# Easy Accessibility Practices for Word and PowerPoint

We at GW Health Sciences are committed to making our courses as accessible as possible to all. Below are some easy things faculty instructors can do to help make course materials more accessible. The more you use these strategies on an ongoing basis, the more prepared you will be if/when there is a student with a documented need.

Run the accessibility checker

Microsoft Office includes a built-in Accessibility Checker that will tell you how to fix issues in your document and why they are issues. Go to File > Info > Check for Issues and select "Check Accessibility."
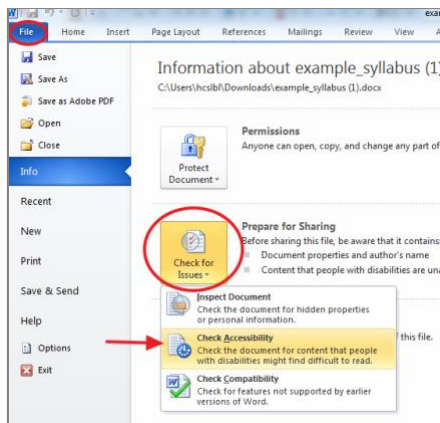

If you click on an item in the list, an explanation and instructions will be provided below.
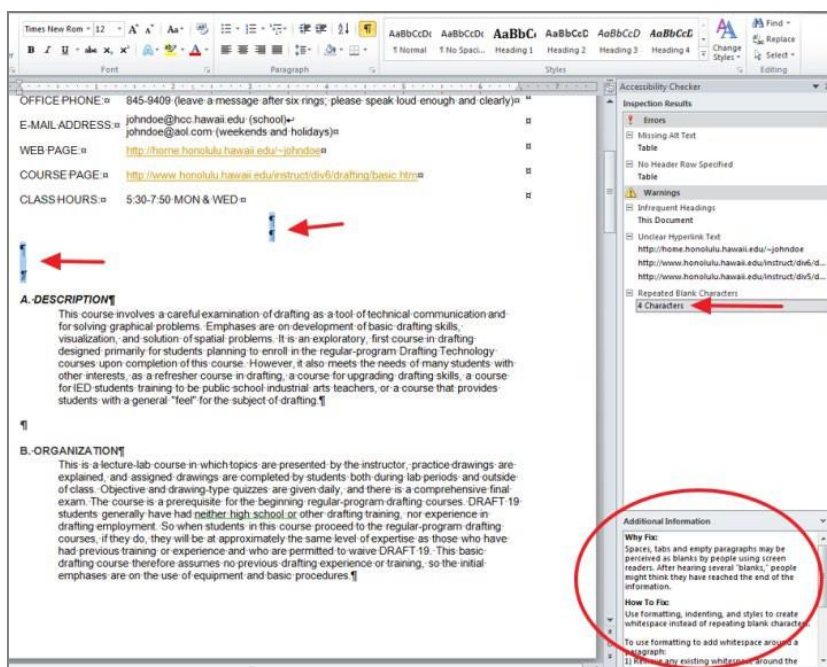
Organize content with headings styles

Headings and subheadings make it easier for all users to navigate content. In addition, screenreaders use headings and subheadings to help students with visual disabilities to skim the content. The formatted headings and subheadings tell screenreaders the order and relationship of the sections. Use heading styles instead of selecting bold and increasing the font size.
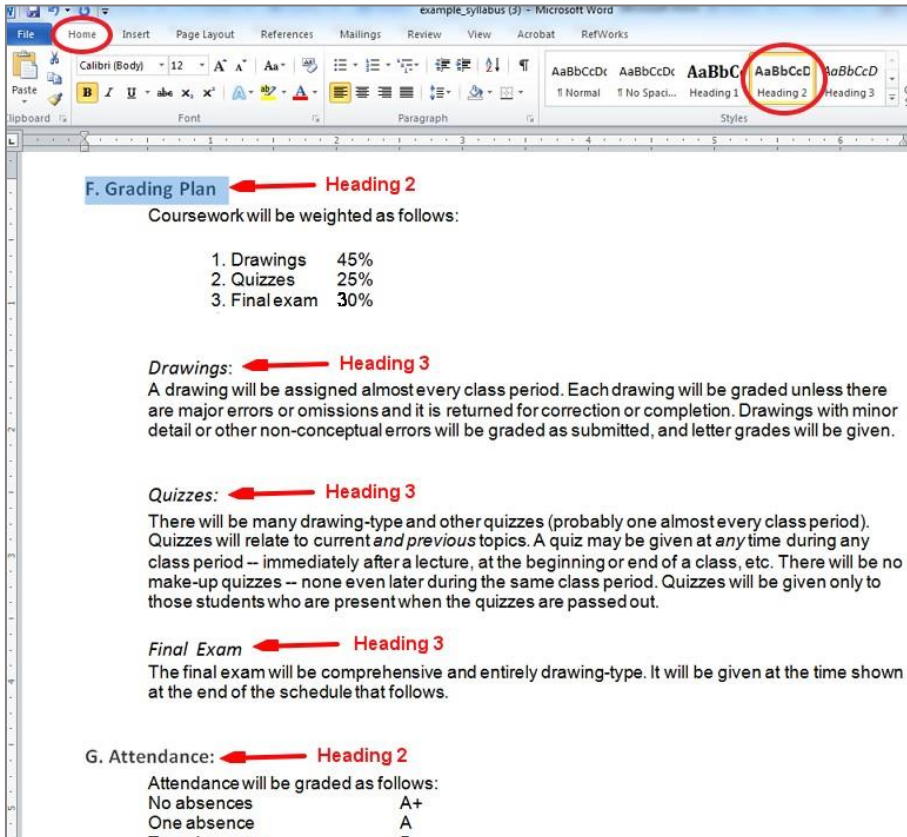
Apply slide titles in PPT

Putting a title for each slide into the designated title box will help create a table of contents for students using screen readers. It can also help you organize your slides!

Provide meaningful link text

A link has two parts, the text (which is visible) and the URL web address (which generally starts with http:// and is not visible). When including links, the text of the link should be the title of the webpage or the subject that is being linked to. Do not describe the link and then write "click here." Do not use the web address as the text of the link. The screenreader's computer voice will read all the letters, symbols, numbers and words.

Use this:

> Please explore the CDC's information on [emergency preparedness and response](#).

Not these:

> Please explore the CDC's information on emergency preparedness and response (http://emergency.cdc.gov/bioterrorism/).

> Please explore the CDC's information on emergency preparedness and response. [Click here to access the page.](#)

Use tables to present data, not for page layout

Avoid using tables to lay out text on your page that could be arranged using headers and subheaders. Tables can be difficult to interpret because screen readers read from left to right by default, (see example below). When you do use tables, make sure the first row/column is marked as a header and includes a description of the type of data used in each row or column.

Office	Office Hours	Class Hours
Building 2, Room 613	MON & WED 4:30-5:30	MON & WED 5:30-7:50
	TUE & THR 7:30-8:30	
	FRI 11:30-12:30	

Avoid using only color to convey meaning

About 8 percent of males and 0.5 percent of females have some degree of color blindness or ("color deficiency"). This means that to them, some colors appear more similar or are muted. It is good to avoid using color to convey meaning, such as highlighting or changing the font color of words to emphasize them. Use logical formatting to signal importance. If you must use color on text, be sure to also change the style or size of the font.

Photo, video and audio can be made accessible

Multimedia files which convey meaningful information (i.e. are not decorative) can be made accessible. This involves providing alternative text and creating captions. Ask us for help with multimedia files.

Need Additional Help?

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