Accessibility in Microsoft Word Documents (Word 2019)

Headings
Use the Styles panel to create Headings which reflect the structure of your document. This allows a screen reader to easily navigate the document.

The Navigation Pane shows the Headings indented to different levels, giving the author the ability to manage the order, generate an automatic table of contents, and easily navigate to any section.

1. Highlight the desired text, or start a new line to act as a heading.
2. In the Home tab, click the appropriate Heading level in the Styles panel to assign it.
3. Change the “look” of a heading style by right-clicking it in the Styles panel. Note: If you’d like to change the appearance of headings in the future, one change here will affect the whole document.

Lists
Use numbered lists when hierarchy or order is needed, and bulleted lists to collect a list of equally-important items.

1. In the Home tab, find the list buttons in the Paragraph group.
2. Create the first item in a list and add as you go, or highlight a number of lines and assign the list in one click.

Alternative Text Description
Any visual information, such as a shape, diagram, or image, should have an appropriate text-based description.

1. Right-click on an image, and choose Edit Alt Text... from the drop-down
2. Insert the text in the field. Limit your text to <120 characters.
3. If an image requires a detailed explanation, longer than 1-2 sentences, contact the

Accessibility Resources Team about complex description options.

Tables
Tables should not be used to create columns or layouts, only to display data.

1. Use the Table tool in the Insert tab to create a table.
2. Right-click on a table and choose Table Properties, click Row, then choose Repeat as Header Row to mark your Header.
3. Use the Alt Text tool to give your table a preceding title and add Alt Text.

Hyperlinks
An accessible link is one that describes the target in “Plain English”. Avoid using links like https://unlv.edu/something-something, or “For more information, click here!” Instead try, “Read more about this on the UNLV Accessibility Page”. To create a link, highlight the text, right-click it, and choose Hyperlink.

Document Color and Contrast
Use a WCAG Color Contrast analyzer to ensure colored text contrasts well with its background. Don’t expect a reader to be able to determine text or shapes of different colors.

Accessibility Checker
In the Review tab, choose Check Accessibility. This will give some useful tips and warnings about your document, but it is not guaranteed to identify all issues. Manual review is required to ensure accessibility.