

# Building a Better Syllabus with Microsoft® Word

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*A Workshop for San Diego State University Faculty*



## Where to Find Help When You Need It

### Help from your Division/College's Computer Consultant

Some divisions and colleges have computer consultants assigned to them. You can contact these consultants when you need help. To determine if you have a consultant assigned to your division or college, look to: <http://rohan.sdsu.edu/~facstaff>

### Help from the BATS Web Page

BATS (Baseline Access, Training and Support) is a California State University initiative to provide all students, faculty, and staff with "baseline" access to information resources via networks, training in the uses of baseline hardware and software systems, and ongoing professional and technical support for utilization of computer resources at San Diego State University. You can access the BATS Web Page by pointing your browser to:

<http://rohan.sdsu.edu/~bats/>

### Help in the San Diego State University, Faculty Room

The Faculty Room is staffed Monday through Friday with computing consultants who will try to answer your questions.

**Location:** Adams Humanities, 1109  
**Phone Number:** x45727  
**Semester Hours:** 7:30am – 6:00pm Monday -Thursday  
7:30am – 4:30pm Friday  
**Semester Intersession:** 7:30am – 4:30pm Monday – Friday

### Help from the Faculty Computing Help Line

**Phone Number:** x41348 **E-mail:** [helpline@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:helpline@mail.sdsu.edu)  
**Semester Hours:** 7:30am – 6:00pm Monday – Thursday  
7:30am – 4:30pm Friday  
**Semester Intersession:** 7:30am – 4:30pm Monday – Friday

### Help from the Staff Computing Help Line

**Phone Number:** x40824 **E-mail:** [staffhelp@sdsu.edu](mailto:staffhelp@sdsu.edu)  
**Semester Hours:** 7:30am – 6:00pm Monday – Thursday  
7:30am – 4:30pm Friday  
**Semester Intersession:** 7:30am – 4:30pm Monday – Friday

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## Good syllabus design

Incorporating good design principles, both instructional and word processing, into your syllabus will make it as clear and direct as possible for your students.\* Good syllabus design will increase the chances that your students will find a learning strategy that is successful for them. While the exact structure of your syllabus is up to you, all syllabi should include the following areas:

1. Let them know why they are there and how the course will benefit them or, why take this course?
2. Tell them what is expected. State the course requirements.
3. Suggest ways in which they can meet those expectations. Provide an action plan for the course, a clear plan for attaining the course goals. What reading, films, activities, practice exercises, etc. do you suggest, require?
4. Explain how they will be evaluated. Student Evaluation and Grading Procedures.

## How to insure students will read your syllabus

Your syllabus should be a tool that can be used throughout the semester, but it is most effective if it is read carefully at the beginning of the semester. One way to insure that your students read your syllabus is to give a short take-home exam on the syllabus and assign the students to complete the exam during the first few days of the semester. This will insure that your students focus on the most important parts of the syllabus, and helps bring to light questions your students may have.

Allowing time during the second class meeting to discuss questions your students may have regarding the course syllabus is always a good idea.

## Editing Faster

### Editing and Selecting Text

After entering text, you may want to delete or move a word, sentence, or paragraph. Before you can perform these actions on the text in your document, you must select the text. You can select text by using the mouse and one of these methods.

1. To select specific text, click and drag the I-beam pointer over one character, one word, or the entire screen.
2. To select one word, position the I-beam pointer anywhere in a word and double-click.
3. To select a sentence, on a Mac hold down the Command key while clicking anywhere in the sentence. On Windows, hold down the Ctrl key while clicking anywhere in the sentence.
4. To select a paragraph, triple-click on the paragraph.

If you make a mistake you can use the following methods to edit text.

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\* This and the following section were adapted from: *Writing A Student Syllabus*, Grant Von Harrison & Kenneth Derr, Brigham Young University, 1977.

1. While typing, press the Backspace key to erase a character to the left of the insertion point.
2. Press the Del key to remove characters to the right of the insertion point

Double-click the OVR indicator in the status bar to use overtype mode, in which the text you enter replaces existing text. Double-click the indicator again to turn off the overtype mode.

### Copy, Cut & Paste



1. Once the text has been selected, use the menu bar to choose **Edit, Copy**.
2. Use the **Edit, Paste** command to copy text from the clipboard.
3. If you wish to Cut and Paste, use the **Edit, Cut** and **Paste** commands on the Standard toolbar.

Note the difference between copying and cutting.

