



Making pdf Files for Fellowship Applications

Try the process early!! Go through a trial with files of the same type you will eventually need to use. Software snags will not be reasons for extending application deadlines.

Use Adobe Acrobat

If you or someone you know has the full Adobe Acrobat program (not the Acrobat Reader), it can turn just about any kind of file into a pdf document. You can also use it to merge several pdf files into one large one, and control the order in which the component files are put together.

Acrobat also allows you to control the file size:

- Document > Reduce File Size will automatically reduce the size
- Advanced > PDF Optimized will allow you to control how the file size is reduced in some detail

Download and use free pdf creator software

Among the free options are...

- PDF Creator from SourceForge.net (<http://sourceforge.net/projects/pdfcreator/>)
- PrimoPDF (<http://www.primopdf.com/>)
- doPDF (<http://www.dopdf.com/>)
- CutePDF (<http://www.cutepdf.com/Products/CutePDF/writer.asp>)

I don't know just what functionality each of these programs has. I have seen PDF Creator endorsed by people with computer savvy, but have never used any of them myself.

If you need to scan items....

... you may have two issues: getting them to pdf format and managing the size of the file.

Getting to pdf format:

- Most scanners allow you to scan directly to pdf.
- Some pdf creation software will allow you to convert any file format that can be printed—it may work through the print menu of whatever program you use to open the scanned file.
- There are roundabout paths: first print your file to Microsoft Imagewriter, then convert the resulting file; paste your scanned file into a Word document, then convert the Word document.

Managing file size:

- Use scanner settings to control the resolution of your scanned image—the larger your dpi (dots per inch), the larger the file. 1200 dpi is too much, 600 dpi is plenty, and 300 dpi may be enough (it depends a little on the nature of the scanned document).
- Use scanner settings to control the size of the scanned image—your image should be 8.5 x 11, or letter size. This setting is different from the resolution setting: resolution determines how many distinct points per inch are used to create an image, and image size determines how many inches the image measures. Together, the two settings define how large a file is.



- Use scanner settings to scan black-and-white text. If the scanner is set to scan a color image—even if the only colors are black and white background—that file will be larger than if you set it on black-and-white. If the scanner is set to scan a photo, the image will be larger than if it is set to produce a text document.
- Use the pdf software to reduce the size of the resulting file—Adobe Acrobat, at least, allows you to do that (see above).

If you learn things that may be helpful to others, contact me at ulf.nilsson@emory.edu and I will include them in this document.