

GOUCHER | college

Inspiring Global Changemakers

Web Accessibility

For web editors and content creators

WHY A11Y?

- A11y benefits us all
- We've all used assistive technology
 - eyeglasses
 - escalators, elevators
- A11y gives equal access to everyone



WHY A11Y?

Digital Accessibility Working Group

- improve the accessibility of Goucher's digital spaces
- make sure our digital properties pass legal requirements (WCAG)



WHAT IS WEB ACCESSIBILITY (A11Y)?

- A11y = accessibility
- A11y is about equality
- Removing barriers that limit a person's access to web content

WHAT IS WEB ACCESSIBILITY (A11Y)?

Common
barriers:

- images without alt-text
- links with non-descript text
- low color contrast and small fonts
- videos without captions, transcripts, or audio descriptions
- improperly structured headings

A11Y STATS – U.S.



1 in 4 (70 million) people in the U.S. have some type of disability

21% of undergrad students reported having a disability

CDC.gov. (2022). [Disability Impacts All of Us.](#)

NCES.ed.gov (2019). [Fast Facts.](#)

ACCESSIBLE DESIGN HELPS EVERYONE

- Auditory
- Cognitive
- Neurological
- Physical
- Speech
- Visual
- Situational

...and many others

ACCESSIBLE
DESIGN HELPS
EVERYONE



HOW DO WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)
- Developed by World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)
- Legally required to follow **WCAG 2.1 AA**
- 13 guidelines, organized under 4 principles

WCAG PRINCIPLES

- Perceivable
- Operable
- Understandable
- Robust

HOW YOU CAN AFFECT A11Y & CONFORMANCE

1. Images

2. Text

3. Links

4. Media

5. Visual design*

ACCESS THE WEB STYLE GUIDE:

from the CMS login
screen

from the “Add-Ons”
dropdown in the top
navigation bar

The screenshot shows the Modern Campus CMS login interface. The top navigation bar includes the Modern Campus CMS logo, a 'Dashboard' dropdown, 'Content', 'Reports', 'Add-Ons' (circled in green), and 'Setup' dropdown. An orange arrow points from the 'Add-Ons' dropdown to the 'Web Style Guide' section on the right. Another orange arrow points from the 'Add-Ons' dropdown to the 'Add-Ons' text in the CMS login screen. The 'Web Style Guide' section on the right contains the following text:

Web Style Guide

We're pleased to announce the newly updated and expanded [Web Style Guide](#), a resource designed to make your web content more effective, inclusive, and aligned with Goucher College's standards.

The guide includes:

- step-by-step tutorials for using the Modern Campus CMS.
- guidelines for writing, formatting, and structuring content.
- best practices for creating accessible content.
- explanation and examples for using web templates and modules.
- tips for maintaining a consistent, professional web presence.

Tip: You can also access the Web Style Guide directly from within the CMS by clicking **Add-Ons** in the top navigation bar.

Need more assistance?

If you'd like to request a new page, update a page title or URL, add redirects, or make changes to your site's navigation, please [submit a project request](#).

If you need help, have questions, or would like access to web modules (such as accordions, media sliders, testimonials, and more), please contact:

The CMS login screen on the left includes the Modern Campus CMS logo, a 'Log in to your account' button, and input fields for 'Username' and 'Password', followed by a 'LOGIN' button and a 'Reset Password' link.

#1 - IMAGES

- Single-sense content can only be sensed by one of the five senses
- Images can only be seen
- Audio can only be heard

IMAGES & ALT-TEXT

- Text can be seen, heard, and felt with braille
- Alternative text (alt-text) augments single-sense content

IMAGES & ALT-TEXT

- Alt-text is a textual substitute for images on the web
- Represents the **content**, **function**, and **emotion** of an image

Insert/Edit Image

×

General

Advanced

Source

{{f:72677509}}



/_resources/video/_stills/hp339.jpg

Alternative description

A group of international students, standing on

Image title

Width

Height

1065

599



Class

(not set) ▼

Custom Class

ID

CANCEL

SAVE



The alt-text field in the CMS is required.

Microsoft Word interface showing the **Picture Format** tab. The ribbon includes options for **Remove Background**, **Corrections**, **Color**, **Artistic Effects**, **Transparency**, **Adjust**, **Quick Styles**, **Picture Styles**, **Alt Text**, **Position**, **Wrap Text**, **Bring Forward**, **Send Backward**, **Selection Pane**, **Arrange**, **Crop**, and **Size**.

The main image area displays a photograph of a stone building with a wooden pergola structure over the entrance. The building has a sign that reads "ALUMNAE & ALUMNI HOUSE".

The **Alt Text** pane on the right provides instructions for describing the image:

Alt Text

How would you describe this object and its context to someone who is blind or low vision?

- The subject(s) in detail
- The setting
- The actions or interactions
- Other relevant information

(1-2 detailed sentences recommended)

The exterior of Alumnae/i House at Goucher College. The building's facade is built in the mid-century modern style with local flagstone and wood cladding. A stone and wood

☐ Mark as decorative ⓘ

The alt-text field automatically appears when adding images to Word.



Microsoft PowerPoint interface showing the "Insert/Edit Image" dialog box. The dialog box is open, displaying the "Alternative description" field, which is highlighted by an orange arrow. The text in the field reads: "A group of international students, standing on". The "Image title" field is also visible. The "Generate alt text for me" button is present at the bottom of the dialog box.

The alt-text field in the CMS is required

Alt Text

How would you describe this object and its context to someone who is blind or low vision?

- The subject(s) in detail
- The setting
- The actions or interactions
- Other relevant information

(1-2 detailed sentences recommended)

A screenshot of the "Insert/Edit Image" dialog box in Modern Campus CMS highlights the "Alternative description" field where a user can input alt-text.

Generate alt text for me

☐ Mark as decorative ⓘ

The alt-text field automatically appears when adding images to PowerPoint.



Blue & Gold Weekend - Message (HT...)

