

CA-ROTEL Project Style Guide

This guide establishes the standards for document creation and formatting to ensure consistency, accessibility, and seamless collaboration within Google Workspace.

1. Tooling & Compatibility

To maintain formatting integrity and accessibility, **one format (Google Suite/Microsoft Word) should be chosen and used consistently.**

Options

Google Suite

Google has a proven record of easy collaborative functionality. CA-ROTEL Grant administration defaults to using the Google Suite (Google Docs/Slides/Sheets) for this purpose. Communication with the Publishing Support Team will be easier using the Google Suite.

Microsoft Word

Microsoft Word has a robust toolset for document design and formatting. If choosing to use Microsoft Word, creators may need to utilize templates and email to exchange information with the Publishing Support Team.

Known Conflicts:

Below are the issues we have determined between Microsoft and Google. This list is non-exhaustive.

- **Accessibility:** Word image captions often break or fail to translate during conversion.
- **Formatting:** Proprietary fonts and spacing in Word frequently shift when imported into Google.
- **Data Accuracy:** Word counts differ between the two platforms, which can affect project requirements.

Version Control

Once a project is finalized, **edits cannot be made to the documents in the PST folder.**

- *Action Required:* Always keep personal copies of your work if you anticipate future adjustments or edits.

2. Typography & Alignment

The goal for all PST documents is readability and clean digital presentation.

- **Font Family:** Use **Sans-serif** fonts only.

- *PST Default: Calibri*
- *Approved Alternative: Arial*
- **Alignment:** Use **Left-aligned** text.
 - **Strict Rule:** No justified text. Justified text creates "rivers" of white space that make reading difficult for users with dyslexia or visual impairments.
 - **Guideline:** No right-aligned text. Right-aligned text can be missed by screen readers who are utilizing a magnifying tool rather than having it read to them. Design and accessibility best practices state to be consistent and predictable in alignment.
- **Punctuation:** The **Oxford Comma** is mandatory for all lists of three or more items.

3. Media & File Types

OER Commons supports specific file types natively. Please adhere to this list when preparing assets:

Category	Supported File Types
Documents	DOC, DOCX, XLS, XLSX, PPT, PPTX, PDF, EPUB
Images	JPEG, TIFF, GIF, PNG, SVG
Audio	MP3, WAV, AIFF
Video	MP4, MOV
Course Content	IMSCC

- **Video Hosting:** All videos must be uploaded to **YouTube**. YouTube is the default for publicly available video, and OER Commons allows for direct embedding within their builder.

4. Formatting Standards & Style

PST defaults to specific academic and professional standards to ensure a unified "voice."

- **Citation Style:** PST will adhere to **Chicago Manual of Style** unless a project specifically requires MLA or APA.
- **Web Accessibility:** All documents must meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).
 - **Color Usage:** Color must be purely decorative. Never use color as the *only* way to convey meaning (e.g., "Items in red are urgent"). Use bolding, icons, or text labels instead.
 - **Tables:** Tables must be used exclusively for **data**. Do not use tables as a layout tool for spacing or columns.

5. Accessibility Checklist

- Font is Sans-serif (Calibri or Arial).
- Text is [Left-aligned](#).
- The Oxford comma is used consistently.
- Color is not the sole indicator of meaning.
- Tables are used for data, not layout.
- Final version is saved/copied locally outside of the PST folder.
- All videos are [hosted on YouTube](#).

For more details, please reference the Accessibility Evaluation Rubric, which will be the PST’s standard for measuring accessibility.

6. Quick Reference Summary

Element	Requirement
Primary Tool	Google Docs
Font	Calibri (Default) or Arial
Alignment	Left-aligned
Punctuation	Oxford Comma required
Style Guide	Chicago (Default)
Accessibility	WCAG Compliant
Video Hosting	YouTube
Version Control	Edits locked in PST folders; keep personal copies

7. Creative Commons License

After selecting a Creative Commons license that aligns with your goals and chosen materials, be sure to include the license on all relevant documents you share to clearly communicate reuse permissions. If you need assistance with license selection or have any questions, please contact Rachel Oleaga at Roleaga@necc.mass.edu.

Examples by Format

Resource Type	Where to Place the License
Google Doc / Word Doc	Footer, title page, or final page
PDF	Footer or end of document
PowerPoint / Google Slides	First and/or final slide
Video	End credits or video description
Web Page	Footer or near the title
Handout / Worksheet	Bottom of the page