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When Open Isn't Accessible

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When Open Isn’t Accessible

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Why Accessibility?
“Accessibility is all about our ability to engage with, use, participate in, and belong to, the world around us.”

The spirit of open access is to remove barriers to education. This includes barriers related to accessibility. Accessibility, as it relates to open educational resources, means that your OER should be accessible to a variety of users - learners with disabilities, the aging population, and those for whom English is a second language.

Designed correctly, OER's create equal learning opportunities for all students; designed poorly, they create new barriers to participation. Furthermore, institutions of higher education have a legal and ethical responsibility to ensure individuals with disabilities have equal access to information both online and in the classroom.

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines are the legal and technical standards for ensuring accessible open educational resources.

What is Accessible Content?
Accessible content refers to instructional materials that are designed from the outset to be flexible and responsive to the needs and abilities of students with physical, sensory, or learning disabilities, by offering media in multiple formats and by being interoperable with assistive technologies.

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