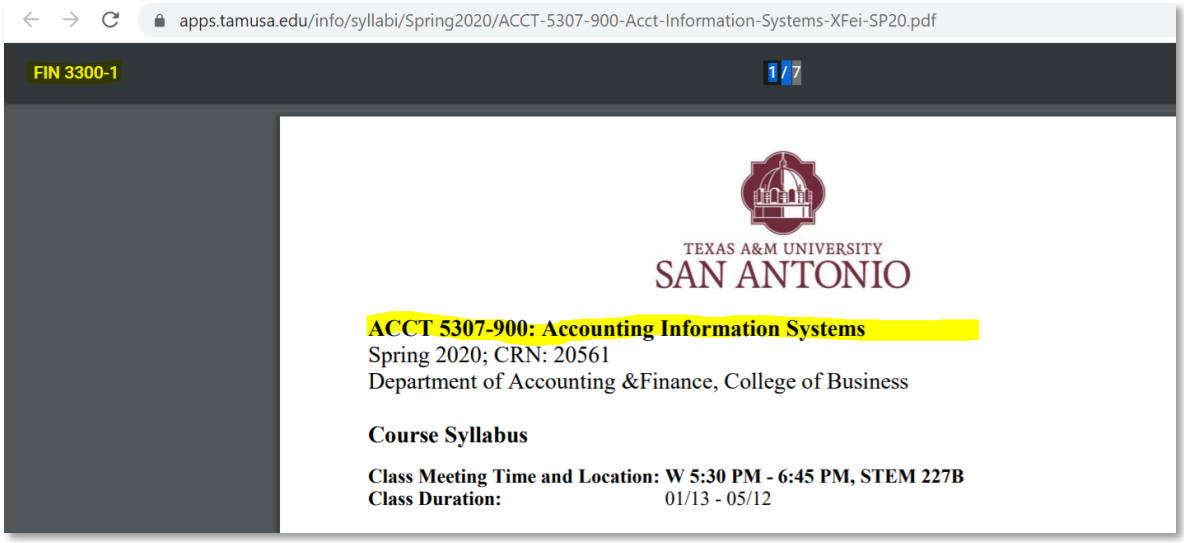
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
SAN ANTONIO

Document Accessibility

The Communications Act requires digital material online and other forms of communication be easily accessible by persons with disabilities. As a state institution, we are required to follow these guidelines. You can read more about accessibility by visiting the W3 organization's website here https://www.w3.org/WAI/policies/united-states/.

Document Heading (Heading 1, Heading 2, Heading 3)

Before converting your document to PDF, check to make sure the document heading corresponds with the title of the document. In the example below, the screen reader will read the document title as *FIN 3300-1* instead of *Accounting 5307-900: Accounting Information Systems*. If you are using a template to create your course syllabus, you will need to save the document with a new file name. Open the document, navigate to *File*, then *Save As*, and type in the new name. Do not right-click on the name to change it. Doing so will only change the name of the document but not the title (See Removing Hidden Metadata section for more information).

