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| Sullivan University Online Style Policy |
| Writing Style | * Use Active voice
* Use Present tense (example: *Submit your paper…* rather than *The paper will be due . . or The paper is due.)*
* Use more personal address of *you* rather than *students*
* Minimize use of contractions
* No ampersands unless part of the official citation; minimize use in paragraph text.
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| Formatting: Blackboard Items/Pages | \*Keep formatting consistent throughout course.Font* LMS Default font and color
* No underlines other than links
* ALL CAPS are used sparingly if at all
* Color text and fonts other than default may be used *sparingly* to set off special items; for example, stand-alone quotations, side bars, etc.
* Color alone should not be used to convey information – 508 Subpart B - Technical Standards 1194.22 (c) and WCAG 1.1
	+ Replace color with icon (such as exclamation point inside circle defined as the ‘Important’ or ‘Warning’ Icon) or with cue words such as ‘Important:’,’ Remember:’, or ‘Note:’ – screen readers will read these items

Titles* Web pages have descriptive titles – WCAG 2.4.2
* Web pages have distinct titles

Headings * If creating a page within Blackboard:
* Blackboard uses Title <H1> and <H2> in navigation, therefore a page title entered in the Name field will be <H3> in the html code
* Do not use a Title at top of page unless it is an organizing subhead that would be the next level down from a paper’s title
* Use Sub Heading 1 and Sub Heading 2 to further organize the content
* Do not skip heading levels, but levels may be used more than once for equal content subdivisions/levels

Bullets* Default bullets
* Use numbers for a sequence or to list a specified number of items

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| Formatting | Punctuation and Spacing* One space after punctuation marks
* Double-space between heading and paragraph
* Subheadings use either one or two spaces between subheading and paragraph
* Periods go *inside* quotation marks

Color and Contrast - WCAG 1.4.1* If using colors to highlight or create focus do not use colors known to cause color blindness or strobing effects (red/green, blue/yellow, etc.)
* Do not use color as the only means of transmitting information - 508 Subpart B - Technical Standards 1194.22 (c) and WCAG 1.1 (screen readers do not discern colors)
* Ensure sufficient color contrast between elements of the page/slide
* In bar charts and other color-coded graphics use a combination of color and texture to distinguish items

Include a legend |
| Formatting:Handouts | Handouts* For Word doc to be used as is (linked or uploaded as completed pages):
	+ Use a Title at the top of the page (14 pt Arial bold, 6 pt spacing before, 10 pt spacing after)
	+ Use Heading 1 (12 Arial, 6 pt spacing bold before and after) and Heading 2 for subheadings (10 pr Arial bold, 6 pt spacing bold before and after)
	+ Do not skip heading levels, but levels may be used more than once for equal content subdivisions/levels
	+ [Sample doc with Headings as described](https://sullivanedu.sharepoint.com/sites/InstructionalDesign/Shared%20Documents/Templates/Handout%20Heading%20Example.docx)
* Discourage use of pdf format as they are not 508 compliant – WCAG 1.4.5
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| Naming Conventions | * Weeks are used with numbers (Week 1, Week 2) – WCAG3.2.3 and 3.2.4
* Avoid referencing chapter numbers in content—use topics instead(for example: Week 1, Introduction to Qualitative Research)
* Instructional content, assignments, and discussions include titles that refer to the topic – WCAG3.2.3 and 3.2.4
* Assignments and naming of assignments are consistent in Syllabus, Course Schedule, and Weeks – WCAG3.2.3 and 3.2.4
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| Links | * Use descriptive link text – WCAG 2.4.4
	+ For library resources, show citations (rather than link)
	+ Put required urls in parenthesis
* Links open in new window
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| Images/Non-text Content | * Keep image borders and spacing consistent throughout course (exceptions allowed)
* Use alternate text to describe relevant pictures - 508 Subpart B - Technical Standards 1194.22 (a)
	+ Use enough text to give context
	+ Generally less than 120 characters
	+ In BB use the description field rather than the Title field
* Use null alternate text if picture is solely decoration (adds no meaning to the page)
	+ Not the same as having no alt tag
	+ <alt=””>
	+ Do *not use* a Title for the image either
* For complex graphics use long description or provide a link to an alternative presentation - 508 Subpart B - Technical Standards 1194.22 (a)
* Use the embedded math editor – WCAG 1.4.5, 1.4.9
	+ Do not use images of math equations
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| Tables | * Minimize use of tables for page layout
	+ No use of 80% tables for layout except for schedule pages
	+ Sometimes simple tables can be easily converted to lists or ordered lists
	+ If *required* use subheadings
	+ Div tags can be used for readability and indentations
* Data tables *must use* headings and summaries to assist readers- 508 Subpart B - Technical Standards 1194.22 (g) and (h)
* Use table heading styles for table columns and rows - 508 Subpart B - Technical Standards 1194.22 (g) and (h)
* Within each row use <th>Title of Row 1</th> to designate headings of rows
* Use table summary to describe the table contents (see example below)
	+ This is more than, and not the same as, the caption
	+ Use captions
		- <caption> tag immediately follows the <table> tag e.g.,:

  <TABLE border="1" summary="This table gives some statistics about fruit flies: average height and weight, and percentage with red eyes (for both males and females)."> <CAPTION><EM>Fruit Fly Statistics</EM></CAPTION> ….</TABLE> |
| Content Readability | * Unusual words are defined – WCAG 3.1.3
* Abbreviations and acronyms are defined – WCAG 3.1.4
	+ Acronyms are spelled out on first use
* A mechanism for unusual words that require pronunciation for comprehension (such as medical terms?) is available – WCAG 3.1.6 AAA level
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| Multimedia | * Moving, blinking, scrolling content must have a user mechanism to pause, stop, or hide - 508 Subpart B - Technical Standards 1194.22 (j) and WCAG 2.2.2
* Pre-loaded animations should indicate download progress – WCAG 2.2.2
* Three flashes or below threshold – do not include anything that flashes more than three times in any one second – WCAG 2.3.1 and 2.3.2
* An alternate text presentation is provided - 508 Subpart B - Technical Standards 1194.24 (e)
* Provide warnings that something that flashes/strobes is coming so students can skip/not view the item

