



LIGHTHOUSE
WRITERS WORKSHOP

Faculty Accessibility Toolkit

Lighthouse aims to make our programs accessible to all, and faculty awareness is critical to that mission. Workshops created with accessibility in mind support all learning, not just that of writers with disabilities. This guide will get you started on making your workshops more accessible, but it isn't meant to be exhaustive. Lighthouse staff are here as a resource; please reach out to us for any support in your efforts toward building accessible teaching materials.

Overview

This document covers two categories of accessible teaching strategies:

- Incorporating diverse perspectives into workshop content
- Removing barriers to understanding for students of varying abilities

General Strategies and Reminders

- Provide a referenceable syllabus so expectations are transparent
- Provide materials that support the content of your presentation such as outlines, illustrations, and glossaries, and consider presenting information in multiple formats, such as visual, textual, auditory, etc.
- Encourage student participation in establishing community guidelines
- Break longer periods of time into smaller segments
- Use icebreakers to foster connections and promote a sense of community
- Put schedule on board, in chat, or handout, so students know what to expect
- Create lesson plans that support inclusivity rather than separating out students with differing needs and abilities
- Use inclusive language and images and integrate diverse authors into curriculum
- Encourage full participation and provide space for those who are less talkative to contribute without silencing more active participants
- Provide opportunities for participant feedback throughout the course
- Provide specific, actionable feedback in a timely manner to help students gauge their progress and revise their work

- Alert participants at the start of class that you'll share lecture notes or slides so writers can be more present in class
- Provide some support outside of workshop time, such as office hours
- Praise publicly; reprimand privately

Environmental Access

- Normalize bathroom and water breaks
- Alert Lighthouse staff if views of instructor and boards, charts, videos, etc., are obstructed in any way
- Alert staff if preferential seating is needed and not readily available
- Encourage writers to sit in a consistent arrangement, which assists those with cognitive disabilities
- Minimize visual distractions, such as unrelated slides or screensavers
- Provide time limits and warnings

Accessible Materials and Handouts

Make every effort to provide materials to participants in advance and provide both verbal and written instructions. Use the following guide for document formatting:

- Use formats that can be manipulated by the reader. For example, docs and pdfs allow the visually impaired to zoom in and out
- When scanning PDFs, use clean source materials
- Set scanners to highest resolution
- Use headings, page numbers, and tables to organize documents
- Use bullet points and lists to structure handouts
- Provide descriptions for images
- Use 1.5x or 2x line spacing when possible
- Consider left aligning text as it is easiest to read
- Use simple, accessible fonts like Arial, Calibri, Helvetica, Verdana, or Times New Roman
- Use a legible font size of 12 point or higher
- Avoid ALL CAPS, which is difficult to read

For more resources on making your workshop accessible, please visit <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-main>, and reach out to your program manager for any questions, concerns, or assistance.