Accessible Teaching

The following is a curated list of resources and tips for teachers creating teaching materials, with a special focus on A+, and other platforms which allow teachers a high degree of control over the work. This overlaps with a lot of general web accessibility and understanding the needs of students with disabilities.

Quick Tips

Keep these in mind:

- Make sure that students can change colours, sizes and fonts if they need to - provide multiple formats if necessary.
- Make sure that colour doesn't convey meaning alone - for example, on a scatter plot, use different shapes as well as colours.
  - Especially avoid red and green together, as many people can't see the difference.
- Add subtitles (captions) to videos - Panopto let's you do this, and PowerPoint has a built-in live subtitling option which supports English, Finnish and Swedish. More information about subtitles and captioning on Aalto.fi.
- Make sure information in every picture is described some other way:
  - On the web, add a description of the image as the ALT attribute to your IMG tag.
  - If you're showing a graph, consider making the raw data available as a table
- Use appropriately nested headings (so, on the web, every h3 is nested under an h2, etc) to organise the document. There should be one h1 per document.

Working with students with disabilities

- Creating Accessible Learning Environments - some theory and history about disability in higher education in general from Vanderbilt University in the US.
- Aalto has pages about some classes of disabilities and long term health conditions which provide background information in an Aalto context:
  - Individual Study Arrangements - Aalto's toolkit is linked at the bottom of the page, and has pages for the most common conditions
- CS department webinar (37 minutes, 26 August 2020, English with automatically generated English subtitles) includes a brief overview of disability in the University context along with some guidelines on testing things you've built.

Web Accessibility

- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 - The gold standard for building accessible websites, apps and materials. Getting started with them can take a bit of work. Aiming for meeting the AA requirements is recommended.
  - WCAG in English
  - WCAG suomeksi (Verkkosisällön saavutettavuusohjeet)
  - How to meet WCAG 2.1 - this list contains passing and failing examples and can be filtered by level.
- The a11y Project Checklist - a good starting point if you want some quicker checks
- Microsoft's Inclusive design toolkit features lots of information about building accessible products in industry.
- WebAIM's WAVE Browser Plugin - available for Chrome and Firefox, includes excellent documentation on the potential issues it finds.
- Aalto.fi: Digital Accessibility

Who to ask for help

- For matters related to accessibility inside A+: aplusguru@cs.aalto.fi
- For matters related to students with disabilities more generally: Aalto.fi: Contact information for individual study arrangements (requires Aalto login)
- For small web accessibility related matters outside of the above: matthew.higgins@aalto.fi (NB: I'm a student in the department, but I am happy to answer questions when I can on a best effort basis)