Disability Terminology Handbook
Overview

The following document is a communications handbook for guidelines on how to reference persons with disabilities in official communications and documents for public or mass consumption.

The handbook provides clarifying information on misconceptions regarding disabilities, vocabulary “dos” and “don’ts,” and tips for framing stories, conducting interviews with persons with disabilities, and preparing the information in accessible formats for inclusive consumption.
Myth vs. Reality

Myth

Using the term “disability” is the same as using “handicapped,” “crippled,” or “special needs.” They all mean the same thing.

Reality

The terms “handicapped”, “crippled”, “special needs”, and others are outdated terms that presume persons with disabilities are different from the rest of society and in “need” of being treated differently or “specially.” People with disabilities have the same needs and interests as everybody else: school, work, family, and participation in their community.

The term “disability” refers to the interactions between an individual and their environment. When a person encounters a barrier to participation, that barrier is disabling.

Therefore, the appropriate term accepted by the international community and the United Nations is “persons with disabilities”.

الأحكام المسبقة مقابل الحقيقة

أحكام مسبقة

استخدام مصطلح "إعاقة" هو تماماً مثل استخدام مصطلحات "معوق", "عاجز", أو "حاجات خاصة". جميع هذه المصطلحات تعني الأمر نفسه.

حقيقة

إن مصطلحات "معوق", "عاجز", "حاجات خاصة", وغيرها هي مصطلحات بالية تفترض بأن الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقات مختلفون عن باقي أفراد المجتمع، وبحاجة إلى أن يحصلوا على معاملة مختلفة وخاصة. في حين أن الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقات لديهم الحاجات والاهتمامات نفسها، مثلهم مثل أي شخص آخر: المدرسة، والعمل، والعائلة، والمشاركة في المجتمع.

إن مصطلح "إعاقة" يشفر إلى طرق التفاعل بين الفرد ومحيطه. إذ عندما يواجه الفرد عائقاً ما، فإن هذا العائق يؤخره.

بالتالي، فإن المصطلح المناسب والمقبول يه في المجتمع الدولي والأمم المتحدة هو "أشخاص ذوي إعاقات".
Myth vs. Reality

Myth

If, for example, a person who has a hearing or visual impairment is a “person with disability”, then a person who doesn’t have a disability should be referred to as “normal”.

Reality

What is “normal”? All communities around the world are comprised of groups with a wide range of diversifying factors. Persons with or without disabilities are simply part of the diversity at large of any community.

الأحكام المسبقة مقابل الحقيقة

أحكام مسبقة

إذا كان الشخص الذي يعاني من إعاقة ما في السمع أو في البصر هو “شخص ذو إعاقة”， فيجب أن نشير إذاً إلى الشخص الذي لا يعاني من إعاقة بأنه شخص “ طبيعي ”.

حقيقة

ما هو “ الطبيعي ”؟ كافة المجتمعات في العالم تتألف من مجموعات تميّزها عدد كبير من العوامل عن بعضها البعض. وبالتالي فإن الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقات أو الخاليين منها ليسوا سوى جزءاً من هذا التنوّع الكبير الموجودة في أي مجتمع.
Myth vs. Reality

Myth
We need to feel sorry for persons with disabilities.

Reality
Feeling sorry for a person with disability is patronizing. Persons with disabilities don’t need pity. They need removal of barriers that limit their ability to fully function in their community and access opportunities.
Myth vs. Reality

Myth
Persons with disabilities are easily offended if you use the wrong word to refer to them.

Reality
Persons with disabilities are no different than others in terms of what offends them. Not knowing how to address someone is not cause for concern. If you are not sure as to what to say or do, simply ask.
Myth vs. Reality

Myth

All persons with hearing disabilities can read lips.

Reality

Lip-reading skills vary among people who use them and are never entirely reliable.
Vocabulary DOs and DON’Ts for Official and Public Documents

The chart below provides useful tips on the official and appropriate vocabulary for official and public documents when referring to persons with disabilities.

The vocabulary in the “SAY” list is comprised of the official globally accepted terms by the international community also endorsed by the United Nations in all official documentation pertaining to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD).
**Vocabulary DOs and DON’Ts for Official and Public Documents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAY THIS…</th>
<th>DON’T SAY THIS…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Persons with disabilities</strong>: this is the globally recognized appropriate term, and the one promoted by the United Nations. “People with disabilities” may also be used in conversation and unofficial documents.</td>
<td>The handicapped; The disabled; People with special needs; The Blind; The Deaf; The crippled; Invalids; Victims; Patients. These connote that any kind of illness is a negative experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة**: هذا هو المصطلح المناسب المعترف به عالمياً، والذي تروج لاستخدامه الأمم المتحدة. 