File Message Insert Options Format Text Review Help Acrobat Picture Format Table Design Table Layout

Paste Basic Text Names Include Attach File via Link Loop Components Tags Dictate All Apps Sensitivity Editor Switch Background Immersive Reader New Scheduling Poll Insert HTML View Templates

Send

From OfficeofCommunications@goucher.edu

To

Cc

Bcc

Subject Blue & Gold Weekend

- 10 a.m., Women's Lacrosse Alumnae Game
- Noon, Volleyball vs. Moravian (Eliza Memorial Game)
- Noon - 5 p.m., Blue & Gold Tailgate [Sign up to be a Celebrity Bartender](#) (includes meal & drink ticket)
- 1 p.m., Women's Soccer vs. Scranton
- 1:30 p.m., Men's Soccer Alumni Game
- 3:30 p.m., Men's Soccer vs. Scranton



Support Goucher Athletics even further by [becoming a Blue & Gold Society Member](#) today.*

Alt Text

How would you describe this object and its context to someone who is blind or low vision?

- The subject(s) in detail
- The setting
- The actions or interactions
- Other relevant information

(1-2 detailed sentences recommended)

Goucher students and alumni wearing Goucher gear and celebrating during Blue & Gold Weekend 2024.

Generate alt text for me

Right-click on the image to add alt-text in Outlook.



REI: A Life Outdoors is a Life We... x

rei.com

☆ | 📦 | 🖨️ | 🌐 | ⋮

☐

New arrivals

Men's clothing

Women's clothing

Kids' clothing

Camping and hiking



Running



Cycling



Watersports



Travel gear

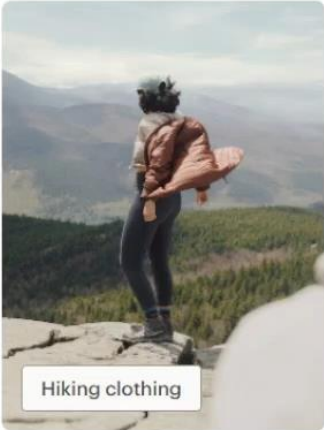


Outlet deals

Looking for great deals?

Shop all deals

Camp & hike essentials



Hiking clothing



Hiking footwear



Packs



Sleeping gear



Tent

GOOD ALT-TEXT

- Describes the **who, what, where, when + emotion**
- Context dependent
- Concise and descriptive
- Ends with a period

IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT ALT-TEXT

- Avoid “Image of...”
- Leave alt-text blank for decorative images
- Do not use the image’s filename
- Avoid embedded text
- Be mindful of charts and graphs
- Avoid using AI
- When in doubt, email the web team!

ALT-TEXT EXAMPLES



Bad:

“International students”

Good:

“A group of international students, standing on the Hyman Forum stage, excitedly holding flags of their home countries during the 2024 International Festival.”

ALT-TEXT EXAMPLES

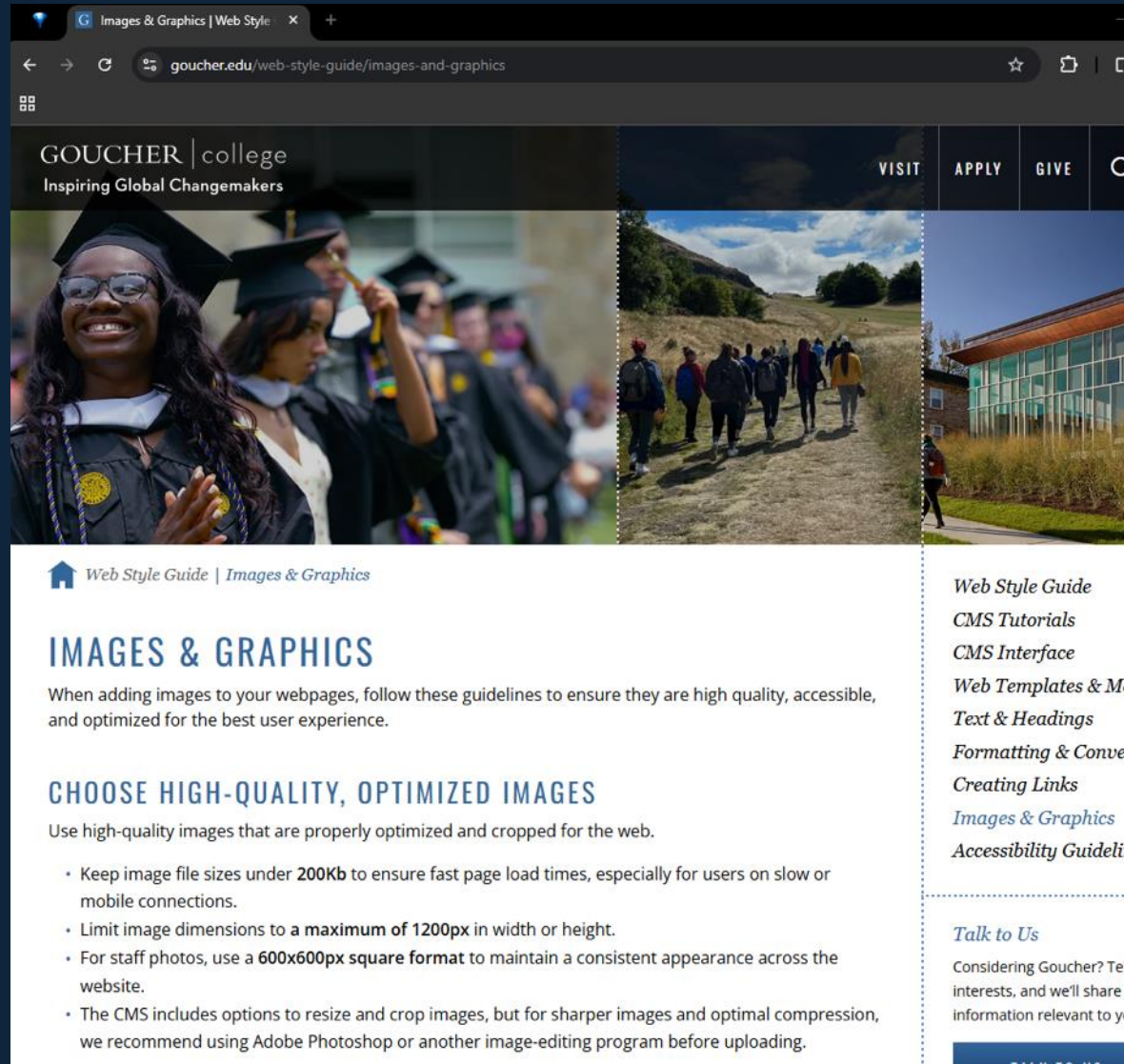


Bad:

“The LSC groundbreaking.”