 Note: Even Optical Illusions can trigger some seizures or migraine headaches |
| Videos | * Videos made by Sullivan for use in Online courses are stored on Screencast.com and on sullivanonine.net
* Videos made by Sullivan may be embedded or a link to Screencast/sullivanonline provided
* All videos contain closed captioning - 508 Subpart B - Technical Standards 1194.22 (b), 1194.24(c) and WCAG1.2.1 and 1.2.2 This requires funds that to date the provost has not approved
 |
| Course Schedule | * Course name and number appear at top of schedule
* Textbooks listed at top of schedule with complete APA citation and ISBN13 number

Weekly Assignment Table* View dates with link to calendar from sullivanonline.net at top of Due Column
* Days only (omit times) are indicated in the Due column
* Each week must have a title
* No links to readings within the table
* Due Date column uses Sunday with the exception of Discussions
	+ - Discussions use “Initial post due Wednesday, Responses due Sunday”
* Display Total in the last row of the grading criteria table
* All assignments are listed in the Course Schedule
* Due days are mentioned only in the Course Schedule with the exception of Week 11 where a specific day may be mentioned

Assignment Descriptions* Include brief descriptions of assignment categories with any pertinent directions
* Minimize links to Rubrics or project directions
	+ Project descriptions go into left navigation item
 |
| Weekly AssignmentsPage | * + Assignments are contained in a Weekly Assignments page that includes a list of assignments, such as readings, discussions, and assessments – WCAG3.2.3 and 3.2.4
	+ Naming convention and formatting for assignments – WCAG3.2.3 and 3.2.4

Discussion 2.1 – Brief Title Discussion 2.2 – Brief TitleAssignment 2.1 – Brief TitleAssignment 2.2 – Brief TitleQuiz 2.1Midterm/Final Exam (note Midterm is one word)* Do not refer to where assignments are submitted
* Naming is consistent throughout a course – WCAG3.2.3 and 3.2.4
* Turn on *Track Number of Views* in all assignments

Discussions* Include discussion description
* Discussion descriptions are copied into discussion – WCAG 3.3.2
* Options in *Forum Settings*:
	+ - If post first is desired select *Participants must create a thread in order to view other threads in this forum*
		- Select to grade or not; if graded set grade points to 100
	+ Attach rubrics to discussion if needed
		- Select “Yes(with Rubric Score)”

Assignments* Assignment directions are not included within the Assignment – WCAG 3.3.2
* Text subheadings can be added to discussions and assignments directions
* Attach rubrics to Assignments if needed
	+ - Select “Yes(with Rubric Score)”
	+ Under Submission Details: Number of Attempts must be set to “Unlimited Attempts” and Score Attempts must be set to “Highest Grade”
* Under Submission Details: SafeAssign must be selected for plagiarism check if desired
* Set Primary grading to Percentage, Secondary to “None”
* Check “Track Number of Views”
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| Peer Review Assignments | Peer Review Assignments* Due to Blackboard restrictions a Peer Review Assignment is set up as follows:
	+ First week of assignment Students upload assignment to a discussion forum where they exchange files
		- No discussion is required
		- Ensure discussion is assigned to the proper grading category
	+ The following week Peer Review Discussion takes place in a companion discussion board with the same identifying naming convention
		- If review is done within the original paper the review is uploaded again to this week’s forum for file exchange
 |
| Assessments | * You may add a test description as well as instructions as needed in the Assignment page only unless the information is required for successful completion of the exam
* Each assessment has instructions that may include content covered and time limit. The description is included on the Assignment landing page - WCAG 3.3.2Example:

This quiz covers Chapters 1, 2, and 3 and consists of 20 multiple choice questions. You have 30 minutes. * Tests always use a warning before time expires – WCAG 2.2.1
	+ Note that Blackboard automatically generates warning times based upon length of test time entered in the test options
* *Test Availability* Options:
	+ Use the Link to the test
	+ Do NOT use Force Completion
	+ Timer: ensure settings match assessment description
	+ Attempts allowed: 1 (unless otherwise specified by SME)
	+ Turn Autosubmit on if timed test
* Present test questions all at once (some exceptions allowed)
* Randomize questions unless valid reason for flow prevent this
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| Assessments | **Entering Test Questions - Options*** Question Sets or Random Blocks may be used in complex exams
	+ Use Question Set to groups like items together in a set that can be randomized, e.g., questions from Chapter 1 or all multiple-choice items, for ease of directions
	+ Use Random Blocks to pull items from a pool based on question type
* Check Answers Randomized if required
	+ Since answers may be randomized, verbiage should state *All/None of these* rather than *All/None of the above*
* Do not use Question Names

**Review Settings*** Check Feedback Options
	+ Formative feedback - After Attempts are Graded: Score, Incorrect Questions, All Answers, Correct, Feedback (if any is used)
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| Gradebook | * Gradebook Center Settings are percent based
	+ Use a weighted column called Overall
	+ Total for all assignment categories should equal 100%
	+ Each assignment is worth 100 points unless there is a compelling reason for an alternate schema (due to using a percent-based gradebook)
	+ Assignments types and titles match those listed in the Course Schedule
* Gradebook Center Primary Display should be set to Percent, Secondary display: None
 |
| Other | * SME is not referred to by name or by personal experiences that require undue explanation by someone else teaching the course
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