

TASSR Highlights

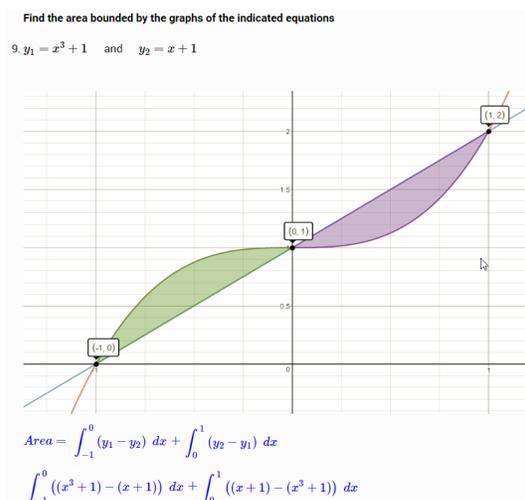
Making Accessibility Accessible

As a leading voice in student success, the [Tennessee Association of Student Success and Retention](#), hosted their annual conference last October at the Read House in Chattanooga. One of the highly popular sessions was "[Making Accessibility Accessible for Faculty.](#)"

This timely session was in response to the Accessibility Initiative for Higher Education in Tennessee which recommends that information materials and technologies along with digital curricula be accessible to all students. According to the initiative recommendations, accessible means that "individuals with disabilities are able to independently acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services within the same timeframe as individuals without disabilities, with substantially equivalent ease of use." Although the initiative also recommends that training be provided to faculty and staff who develop or post web content or other digital information materials, many faculty have felt uninformed or frustrated when it comes to creating accessible documents, especially for a mathematics course.



Susan Mosteller, Josh Dean, and Mary Monroe-Ellis



For the past two years, Mary Monroe-Ellis and Susan Mosteller from the [Pellissippi State Math Department](#) have worked collaboratively with Instructional Technology Specialist Josh Dean to create an open-source business Calculus course. They developed class notes and homework assignments accessible as html documents and posted them to their [class website](#). In their TASSR conference session, Mary and Susan shared the results of their long journey toward accessibility so that others can learn from their experience. Working together with Educational Technology Services and the Services for

Students with Disabilities office, it took months for them to even figure out what might work.

Mary explained, “No one knew what to tell us to do, what product, how to write it. Our technology people didn’t know. Our disability office didn’t know.”

Through trial and error, much experimentation, and a little head-banging, they found that using the free Markdown editor called [Stackedit](#) worked well for creating and formatting class notes and homework documents. Links to images with alternate text can easily be saved in Stackedit. They used [Desmos](#) to create graphs. They used the Markdown table generator to create tables, and they used the free [Wiris](#) editor to write formulas that they inserted into Stackedit. All of their documents are accessible and screen-reader friendly.