### Drag & Drop

An additional method you can use to move or copy text is called *drag and drop*. To use drag and drop to move text, follow these steps:

1. Select the text you want to move.
2. Point to the selected text, and hold down the mouse button. The drag and drop pointer appears.
3. Drag the **pointer** and the **dotted insertion point** that appears to the new locations, and then release the button.

### Undo



Note that if you have made a mistake, an action can always be “undone.” The **undo command** can be invoked two ways: from the Edit, Undo menu or by selecting the Undo Arrow Icon on the Standard toolbar.

### Checking Spelling

Visually review your document for typing errors. Fix any errors using the editing commands above. Then have Word automatically check the spelling for you.

1. Automatically check your document for spelling by choosing **Tools, Spelling and Grammar**.
2. Follow the **prompts** in the Spelling Checking dialog box to spell check your document.
3. When spell checking has been completed, click **Ok**.



Note that you can also use the **Spell Checking Icon** on the Standard toolbar.

## Using bold, bullets, and indents effectively

Changing the appearance of your font can draw attention to or away from a particular block of text. By bolding a word, you can signify importance.

## **Bold**

1. To apply bold, select the text.
2. Choose, **Format, Font, Bold**.

Note that **Apple + B** (MAC) or **Control + B** (Windows) on your keyboard also can be used to bold.

## **B**

Note that by choosing **Format, Font** from the menu bar you see a full list of available font options. There is always more than “one way” to execute most commands.

## **Bullets & Numbering**

1. Go to the **Format, Bullets and Numbering**.
2. Select the **bullet or numbering style** to match the one in the letter.
3. Click **Ok**.
4. **Undo** this action, and reapply the bullets by using the **Bullets** command on the Formatting menu.

## **Indent**

1. Choose **Format, Paragraph**.
2. Select the **Indents and Spacing** tab.
3. Change the left **Indentation** box to **.5**.
4. **Undo** this action, and reapply the indentation by using the **Indentation icon** on the formatting menu.

## **Margins**

You can change the margins of your document from the default settings to any margin you want. To change the margins of your document, follow these steps.

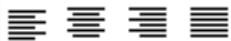
1. Choose the **File, Page Setup**.
2. Select the **Margins** tab.
3. Enter your desired measurements in the **Top, Bottom, Left, and Right** boxes.
4. Choose **Ok**.

Note the difference between applying margins to a single page, section, or whole document.

## **Text Alignment**

Using alignment to organize your text is one way to make your text more appealing to the eye. Word enables you to left-align, right-align, center, or justify the text in your documents.

1. Select the text you would like to align.
2. Choose the **Format, Paragraph**.
3. Select the Alignment you would like.



Note that you can also use the formatting toolbar to execute these commands.

### Page Break

Sometimes you need to start a new page, yet you are not at the end of the page yet. The easiest way to start a new page is:

1. Click where you want to start a new page.
2. On the **Insert** menu, click **Break**.

Click **Page Break**.

### Page numbering

1. On the **Insert** menu, click **Page Numbers**.
2. In the **Position box**, specify whether to print page numbers in the header at the top of the page or in the footer at the bottom of the page.
3. Select any other options you want.
4. The style of page number you want can be **changed** by clicking on the **Format** button from the **Page Number** window.
5. Choose **OK**.


### Previewing your Syllabus Before Printing

It is always nice to know how your paper will look before you print it. Print Preview allows you to view multiple pages at a time, magnify or reduce the size of the page on the screen and check page breaks.



Click **Print Preview** from the **Standard Toolbar**.

### Creating and Editing Headers and Footers

1. On the **View** menu, click **Header and Footer**.
2. To create a header, enter text in the header area.
3. To create a footer, click Switch Between Header and Footer to move to the footer area. Then repeat step 2.
4. When you finish, click **Close**. 

### Inserting and formatting tables

An alternative to columns, is tables. Tables are useful when you would like to place text, or pictures **side by side**. To insert a table, follow these steps.

1. Position your cursor where you would like to insert your table.
2. Choose the **Table, Insert Table** command.
3. Chose the number of columns and rows you would like your table to have.
4. Click **Ok**.

Paste text into the table by typing in the table, or pasting text into it. Reposition the column borders by clicking on them, and dragging them.

### Inserting and formatting columns

You can divide the page into one, two, three, or more columns to make the text well organized and easy to read. Generally, when using columns, your **text wraps** from the bottom of your left column to the top of your right column. To insert columns, follow these steps.

