

UConn ECE Document Remediation Guidelines for UConn ECE Instructor Syllabus

Background

UConn is required to ensure that all digital materials, including course syllabi, are accessible to every student. Recent updates to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (effective April 2026) mandate compliance with WCAG 2.1 AA standards, which means that documents must be designed so students with disabilities can access them equitably. The University's Information Technology Services (ITS) office emphasizes that accessible materials include properly structured headings, sufficient color contrast, descriptive alt text, captions for multimedia, and other inclusive design features. The ultimate goal of remediating a syllabus is to ensure that a screen reader—such as NVDA—can read the document in a logical, meaningful way, giving all students equal access to its content. A fully remediated syllabus template is available for instructors to adapt for their own courses, and the following steps explain how to ensure accessibility if additional editing is needed.

1. Ensure Meaningful Document Title

- Go to *File > Info > Properties > Title* and enter a clear document title (e.g., “ECE 1001 Syllabus, Fall 2025”).
 - This helps students using assistive technology identify the file quickly.
 - Note that the document title is separate from the file name, though they can be the same
 - [More on accessible document basics](#)
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2 . Set Paragraph Spacing for Consistency

If you are updating or applying these rules to an existing syllabus, set spacing before applying headings. This creates a clean foundation and avoids inconsistent formatting.

- **Why it matters:** Proper spacing ensures that headings, subheadings, and text flow neatly without extra blank lines or uneven gaps. Screen readers also interpret spacing more predictably.
- **Actions:**
 1. Select all text (Ctrl + A).
 2. Go to the *Home tab > Paragraph group > click on small arrow in corner*.
 3. Under *Spacing*, set:
 - Before = 0 pt
 - After = 0 pt
 - Line Spacing = Multiple
 - At: 1.16
 4. Click *OK* to apply changes.
- [Formatting Guidance](#)

3. Use Built-in Headings and Styles

- Apply **Heading 1**, **Heading 2**, **Heading 3** in a hierarchical order (found under *Home > Styles*) instead of manually adjusting font size or bolding.
- This creates a logical document structure that screen readers can navigate.
- [Headings Explained](#)

4. Add Alt Text to Images

- Right-click the image > *Edit Alt Text*.
- Enter a concise description of the image's content or purpose.
- If decorative, check "Mark as decorative."
- [Alt text instructions](#)

5. Check Color and Contrast

- Ensure text has **sufficient color contrast** (e.g., dark text on a light background).
- Avoid using color alone to convey meaning (e.g., don't say "items in red are required").
- [Contrast Guidance](#)

6. Make Lists with Built-in Tools

- Use *Home > Bullets* or *Numbering* instead of typing symbols (–, *, 1.).
- This allows assistive technology to recognize the list correctly.
- [Lists Accessibility](#)

7. Create Accessible Tables

- Use simple tables for data (avoid merged or split cells).
 - Add a header row: *Table Tools > Layout > Repeat Header Rows*.
 - Do **not** use tables for layout or spacing.
 - [Accessible Tables](#)
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8. Add Descriptive Hyperlinks

- Instead of pasting raw URLs, hyperlink descriptive text (e.g., write “UConn Accessibility Resources” instead of <https://accessibility.uconn.edu>)
 - [Hyperlink Guidance](#)
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9. Ensure Document Language Is Set

- Go to *Review > Language > Set Proofing Language* and confirm the correct language (e.g., English).
 - This improves screen reader pronunciation.
 - [Language Settings Info](#)
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10. Run the Accessibility Checker

- Go to *Review > Check Accessibility*.
 - Address any issues flagged in the results pane.
 - [Using Accessibility Checker](#)
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11. Save as an Accessible PDF (if needed)

- When sharing as PDF, use *File > Save As > PDF*.
- Before saving, select **Options > Document structure tags for accessibility**.
- [Exporting Accessible PDFs](#)