هذه المصطلحات تفترض بأن أي نوع من الإعتلال أو المرض هو تجربة سلبية.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAY THIS...</th>
<th>DON’T SAY THIS...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person with visual impairment: This emphasizes the person <em>first</em>, then their condition.</td>
<td>The blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with hearing impairment: This emphasizes the person <em>first</em>, then their condition.</td>
<td>The deaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person who uses a wheelchair: This emphasizes the person <em>first</em>, then their condition.</td>
<td>The handicapped; Wheelchair bound; Wheelchair confined</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

فocabulary DOs and DON’Ts for Official and Public Documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>لا تقل...</th>
<th>قل...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>شخص ذو إعاقة بصرية: هذا المصطلح يشدّد على الشخص أولاً، ومن ثم يشدد على وضعه.</td>
<td>أعمى، ضرير، كفيف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>شخص ذو إعاقة سمعية: هذا المصطلح يشدد على الشخص أولاً، ومن ثم يشدد على وضعه.</td>
<td>الصم والبكم، أطرش، أخرس، أطرم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>شخص ذو إعاقة جسدية – شخص ذو إعاقة حركية: هذا المصطلح يشدد على الشخص أولاً، ومن ثم يشدد على وضعه.</td>
<td>عاجز، مشلول، مكرس، مكسحم، كسيح مقعد</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Vocabulary DOs and DON’Ts for Official and Public Documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAY THIS…</th>
<th>DON’T SAY THIS…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person with intellectual disability</td>
<td>Mentally retarded, mentally delayed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with mental disability – Down Syndrome</td>
<td>Mongol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with developmental disability – Autism</td>
<td>Autistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with psychiatric disability or mental and social disorder</td>
<td>Crazy, loony, fool</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>لا تقل…</th>
<th>قل…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>شخص ذو إعاقة ذهنية</td>
<td>متخلف عقلياً، معوق نمائياً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>شخص ذو إعاقة ذهنية – متلازمة داون</td>
<td>منغولي متلازمة داون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>شخص ذو إعاقة نمائية – التوحد</td>
<td>متوحد التوحد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>شخص ذو إعاقة نفسية أو اضطرابات نفسية واجتماعية</td>
<td>مجنون، معتوه، سفيفه</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAY THIS...</td>
<td>DON’T SAY THIS...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with [Name of Condition]: For example “people with epilepsy”; “people with diabetes.”</td>
<td>Suffering from__. Afflicted by/with__. Epileptics; Diabetics; Or any other “label” that groups people by their condition.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persons who are employed at home:</th>
<th>Homebound employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always phrase their employment status in an active form, and not to what they are confined.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| مفردات يجوز استخدامها وأخرى يجب تلافيها في الوثائق الرسمية والعامة |
|----------------|----------------|
| لا تقل... | لا تقل... |
| يعاني من... مصاب ب... مصروع، مصاب بالسكري، أو أي "نعت" يصنّف الشخص حسب وضعه. | شخص ذو [تحديد وضعه]: مثلاً "شخص لديه صرع"، "شخص لديه سكري". |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>الأشخاص الموظفون في المنزل: دائماً يجب وضع وضعهم الوظيفي في شكل إيجابي، وليس في شكل يشير إلى أنهم أسيرو المنزل.</th>
<th>وظيفة منزلية</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Vocabulary DOs and DON’Ts for Official and Public Documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAY THIS…</th>
<th>DON’T SAY THIS…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accurate terms of the person’s condition:</strong> Remain as factual as possible without embellishment.</td>
<td>Courageous; Brave; Inspirational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use these terms only if they are intrinsically tied to the relevance of the story. Adapting to a disability does not mean a person has acquired these traits.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### مفردات يجوز استخدامها وأخرى يجب تلافيها في الوثائق الرسمية والعامة

لا تقل…

شجاع، مقدام، مصدر وحي

استخدم هذه المصطلحات فقط في حال كانت مرتبطه في حد ذاتها بالقصة. فالتكيف مع إعاقة ما لا يعني بأن الشخص اكتسب هذه الميزات.

قل...