Good:

“President Devereaux, along with local leaders, government officials, faculty, and alumni, wear hard hats and hold shovels as they officially break ground on the future site of The Judy C. Lewent Science Center.”



RESOURCES

Web Style Guide – Images & Graphics page

goucher.edu/web-style-guide/images-and-graphics

#2 – TEXT

- Write simply and clearly
- Be concise
- Avoid able-assumptive language
- Create structure with headings

WRITE SIMPLY & CLEARLY

Simple and clear language helps:

- people with autism
- non-native speakers
- people who are hurried or stressed
- people with dyslexia and other cognitive differences

WRITE SIMPLY & CLEARLY

- 8th or 9th grade reading level
- Short sentences and simple tenses
- Short blocks of text
- Use the [Hemingway Editor](#) to check text

Hemingway Editor

hemingwayapp.com

Hemingway's classic desktop app. Save/load files and work offline. No AI. [Learn more](#)

Hemingway
Editor

File Plus

Fix Grammar Plus

Rewrite Plus

Paragraph

How to use

Menu

Write Edit Feedback

Readability ⓘ

Grade 15

Poor. Aim for 9.

Words: 27

Show more stats

1 of 2 sentences is very hard to read.

0 of 2 sentences are hard to read.

Find grammar and spelling issues with Editor Plus.

Upgrade

Stay connected to Goucher, wherever life takes you, through virtual engagement opportunities, events, and reunions. Explore upcoming virtual events and continue building community from wherever you are.

BE CONCISE



Unnecessarily Complex

CPP: In the event of a vehicular collision, a company assigned representative will seek to ascertain the extent and cause of damages to property belonging to all parties involved. Once our representative obtains information that allows us to understand the causality, we may or may not assign appropriate monetary compensation. The resulting decision may occasion one of the following options: the claim is not approved and is assigned a rejected status, the status of the claim is ambiguous and will require additional information before further processing can occur, the claim is partially approved and reduced payment is assigned and issued, or claim is fully approved, and total claim payment is assigned and issued.



Easier to Understand

Claims Processing Procedure (CPP): If you have a car accident, our agent will investigate. Findings will determine any claim payment.

This could result in:

- Approved claim - full payment
- Partially approved claim - reduced payment
- Undetermined claim - more information needed
- Rejected claim - no payment

AVOID ABLE-ASSUMPTIVE LANGUAGE

- Avoid describing something by the way it looks
 - “the blue button”
 - “the right side”
- Be mindful of verbs that assume ability
 - “click the button”

AVOID ABLE-ASSUMPTIVE LANGUAGE

If you need to highlight a resource, include a text link

Bad:

“Click the link on the right for information about Financial Aid.”

Good:

“For more information, visit the [Financial Aid page](#).”

CREATE STRUCTURE WITH HEADINGS

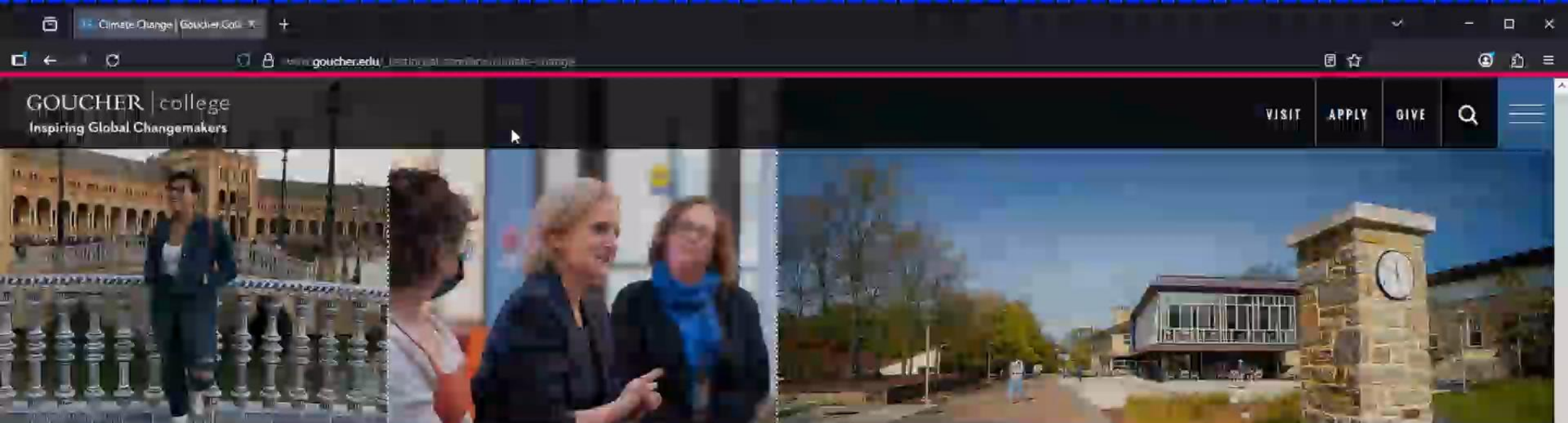
- Headings clearly describe section content
- Provide an outline of the page
- Make it easy to scan a page for relevant info

CREATE STRUCTURE WITH HEADINGS

- Assistive tech perceives page structure through headings
- Heading levels reflect relationships between sections
- Six levels, H1 to H6
- Used for page exploration and navigation

CREATE STRUCTURE WITH HEADINGS

- Never skip a level
 - H1 – page title, one per page, assigned by web team
 - H2 – subheading of H1
 - H3 – subheading of H2
 - H4 – subheading of H3
- ...and so on



Testing | Allison's Sandbox | Climate Change

CLIMATE CHANGE

WHAT IS CLIMATE CHANGE

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.

DRIVERS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.

Allison's Sandbox

Callout Testing

Staff Listing Testing

Staff Listing Testing - no heading

Staff Listing Testing - clearfix

URL Hash Testing Page

URL Hash Landing Page

Talk to Us

Considering Goucher? Tell us your interests, and we'll share information relevant to you.

