Options for Captioning Instructional Video Content at Western
August 2020

Introduction

Captioning is a service that makes video content more accessible and supports students with disabilities (hearing loss, auditory processing disorders, concussion, mental health, ADHD to name a few). At Western, the number of students already registered as having those types of disabilities exceeds 2000.

Captioning not only provides an essential service to those who have visual auditory disabilities, it is also valuable to those facing temporary impairments such as watching content in locations where it's not advisable to have sound such as a library, or on a bus (see https://canadianaudiologist.ca/the-use-of-captions-in-post-secondary-institutions/).

According to the Accessibility for Ontarians with a Disability Act (AODA): "New public websites and significantly refreshed websites were required to be compliant with WCAG 2.0 Level A by January 1, 2014. Furthermore, by January 1, 2021, all public websites and web content posted after January 1, 2012, must meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA. "

The WCAG 2.0 guidelines outline requirements for website accessibility, with level A being the most basic, and level AAA being the most advanced. Captioning falls under the most basic category. Having captions for prerecorded video is a level A requirement and having captions for live video is an AA requirement.

Captioning Options for Pre-recorded Videos

Both MicroSoft Stream and YouTube provide automatic captioning. Automatic captions vary in accuracy but can be used as a good starting place from which instructors can make corrections/additions. Stream is recommended as it's a centrally provided and supported system at Western.

Although OWL does not provide automatic captioning, video caption files can be included with embedded videos so that students can view videos with captions.

*MS Stream
MS Stream provides automatically generated captions as well as a searchable transcript, that will jump to the location in the video where the words were spoken.

> To turn on automatic captions in MS Stream:

1. Upload the video to MS Stream.
2. Select a supported language in the Details section.
3. From the Options tab, set Autogenerated Captions to On.
4. Captions will be automatically generated (there may be a delay while captions are generated).

> To edit the automatic captions in MS Stream:

1. Navigate to the Transcript window.
2. Choose Edit (changes will be automatically saved).

To download the caption file:
1. Select the Options tab.
2. Click the Download File button (located near the Captions heading).

* If you don't have access to Stream, please contact the WTS Helpdesk to request it.

YouTube
YouTube provides automatically generated captions for any uploaded video.

To turn on automatic captioning in YouTube:

1. Upload the video to YouTube, making sure to select a language (captions will be automatically created if you have selected a language for your video).

To edit the automatic captions in YouTube:
1. While still logged into YouTube Studio, select Subtitles from the left-hand menu.
2. Select the video you'd like to edit.
3. For the language you'd like to edit, in the "Subtitles" column, select Edit from the Options menu.
4. Click Edit.
5. Select the caption track you would like to edit.
6. Click inside any line in the caption track panel and edit the text.
7. When you've finished making changes, click Publish edits, at the top right.
8. You'll be asked to confirm that you want to overwrite existing subtitles. Click Publish.

To download the automatic captions from YouTube:

1. While still logged into YouTube Studio, select Subtitles from the left-hand menu.
2. For the language you'd like to delete, in the "Subtitles" column, select Download from the Options menu.
3. Choose the VTT format and confirm to Save.

Posting Videos with Captions to OWL

Once the captions are corrected, videos can be posted to OWL in two ways:

1. Captioned videos can continue to be **hosted on MS Stream or YouTube**. Instructors can link to the videos or embed in OWL Lessons. Please note that MS Stream is recommended as the centrally provided and supported video tool. Furthermore, YouTube is blocked in mainland China, so if you have students studying remotely from that country, you should not use YouTube to host your videos.
2. Videos, along with the downloaded caption (.VTT) file, can be **hosted in OWL**.
   a. Once the video has been embedded in a Lesson, choose the edit button (pencil icon).
   b. Choose Add Caption file.

c. Click the browse button to find the .VTT file (downloaded from either MS Stream or YouTube) and then choose Save.

Note: OWL has a file upload limit of 2GB so this option will not be suitable for very large video files

Options for Real-time Captioning of Virtual Events

MS Teams Meetings

Live captioning in now available in MS Teams Meetings. Captions are also available in a recorded Teams meeting.

To turn on live captions:

1. Select the More Options menu (**…** icon).
2. Choose "Turn on Live Captions(preview)".

PowerPoint

PowerPoint for Office 365 now supports live captions and subtitles.

To turn on live captions:

1. Open the presentation in Office 365.
2. From the Slide Show menu, select "Always Use Subtitles".
3. Choose the location of captions, the spoken language and the subtitle language.
4. Captions will now appear while presenting the slide show.

More Information

[Accessibility in Online Teaching](#)

[Automatic Captioning in MS Stream](#)

[MS Stream at Western](#)

[Automatic Captioning in YouTube](#)

[Embedding a Video in OWL Lessons](#)

[Live Captioning in MS Teams Meetings](#)

[Live Captioning and Subtitles in PowerPoint](#)