

# Welcome to Today's WCET Webcast

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March 25, 2025

The webcast will begin shortly.

There is no audio being broadcast at this time.

An archive of this webcast will be available on the WCET website next week.

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# Welcome!

- Slides can be downloaded via the link in chat.
- Please use the Question box for questions and Chat for other information exchange.
- Slides, recording, and shared resources will be emailed to attendees.

**Megan Raymond**

Senior Director, Membership & Programs  
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# Accessibility Commitment

WCET is committed to creating inclusive and accessible materials. Our slides are designed with high-contrast visuals, large text, and descriptive alt text for images.

You can scan the QR code to download the slides on your phone if you prefer.

If you need the slides in an alternative format or additional accommodations, please let us know. We value your feedback to make our content accessible for everyone.





wcet

Webcast

# Where AI Meets Accessibility: Considerations for Higher Education

March 25, 2025

Hosted in partnership with:

every learner  
↔  
everywhere



teach access



# ● ● Today's Moderator

## **Emilie Cook**

Senior Manager, Content,  
Community, and Digital Engagement

Every Learner Everywhere

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# Speakers



**Rolando Méndez**

Director of Education  
Teach Access



**Tessa Wolf**

Student Intern  
Every Learner Everywhere  
University of Illinois at  
Urbana-Champaign

# Why Should We Care About Accessibility?

There are many reasons to prioritize accessibility:

- Legal Considerations
- Social Justice Shared Responsibility
- Quality Educational Experience
- Institutional Sustainability
- Accreditation



# AI in Higher Education

Artificial intelligence is sparking diverse and dynamic conversations across higher education, particularly on teaching and learning.

Key topics include:

- Pedagogical innovation
- Instructional design
- Personalized learning



## PERSPECTIVES ON AI

"In higher education, AI is a topic that generates many interesting conversations. One of the most important topics is pedagogical innovation. Another big topic is ethics and bias in AI. There is a strong debate about how to ensure that AI systems do not perpetuate social or cultural biases and how to use them fairly. And finally, there are discussions about access, as some see AI as a way to democratize education, while others fear that it could increase inequalities if not implemented properly."

— Bernabé Soto Beltrán, Director for Online Learning and Internationalization at Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico, Aguadilla Campus

# AI and People with Disabilities (PWD)

- Barriers for PWD

- Classifier AI
- Predictive AI
- Generative AI



## BIASES IN TECHNOLOGY

**"The biases and ableist practices that AI can have reflect how often society focuses on 'normal' standards when creating technology."**

— Tessa Wolf, Learning and Education Studies Student at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

- Perpetuating Biases and Ableist Assumptions

# AI and Assistive Technologies (AT)

**Assistive technology** describes tools and devices that help PWD in various areas of daily life.

- AI in AT
  - AI-powered assistive technologies are transforming how students and educators with disabilities engage in communication and learning.
- AI as AT
  - AI offers support in reading, writing and can help reduce the mental strain of higher education, especially for students with disabilities

# AI and Accessible Content

## Using AI to Describe Images and Graphs

### Image Example

#### 1. Image:



#### 2. Prompt Used to Generate an Alt Text Description for an Image:

"Please generate a detailed and accurate alt text description for this image: [insert image URL or upload image file]. Be sure to include key details such as the main subject, objects, people, their positions, colors, and any other visual elements that are significant to understanding the image. Provide context that would be helpful for a person who is blind or has low vision, ensuring that the description conveys the overall meaning or purpose of the image."

# AI and Accessible Content

## 3. Result:

The image is a vibrant graphic promoting “Back to School: Cross-disciplinary Resources for Educators” by Teach Access. At the top, a yellow banner with black text reads “Back to School,” accompanied by the Teach Access logo, which features a bridge design above the text “teach access” in white. Below this, the subtitle “Cross-disciplinary Resources for Educators” appears in white text on a dark blue background.

The center of the image features a grid of six circular buttons labeled with white text on dark blue backgrounds, highlighting resource types: “Assignments,” “Lessons,” “Presentations,” “Syllabi,” “Discussions,” and “Videos.” Behind the buttons, the dark blue background includes faint, chalk-like illustrations of various educational symbols, such as light bulbs, books, globes, and geometric shapes.

In the bottom left, there is a partial image of a document titled “Exercise: Understanding Alt Text,” displayed against a white paper background with a red-bordered clipboard. The bottom right corner features a stylized orange teacup with steam rising, sitting on a wooden saucer.

# Key Considerations for Higher Education

- Include accessibility in AI policies
- Prioritize AI tools intentionally designed for accessibility
- Adopt AI in academic and administrative processes
- Implement AI tools in teaching and learning
- Promote AI Literacy
- Become an AI and Accessibility Advocate
- Engage in Continuous Improvement

# Questions from the Audience





# Contact Information



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# Every Learner Everywhere

Every Learner Everywhere is a network of partner organizations with expertise in evaluating, implementing, scaling, and measuring the efficacy of education technologies, curriculum and course design strategies, teaching practices, and support services that personalize instruction for students in blended and online learning environments.



[everylearnereverywhere.org](http://everylearnereverywhere.org)

# Teach Access

Teach Access is a US-based nonprofit organization dedicated to bridging the gap between the demand for digital accessibility skills in the workplace and the supply of professionals equipped with this knowledge.

They collaborate with educational institutions, industry leaders, and disability advocacy groups to integrate accessibility principles into curricula.



teach access

[teachaccess.org](https://teachaccess.org)

# Additional Information and Resources

The webcast recording and additional resources will be available in the next week: [wcet.wiche.edu/events/webcasts](http://wcet.wiche.edu/events/webcasts).

Visit [wcet.wiche.edu](http://wcet.wiche.edu) to explore our Policy and Practice work, Events, Membership, and Sponsorship.

# Stay Connected with WCET

*WCET is the leader in the practice, policy & advocacy of digital learning in higher education.*

Learn more about the benefits of joining our community:  
[wcet.wiche.edu/join-us](https://wcet.wiche.edu/join-us)



# Share Your Expertise at WCET 2025

**Deadline: Monday, March 31**

**[bit.ly/WCET2025proposals](https://bit.ly/WCET2025proposals)**

**Join us in Denver, Colorado**

**SAN Coordinators: October 20**

**WCET 2025: October 21-23**

**ASWE Rise: October 23-24**

# Thank you

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*Supporting members make an additional investment and support WCET's mission to advance the effective use of technology for teaching and learning.*



Thank you for attending!

*[wcet.wiche.edu](http://wcet.wiche.edu)*