TALK TO US

Apply to Goucher College

Climate Change | Goucher College

New Tab

goucher.edu/_testing/al-sandbox/climate-change

☆

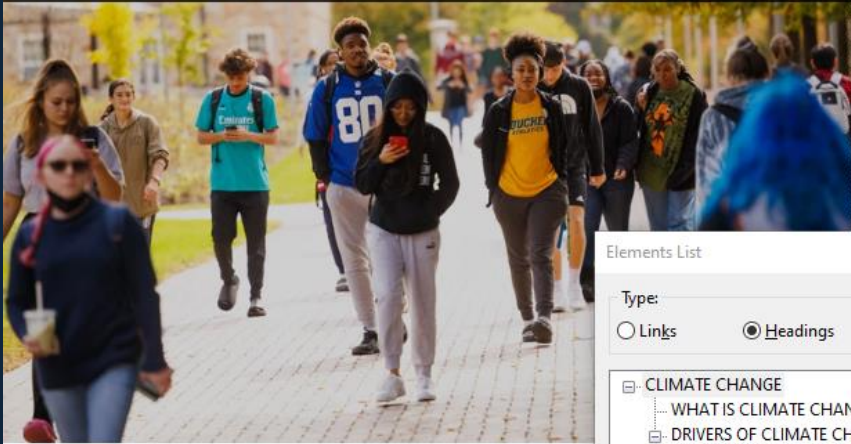
GOUCHER college

Inspiring Global Changemakers

VISIT

APPLY

GIVE



Testing | Allison's Sandbox | Climate Change

CLIMATE CHANGE

WHAT IS CLIMATE CHANGE

DRIVERS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS

CUTTING DOWN FORESTS

HOW FORESTS REMOVE CARBON DIOXIDE

FARMING LIVESTOCK

SOLUTIONS TO REDUCE CLIMATE CHANGE

Talk to Us

Apply to Goucher College

Filter by:

Activate

Move to

Cancel

Allison's Sandbox

Callout Testing

Staff Listing Testing

Staff Listing Testing - no heading

Staff Listing Testing - clearfix

URL Hash Testing Page

URL Hash Landing Page

Talk to Us

Considering Goucher? Tell us your interests, and we'll share information relevant to you.

TALK TO US

RESOURCES

Web Style Guide – Text & Headings page

goucher.edu/web-style-guide/text-and-headings

Writing Style Guide

goucher.edu/office-of-communications/documents/Goucher-College-Writing-Style-Guide.pdf

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Goucher College website. The header features the Goucher College logo and navigation links: VISIT, APPLY, GIVE, and a search icon. Below the header is a large banner image divided into three sections: a modern building with large glass windows, a person at a pink donut stand, and two young people smiling. The main content area is titled 'TEXT & HEADINGS' and includes a sub-header 'CREATE ACCESSIBLE CONTENT'. It provides guidelines for writing simply and clearly, being concise, using built-in features for text and headings, avoiding able-assumptive language, and creating structure with headings. A sidebar on the right lists various resources: Web Style Guide, CMS Tutorials, CMS Interface, Web Templates & Modules, Text & Headings, Formatting & Conventions, Creating Links, Images & Graphics, and Accessibility Guidelines. At the bottom, there is a 'Talk to Us' section with a contact form.

GOUCHER | college
Inspiring Global Changemakers

VISIT APPLY GIVE

Web Style Guide | Text & Headings

TEXT & HEADINGS

Use this section as a lead-in to introduce page content if necessary. Introductory text is optional and should be short and to the point.

CREATE ACCESSIBLE CONTENT

To ensure that people of all abilities can read and understand content on our website, here are a few guidelines to keep in mind:

- Write simply and clearly.
- Be concise.
- Use the built-in features for text and headings.
- Avoid able-assumptive language.
- Create structure with headings.

Web Style Guide
CMS Tutorials
CMS Interface
Web Templates & Modules
Text & Headings
Formatting & Conventions
Creating Links
Images & Graphics
Accessibility Guidelines

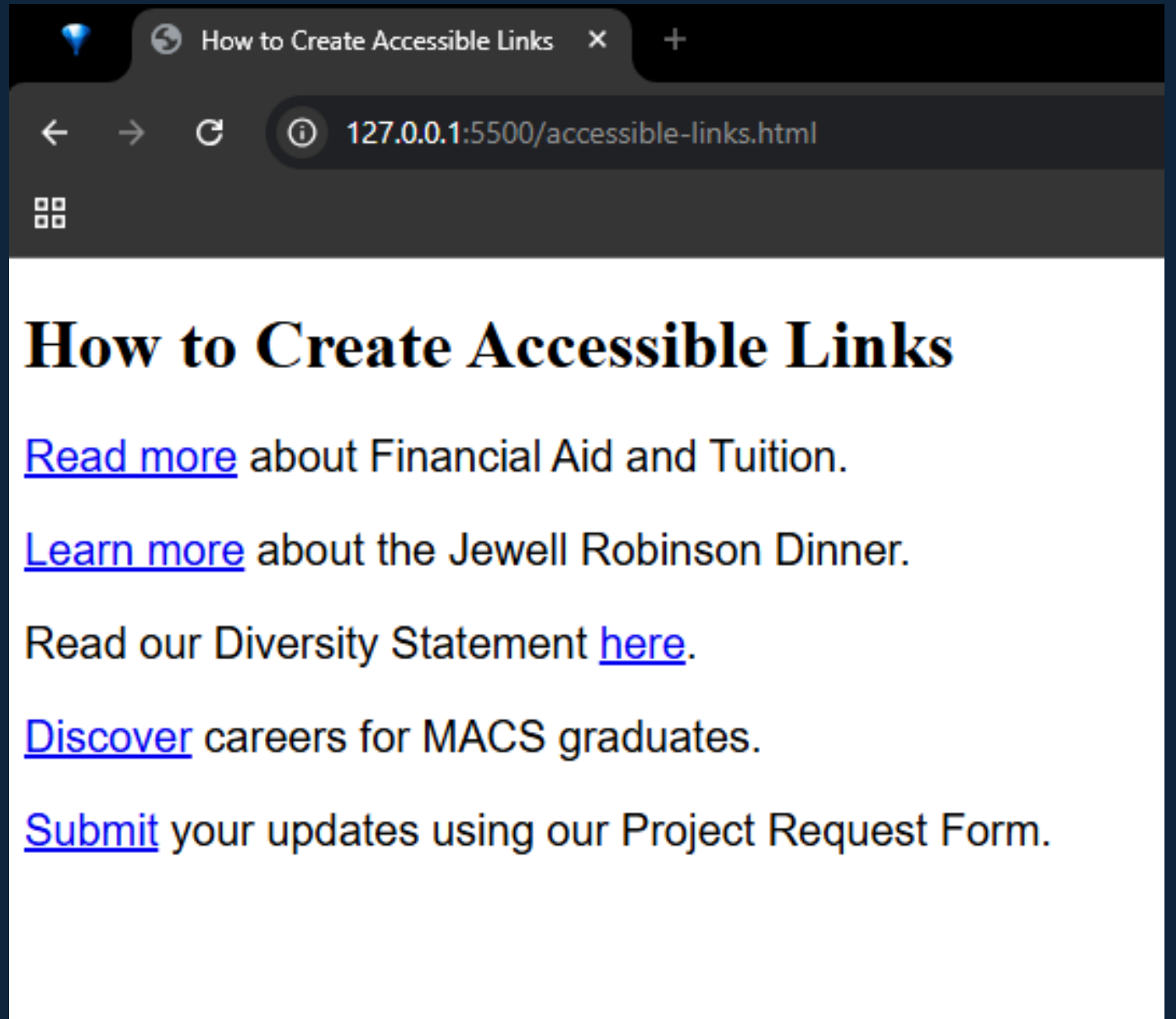
Talk to Us
Considering Goucher? Tell us your interests, and we'll share information relevant to you.