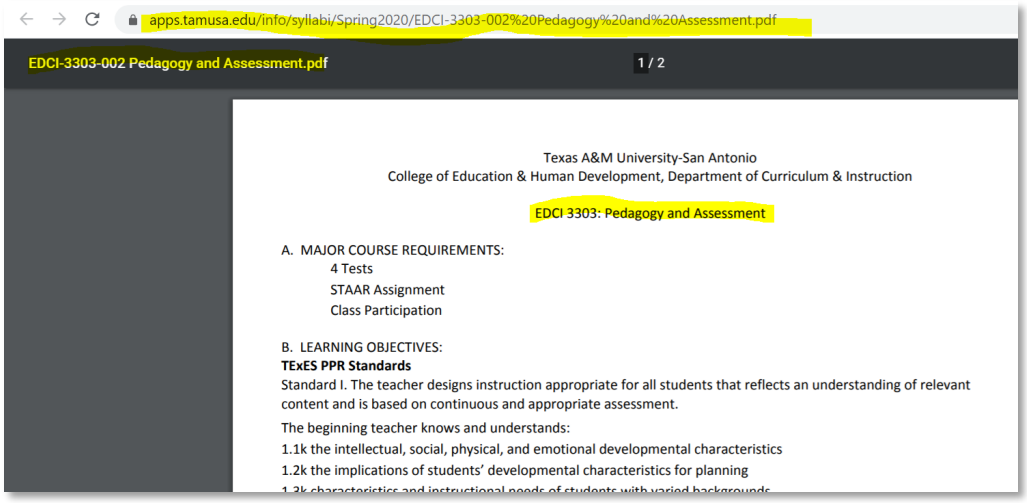


Document with multiple headings need to follow H1, H2, H3, H4, guidelines. Visit the W3 website for more information here https://www.w3.org/WAI/tutorials/page-structure/headings/.

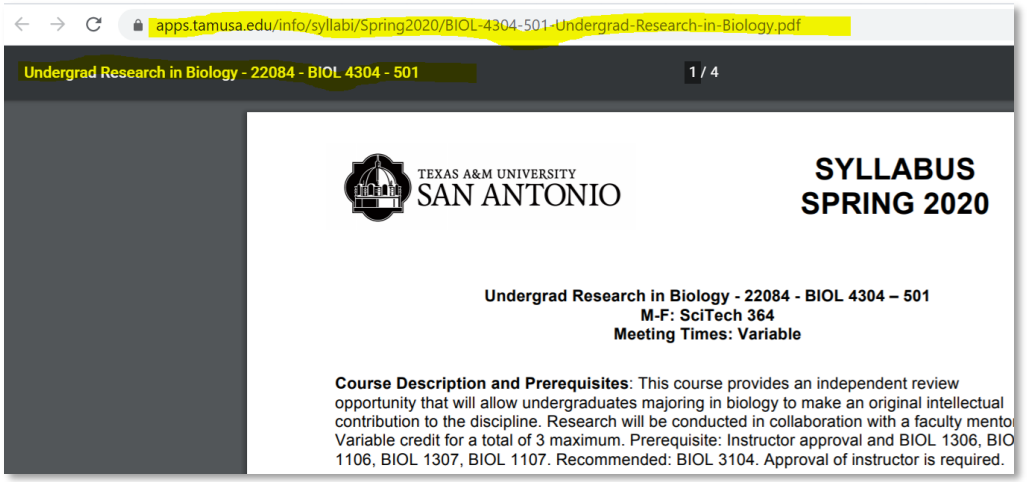
Descriptive links and file names

When adding a web link to a document or naming a file to upload to a website, link or file name should be descriptive enough for screen reader technology to decipher. PDF file names should not contain spaces, but should use dashes to separate the words. Using dashes will make the URL to the document readable to people using screen reader software. Some web browsers will add the characters %20 for every space in the document, which makes it difficult for screen readers to make sense of the document's content. The correct way to name a course syllabus is in this format: **Subject-CourseNumber-Section-Description** (Example: EDEC-5310-600-Infants-toddlers-preschoolers.pdf).

a. Incorrectly named document



b. Correctly named document



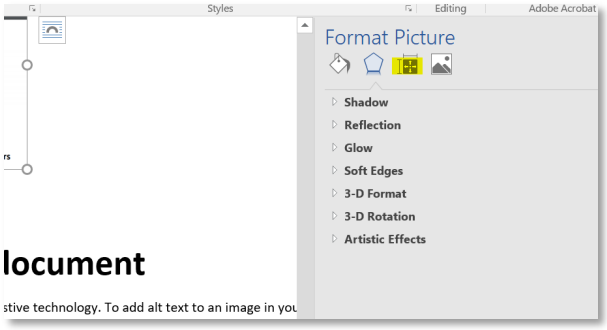
Naming CV For Faculty Profile

Before uploading your CV to your profile, check the file for accessibility issues. The file name should not contain spaces or special characters. Replace all spaces in the file name with dashes (**First-LastName-CV**). Avoid uploading different versions of your CV with different document names. Files you upload to the server are indexed in the search engines and will confuse the user if multiple search results appear for the same instructor.

