

True accessibility is already there, we shouldn't have to ask: Alternative text

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Summary

This motion is asking for the SU to lobby the university to implement consistent use of image descriptions or alternative text for all images in all their curriculum materials.

Union notes

1. Alternative text attached to images or figures that provides a brief description of the contents of the image or figure. This allows screen readers to describe the image or figure.
2. Screen readers are used by students with a broad range of disabilities to have the information on the screen read/ described verbally.
3. Many visually impaired people rely on alternative text to gain the same information from an image or figure that a fully sighted person can.
4. Preliminary research is indicating no course within biological sciences uses Alternative text. No research is currently available to indicate whether this is used in other schools.
5. Office has all the necessary features to easily add alternative text to images and check that all images have been covered.
6. Alternative text can be autogenerated by in specialist topics where the image or figure contains specific details required for the understanding the topic, these autogenerated Alternative texts can be anything from useless to laughable.

Union Believes

1. Full accessibility is the right of every student on campus.
2. Teaching staff aren't offered training on accessibility measures and as a result the accessibility of curriculum content is lacking. Which in turn puts Disabled students and those who use assistive technology at a disadvantage.
3. Alternative text is a core accessibility feature which benefits many disabled students and is vital for assistive technology to be used to its full potential. Without it much learning can be missed, because figures and images often contain a large portion of the information in lectures.
4. Adding Alternative text is easy to do and easy to check for.
5. Alternative text allows all students to prepare and review course material.

Union Resolves

1. To lobby the university to offer training to all teaching staff on how to add Alternative text, and the importance of doing so.