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**Instructor Guidance on Meeting PowerPoint Accessibility Standards**

This document shows you how to meet the Checklist Standards for PowerPoint decks. The Checklist and Guidance are based on Microsoft documents and tries to keep directions simple. See the Resources section if you want to go deeper.

**General Guidance**

It is easier to create accessible slides if you keep your deck simhttps://docs.google.com/document/d/15kSIJ6F9Hpq93fEpwK0M3Y4ISm33ZBD7LJ4s6BDjNR4/edit?usp=sharingple and start off right and check as you go along. You do not want to create an entire presentation and then discover that there are systematic errors that require extensive remediation and a redesign of your deck. All instructions apply to both Macs and PCs unless otherwise indicated.

1. Use an accessible PowerPoint template:

* Recommended:
  + [MLA-branded template](https://www.mlanet.org/d/do/24241). This is a Microsoft Accessible PowerPoint template with MLA branding. It includes a variety of slide types. Use what you need and delete the rest.
  + Mac: **Go to File> New from Template> type “accessible templates**” in the search bar
  + PC: **Go to File> New> type “accessible templates”** in the *Search for online templates and themes* search bar
  + These may or may not meet our accessibility standards:
    - An accessible PowerPoint template from your employer
    - [Microsoft’s Accessible PowerPoint template sampler](https://templates.office.com/en-us/accessible-powerpoint-template-sampler-tm16401472) (true!)

1. Use the built-in Accessibility Checker that runs automatically in the background when you're creating a document. Monitoring it and following its tips will take you far in meeting our standards. If the Accessibility Checker detects accessibility issues, you’ll get a notice in the status bar.
   * To launch the Checker manually:
     + Select Review > Check Accessibility. (See this video on using the Accessibility Checker for more.)
   * Run the checker any time you make significant revisions to the content.
   * Run the checker one last time, close the document, and rerun the checker before submitting your document for accessibility review by MLA staff.
   * **IMPORTANT**: The Checker does not address all accessibility requirements. No errors reported by the Checker does not mean that all accessibility requirements are met.

**Guidance on Meeting Standards**

1. Every slide has a unique title
   * To find slides that do not have titles, Select **Review** **> Check Accessibility**.
   * See [Title a Slide](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/title-a-slide-c5286802-495a-4b47-a8ae-212fb8a7dc74#OfficeVersion=Microsoft_365) for guidance on ways of titling slides
2. Fonts are sans serif and 24pt or larger
   * Use Georgia, Helvetica, Open Sans, Futura, or other sans serif fonts.
   * To check font size
     + Visually inspect your slides
     + Select the **Home** taband place your cursor in every line of text and check your font settings
3. Slide content is uncrowded and adequate white space is used
   * Visually inspect your slides. Slides should have plenty of white space and “breathe.”
   * Follow these rules--not required, but they will help you meet this standard (from [How to Properly Use Bullet Points in Your Presentation](https://visme.co/blog/bullet-points-presentation/)):
     + Keep bullets short and to the point
     + Ensure bullets are parallel, as in:
       - Running a business smoothly
       - Monitoring website traffic
       - Designing effective marketing strategies
     + Follow 6x6 rule:
       - Keep text slides simple
       - Use bullets, not paragraphs
       - Six lines or fewer per slide
       - Six words or fewer per line
       - Proper nouns count as one word (e.g., Statue of Liberty)
4. Tables are only used if absolutely necessary to display data. If there is no other way to clearly display data, keep the table structure simple and specify column header information. (If you are using an image of a table, see #8 below, guidance on using visuals.)
   * To ensure that tables are simple and don't contain split cells, merged cells, or nested tables, use the Accessibility Checker.
   * Add alt text to the table
   * To add table headers:

* Place the cursor anywhere in a table.
* PC: On the **Table Design** tab, in the **Table Styles Options** group, select the **Header Row** checkbox.
* Mac: On the **Table Design** tab, select the **Header Row** check box
* Type in your column headings.

