# Objective:

To create a repository of information to promote the awareness and inclusivity at campus for visually impaired students. Prevalence of blindness is increasing. It’s not if, it’s when you will have a visually impaired student.

If you have any questions at all, do not hesitate to reach out:

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### What is JAWS?

* JAWS (Job Access With Speech) is a screen reader, an assistive technology tool.
* Allows the visually impaired to access their computer.
* Verbalizes the screen.
* Keyboard based, no mouse input.

### General tips for improving JAWS accessibility.

* JAWS is much more friendly with Word Documents than PDFs.
* If using images, provide alt text so a JAWS user will understand the graphic.
* Use clear and consistent formatting in documents and presentations to enhance navigation for screen readers, including:
* Headings
* Lists
* Descriptive hyperlinks
* An audio description for videos is another great resource. Audio-only videos are difficult to understand without context, so providing context is helpful.
* Occasionally, JAWS will be incompatible with certain software. A visually impaired student may require accommodations in order to complete their classwork.

### JAWS and Canvas

Canvas is a highly accessible platform. There are numerous features tailored to enhance accessibility. Nevertheless, it's important to present materials in the most effective manner possible.

#### General Recommendations

* **Use Clear Formatting:** Ensure that all text is well-formatted with appropriate font size, headings, bullet points, and spacing to aid readability for screen readers.
* **Maintain consistency:** If Start Quiz is a button, all Start Quiz options should be a button. Nothing is more frustrating than expecting a button, then realizing it is a link on the next module.
* **Provide Descriptive Alt Text:** It’s important to provide descriptive alt text for all images, charts, and other visual content.
* **Provide course materials in multiple formats:** Providing a variety of formats such as text documents, .txt, word documents, .doc, or html will accommodate various screen reader preferences and assistive technologies. (Note: Some students use an embosser, which prints documents into Braille. This requires certain file types to convert the file into a .brf file, or a Braille Ready File.)
* **Use Accessible Links:** Ensure that all hyperlinks are descriptive, providing clear information about the destination. Avoid using generic phrases like "click here."

#### Designing Quizzes in Canvas

Quizzes typically offer a straightforward task to complete, yet it's crucial to consider how questions are presented.

Most question formats, such as multiple choice, true/false, matching with combo boxes, and free response, are easy to handle. However, Drag and Drop questions are inaccessible as JAWS lacks a cursor, making it impossible to select and relocate elements.

Moreover, providing ALT Text for images within questions is essential for ensuring that the necessary context to answer the question is present.

#### Discussion Boards in Canvas

For JAWS users, engaging in discussions, replying to others, and formatting their responses according to their preferences are straightforward tasks.

Compared to the challenge when attempting to upload documents through the Canvas menu. This is a Canvas issue, however, it still effects the visually impaired student. It is difficult to find the upload menu, difficult to find the Browse this computer button, and upload the file.

I would also like to add that it is possible to record a video, and even add captions to it using JAWS.

### Next Steps

For further information about making materials accessible for JAWS, including demonstration videos and information on formatting math equations, please visit this [Google Drive](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-vzCm9wU-svQYoLTJD-d-ujCuzvR_YQ0?usp=drive_link).