

Blackboard Ally is Coming to Seneca

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To support Seneca's commitment to continue to be inclusive, and to deliver courses online, this semester we are introducing a new tool to your Blackboard courses called **Blackboard Ally**.



What is Blackboard Ally?

Blackboard Ally is an accessibility tool integrated into Blackboard that helps identify whether digital course content is accessible. It does not change how anything works in your course, and it will not alter your course documents.

How does Blackboard Ally help you?

Blackboard Ally identifies what the accessibility issues are, it explains why they need fixing, and it provides resources outlining how to fix the issues.

What will you see?

You will notice one of four Blackboard Ally indicators next to your course documents and some course content. The indicators are a visual representation of the accessibility score for the content.

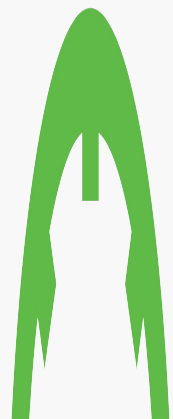




Red:
Needs help!

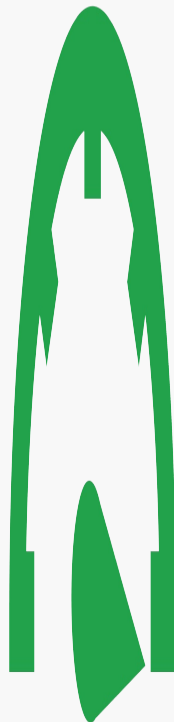


Orange:
A little better!





Light Green:
Almost there!



Dark Green:
Perfect!

When you click on the Blackboard Ally indicator for that content, it will explain the reason for that accessibility score and offer explanations around what that error means as well as guidance on how you can improve the accessibility score.

These indicators are not visible to students.



You'll also notice an "A" symbol next to your course documents: . This icon means there are alternative formats of this document available to download. Blackboard Ally automatically generates alternative formats of your course documents, making them

available to you and your students.

Why should you use Blackboard Ally?

Improving the accessibility of your course content not only helps to ensure that your students who need accommodations can access your course content, it will also improve the learning experience for all students. And the alternative formats allow your students to engage with the course content in a different way.

For example, students can download the HTML version to read on their phone, the ePub version to read on their tablet, an Audio version to listen to on any MP3 player, or an electronic braille version to use with their braille reader.

What will students see?

Students do not see the Blackboard Ally indicators, but they will have access to alternative formats.



Students can click on the “A” symbol to see which alternative formats of that document are available to download. Common alternative formats include tagged PDF, HTML, ePub, electronic braille, audio, and BeeLine Reader.

ITS's website contains information on alternative formats in [Ally](#). More information and resources on Blackboard Ally are coming soon.

View the [September 2020 issue of the Academic Newsletter](#).

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