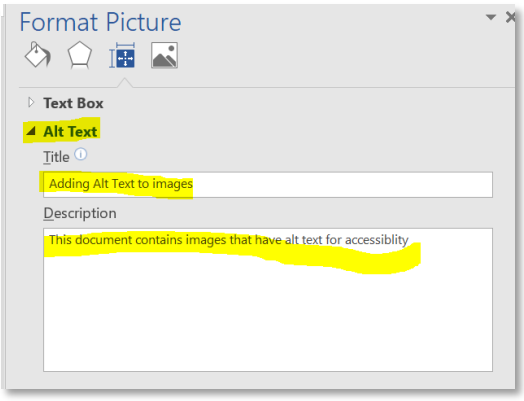
Adding Alt Text to images in your document

Adding alt text to images makes your document readable by individuals using assistive technology. Screen reader technology cannot decipher images, it relies on the image metadata to get image description. Using descriptive alt text for images in a document will allow the screen reader read content including image description to the user.

1. To add alt text to an image in your Word document, right click on the image and select *Format Picture*. A window will open on the right of the document. Select *Layout & Properties*.



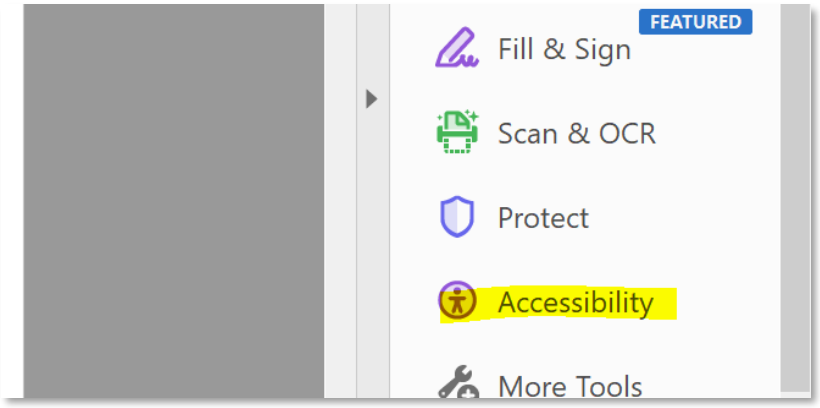
2. Expand *Alt Text*. Add title and image description. Repeat step for any additional images in your document.



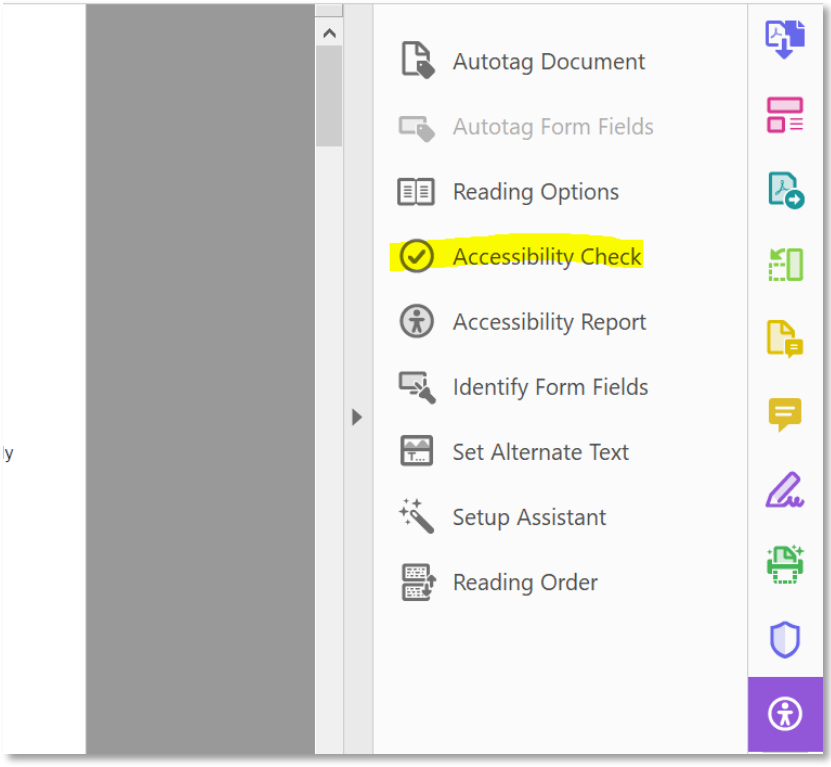
Checking your PDF file for accessibility issues

