

Audio Description Best Practices

Accessibility is an essential part of effective course design, ensuring every student has equitable access to your instructional materials. Along with captions, videos that convey important visual information will also require audio descriptions to meet accessibility requirements under [Title II of the ADA](#). Because you know your course content best, you will be asked to help describe any important visuals within the video/lecture while recording.

Introductory Videos, Weekly Overviews, and Interviews

Introduce yourself in your video and have any guest speakers introduce themselves with their name and role. Briefly describe your surroundings when relevant.

Powerpoint Lectures and Lightboards

Consider types of visual elements that need description:

- Simple charts or graphs and their trends (e.g., *“This bar chart shows enrollment increasing each year from 2020 to 2024.”*)
- Images that support the spoken content.
- On-screen text that adds meaning beyond what is already said.
- Demonstrations where actions are visually important (e.g., *“I’m clicking the ‘Submit’ button in the top-right corner.”*)

When selecting your visuals and drafting your script, ask yourself these questions:

- What information is conveyed *only visually*?
- Would a student miss key meaning if they couldn’t see this?
- Is the visual essential to understanding the concept?

Aim to describe:

- Only what matters instructionally, not decorative elements.
- Purpose before detail.
- Describe trends, relationships, outcomes, and takeaways.

Other tips:

- Say what you are pointing to.
- Imagine a student listening without the screen.
- Take brief pauses to describe visuals.
- Avoid phrases like *“as you can see.”*