1. Hyperlink text is accurate, concise, makes sense out of context, and stands out. (Information and text taken from [Accessible Hyperlinks](https://accessibility.oit.ncsu.edu/accessible-hyperlinks/).)
   * To determine whether hyperlink text makes sense as standalone information, look over your document and read the links. Do they make sense on their own? Are they concise?
     + Links that don’t make sense on their own:
       - URLs (e.g., <https://classroomaccess.oit.ncsu.edu/simple-wayslesson2/part-6-hyperlinks/>)
       - "Click here," "See this page" “Benefits," "Learn more"
     + A link that makes sense out of context but is verbose: [This page lists ways in which accessible hyperlinks can benefit screen reader users](https://classroomaccess.oit.ncsu.edu/simple-wayslesson2/part-6-hyperlinks/)
     + Meaningful, concise hyperlinks: “Lesson 2.6: Hyperlinks,” “Creating Accessible Hyperlinks”
   * Hyperlink text is usually blue but may be any color that contrasts with surrounding colors. Use the same color for all hyperlinks in a given document. Underline links.
   * To create a basic web hyperlink: Press Enter after you type the address of an existing webpage (such as <http://www.contoso.com>).
   * To make a link accessible:
     + Select the whole URL, including the "http" or “https” at the beginning and the domain at the end.
     + Right-click to open the context menu, then find and select **Edit Hyperlink** (PC) **/Hyperlink> Edit Hyperlink** (mac).
     + In the dialog box, look for a text box labeled **Text to display**. Type in the description text you want.
     + Click **OK**.
   * Tips
     + If the title on the hyperlink's destination page gives an accurate summary of what’s on the page, use it for the hyperlink text.
     + If a hyperlink downloads a file, be sure to mention that.  
       Example: [Campus Map (PDF, 5.62 MB)](https://accessibility.oit.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/47/2019/03/CampusMap_11x17.pdf)
     + If a hyperlink opens in a new browser tab or window, be sure to mention that. Example: [NC State University Homepage (opens in new tab)](http://www.ncsu.edu/)
     + Write out full email addresses to convey that it is an email address
2. Color is not the only means of conveying information.
   * For example: Do not use Red to mean “required” and green to mean ”not required.” Instead:

* Add an underline to color-coded hyperlink text
* For headings, use bold or a larger font
* Add alternative text to convey the meaning color conveys. See #9 for guidance on adding alt text.

1. There is sufficient contrast between text and background colors. If you are unsure if you have enough contrast, use [the color contrast checker](https://color.a11y.com/). When in doubt, use color for headings and in the text area use black text and light-colored or white backgrounds.
2. All visuals include 1 or 2 sentences of alternative text or are marked decorative.

* **To add Alt Text on a Mac**
  + When you insert an image or object, Mac adds alt text and lets you edit it or mark as decorative.
  + To add alt text to existing image, double click or right click the image and select Alt Text.
* **To add Alt Text in Windows**
  + Right-click the object and select **Edit Alt Text**. Enter text or mark as decorative
* For the step-by-step instructions on how to add or edit alt text in PCs & Macs, see [Add alternative text to a shape, picture, chart, SmartArt graphic, or other object](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/add-alternative-text-to-a-shape-picture-chart-smartart-graphic-or-other-object-44989b2a-903c-4d9a-b742-6a75b451c669#PickTab=Windows).
* For guidance on writing Alt Text, see [Everything you need to know to write effective alt text](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/everything-you-need-to-know-to-write-effective-alt-text-df98f884-ca3d-456c-807b-1a1fa82f5dc2). (This says you don't have to add Alt Text for a table. Ignore it. Add Alt Text to tables.)

1. Slide contents can be read in correct order
   * Use the Accessibility Checker to find slides that have possible problems with reading order.
   * For step-by-step instructions on how to set the reading order, go to [Make slides easier to read by using the Reading Order pane (Windows)](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-slides-easier-to-read-by-using-the-reading-order-pane-863b5c1c-4f19-45ec-96e6-93a6457f5e1c).
2. Embedded videos have captions
   * Don’t embed videos in slide deck!
   * If you must embed videos, the videos must have closed captions
3. The PowerPoint Accessibility Checker returns no errors.
   * To launch the Checker manually: Select **Review** **> Check Accessibility**.

**Supplementary Resources**

* If you are new to accessibility in PowerPoint, we recommend reading the [WebAIM module on PowerPoint Accessibility](https://webaim.org/techniques/powerpoint).
* [Make your PowerPoint presentations accessible to people with disabilities (Microsoft)](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-powerpoint-presentations-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-6f7772b2-2f33-4bd2-8ca7-dae3b2b3ef25): The official Microsoft documentation, includes best practices and how-tos on basic accessibility tasks.

## **Getting Help**

* Academic librarians should contact their campus accessibility coordinator for assistance.
* [Join the WebAIM E-mail Discussion List or view the list archives](https://webaim.org/discussion/): “With over 1,000 subscribers, the WebAIM list is one of the largest accessibility discussion lists available. With subscribers who range from the foremost accessibility experts to those just beginning in web accessibility, the list is an excellent resource for anyone.”