194.41: *INFORMATION, DOCUMENTATION AND SUPPORT – DETAIL* VPAT™ (*VOLUNTARY PRODUCT ACCESSIBILITY TEMPLATE*®)

Criteria	Supporting Features	Remarks and Explanations
(a) Product support documentation provided to end-users shall be made available in alternate formats upon request, at no additional charge.	Supports, with exceptions	Product support in an accessible text-based format is available online. Alternative formats may require an additional charge.
(b) End-users shall have access to a description of the accessibility and compatibility features of products in alternate formats or alternate methods upon request, at no additional charge.	Supports	
(c) Support services for products shall accommodate the communication needs of end-users with disabilities.	Supports	All support content is available in an accessible HTML, text-based format.