

## How to Format Figures in the American University Thesis and Dissertation Template

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### Inserting Preexisting Figures

Inserting figures is usually an easy process. Just copy and paste the photo image, chart, graph, or other illustration into the template. Then check to make sure your image fits within the page margins.

1. Open the Layout tab.

2. Check the Gridlines box (if your screen is narrow and you can't see the checkbox, click Options and then check the Gridlines box in the pop-up window).

3. Any material that extends to the right or left of the gridded area is outside your margin widths. Resize the figure to fit within the gridded area.

Figure 1. Figure caption (note that color often grayscale all color graphs, photos, etc. unless references, and explanations right in the caption use a chart or figure title above the figure.

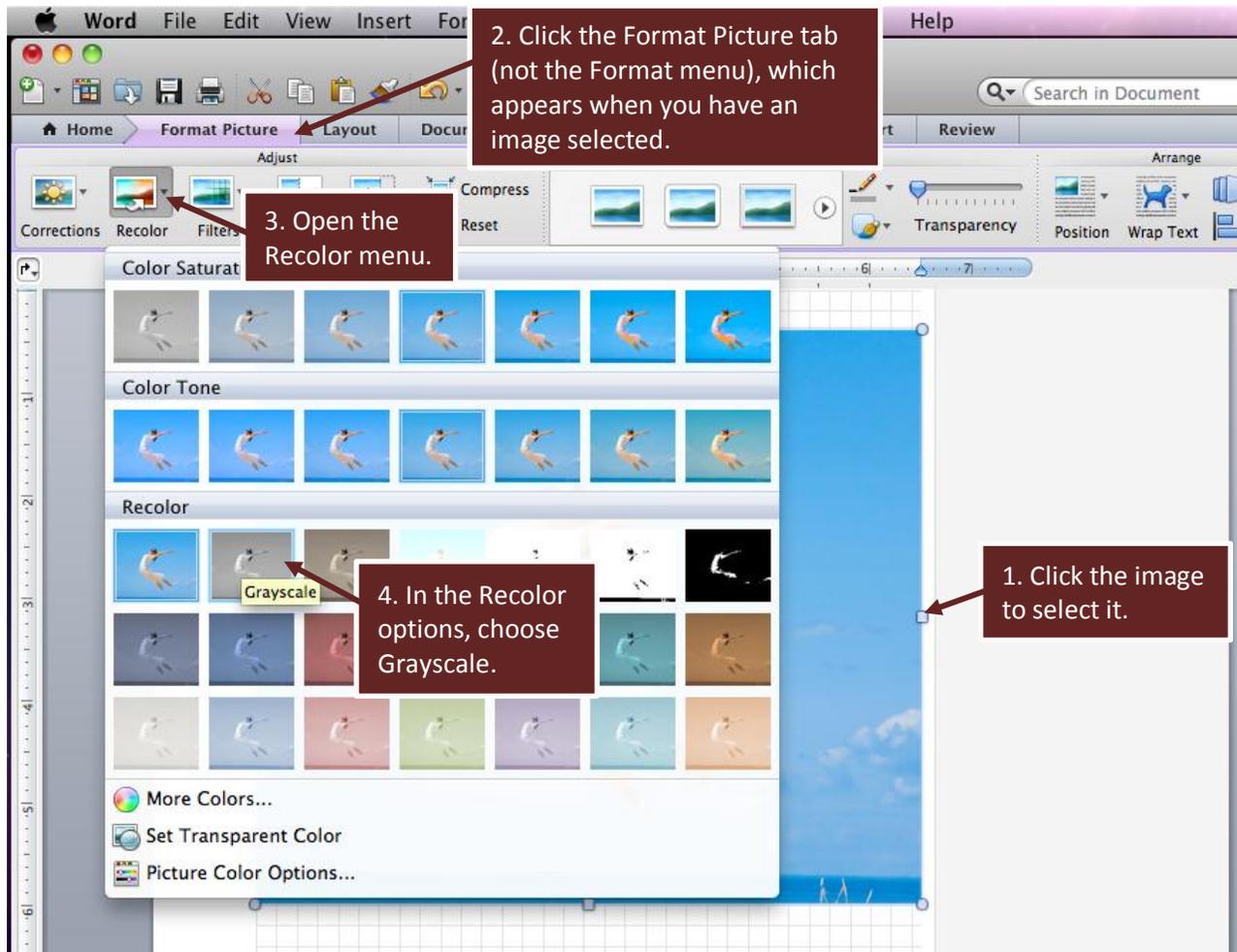
If you need a landscaped page for your tables or figures, below are a couple that you can