1. Select the text you would like to put into columns.

2. Choose the **Format, Columns**.
3. Choose the **number of columns** you would like.
4. Click **Ok**.

## Placing horizontal and vertical graphics lines within a document

The Drawing Toolbar (Choose **View, Toolbars, Drawing**) is an effective way to add horizontal and vertical lines, as well as arrows and shapes. From the toolbar **choose** any one of these options, and **click** and **drag** within your Word document.

To edit a drawing object, **select it** and **double click**.

## Inserting graphics & symbols

1. Pictures are a great way to add flavor to your document, however, there are many different picture file types each with its own purpose. A list of commonly used picture file types and their general purpose is included on the last page.
2. Choose **Insert, Picture, From File**.
3. Change the **Location** to **Desktop**.
4. Locate your floppy disk on the desktop, and click **Open**.
5. Find the image, **sdsuimage**, and click once on this file.
6. Click **Ok**.

## Using **WordArt**

Using WordArt is an effective way to take a block of text and add angle or three-dimension to it. The WordArt can be accessed from the Drawing Toolbar (Choose **View, Toolbars, Drawing**).

1. **Select** the WordArt shape you would like to use.
2. Click **Ok**.
3. Enter the **text** and **font properties**, click **Ok**.
4. To rotate your WordArt object, **select** the object and rotate by the **yellow** handle.
5. To edit the object, **double click** on the **object**.

## Using styles to define headings

### Defining a Style

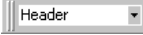
Styles are generally based on other styles. To do this:

1. Choose **Style...** from the Format menu.
2. The Style dialog box will open. Click on **New**.
3. After the new dialog box opens, **type** a new style name.
4. **Click** and **hold** on the **down-pointing arrow** to the right of the "Based On:" box. From the menu that drops down, drag to select the name of the existing style on which you want your new style to be based (e.g., "Normal").
5. The instructions for the "based on" style will appear in the "Description" box. They can be changed by choosing commands using the Format button. Click and hold on the down-pointing arrow to the

right of Format. Drag to different topics to modify different aspects of your new style.

6. When you have modified the instructions to your taste, click on the **OK** button.
7. When you have returned to the Style dialog box, click on **Apply**.

### Applying a Style

1. To apply a style, select the **paragraph(s)** you wish to format.
2. **Click and hold** on the **arrow** to the right of the Style Selection box in the Formatting Toolbar. 
3. **Drag to highlight** the **desired style**, and **release the mouse button** to apply it to the selected text.

### Removing a Style

1. Choose **Style** from the **Format** menu.
2. Select the name of the style you wish to remove from the list box.
3. Click on **Delete**.
4. An alert box will ask you to confirm the deletion. Click on **Yes**. Any paragraphs that used the deleted style will become Normal style.
5. Click on **Close** to close the Styles window.

## Saving your syllabus as a template

A template can store boilerplate text, custom toolbars, macros, shortcut keys, styles, and AutoText entries. An easy way to create a template is by opening a document that contains the items you want to reuse and saving it as a template. If you save a template in the Templates folder, the template will appear on the General tab when you click **New** on the File menu. If you save a template in a subfolder of the Templates folder, such as Memos or Letters and Faxes, the template will appear on the corresponding tab when you click the New command.

1. To base a new template on an existing document, click **Open** on the File menu, and then open the document you want.
2. To base a new template on an existing template, click **New** on the File menu. Click a template that is similar to the one you want to create, click **Template** under **Create New**, and then click **OK**.
3. On the **File menu**, click **Save As**.
4. In the Save File as type box, click **Document Template**. This file type will already be selected if you are saving a file that you created as a template.
5. Word proposes the Templates folder in the Save in box. To save the template so that it will appear on a tab other than General, switch to the corresponding subfolder within the Templates folder.
6. In the **Save current document as** box, type a name for the new template, and then click **Save**.
7. In the new template, add the text and graphics you want to appear in all new documents that you base on the template, and delete any items you don't want to appear.

8. Make the changes you want to the margin settings, page size and orientation, styles, and other formats.
9. Click **Save**, and then click **Close on the File menu**.
10. Note: To make AutoText entries and macros available only to documents based on this template, store them in this template, not in the Normal template.

## **Congratulations!**

You have completed Building A Better Syllabus for Faculty at SDSU. Please feel free to contact your instructor if you have any questions on material covered during this workshop. Also, please feel free to take advantage of the help resources listed on page 2 of this handout.