

Undergraduate Research Journal Formatting

This formatting guide assumes you are working in Word. Most programs have similar functionality, so if you're working in something else, simply refer to the metrics (like font size). See the [URJ Review template](#) for an example layout. If you are struggling to format something, please contact Prof. Amanda Sladek at sladekam@unk.edu.

1. Fonts and Paragraphs

1.1. Styles

Styles are not just for controlling the look of the text. They also create a document structure, which is needed for accessibility.

1.1.A. Modifying a Style

1. Highlight desired text.
2. Click the arrow under Styles. This will expand the list so you can see all styles.
3. Click Apply Styles. This will open a new menu.
4. Select your desired style. If it doesn't match the journal guidelines, click Modify.
5. In the Modify menu, set the appropriate font, font size, and any styling like bold or italics.
6. To change spacing, from the Modify menu, select Format and Paragraph, then set appropriate values. The Format menu has additional options that will let you change the indent and other settings.

1.1.B. URJ Styles

Here are the style and formatting requirements for each paper component. See the Template for a visual representation of this. Set text color to automatic for every style.

1. Title: Style=Title. Title Case. Arial. 18pt. Bold. Centered.
2. Author Name: Style=Subtitle. Arial. 14pt. Centered.
3. Author Information: Style=Normal. Arial. 11pt. Centered. Department or Program Name; Institution; ORCID (optional)
4. Abstract and Keywords: Style=Subtle Emphasis. Arial. 11pt. Bold. Left-aligned.
5. Introduction and Headings: Style=Heading 1. Arial. 16pt. Bold. Left-aligned. Example of content, NOT formatted: 1. Introduction.
6. Sub-headings: Style=Heading 2. Arial. 14pt. Bold. Left-aligned. Example of content, NOT formatted: 1.1. Sub-headings
7. Captions: Style=Caption. Arial. 9pt. Italic. Centered.
8. Footnotes: Style=Footnote Text. Arial. 10pt.

1.1. Paragraphs

For body text: Spacing should be set to 6pt both before and after. Line spacing should be set to multiple and 1.08. Make sure the option is set to automatically add spaces between paragraphs of the same style.

For Headings 1 and 2: Spacing should be set to 18pt before and 6pt after.

2. Tables, Images, Equations, and Equivalent

2.1. Captions

Tables, images, equations, and equivalent must have captions. Captions are Arial, 9pt, italics and should be placed above the figure, table, etc.

Where possible, use Word functionality to add captions.

1. Right click on image.
2. Click Insert Caption.
3. Type in desired name. A format such as Figure 1: name of figure is recommended.
4. Select a label. All images will use Figure. Tables will use tables and equations will use equation. If in doubt, use Figure.
5. Select “above selected item” in Position.
6. Click OK.

2.2. Alt text

All images, tables, and equations must have alt text set. Alt text is a brief description of an item. For charts and tables, think about what information people need to know about the content. Do not just label it “chart”. If you’re struggling to write your own description, Arizona State’s [image description tool](#) may help.

To set alt text in Word on Microsoft:

1. Right click on image.
2. Click View Alt Text.

To set alt text in Word on Mac:

1. Right click on image.
2. Select Format Picture.
3. Select Layout and Properties.
4. Select Alt Text.

3. Bibliography

You are welcome to use the citation style in which you are most comfortable. Please make sure your bibliography is consistent with that style. If using footnotes, they should be in 10pt Arial.

4. Accessibility

Creating accessible documents helps the widest number of people read your content. It also is necessary to comply with federal Title II regulations. To create an accessible document, use styles as outlined in 1.1. and Alt-text as defined in 2.2.

Tips and tricks:

- Tables: Tables are the most common accessibility problems. Tables should be used to display data, not to lay out the document. California State Northridge has a help [table formatting guide](#).
- Charts and visualizations: consider color contrast, labeling, and descriptions. Harvard University's [Data Visualizations, Charts, and Graphs guide](#) is a great resource for more in-depth assistance.

Before submitting your final formatted document, use the accessibility checker. In Word, from the Review tab, click Check Accessibility.