مصطلحات دقيقة لوصف وضع الشخص: إبق ملتزما بالحقائق كما هي بدون تجميل.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAY THIS…</th>
<th>DON’T SAY THIS…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Disability is a human rights issue&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Disability is primarily a humanitarian issue&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Disability is diversity and a natural human difference&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Disability is trial and error&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;We must achieve justice and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;We must provide care and attention for them...&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;This group that is being excluded and discriminated against in terms of rights&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;This marginalized group&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>لا تقل…</th>
<th>قل…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;الإعاقة قضية حقوق إنسان&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;الإعاقة قضية إنسانية بالدرجة الأولى&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;الإعاقة تنوع واختبار&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;الإعاقة ابتلاء واختبار&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;يجب تقديم الرعاية والعناية لهم...&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;يجب أن يتم تحقيق العدالة وتكافؤ الفرص للأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;هذه الفئة المهمشة&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;هذه الشريحة التي يتم إقصاؤها والتمييز ضدها على أساس الحقوق&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Framing The Story

The following are recommendations for appropriately framing stories of persons with disabilities.

When to Mention the Disability

It is recommended to omit mention of the disability unless it is absolutely pertinent to the story. The article should always be about the person first, the condition second.

How to Frame Achievements

It is recommended to depict to also provide balanced news coverage of average achievers with disability, not just the super-achievers. To only focus on the super-achievers sends the wrong message that only above-average achievements are worth noting, and risks putting the disability condition at the center, not the person.
Framing The Story

Achievements that also merit focus may include: educational achievements, prominent job appointment, research achievements, sports achievements, or any other achievement that denotes success in everyday life.

Portrayals may include:

*Everyday Life:* Depict people with disabilities experiencing the same successes or challenges that others have in everyday life, such as work, parenting, education, sports, and community involvement.

*Variety:* Disabilities include those that are both visible (i.e., a person who uses a wheelchair) as well as non-visible (i.e., a person with autism). Featuring a balance of stories across the spectrum of disabilities is important for educating the general public.

*Collaboration:* Depict stories where persons with and without disabilities work together.

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صياغة القصة

يمكن أن تشمل الإنجازات التي تستحق أيضاً التركيز عليها: الإنجازات التعليمية، التعيين في منصب بارز، إنجازات في مجال الأبحاث، إنجازات رياضية، أو أي إنجاز آخر يدل على التمتع في الحياة اليومية.

الوصف يمكن أن يشمل:

*الحياة اليومية:* وصف أشخاص ذوي إعاقات يعيشون النجاح والتحديات نفسها التي يعيشها غيرهم في الحياة اليومية، مثل العمل والأبوة أو الأمومة، والرياضة، والمشاركة في المجتمع.

*التنوع:* تشمل الإعاقات المرئية (أي الشخص الذي يستخدم كرسياً متحركاً مثلاً) بالإضافة إلى الإعاقات غير المرئية (مثل الشخص الذي لديه توحد). بالتالي فإن إبراز نوع من التوازن في القصة بحيث تغطي كامل أنواع الإعاقات مهم من أجل تثقيف الرأي العام.

*التعاون:* تصوير قصص حيث يعمل معًا الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقات والخاليين منها.
Framing The Story

Remain Objective

It is important to avoid biased statements that in any way pass judgment on any aspect of the person’s condition. Focus on providing accurate descriptions that focus on facts, rather than an evaluation of the situation.

Consultation

It is important to be in constant consultation with persons with disabilities for them to provide correct information and assistance with respect to their circumstances so as to avoid stereotypes in the media.

صياغة القصة

توخي الموضوعية

من المهم تجنب التصريحات المتحيزة التي تشكل نوعاً من الحكم من أي نوع كان على وضع الشخص. التركيز على توفير وصف دقيق يركز على الحقيقة وليس على تقييم الوضع.

الاستشارة

من المهم أن نتشاور دائماً مع أشخاص ذوي إعاقة من أجل تزويدنا بمعلومات صحيحة ومساعدة فيما يتعلق بظروفهم من أجل تجنب الأفكار المقبولية في الإعلام.
Interviewing Persons with Disabilities

When interviewing a person with a disability, relax! Conduct your interview as you would with anyone. Be clear and candid in your questioning and ask for clarification of terms or issues when necessary. As with any interview, be upfront about deadlines, the focus of your story, and when and where it will be featured.

The following are additional factors to take into consideration when interviewing a person with disability.

