

Engineering LibGuide Remediation: Auditing and Updating LibGuides for Title II Standards

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About the Project

The 2024 Title II Regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) require that public colleges and universities make all of their digital content accessible to users with disabilities. The University of Maryland (UMD) Libraries have been hard at work remediating its digital resources in order to meet the April 24, 2026 deadline, which has been recently extended by a year. A resource that librarians have focused their efforts on is LibGuides, due to the significant number of guides for different academic subjects, courses, and resources. Working with Sarah Weiss, Open Science and STEM Librarian, this field study project worked on auditing and updating the eight Engineering LibGuides so that they are in compliance with the Title II digital accessibility standards.

Engineering LibGuides

The eight Engineering LibGuides were chosen to be the priority for this remediation project due to the high frequency that they are used. Additionally, the Engineering LibGuides are built on a shared template, so all eight guides can be updated at the same time by editing the template.

The Engineering LibGuides are:

- Aerospace Engineering
- Bioengineering
- Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering
- Civil & Environmental Engineering
- Electrical & Computer Engineering
- Fire Protection Engineering
- Materials Science & Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering

LibGuide Audit

To begin the remediation process, I started with an audit of each Engineering LibGuide to assess the current state of accessibility and to identify what changes need to be made. Using the LibGuide Accessibility Checklist, I reviewed the guides and made note of the accessibility issues present in each.

As I worked through this process I created a spreadsheet to track the status of different elements, including guide findability, headings and text format, links, and images.

LibGuide Accessibility Checklist	LibGuide	LibGuide	LibGuide
Checklist	Aerospace	Civil & Environmental	Bioengineering
Guide Findability (Guide Name and Type)			
LibGuide has a unique and descriptive name and description.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Guide Formatting			
The LibGuide is free from directional language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Boxes			
There are no floating boxes present in the LibGuide.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Headings and Text Format			
All headings in the LibGuides text boxes are used in sequential order, beginning with Heading 3 (h3).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Links			
All links in the LibGuide are unique and descriptive. The user can predict where the link is headed based on the link text.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Links using the "Link" feature in LibGuides include an annotation describing the link.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
All links that open into a new window include language to inform the user that the link will open in another browser window.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Screenshot from LibGuide Audit Tracking Spreadsheet

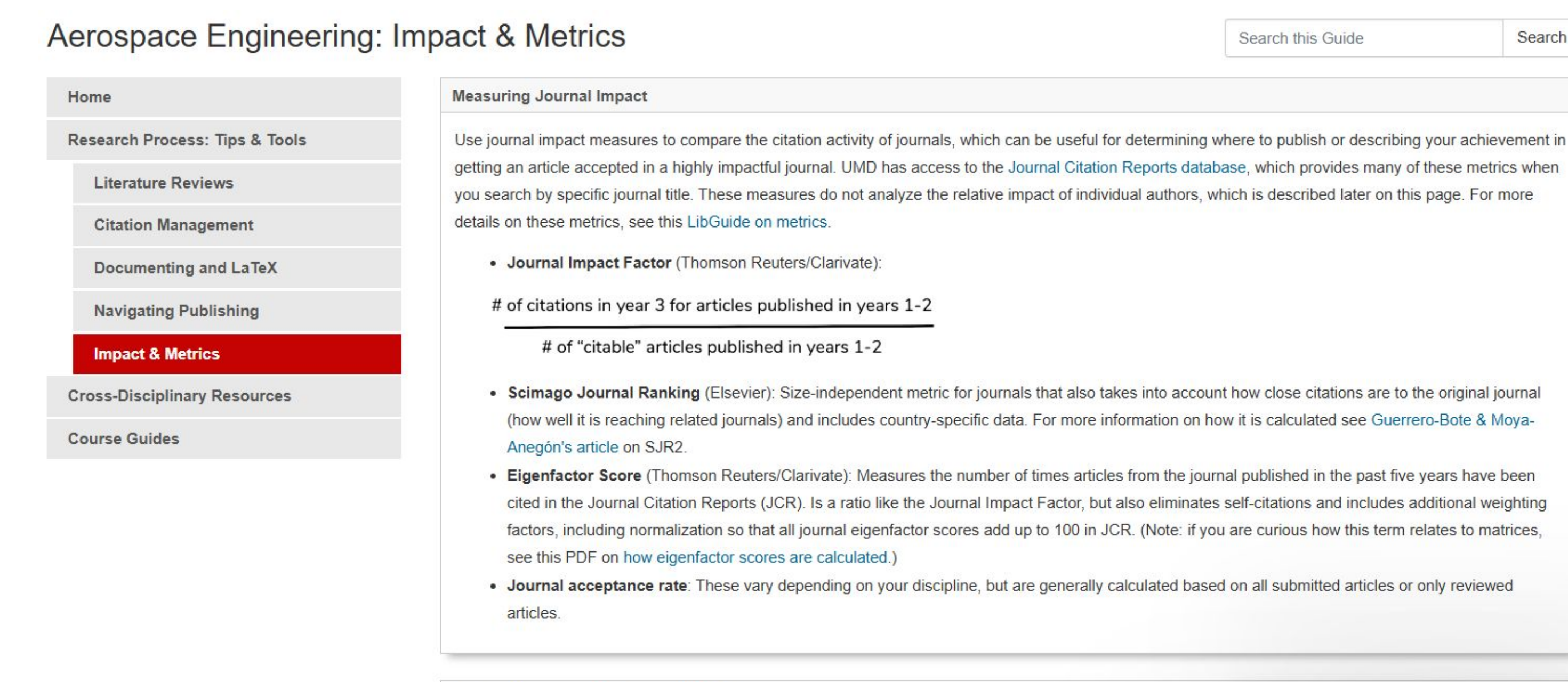
LibGuide Remediation

Once I completed the auditing process, I began updating and remediating the LibGuides to correct the accessibility problems I identified. As I worked through this project, I encountered the same issues over and over again. The common elements I edited were:

- **Links:** All of the links must be descriptive so that the destination is understandable on its own. They also must be set to open in the same window, or it is marked if they open in a new window. All links must be checked to make sure that they still work and lead to the correct destination.
- **Images:** All images need properly formatted alternative text to describe the picture for screen readers. Images with a lot of text, especially formulas or equations, were particularly trick to describe in the character limit.
- **Directional Language:** Text should be free from directional language like “see below” so that users can navigate a page without sight.
- **Headings:** Headings are used in the correct order on the guides, starting with Heading 3 in the text boxes. Headings are used for organization and not aesthetics.

Future Research

Due to the extended deadline for Title II compliance, there is now another year to update the LibGuides. With this extra time, I am interested in how we can make our digital resource accessible beyond the Title II guidelines. Our energy has been focused on remediating LibGuides so that they meet the standards, but now we have more time to research new accessibility tools and features that we can implement in our LibGuides.



Screenshot from Aerospace Engineering LibGuide