You need to have Adobe Acrobat DC to perform accessibility check on a PDF document.

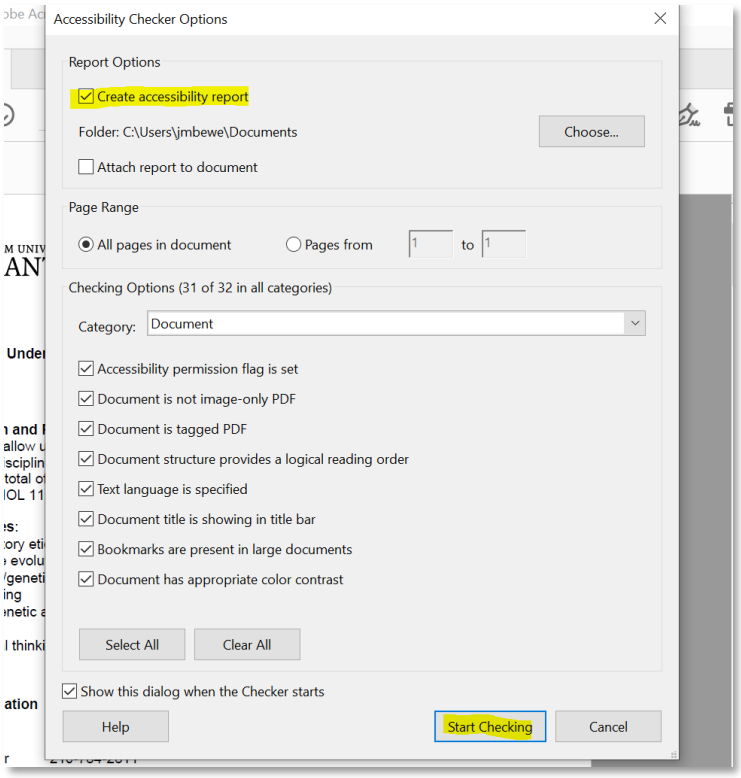
1. Open the document in Adobe Acrobat DC and select *Accessibility* in the window to the right of the document.



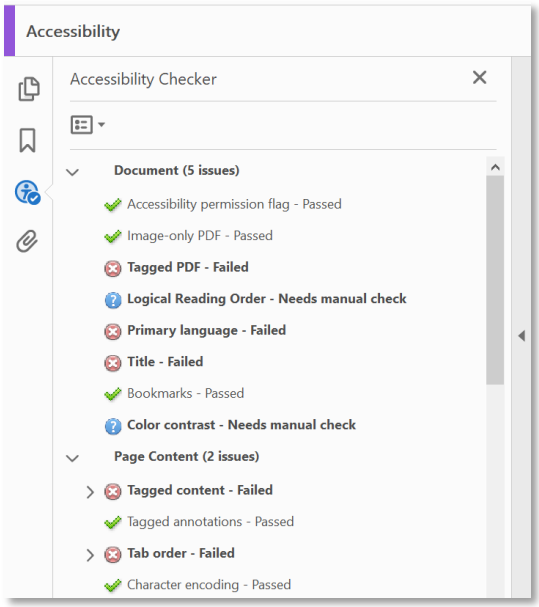
2. Click on *Accessibility Check* to open the accessibility check window.



