Guidelines for Achieving Accessibility in your Online Course

For course web pages, documents, images, and videos:

1. Use clear, consistent layouts and organization schemes for presenting content.
2. Structure headings (using style features built into the Learning Management System, Word, PowerPoint (PPT), PDFs, etc.) and use built-in designs/layouts (e.g., for PPT slides).
3. Use descriptive wording for hyperlink text (e.g., "Chapter 1 Outline" rather than "click here").
4. Once a Word or PPT item is accessible, use File > "Save As…" and select PDF from the choices - by default this produces a PDF that preserves the document's accessibility features. Do not use PDFs when presented as an image (make sure the text is accessible by testing to see if you can copy and paste it).
5. Provide concise alternative text descriptions of content presented within images.
6. Use large, bold fonts on uncluttered pages with plain backgrounds.
7. Use color combinations that are high contrast and can be read by those who are colorblind (eg. red and green look the same).
8. Make sure all content and navigation is accessible using the keyboard alone.
9. Caption or transcribe video and audio content.

With respect to instructional methods:

10. Assume students have a wide range of technology skills and provide options for gaining the technology skills needed for course participation.
11. Present content in multiple ways (e.g., in a combination of text, video, audio, and/or image format).
12. Address a wide range of language skills as you write content (e.g., spell acronyms, define terms, avoid or define jargon).
13. Make instructions and expectations clear for activities, projects, and assigned reading.
14. Make examples and assignments relevant to learners with a wide variety of interests and backgrounds.
15. Offer outlines and other scaffolding tools to help students learn.
16. Provide adequate opportunities for practice.
17. Allow adequate time for activities, projects, and tests (e.g., give details of project assignments in the syllabus so that students can start working on them early).
18. Provide feedback on project parts and offer corrective opportunities.
19. Provide options for communicating and collaborating that are accessible to individuals with a variety of disabilities.
20. Provide a variety of methods for demonstrating learning (e.g., different types of test items, portfolios, presentations, discussions).