#3 – LINKS

Avoid non-descript text:

- “Read more”
- “Click here”
- “Learn more”

AVOID NON-DESCRIPTIVE TEXT



AVOID NON-DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying `127.0.0.1:5500/accessible-links.html`. The page title is "How to Create Accessible Links". The page content includes several blue, underlined links: "Read more", "Learn more", "Discover", and "Submit". A Chrome DevTools "Elements List" panel is open, showing a list of elements. The "Type" filter is set to "Links", and the list contains the following items: "Read more", "Learn more", "here", "Discover", and "Submit". The "Read more" item is highlighted. At the bottom of the panel, there is a "Filter by:" input field and three buttons: "Activate", "Move to", and "Cancel".

How to Create Accessible Links

[Read more](#) about...

[Learn more](#) about...

Read our Diver...

[Discover](#) career...

[Submit](#) your up...

Elements List

Type:

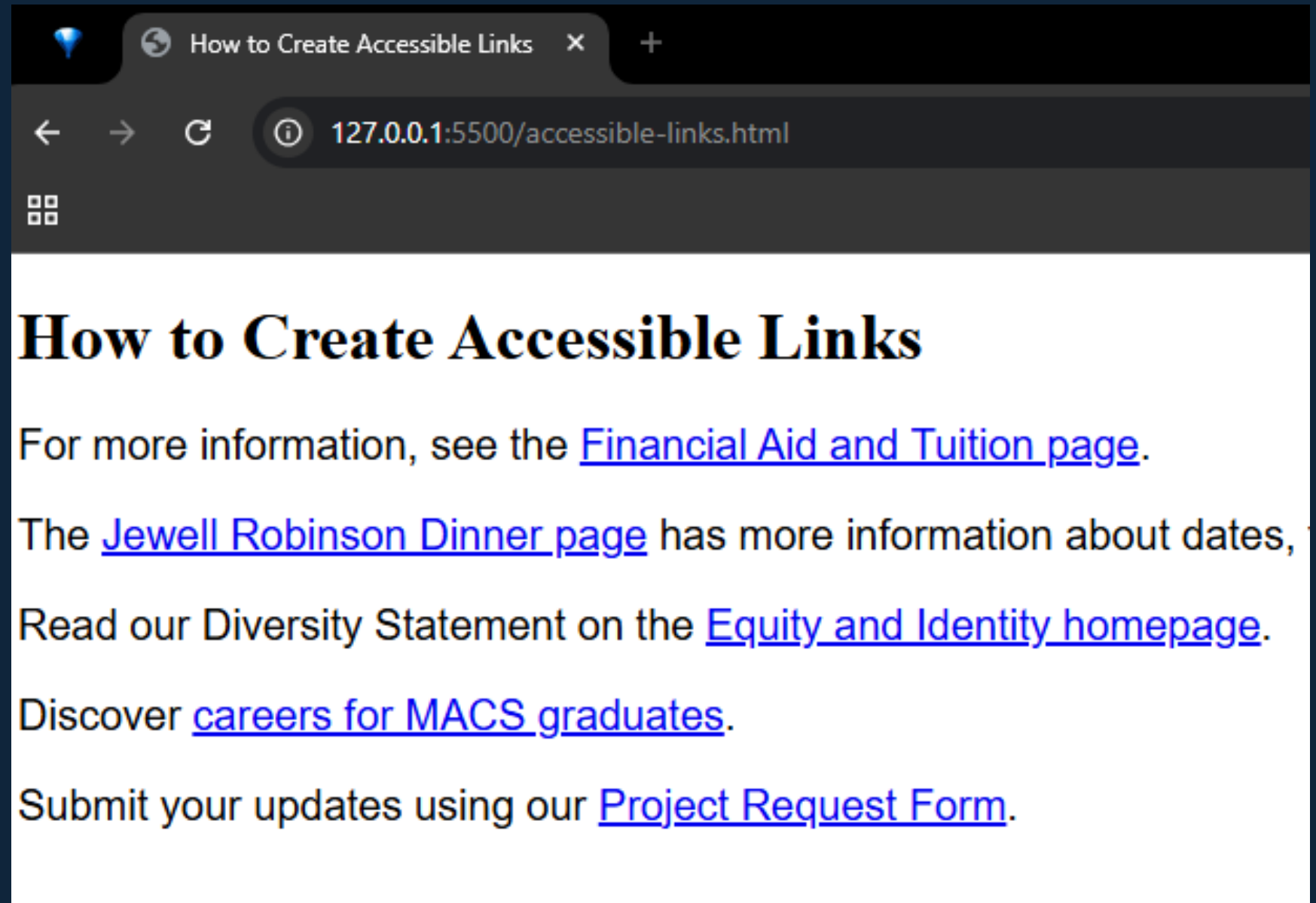
☒ Links ☐ Headings ☐ Form fields ☐ Buttons ☐ Landmarks