3. Click on *Start Checking* button to start the accessibility check.



4. Accessibility results details will show in the window on the left. Correct any accessibility issues reported in your original Word document and convert the updated Word document to PDF to replace the one with accessibility issues.

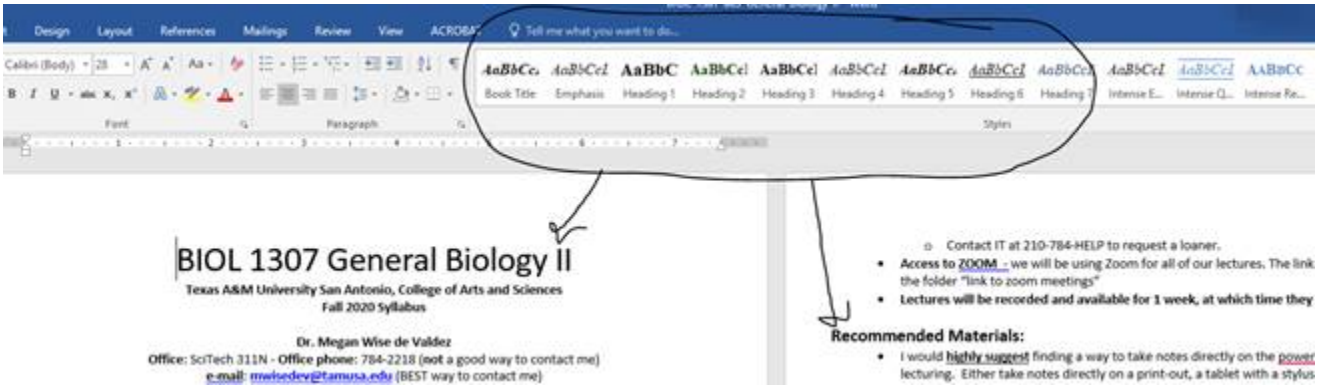


Removing Document Hidden Metadata in Word

If you created your syllabi using a template provided by your department, the document likely has hidden metadata with personal information from the person who created it. Screen reader software will read hidden metadata before reading the content of the document. The steps below will help you remove all hidden document headers and metadata before converting the document into an accessible PDF for upload.

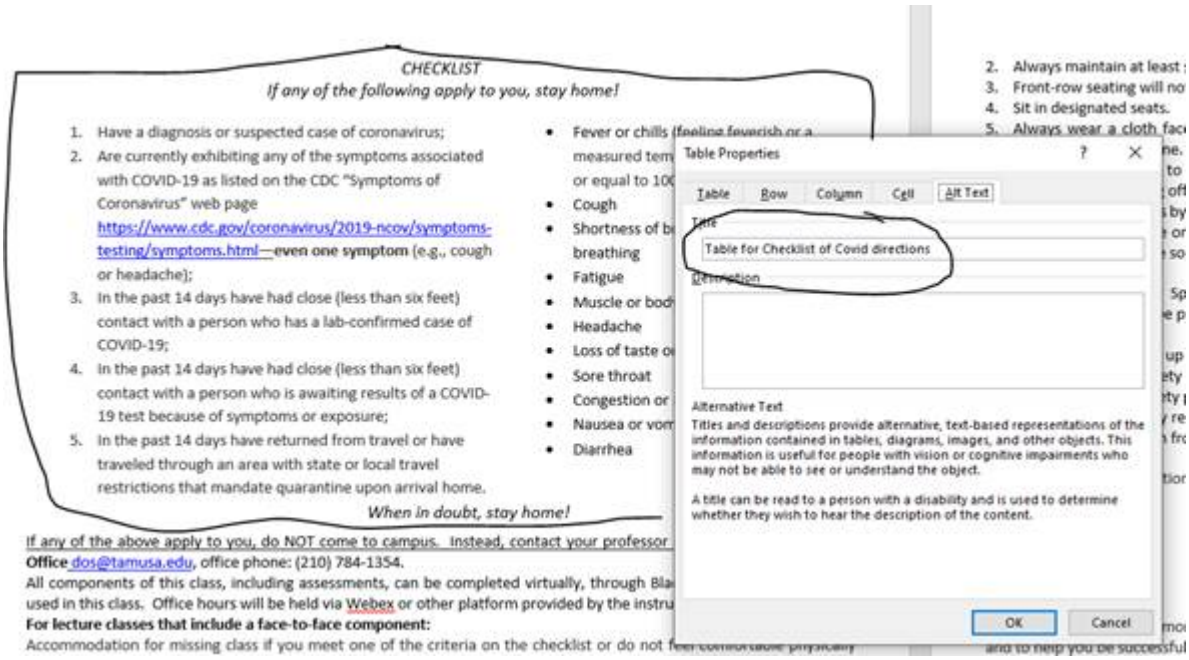
1. Get your regular syllabus you probably already have in WORD. Don't worry, you don't have to make a lot of changes!