**لدى إجراء مقابلة مع شخص ذي إعاقة، استرخ! أجر مقابلتك كما لو أنك تجريها مع أي شخص آخر. توكّ الوضوح والصراحة في أسئلتك واطلب توضيحاً لمصطلحات ومسائل معينة عند الحاجة. وكما هي الحال في أي مقابلة أخرى، كن صادقاً فيما خصّ المواعيد النهائية، والنقاط التي تركز عليها القصة، وموعد ومكان عرضها.**

**فيما يلي، المزيد من العوامل التي يجب أخذها في عين الاعتبار لدى إجراء مقابلة مع شخص ذي إعاقة.**
Interviewing Persons with Disabilities

Interview location

Assessing the interview location of potential barriers is just as important as the interview itself. In selecting venues for meetings, training sessions or other events, ensure that accessibility requirements are met.

If in doubt about accessibility requirement, consult with organizations of persons with disabilities, as they may have expansive knowledge of accessible venues in the area. Whenever possible, consult directly with the person(s) participating in the interview to ensure that their particular requirements are met.

Please mind the following accessibility considerations:

• Choose a venue that does not require going up stairs. If interview location is not on a ground floor, venue should include adequate entrance ramps, elevators, and ample pathways (at least 32” wide) to interview room.
• Venue should have a nearby accessible toilet.
• Participants should be able to reach venue using cost-effective and accessible transport.
• Adequate easy-to-read signage should be provided in the multiple and necessary formats to reach the location.
• Onsite venue staff should be readily available to assist participants and be briefed on protocols for assisting persons with disabilities.
Interviewing Persons with Disabilities

Time management

When planning the total time needed for the interview, ensure that adequate time is allocated to avoid a rushed scenario.

Be sure to factor in potential delays in travel time to venue due to transportation inaccessibility, travel time inside the venue itself to arrive at the interview room, plus additional preparation time and briefing prior to commencing the interview. It is strongly recommended to consult the interviewee regarding how long the pre-interview preparation time should be to get a realistic sense of what the interview time slot should be.
Interviewing Persons with Disabilities

Resources

It is important to factor in that additional resources may be needed for the success of the interview. Factoring in the disability, be it a hearing impairment, deaf-blindness, or intellectual disabilities, among others, it is important that the interviewee understand at all times what is being said by others and can communicate their own ideas. This may include arranging for:

- Sign language interpretation
- Real-time captioning
- Communications assistants
- Any other resource that will facilitate communication between interviewer and interviewee.

• ترجمة لغة الإشارات
• تحديد الوقت الحقيقي
• مساعدون في التواصل
• أي مورد آخر يمكن أن يسهل التواصل بين المحاور والمحاور.
Interviewing Persons with Disabilities

General etiquette

• Shake hands when introduced to someone with a disability. People with limited hand use or artificial limbs do shake hands.

• Speak directly to people with disabilities, not through their companions.

• Don’t be embarrassed using such phrases as “See you soon”, “Walk this way”, or “Got to run”. These are common expressions, and are unlikely to offend.

• If you offer to help, wait until the offer is accepted.

• Consider the needs of people with disabilities when planning events.

• Conduct interviews in a manner that emphasizes abilities, achievements and individual qualities.

• Don’t emphasize differences by putting people with disabilities on a pedestal.

Interviewing Persons with Disabilities

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Interviewing Persons with Disabilities

When interviewing people with hearing impairments

• Attract the person’s attention by tapping on his or her shoulder or waving.

• If you are interviewing someone with a partial hearing loss, ask where it would be most comfortable for you to sit so they can hear you best.

• Not all persons with hearing impairments can read lips and lip-reading is not entirely reliable to ensure effective communication. Get clarification beforehand if the person will need a sign-language interpreter or captioning services.

• If lip-reading, look at the person directly and clearly at a moderate speed. Do not exaggerate lip movements or shout. Be sure to speak expressively, as facial expressions, gestures, and body movements will help them understand you.

• Position yourself facing the light source so they have a clear view of your face to best read lips.

• Keep your hands away from your mouth when speaking.

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Interviewing Persons with Disabilities

- Always identify yourself and anyone else who might be present.
- When offering a handshake, say, “Shall we shake hands?”
- When offering seating, place the person’s hand on the back or arm of the seat.
- Let the person know if you move or need to end the conversation.
Interviewing Persons with Disabilities

When interviewing people with speech impairments

• Ask short questions that require short answers when possible.

• If there is a long pause after you have asked a question, it does not necessarily mean lack of comprehension. Stay looking directly at the interviewee with a calm, friendly expression like you have all the time in the world. Avoid looking frustrated or impatient as that may exacerbate the delay in the interviewee’s answer.