- Read more
- Learn more
- here
- Discover
- Submit

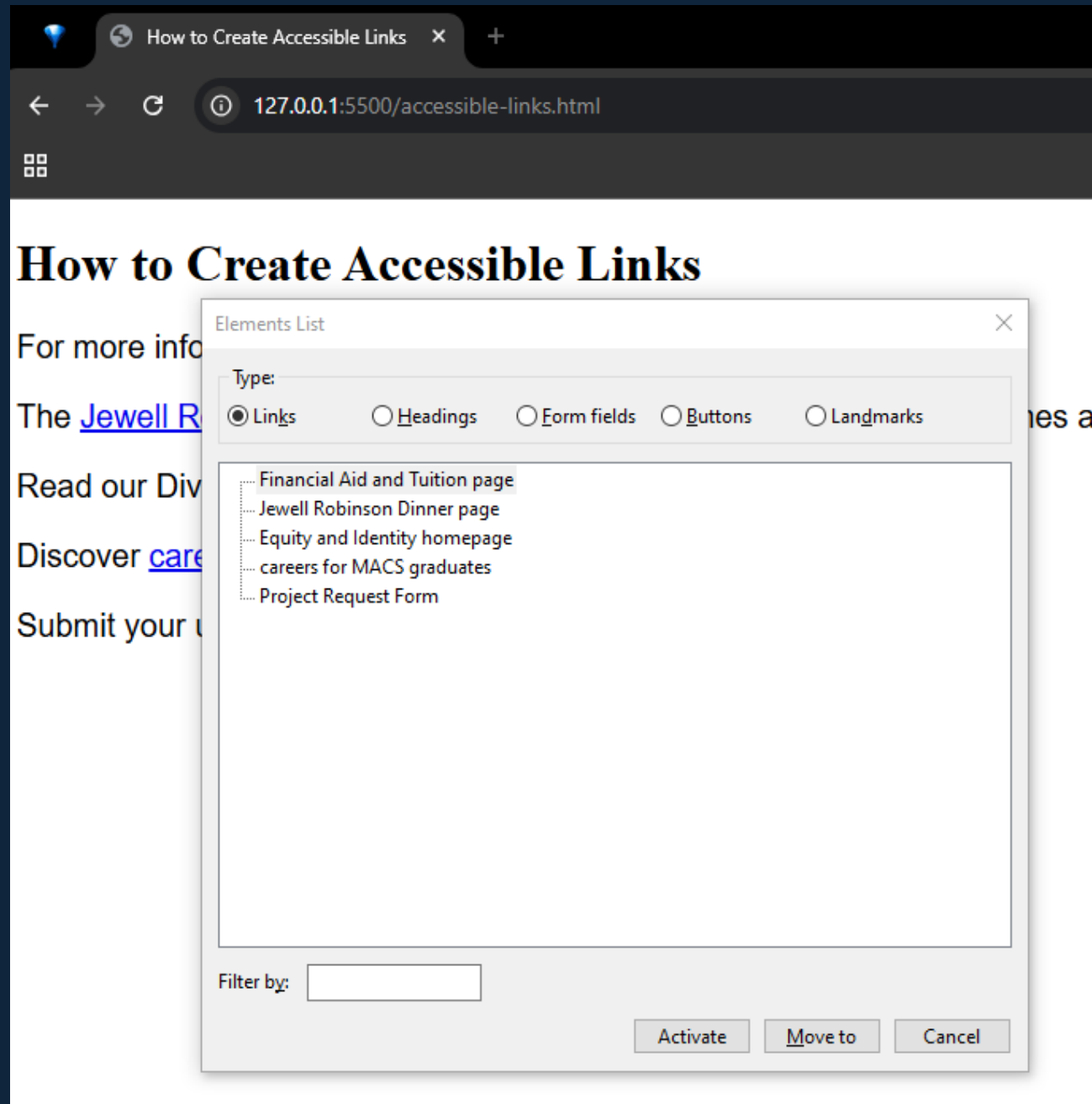
Filter by:

Activate Move to Cancel

USE DESCRIPTIVE LINK TEXT



USE DESCRIPTIVE LINK TEXT



ADDITIONAL LINK BEST PRACTICES

- Announce non-standard behavior:

[Internship Policy \(PDF\)](#)

Submit a [project request form \(opens in a new tab\)](#).

- Avoid linking URLs:

Bad: <https://www.goucher.edu/alumni/events-and-programs/jewell-robinson-dinner>

Good: [Jewell Robinson Dinner](#)

Creating Web Links | Web Style

goucher.edu/web-style-guide/links

GOUCHER | college
Inspiring Global Changemakers

VISIT APPLY GIVE

Web Style Guide | Creating Web Links

CREATING WEB LINKS

Links are an essential part of any webpage, providing navigation within the site and connecting users to resources. Poorly structured or unclear links can create barriers to access and poor usability for people using assistive technology. The following guidelines will help you create clear, informative, and accessible links.

USE MEANINGFUL TEXT

Avoid these non-informative phrases:

- read more
- click here
- here
- link to (some destination)

Instead, link text should make sense out of context and describe something about the destination:

Web Style Guide
CMS Tutorials
CMS Interface
Web Templates & Modules
Text & Headings
Formatting & Conventions
Creating Links
Images & Graphics
Accessibility Guidelines

Talk to Us

Considering Goucher? Tell us your interests, and we'll share information relevant to you.