2. If you use any sort of headings, make sure you use the formal headings instead of just informal bolding/underlining: see image below.



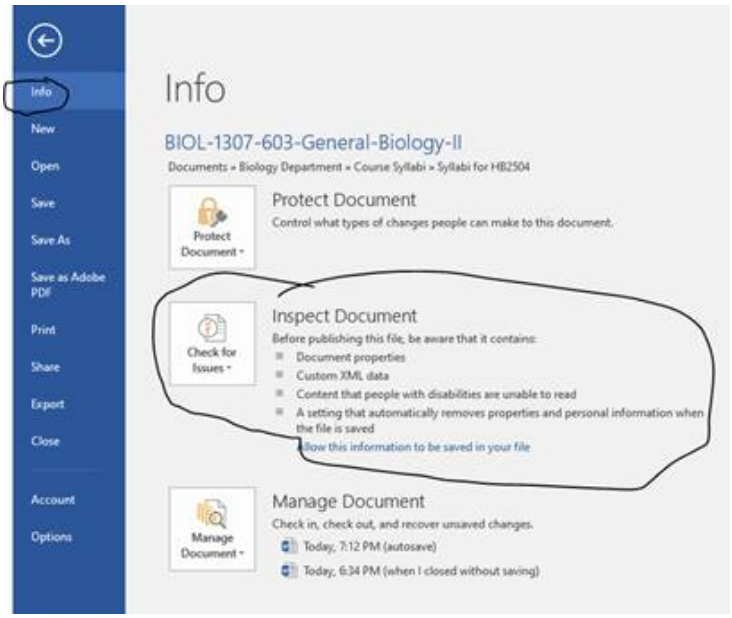
3. Change ALL text to **BLACK** (with exception of your links…links usually highlights in blue)

4. If you have any tables in your syllabus, right click on the table, hit "table properties", hit the tab "alt text" and give your table a title. This will provide an e-reader a title for the table when it gets to it.