• Do not feign understanding. Try rephrasing your questions, if necessary.

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إجراء مقابلة مع أشخاص ذوي إعاقات

عند محاورة أشخاص ذوي إعاقات كلامية

• اطرح أسئلة قصيرة تحتاج إلى أجوبة قصيرة إذا أمكن.

• إذا كانت هناك وقفة طويلة بعد ان تطرح سؤالاً، فهذا لا يعني بالضرورة بأن الشخص لم يفهمه. استمر بالنظر مباشرة إلى المحاور بتعبير هادئ وودود، كما لو أن لديك الوقت كله الذي في العالم. تجنب أن تبدو خائباً أو غير صبور لأن ذلك يمكن أن يفاقم من مشكلة التأخر في إجابة المحاور.

• لا تبتعد عنهم. حاول أن تعيد صياغة أسئلتك عند اللازم.
Interviewing Persons with Disabilities

When interviewing people with cognitive or intellectual disabilities

- Whenever possible speak directly to the person, not their family or caregiver.
- Ask short and direct questions that require short answers when possible.
- Treat the person as an adult, not as a child.
Interviewing Persons with Disabilities

When interviewing people using a wheelchair or crutches

• Do not lean on a person’s wheelchair. The chair is a part of his/her body space.

• Sit or kneel to place yourself at eye-level with the person you are interviewing.

• Make sure the interview site is accessible.

• Check for:
  • Reserved parking for people with disabilities
  • A ramp or step-free entrance
  • Accessible restrooms
  • An elevator in the event the interview is not on the ground floor
  • Water fountains and public telephones low enough for wheelchair use.
  • Be sure to notify the interviewee if there are problems with the location. Discuss what to do and make alternate plans.
Dissemination of Information in Accessible Formats

The following is a list of considerations to keep in mind when disseminating information for public consumption, so that it is as accessible as possible. These tips are also useful for interactions in smaller settings, such as for meetings or presentations.

Printed Materials

Ensure that printed materials are made available in the formats and languages required to ensure full participation. This includes Braille, large print, and “easy-to-read-and-understand” formats. Whenever possible, survey participants to ensure which formats are ideal for their information consumption.

Electronic Materials

When preparing materials for electronic distribution it is important that documents be made available in formats that are ideal for screen-reading software.
Dissemination of Information in Accessible Formats

To what documents does this apply?

• Attachments in emails
• Documents available for download on a website
• Any other situation where information is being consumed NOT in print

What software format is preferred?

• Any of the Microsoft platforms (i.e., Word, Excel, PowerPoint)

What are the preferred fonts that are screen-reader friendly?

• Arial
• Verdana
• Times New Roman
• Calibri

Specialized fonts are not easily recognizable and may impair consumption of material.

نشر المعلومات في نماذج خطية يسهل الإطلاع عليها

على أي نوع من الوثائق ينطبق ذلك؟

• الوثائق المرفقة ربطاً بالرسائل الإلكترونية (إيميل).
• الوثائق المتوقعة للتنزيل عن الموقع الإلكتروني.
• أي حالة أخرى لا تكون فيها المعلومات معدة للطبع.

أي نموذج برامج إلكتروني هو المفضل؟

• أي برامج من برامج مايكروسوفت (أي Word، Excel، PowerPoint).

ما هي أشكال الخط المفضلة بالنسبة لقارئي الشاشات الإلكترونية؟

• Arial
• Verdana
• Times New Roman
• Calibri

أشكال الخط المتخصصة لا يتم التعرف عليها بسهولة وقد تعيق عملية استيعاب المادة.
Dissemination of Information in Accessible Formats

What formats should we avoid?

PDFs can be recognized by specific screen-reading platforms, such as ABBYY Fine Reader, and a handful of others. However, Microsoft software has the most compatibility across the wide variety of screen-readers. Whenever possible, it is recommended to have a Microsoft equivalent—be it in Word, Excel, or PowerPoint—to any PDFs being distributed.

How should we handle images and video?

It is important that any and all images have captions or Alt-text that can be read by the screen-reader. All video material should include captioning.
Dissemination of Information in Accessible Formats

Visual Aids

When presenting visual aids, it is important that the information conveyed is communicated clearly, so that participants who have visual impairments can follow along in alternative formats. This is applicable for:

- Slides
- Photographs
- Diagrams
- Maps
- Videos
- Any other visual aids.

- Slide presentations should be prepared in Microsoft PowerPoint. All images should include captions and image descriptions.
Thank you