

Create mobile-friendly content

Preparing your course materials to be mobile-friendly shouldn't be an afterthought. Incorporating best practices for universal design will benefit all users. It's easy to do if you keep these four factors in mind when creating web-ready content.

SPEED

Think about optimization. As broadband services have gotten faster, load time patience has decreased. When using images, be sure you've looked at the image resolution. Your images don't need to be 300 dpi and 25 inches by 30 inches. Reduce the file size of your images before adding them to your website. You should also optimize your images before adding them to Powerpoint or other presentation software. On a Mac you can use the [Preview](#) tool to resize images. On Windows, you can try an image size editor called [Imageresize](#) that was tested by UAF eLearning on both on Windows 7 and 10.

Don't upload a video file to your site; be sure to use a hosting service like [YouTube](#), [Google Drive](#), or better yet, [Kaltura](#) on the [UAF media](#) server. These hosting services take the guesswork out of optimization and do that for you. When a student accesses the video through one of these services, it detects the mode of access and shares the best viewing option by adjusting file size, type, etc.

RESPONSIVE DESIGN

Access to your web content should exist on a website that is responsive, that is, a site that can detect what kind of a device is being used and can adapt the view for that device. Most WordPress themes and sites built on Google Sites are responsive.

How can you tell if a website is responsive? It's easy to grab your phone and see for yourself. A test that can be done on your computer is resizing the browser window. Simply pull the left side of your browser window to narrow the view and a responsive site will adjust its content as you make the window smaller. You can also use [Google's Mobile-Friendly Test website](#).

The default Blackboard Learn structure (UAF is using the 2012 theme) when accessed through a web browser is not optimized for mobile devices; however, the [Blackboard app](#) is responsive and built specifically for phones and tablets. Keep in mind that the content that you add to Blackboard may not be responsive. Follow the suggestions outlined in this tip to avoid any problems.

FORMATTING

The principles for universal design and [web accessibility](#) will benefit all users, including mobile device users.

- use [header and subheader](#) styles instead of "bold" and larger fonts to portray a hierarchy of content
- use bullet points
- use a [readable typeface](#) or the default typeface and allow the browser or app to use the best option for that device
- consider [contrast](#) to see words and letters better
- use small chunks of content
- links are described and not showing as "click here" or other [uninformed phrases](#)
- avoid using an [entire website site URL](#) as the link text
- add content directly on site instead of attaching a downloadable document that may not have a mobile device reader
- use [alt-tags](#) to identify images and other graphics

AVOID FLASH AND JAVA

Avoid websites that have interactions that require flash. Mobile devices don't do flash. Use this [Flash Test site](#) to see if your website uses Flash. Or Java. Many applets (small applications) use the Java framework and need an operating system that isn't included in mobile devices by default.

If you're interested in interactivity, consider using a tool like [H5P](#) to create your own interactive games and challenges. Everything from [flashcards](#) to [drag and drop](#) exercises to [Speak the Words](#) (answering a question with your voice) can be created and shared with your students or embedded in Blackboard, WordPress or other website.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

If you use a publisher's content or other website content, take a few minutes and search the site to find out if the offering is mobile-friendly.

If you're concerned that students might have difficulty completing your course with a mobile device, it's highly suggested that you add notes regarding tools and access to your course details so that students are given a head's up when registering in UAOnline.