UMA, Title II Digital Accessibility Support

What Title II means at UMA

Since implementing Brightspace Ally in 2020 and offering ongoing workshops on accessible digital content, the University of Maine at Augusta has made steady progress in improving access for students, faculty, and staff. That work puts us in a strong position to meet the updated digital accessibility requirements under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Title II applies to public universities, including the University of Maine at Augusta. In practice, it means that the digital information and services we provide, including web content and materials in Brightspace, **must meet** the standards defined by the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 AA](#) (WCAG 2.1 AA). This is the standard used nationally and internationally to help ensure digital content works for people with disabilities, and ultimately improves access for everyone.

This applies to all of us who publish or share digital content as part of our work, including but not limited to:

- Brightspace course content (pages, documents, images, videos, links)
- Public-facing web content (UMA-affiliated websites, pages, and social media content)
- Documents and forms we digitally share with students, employees, and the public (Word, PDF, slides, spreadsheets, forms)
- Digital tools and platforms that we require people to use

The April 24, 2026, deadline

In 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice issued a new Title II rule that sets a clear digital accessibility standard: [WCAG 2.1 Level AA](#).

UMA's compliance deadline is **April 24, 2026**.

That deadline is not abstract. It is a date we are working toward together, and the content that will still be in use after that date needs to meet the standard.

Why this matters

At UMA, inclusion is a core value. We believe education should be within reach for everyone. When digital content is not accessible, we can unintentionally block access to learning and services for some students and community members. That is not acceptable and does not align with who we are.

Our approach between now and April 2026

We are approaching this in practical phases:

1. Start with the content students actively use. Prioritize materials that affect grades, progress, or completion of required tasks. You do not need to remediate archived content that is not used or linked for current work.
2. We will provide training, guides, and direct support to ensure that digital content is Title II-compliant.
3. We will build clear referral paths for accessibility changes that are complex, time-intensive, or require specialized tools.
4. We will support employees in building accessible content moving forward, so new content is "born accessible."

This work is coordinated through the UMA Faculty Development Center to support all UMA employees.

Focus first on core materials

These are the most common items that affect student access across Brightspace, the web, and shared documents:

- Course and service documents: syllabi, assignments, handouts, applications, email attachments, images (Word, PDFs, etc.)
- Forms, particularly PDF forms
- Presentations: PowerPoint decks and Google Slides
- Brightspace, website, my.uma portal content pages: text, links, embedded images, and tables created in editors
- Video and audio: recorded lectures, Zoom recordings, and other media requiring accurate captions and/or transcripts

You may also encounter specialized content that must meet the new accessibility standard, including shared drive files linked for public or student use, digital forms (Google Forms, Survey Monkey, Qualtrics, etc.), third-party tools required for coursework or services, and departmental or program policy documents.

Training and support

The UMA Faculty Development Center (FDC) and Maine CITE have been providing Title II and accessible content workshops for the past few years, and will continue to do so. If you are unsure where to start, start here.

Please ask for help early. No question is too basic. We would rather help you fix something quickly than have you spend time guessing. The Faculty Development Center, uma.edu/fdc, **supports all faculty and staff**, including doing accessibility remediation work on your specific materials when you need that help. Students can always get support through the Tech Hub, uma.edu/thehub.

We will also align expectations and timelines with University of Maine System guidance and applicable labor processes as they are developed.

FDC: Virtual live support (Zoom):
Mon–Fri, 10:00am–4:00pm

FDC: On-campus live support (Office):
Augusta (Katz 208): Mon–Thu, 10:00am–4:00pm
Bangor (Belfast 100): Wed–Thu, 10:00am–4:00pm

Email: help-fdc@maine.edu

You can also find self-paced resources through the UMS accessibility training and assistance resources.

What you can do now

- In Brightspace, use Ally indicators to identify and address common issues.
- Use the accessibility checker in Brightspace, Microsoft Office, and Adobe Pro.
- Fix clear issues first: headings, meaningful links, alt text, and readable structure.
- Ensure the required video/audio has accurate captions or transcripts.
- Engage in training to improve your understanding of digital accessibility
  - One free training designed by UMA Learning Experience Designers and librarians is the **ACCESS** Course on Brightspace. If you need help accessing it, reach out to the FDC at help-fdc@maine.edu.
- Ask for help when the fix is not clear.

If you have any questions, the UMA Title II Working group wants to hear from you. You can email us at umaaccessibility-group@maine.edu . Your questions will help ensure that by April 2026, every student who seeks their education at UMA will have equal access to our online content.