

Blackboard Ally Transcript

Introducing Blackboard Ally, dedicated to helping create truly inclusive experiences in education. Ally is a revolutionary course content accessibility service that integrates closely with a learning management system. Accessibility of digital course content has been a significant problem for some time, affecting students, instructors, and institutions worldwide. Too often, conversations around accessibility stop or the systems instructors and students use. And the content that lives in them is often neglected. It is very difficult for an institution to understand how they are performing with regards to accessibility. There are vast amounts of content created continuously by many different people, making it hard to understand how or where institutions need to improve, let alone what the legal risks are.

Making instructors aware of the impact of accessibility can be difficult and providing the required accommodations to students with disabilities can be challenging. On top of that, accessibility leads to quality and usability improvements that will ultimately benefit all students.

Ally is dedicated to helping you make your course content more accessible. We do this in three ways. First, ally uses machine-learning algorithms to automatically provide alternative formats for course content throughout your entire institution. This gives students immediate access to more accessible alternatives such as semantic, HTML, audio, ePub, electronic braille, and more, without any manual intervention from the institution or instructor. Ally also checks and scores course content.

It then provides feedback and detailed guidance on how to fix the identified accessibility issues to the instructor all within the context of the learning management system. Allows instructors to see which items in their course have accessibility issues and fix them before students start to use the content.

Lastly, Ally provides a means to understand how the institution is doing in terms of accessibility and analyzes course content into an institution wide report. This report provides administrators a deep and rich understanding of not only how the institution is performing, but how things are evolving and where the problems are. With this kind of insight, informed decisions can be made into how to further improve accessibility at the institution.

Ally quickly provides a level of insight that most institutions don't have access to. All of Ally's features work together to move any institution up on the accessibility spectrum. From the automated generation of alternative accessible formats to in-context instructor feedback and institutional reporting, Ally works hard at making course content more accessible.