

Today we are going to view some basic elements of accessibility in Microsoft Word.

Our example document will be a course syllabus.

This video will piggyback off of Diana Blackburn's video presentations from Online Learning.

The goal of this training is to help guide us on how to determine whether course documents in Microsoft Word meet basic accessibility standards.

We're going to review headings, lists, hyperlinks, images, and data tables.

Please note that the text in the syllabus is Calibri, which is a good sans serif font, and the only color used for text is black, and the background is white.

So no color contrast concerns.

Let's dive into headings.

Headings can help create a logical order for documents.

Screen reader users can more easily navigate documents with the aid of proper headings.

In the home tab of Microsoft Word, you will find a styles ribbon.

This ribbon is going to give us almost all the information that we need to know.

The creator of this document has built in visual cues to categorize information.

For example, Nashville State Community College is capitalized and bolded.

This lets the reader without visual barriers delineate information into categories.

Now we will determine whether or not that delineation has been built into the document for those who may be using screen readers.

In order to make that determination, all we need to do is click on the element within the text and determine how it is categorized in the styles ribbon.

So if we click on Nashville State Community College, a gray box in the styles ribbon indicates heading one.

Heading one is usually a page title or a main content heading.

If we click on the text, the content of that category, the gray box switches back to normal, which is exactly what we'd like to see.

There are several sections within this document, such as course information, and instructor information.

These major section headings are classified as Heading Two.

If you pull up the navigation pane, each heading is ordered in a logical order and will aid in document navigation.

Now let's take a look at determining whether the lists of this document have been built with accessibility standards in mind.

Creating lists correctly helps to add document structure for a screen reader user.

For example, let's examine a list under the attendance policy heading.

If we click anywhere on the list, the list button on the top paragraph ribbon is highlighted, which is exactly what we want to see.

If the list had not been built with the list function, that button would not illuminate.

Now let's take a look at hyperlinks.

Hyperlinks are clickable links that send the reader to a web page that is external to your document.

In order for hyperlinks to meet accessibility standards, they should be clickable and they should have a display text that is descriptive of where you are sending the reader.

Basic requirements include: using descriptive link text that does not rely on context from the surrounding text, keeping the amount of text in the link to a minimum, using underlined text with a color that stands out from the surrounding text.

So for example, in the syllabus there is a link for student resources, access to internet technology, I sort of went back and forth deciding if the full link should be shortened.

The full link for this website does show a clear pathway to this resource for a sighted user that may decide to print this syllabus.

And also for screen reader users, this is still considered descriptive of where the link is sending the person.

In this situation, you could right click on the link, select edit hyperlink,

and you could type a shorter description.

So for example, access to internet and technology.

it's important to avoid links that simply say click here.

Screen reader users can use keyboard commands to list all links.

It is confusing when all links just read click here and are out of context.

Now let's move to images.

To determine whether or not images meet accessibility guidelines, we need to see if they have an alternative text associated with each image.

I added two images, just for example.

To edit alt text, right click on the image, select edit alt text.

There is an area to type in alternative text description.

Or if the image is just just decorative, check the decorative image box.

The first image is a picture of the H building with no text or content.

I am making this mark as decorative.

The second image is an image with a student saying a quote.

This image has context (content).

So I have typed out her quote and her name in the alt text area.

Please note, you do not have to type, image, screen readers will automatically announce that this is an image.

Now let's move on to data tables.

To determine whether or not data tables meet accessibility guidelines, there are a couple of factors we need to look at.

First, does the table have a header row?

That is, does the first row identify the content of the column?

In this example of a table conveying grading scale, the first row tells us that the first column has the letter grades, and the second column has the percentage range.

That is our header row.

Now we are going to highlight this header row and right click to select table properties.

Next, click on the row tab.

Under options, verify that the repeat as header row at the top of each page is checked.

Allow row to break across pages is unchecked if the table extends over multiple pages.

Next, click on alt text tab in the description box.

There should be a brief description.

If that brief description is there, you have a table that meets accessibility standards.

This is very important because this helps a screen reader user navigate a table more easily.

That concludes our basics of accessibility review from Microsoft Word