

We have learned that almost ten percent of our students are experiencing difficulty with remote learning as they have learning or other disabilities. Nationally, about 11 percent of students have disabilities, but of those, less than 30 percent ever disclose that fact. More than 1,000 students have disabilities at UToledo and utilize accommodations. It is a good reminder to all of us to make sure that our course materials are accessible to all of our students.

Inside of your Blackboard course site(s), you'll find built-in assistance for making your course content more accessible through a tool called Blackboard Ally. This tool provides accessibility feedback on a number of different types of content you may add to your online course including PDFs, Word Documents, PowerPoints, images, and more. Watch this brief video for a quick overview: [Overview for Instructors of Ally for Learning Management Systems](#) and read more at Blackboard's [Ally Quick Start for Instructors](#).

When you upload a file into Blackboard you will see these icons appear after a short time:

### **Practice Assignments**

Attached Files:   Practice document.docx  (11.243 KB)

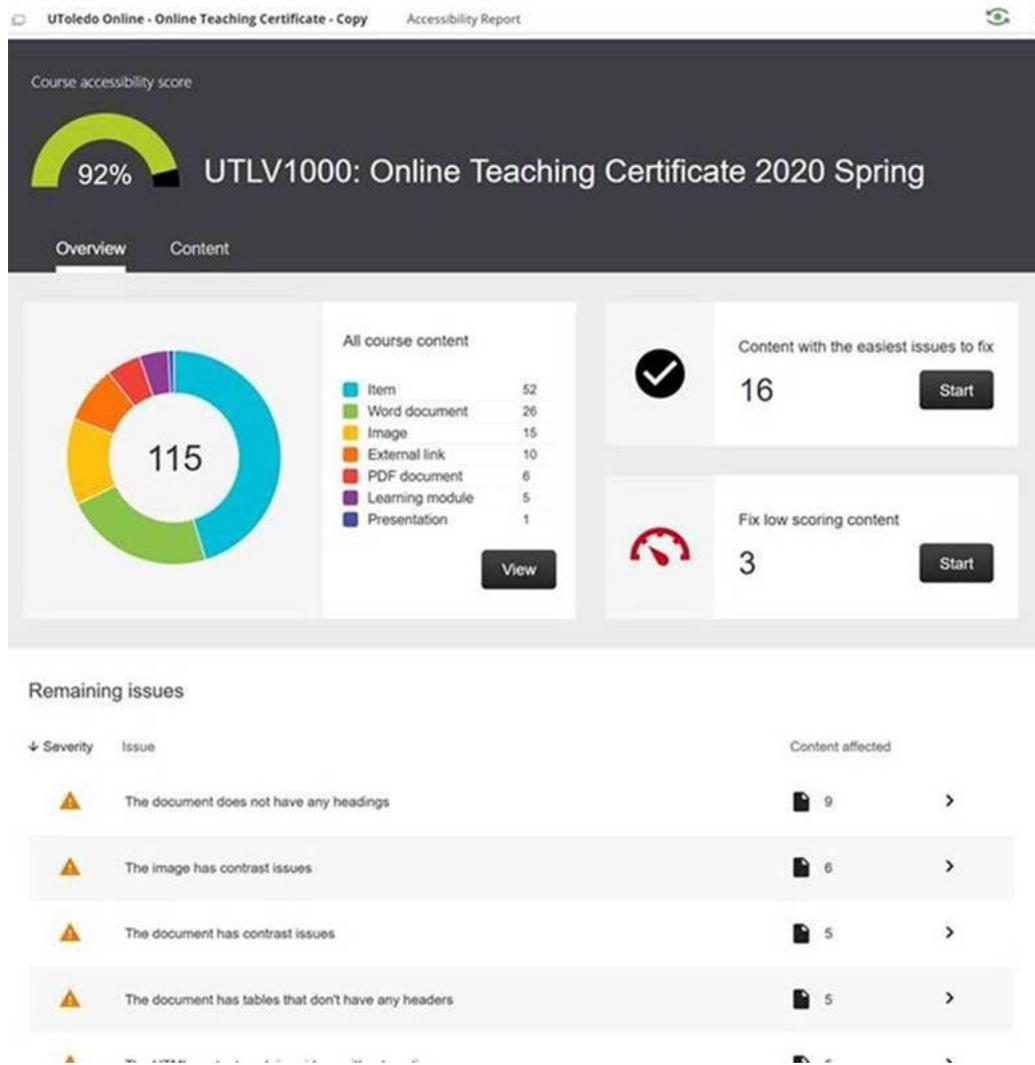
You can upload your practice documents for the assignments.

Clicking the left “meter” icon will provide feedback on the accessibility of the item as well as provide guidance on how to improve it, if needed. This is ONLY visible to course instructors.

Clicking the right “A with a down arrow” icon will provide options for downloading alternative formats of the document automatically generated by ALLY. Some of the alternative formats can be more valuable for students with varying needs and learning preferences. This icon is visible to instructors AND students.

There is also an “Accessibility Report” tool in the Course Tools area that provides a centralized place to review and work on the accessibility of all of your course content. More screenshots below.





Other recommendations for accessibility include:

- Choose third party audio/video content that is captioned.
- Ensure that recordings and live sessions have good audio quality.
- Record all live synchronous sessions in case there is an accessibility need.
- Apply extended time to all quizzes and exams that are timed for students with accommodations memos from Student Disability Services. See [Setting up Test Availability Exceptions in Blackboard](#) for how to apply the extended time in Blackboard.

In addition to Blackboard Ally, UToledo Online is available to assist you with questions about making your online course content accessible. As you transition your course into an online format, you are encouraged to work with the [instructional designer assigned to your college/department](#). Your instructional designer is able to provide guidance with many accessibility-related issues in online courses and they also have access to UToledo Online’s instructional designer – ADA specialist. UToledo Online also collaborates closely with Student Disability Services to remediate online course content for students that have requested accommodations.

Student Disability Services also offers a number of tools to help you make your online learning environment welcoming to all of your students: <https://www.utoledo.edu/offices/student-disability-services/>

We recognize that the work you have undertaken to take your course online has required tremendous resources of time, talent, and patience. We want you to know that our students appreciate it. Thank you for your excellent work and your humanity.

The University Teaching Center & UToledo Online