### Color and Grayscale in Figures

You are allowed to use color in your thesis or dissertation. However, because color reproduces poorly in microfilm and often in print copy as well, it is helpful to your readers to ensure that figures are understandable in grayscale. Choose colors that convert well to grayscale, or be proactive in the issue by using grayscale yourself. The examples below show how you can use grayscale effectively in your images, charts, and graphs.

### How to Grayscale an Image

If your figure is an image, you can quickly grayscale it as follows:





### How to Grayscale and Pattern Fill a Graph

When creating a bar graph, you can use different shades of gray instead of gradients—just make sure they are distinguishable when reproduced. If you want to use pattern fills, follow the two steps below.

**STEP 1.** Access the Gradient Options:

1. Click one of the bars that you wish to change to a gradient fill. All other corresponding bars of the same series should automatically select as well. Right click (or CONTROL click) and choose Format Data Series), or follow Steps 2 to 4.

2. Select the Format tab, which became available when you selected the data series.

3. Click the down arrow for Shape Fill.

4. Choose Fill Effects.

Figure 1. Figure caption (note that color often poorly in print and microform and therefore it is advised that you grayscale all color graphs, photos, etc. unless color is essential to the meaning of the figure). Include all notes, references, and explanations right in the caption. Include axis titles in the figure when possible and relevant. Do not use a chart or figure title above the figure.

If you need a landscaped page for your tables or figures, below are a couple that you can use quickly. If you need to generate others, see the instruction guide on landscaped pages.

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**STEP 2.** Choose a Pattern Fill style:

The screenshot shows the 'Format Data Series' dialog box with the 'Pattern' tab selected. The sidebar on the left has 'Fill' highlighted. A grid of various pattern options is displayed, with one pattern selected. Below the grid is a 'Foreground color' field. Four callout boxes provide instructions: 1. Click Fill. 2. Open the Pattern tab. 3. Choose a pattern that is readable and distinct from the patterns of the other bar groups. 4. Change the foreground color to a readable shade of gray.

### When to Use Color

Of course, in some instances, color is indeed important or even essential to understand the material in a figure.



In these cases, be descriptive in the figure captions so that even readers of grayscale versions of the thesis or dissertation can understand the meaning.

### Figure Captions

Apply the Figure Caption style to automatically single space the caption, reduce the font size, and ensure that the caption will be included when you generate your List of Illustrations. If you want your captions to display in 12 pt font, right click (or Control Click) on the Figure caption heading style in the Styles menu of the Home tab, choose Modify from the pop-up menu, and change the font size to 12 pt. All captions in the document will then display in 12 pt.

The screenshot shows the Microsoft Word 2011 interface with a bar chart. The chart has four categories on the x-axis: Category 1, Category 2, Category 3, and Category 4. The y-axis is labeled 'Axis Title' and ranges from 0 to 4. There are three data series: Series 1 (diagonal lines), Series 2 (dotted pattern), and Series 3 (solid grey). A caption is placed below the chart, which is highlighted in blue. The caption text is: "In both APA and Turabian styles, figure captions are placed beneath the figures. In both styles, each figure specifically referenced by number in the text before it can be presented."

Five numbered callouts provide instructions:

1. Leaving an extra double space before the figure improves readability.
2. Highlight the caption.
3. Open the Home tab.
4. Choose Figure Caption from the Styles menu.
5. Follow your discipline's style guide for use of italics and other issues.

### Checking Figures for Clarity

It is always a good idea to look at your figures at 100% zoom in your window because they can sometimes look clear at a smaller view but become fuzzy at regular resolution. Look for the view percentage at the bottom-right corner of your window and set it to 100%.



Also, try to make your figures directly within the document for optimum clarity. If you are converting or copying and pasting figures multiple times, they will likely become fuzzy and perhaps even unreadable when printed.

### ***Additional Figure Issues***

There are many other issues related to images, charts, graphs, and other illustrations. Consult your discipline's preferred style guide to ensure proper formatting of your illustrations.