## Creating Accessible PowerPoints

## Accessibility and Universal Design

Universal Design (UD) is a process that involves considering potential needs of learners when designing and delivering instruction. UD helps to identify and eliminate unnecessary barriers to teaching and learning while maintaining academic rigor.[[1]](#endnote-1) In the 20 years since CAST coined the term Universal Design for Learning and articulated the principles, UDL has become internationally recognized as an effective tool for designing and implementing inclusive learning environments. [[2]](#endnote-2)

## Important Things to Consider

Provide lecture notes or outlines on Moodle. This allows students to obtain course information and resources to be ready for each class. Ensure that text reading software can process it by testing it with one of the screen readers listed. Highland network NAL (ZENworks) window contains installation materials for Read&Write Gold (RWG) that is a literacy software that assists with reading, writing, and research with screen reading actions. Read&Write can also be accessed under the Services tab on [Highland’s website](https://highland.edu/read-write/). Examples of free screen readers for desktop include: [NV Access](https://www.nvaccess.org/) (PC), [Apple VoiceOver](https://www.apple.com/accessibility/mac/vision/) (Mac), and [ORCA](https://help.gnome.org/users/orca/stable/) (PC and Mac). An example of a paid subscription screen reader for desktop is [JAWS](http://www.freedomscientific.com/products/software/jaws/) (PC).

For significant images, include [alt text tags](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/make-your-word-documents-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-d9bf3683-87ac-47ea-b91a-78dcacb3c66d?ui=en-US&rs=en-US&ad=US) that verbally explain what they are when rolled over by a cursor. Allow supplemental text materials to be available in alternative formats.

## Features of Accessible PowerPoints

1. **Utilize slide layout templates when creating the presentation**. Slide layout templates have been tested to work with screen readers. Text boxes and WordArt are not accessible formatting tools and will be treated like images by screen readers.[[3]](#endnote-3) Create new master slides as needed to adapt the template to your needs. [[4]](#endnote-4)
2. Screen reader software reads text information off the outline view, not the actual slide. All major slide information is depicted in outline view. Thus any information in the outline view will be accessible to someone using a screen reader. To activate Outline View, open the View tab and click Outline in the PresentationViews group.[[5]](#endnote-5)
3. Deactivate self-advancing or timed features. Slides that advance on a timer restrict individuals from accessing all information on slide. Animations
4. Select a clear font style and size, such as Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri in 24 pt. or larger. For titles, 36 to 44 pt. are sufficient.
5. Ensure that there is a good contrast between font color and background color. Avoid using patterned background. Allow users to modify font styles and colors.
6. Layout should be clear, simple, and logical. Remember that screen readers read that outline four in Outline View.
7. Alternative format of resources such as text documents and audio files from lectures.
8. Include caption or an embedded transcript for any video or audio components. Captions (videos) or transcripts (audio files) are essential components of multimedia access for individuals with hearing loss or auditory processing issues. Captions should be present when the video is uploaded.
9. Utilize the [Accessibility Checker](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/make-your-powerpoint-presentations-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-6f7772b2-2f33-4bd2-8ca7-dae3b2b3ef25) in Microsoft PowerPoint to find any accessibility issues. [[6]](#endnote-6)
   1. On the ribbon, click the Review tab.
   2. Click Check Accessibility
   3. Review your results.

1. <https://www.washington.edu/doit/equal-access-universal-design-instruction> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. <http://www.cast.org/our-work#.XHXTDcBKgdU> [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. <http://accessibility.psu.edu/microsoftoffice/microsoftword/> [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. <https://www.colorado.edu/webcentral/tutorial/v2/accessible-documents> [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. <https://support.office.com/en-us/article/create-and-print-a-presentation-in-outline-view-3516310c-c9c0-4d4f-8c11-2759313477a5> [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. <https://support.office.com/en-us/article/use-the-accessibility-checker-to-find-accessibility-issues-a16f6de0-2f39-4a2b-8bd8-5ad801426c7f> [↑](#endnote-ref-6)