TALK TO US

RESOURCES

Web Style Guide – Creating Web
Links page
goucher.edu/web-style-guide/links

#4 – MEDIA

- Captions and transcripts are used by people of all abilities
- Captions are required for all videos
- The web team will include captions to all videos added to goucher.edu
- Email the web team if you need help

PDFs

- Not inherently accessible
- Always need additional remediation and testing
- Add content to webpages instead

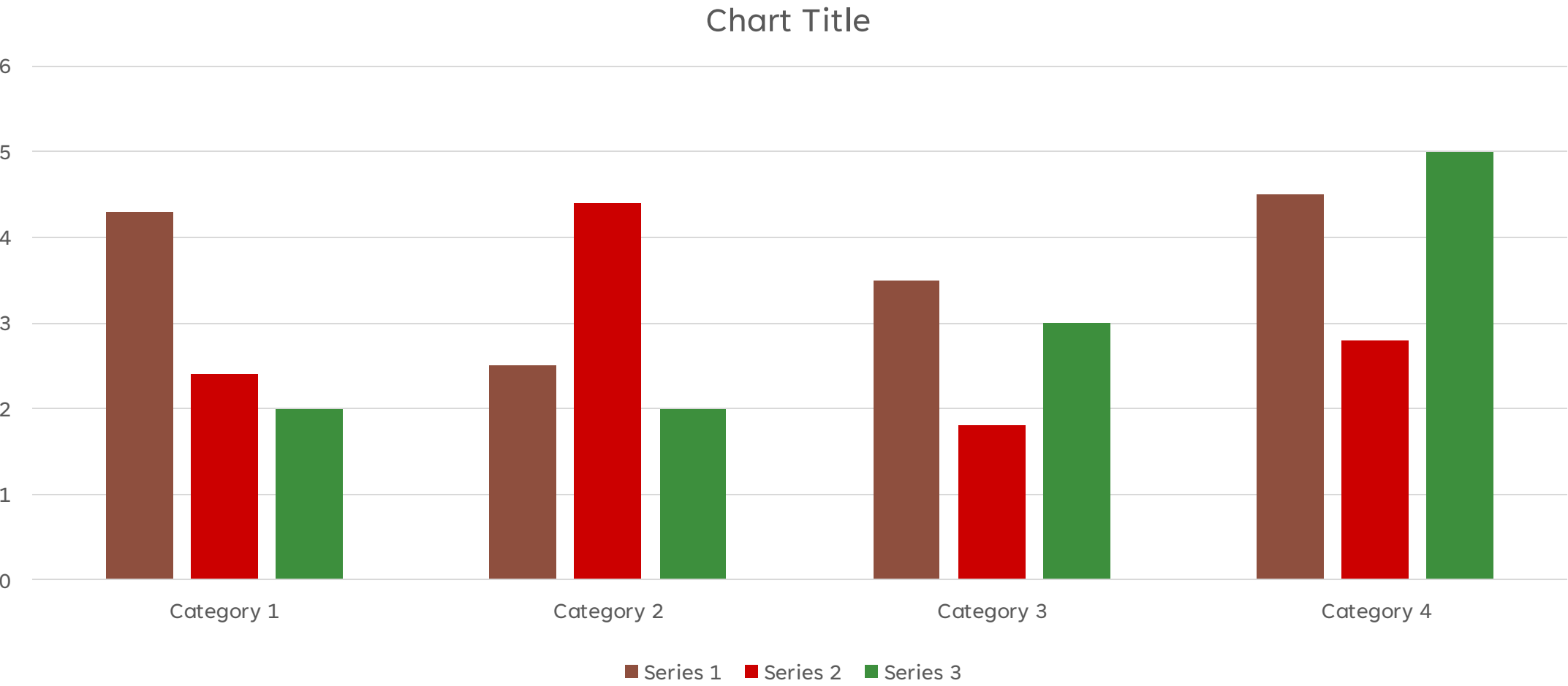
#5 – VISUAL DESIGN

- Goucher.edu visual design is set by the CMS
- Consider visual a11y outside the CMS:
 - emails
 - presentations
 - handouts

