

# Making Images Accessible

For students that are using screen-reading software, adding an "ALT" (alternative) description for images can help them 'see' images and skip over unnecessary decorative images efficiently. Review the below resources for information on how to add alternative text in Canvas, in Word, in PowerPoint, and when converting documents to a PDF format.

## Guidelines for alternative text

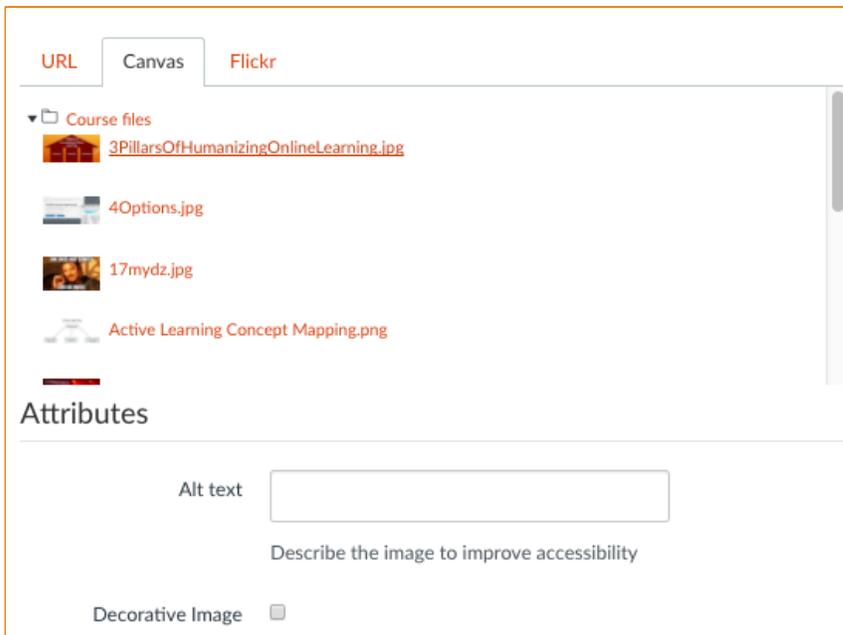
View this article for guidelines on how to write effective alternative text for images.

- <http://webaim.org/techniques/alttext/>

## Canvas "ALT" description

When inserting an image into Canvas, there is an option within the editor that prompts for the text description each time an image is inserted. Follow these steps to add an ALT description within Canvas.

- Select the Embed Image button
- Browse and select the image (after you have inserted the image you can also click on the image and this button to see the same prompts)
- Type in Alt text as per alternative text guidelines, or select the option to mark the images as "Decorative"
- Click on Update



The screenshot shows the Canvas image editor interface. At the top, there are three tabs: "URL", "Canvas", and "Flickr". Below the tabs is a list of image files under the heading "Course files". The files listed are:

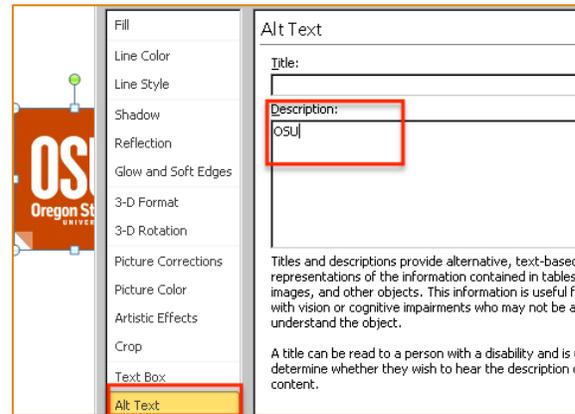
-  3PillarsOfHumanizingOnlineLearning.jpg
-  4Options.jpg
-  17mydz.jpg
-  Active Learning Concept Mapping.png

Below the list of files is the "Attributes" section. It contains an "Alt text" input field with a placeholder text "Describe the image to improve accessibility". Below the input field is a checkbox labeled "Decorative Image".

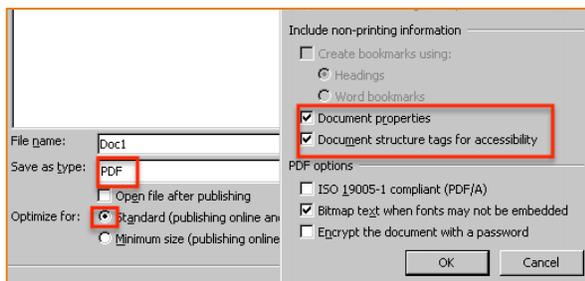
## Microsoft Word or Powerpoint “ALT” description

Microsoft Word and PowerPoint on Macintosh computers will not save ALT descriptions when converting to a PDF so this only applies to PC users. Macintosh users should use the full version of Adobe Acrobat to add alternative text to images instead.

- Insert the image into the document (Word or PowerPoint)
- Right click on the image and select 'Format Picture'
- Look for the ALT option (usually the last tab in recent versions of Microsoft)
- Add an alternative text description into the Description field, do not use the Title field (<http://terrillthompson.com/blog/46>)



When converting a Microsoft document to PDF, use the File->Save As PDF option to save the file into a PDF format (make sure the 'Tagged PDF' is check marked to retain accessibility).



## Adobe Acrobat (PDF) “ALT” Description

Alternative text can be added to images using the full version of Adobe Acrobat however this license is not free. A free 30 day trial can be obtained through the Adobe website or it can be purchased.

- Open a PDF document
- Select the Tools sidebar and select the option to Edit Object (this option may be found in a different location on older versions of Adobe Acrobat)
- Right click on an image and select Properties
- Click on the Tag tab at the top
- Type in the appropriate alternative image text into the 'Alternative Text' box
- Click on Close