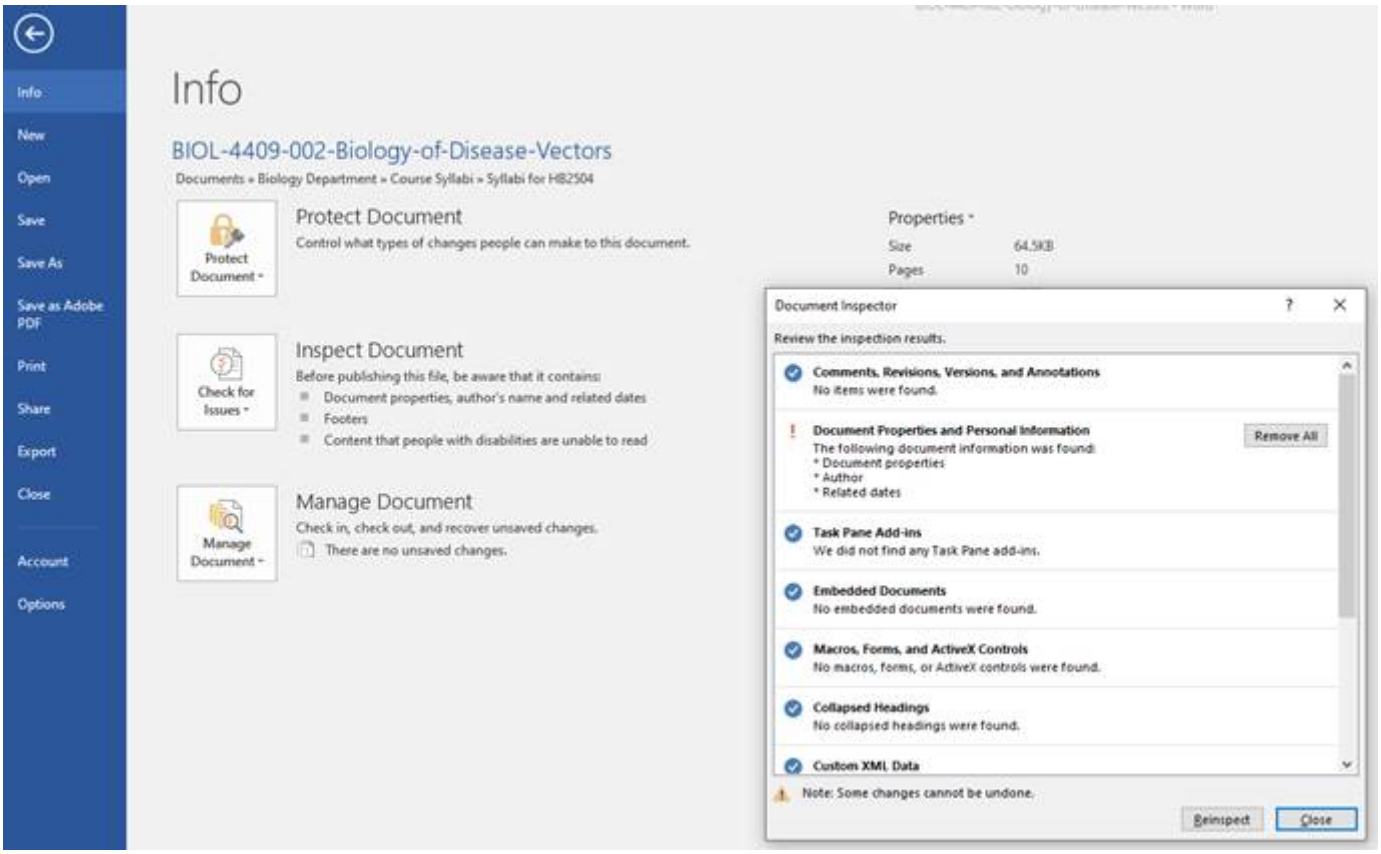


5. If you have any figures, headers etc… just take them out…it is easier! IF it is important information, then just add text instead of the image

6. Run a scan to look for any hidden information that word might throw in there… Go to "File". Click "info", then click "check for issues" then a dropdown menu will show up, click "inspect document", then "inspect"



7. This will give you any “hidden stuff” that an e-reader might read even if you don’t see it…here is what it might look like…just hit “remove all”.



8. You will need to save your word document as: SUBJ-Course#-section#-Title-separated-with-dashes.

   Example: BIOL-1306-005-General-Biology-II

9. Then save your document as a pdf. With the same name.

10. Finally, upload your syllabi in the course information system here https://apps.tamusa.edu/info/Login/