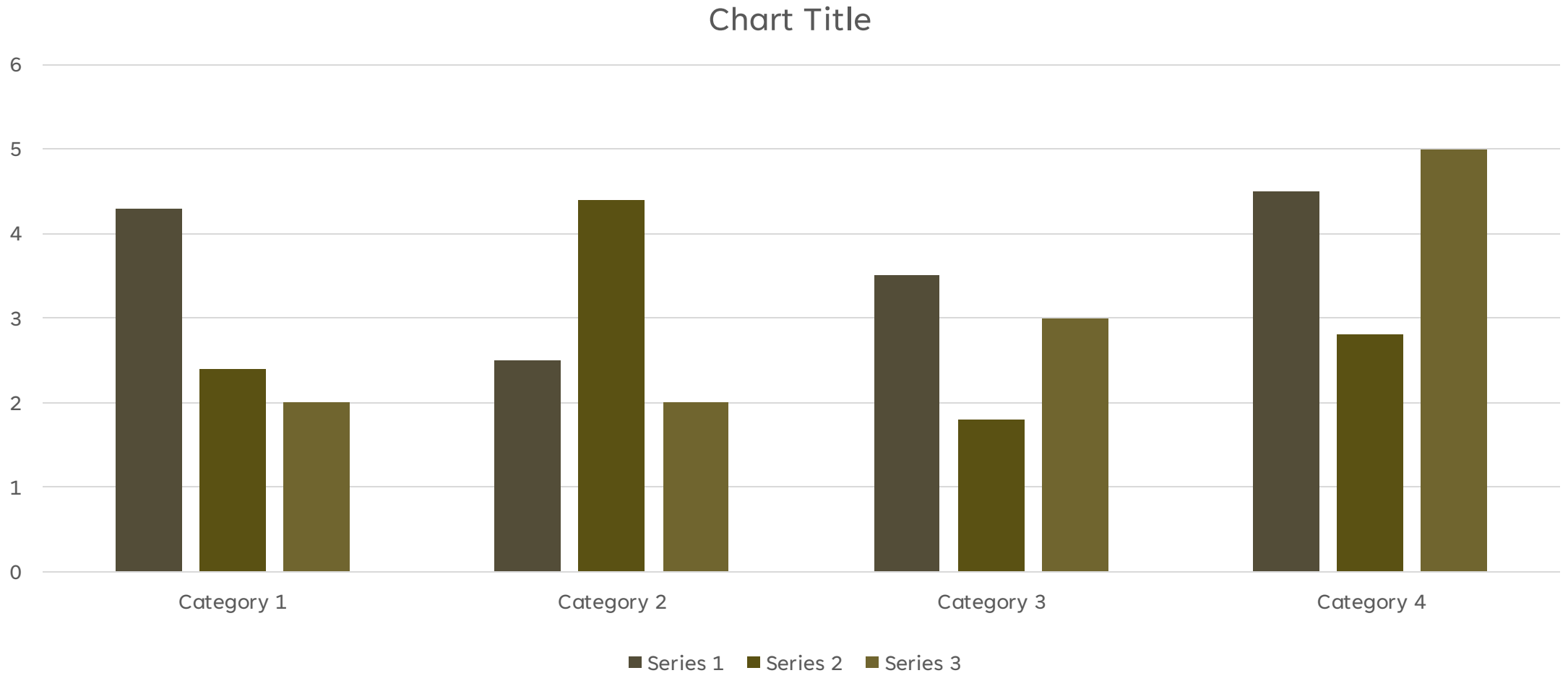
COLOR CONTRAST

- Choose colors with enough contrast:
 - 4.5:1 for normal text
 - 3:1 for large text (18 point, or 14 point bold)
- Use a contrast checker like [Who Can Use](#)

USING COLOR ALONE



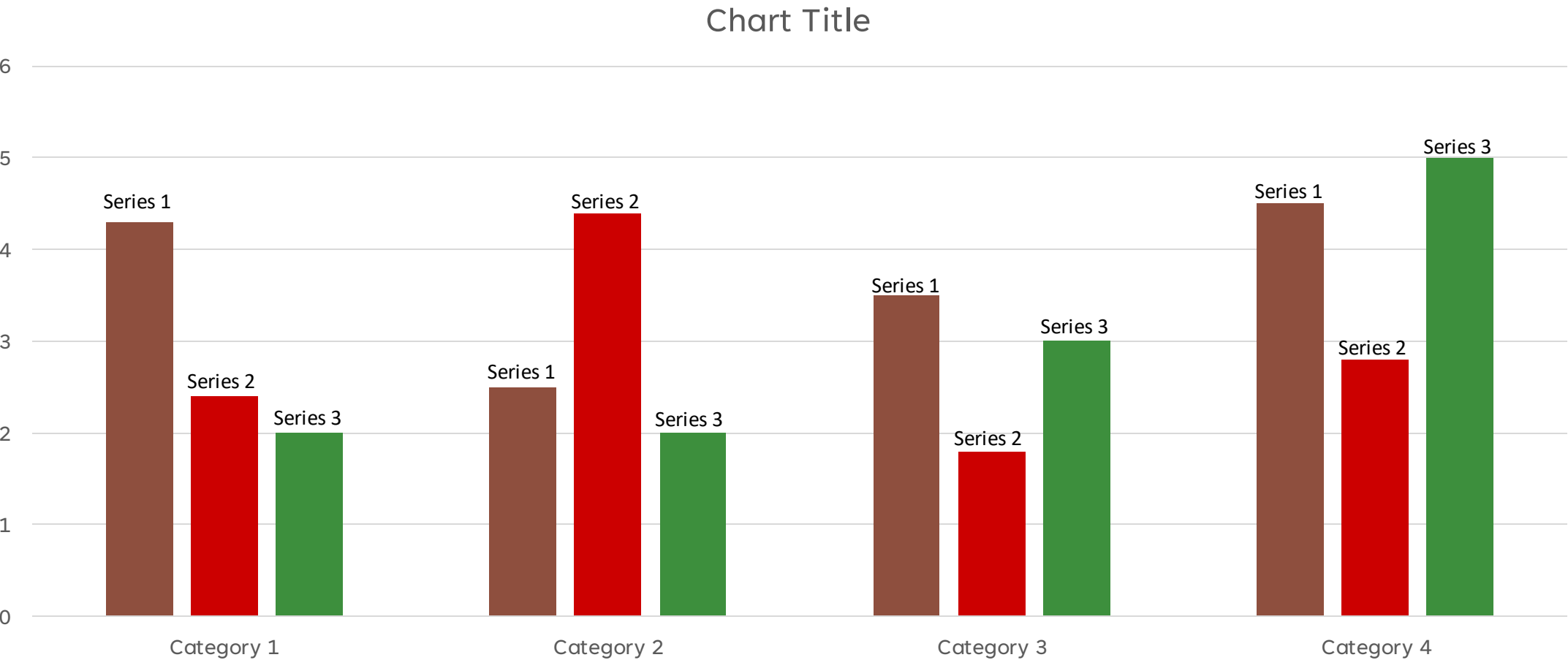
USING COLOR ALONE



Protanopia

Red blind – Can't see reds at all

USING COLOR ALONE



A11Y BEST PRACTICES RECAP

5 areas where you can affect a11y:

- Images
- Text
- Links
- Media
- Visual design

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES – CONTENT CREATION

- [Writing for Web Accessibility](#) – Introduces some basic considerations to help you get started writing accessible web content
- [Alt-texts: The Ultimate Guide](#) – Everything you need to know about alt-text
- [The Hemingway Editor](#) – Assesses text content for reading level and more
- [Who Can Use](#) – Color contrast checker

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES – STORIES OF WEB USERS

- [Lakshmi's story](#) – screen reader user, alt-text in work presentations
- [Sophie's story](#) – text, plain language, short paragraphs, reading level
- [Lexie's story](#) – color contrast, not relying solely on color for meaning
- [Dhruv's story](#) – media captions, text, plain language, short paragraphs, reading level
- [Web A11y Perspectives \(video, 7mins\)](#) – impact of a11y and the benefits for everyone in a variety of situations
- [Bing-O Bakery: Headings Landmarks and Tabs \(video\)](#) – a great animated video to learn how someone using a screen reader may navigate a page using headings and links
- [How a Screen Reader User Surfs the Web \(video\)](#) – a fantastic demonstration by Leoni Watson on how she uses a screen reader

GOUCHER RESOURCES

[Goucher Web Style Guide](#) – The official style guide of the Goucher College website

[Goucher Writing Style Guide](#) – Provides Goucher-specific formatting and conventions

An aerial photograph of the Goucher College campus, showing various academic buildings, green lawns, and surrounding trees. A large, dark blue rectangular overlay is centered on the image, containing the text "Thank you!".

Thank you!

GOUCHER | college

Inspiring Global Changemakers