HTML Accessibility Topics:

- Keyboard Accessibility
- Content and Structure
  - Links
  - Headings and Lists
- Images in HTML Pages
- Tables
- Forms
Keyboard Access

- Some people cannot use a mouse, and navigate sites with tab and enter.
- Thus sites must be entirely keyboard accessible.
- Common barriers to avoid:
  - Incorrect tab order in forms/tables. Use `<tabindex>` to set correct order.
  - JavaScript DHTML menus. Use only with equivalent text menus on destination page.
  - WYSIWYG absolute positioning.
Content and Structure – Links

- Navigable by keyboard only (no mouse)
- Links should look like links
- Follow other link guidelines discussed
- Separate adjacent links, e.g., with | or *
- Link phrases and words rather than write out URLs, e.g.:
  - "Education Department Academic Programs" not
  - “http://education.cornell.edu/academics/index.cfm”
Content and Structure – Skip Navigation

- Start pages with a link that lets users skip to main content.  
  [http://ati.gmu.edu](http://ati.gmu.edu)
Content and Structure – Skip Navigation

- Start pages with a link that lets users skip to main content. Options include:
  - Visible “skip navigation” or “skip to main content” links at the top of the page.
  - Visible skip links elsewhere on page, but indexed with ‘tabindex’ to be the first link users would tab to.
  - Make skip link invisible to anyone but screen reader users. Put a small invisible .gif image at the top of the page with alt="Skip navigation" as the alternative text.
Content and Structure – headings and lists

- Use Real Heading Codes (<h1> <h2> etc.)
  - Test at [http://validator.w3.org/detailed.html](http://validator.w3.org/detailed.html)
    - Enter URL, check “show outline”, click “validate this page.”
    - Skip to bottom of page for results.

- Use Real Lists Codes (<ul> <ol> <dl>)
  - Ordered (1, 2, 3) only if really sequenced.
  - Never use just for layout or indenting.
Images – description options

- **Alternative text** (alt-text): up to 150 characters to describe object or image.
- **Null alt-text**: blank alt-text (alt=“”). Because some screen readers will read image file name if no alt-text is provided.
- **Long descriptions**: describe an image with over 150 characters (e.g., a graph) on a separate web page. Either:
  - Link caption with normal hyperlink, or
  - Use the “longdesc” attribute of HTML Image tag.
Images – image maps

- Create alt-text for overall map and for each hot spot.
- All image maps must be client side to be accessible.
Images – reminders

- Use real text, not graphical text.
- Don’t use flashing/strobing images.
- Avoid background images.
- Provide color contrast, but don’t rely on color alone.
Tables – for data

- Follow all general table guidelines.
- Summarize contents with alt-text or long descriptions.
- Designate headers with `<th>` tag.
- Associate the headers with the correct rows and columns using the scope attribute
  - e.g., `<th scope="col">Name</th>` to identify and associate a column called “name”
- Use the caption tag to describe, or name, the table.
  - E.g., `<caption>Biology 100 Grades</caption>`
Tables – for layout

- Again, CSS usually better for layout than tables.
- If using tables to create your page layout:
  - Do not use `<th>` tags for headers.
  - Keep layout simple. Your table lines are not invisible to screen reader users.
  - Make sure a screen reader will read in the right order, use `<tabindex>` if needed.
HTML Forms

- Keyboard accessible
- Organized logically
- Linear
- Every element labeled (<label>)
- Associated elements grouped with <fieldset>, described with <legend>
- Accessible form controls
Questions

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