WHY TEACH ACCESSIBILITY?

The students you teach today will build tomorrow's technology. Prepare them by teaching accessibility best practices to technology designers, engineers, and writers.

What is accessibility?

Accessible technology is designed to meet diverse needs through flexibility and customization features and accessible content.

WHEN TECHNOLOGY BECOMES AN OBSTACLE FOR...

Getting cash at an ATM

Paying for a purchase at a checkout system

Getting past the login screen for your secure information

Accessibility is important to everyone...

NINE IN TEN

American adults use the internet.

And nearly

ONE IN FIVE

have a disability that may affect their ability to use the Internet.

For example, more than

2,200

accessibility-related lawsuits were filed in 2018 by plaintiffs claiming discrimination due to inaccessible websites, a 181% increase over 2017.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY ALERT!

Industry leaders like Adobe, Apple, Facebook, Google, Intuit, Microsoft, Oracle, Walmart eCommerce, and Verizon Media are actively recruiting people who can create products everyone can use, but they can't find appropriately trained talent due to a significant skills gap.

of companies say their current staff don't have sufficient accessible technology skills

say demand for accessibility skills will increase in the future.

Schools are not preparing students with accessible design and development skills

<3%

In a review of Teach Access member schools, less than 3% of engineering and computing technology course descriptions reference "accessibility" or "people with disabilities."

60%

Thus, 60% of industry respondents said it was difficult or very difficult for their organization to hire job candidates with accessibility skills.

Stay ahead of the curve by preparing now

- Help your graduates stand out in the job marketplace by preparing them in advance with the necessary skills to meet the increasing demand for inclusive design thinking.
- Add accessibility to your curriculum in engineering, computer science, design, information science, and other disciplines that relate to technology.
- Accreditation organizations like ABET/ACM and NASAD are exploring specific accessibility additions to their criteria.
- Use Teach Access resources to fill the gaps in current program offerings. Teach students the skills that are in high demand.

BUILD A BETTER FUTURE BY TEACHING ACCESSIBILITY

teach access

teachaccess.org

Use Teach Access resources

Teach Access offers resources and connections to fill gaps in current program offerings.

- **Teaching resources you can use in your courses.**
- **Curriculum development grants to help you create teaching materials.**
- **Study away programs onsite in Silicon Valley for faculty and students to learn about accessibility skills and career opportunities.**

WHY TEACH ACCESSIBILITY?

Without disability awareness and accessibility skills in their professional toolkit, students entering the technology industry are not prepared to produce quality products and services that everyone can use.

Accessible technology is important to everyone

Carl has a tremor and arthritis that makes typing difficult. He types slowly, which can cause his banking app to time out due to inactivity. Carl loves the convenience of online banking, but wishes app developers didn't lock out slow typists.

Technology can reduce barriers and increase participation for people with disabilities. Screen reading and magnification tools, speech and other input methods, and the availability of online services open up opportunities to work, learn, communicate, and accomplish everyday activities.

The United Nations calls for accessible technology as an essential means to "promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities."

Without attention to accessibility, technology excludes people with disabilities from opportunities and services.

Industry is building accessibility capacity

Creating inclusive products is a market differentiator. Apple is known for providing technology that is usable "out of the box" by anyone. Other industry leaders are also building capacity with policies, demonstration and training labs, dedicated teams, public blogs, and employee support programs. Companies are actively recruiting people who can create products everyone can use.

Mariana is reviewing applicants seeking to join her team. Her company has built a large, loyal user base by providing high-quality, accessible products. But none of the otherwise qualified applicants have background in accessibility or learned accessibility in their studies.

Most job candidates have not learned about accessible design and development in their engineering, computer and information science, and design programs.

Schools are not preparing students in accessibility

Lena is looking for a job in web development. As she scans through job postings, she notices that accessibility is called out as a preferred skill. She wonders what wheelchairs have to do with the web. Plus, what is WCAG? She hasn't heard her professors talk about it at all.

There is proven industry demand for accessibility awareness and skills. Companies are increasingly preferring or requiring general accessibility skills in their engineering, developer, UX, and research positions.

In a study of Teach Access member schools, less than 3% of engineering and computing technology course descriptions referenced accessibility skills.

Monitor your accreditation organizations for proposed changes

- **Encourage instructors to include accessibility in the curriculum. Suggest accessibility as an emerging topic for teaching and research, and promote peer networks and mentoring. Offer support, including course leave and training resources to develop an accessibility practice.**
- **Integrate teaching accessibility into tenure and annual reviews. Reward those who engage in accessibility teaching, research, and publication.**

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Please contact us!

Tell us what you need to advance digital accessibility. info@teachaccess.org

References available online at teachaccess.org/resources