

## **Marketing and Communications Style Guide**

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### **Definition:**

A style guide is a set of standards for writing and design of documents which provides uniformity in style and formatting within a document and across multiple documents. This style guide is intended to be a resource for the writing standards known as “house style” for California State University, Northridge.

### **Purpose:**

Because the number of choices available to writers is infinite, the Marketing and Communications Department created this convenient guide to establish a standard for clear and consistent writing across all publications, websites and other communication vehicles of the university. This guide is primarily based on “The Associated Press Stylebook,” with “Chicago Manual of Style” as the secondary source.

It is acknowledged that there are other style guides used on campus, such as APA—the editorial style used to present academic written material. The department has chosen AP based on the external nature of our communications: news (for which AP is the accepted style) and more formal communications, such as invitations and print materials (for which we sometimes defer to Chicago).

### **Collaboration:**

All written publications, letters, blogs, etc., reflect the image of the entire university. While individual styles naturally vary, collectively using defined style elements will help convey a consistent and positive image of the University. This information is to be used as a resource when drafting and publishing copy, verses academic writing, especially when writing for external audiences. Though not intended to answer every question, this guide addresses style issues commonly encountered at the university.

Above all else, make sure that the same style is used consistently throughout each written piece or publication. Please keep in mind that because this is an ongoing document, entries may be added or revised on a continuing basis. This information is organized and formatted like a dictionary, much like AP’s style guide.

For additional information, questions, or suggestions, please contact the Marketing and Communications department at [pubs@csun.edu](mailto:pubs@csun.edu).

## A

### **A before H**

Use “a” before a pronounced “h”: a historian, a horse, a hysterical joke

Use “an” before an aspirated “h”: an hour, an honest man

### **Abbreviations**

It is preferable to avoid abbreviations of schools, programs and organizations except in tables, headlines and other situations where space is limited. Your copy will read better if you avoid the alphabet soup syndrome. When you do need to abbreviate, here are some reminders:

#### All-capital abbreviations or acronyms

All-capital abbreviations or acronyms do not take periods except when referring to nations, states, cities or persons.

- CSUN, NFL, CBS, NSF

Abbreviate grade point average in capitals with no spaces.

- GPA

#### Names of organizations

Names of organizations should be spelled out on first reference. In general, do not follow an organization’s name with an abbreviation or acronym in parentheses or set off by dashes (legal documents excepted). If an abbreviation or acronym would not be clear on second reference without this arrangement, do not use it.

- The National Collegiate Athletic Association recently certified the California State University, Northridge athletics program. The CSUN program was certified on its first participation in the NCAA review process.

### **Academic degrees**

In running prose, avoid an abbreviation and use instead a phrase, such as: Sarah Jones, who has a doctorate in psychology.

Use an apostrophe in bachelor’s degree, a master’s, etc., but there is no possessive in Bachelor of Arts or Master of Science.

Bachelor of Science (B.S.)

Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)

Master of Business Administration (MBA)

Master of Arts (M.A.)

Master of Education (M.Ed.)

Master of Public Administration (MPA)

Master of Science (M.S.)

Doctor of Education (Ed.D.)  
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)  
Honorary Degree (Hon.D.)

### **Academic departments**

Capitalize when it's the department's formal name, otherwise lowercase.

- the history department
- the Department of History
- the English department
- the Department of English

### **Academic titles**

Capitalize and spell out formal titles such as chancellor, chairman, etc., when they precede a name. Lowercase elsewhere.

- President Dianne F. Harrison
- Dianne F. Harrison, president of California State University, Northridge
- Chancellor Charles Reed
- Charles Reed, chancellor of the California State University system
- William Watkins, vice president for student affairs and dean of students
- Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students William Watkins

Exception: For invitations, programs and other formal promotional and ceremonial contexts, capitalize titles wherever they appear. See **Invitations, programs and other formal promotional and ceremonial contexts**.

### **Addressing envelopes**

Capitalize a person's title.

Spell out one-digit addresses: Three Heritage Lane, One Washington Square

Abbreviate and capitalize compass points: 1130 Dupont Circle, NW

Capitalize and spell out First through Ninth when used as street names; use numerals with two letters for 10th and above.

Spell out Avenue, Street, Lane, etc., unless space does not permit.

Use the two-letter U.S. postal abbreviations for states: CA, PA, MD

Example:

Mr. Stuart Waldman

President

Valley Industry & Commerce Association

5121 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite 203

Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

### **Affiliate organizations**

Capitalize when it's the organization's formal name.

- President's Associates
- Center for Southern California Studies
- Alumni Association

Do not capitalize associates, center, institute, association, etc., when used alone.

- The center will be hosting a conference in July.
- The CSU board will be meeting next month.
- Foundation board members will be attending the event.

### **African-American**

Use a hyphen as both a noun and an adjective. The term is acceptable for an American person of African descent, but be careful not to apply it indiscriminately. For instance, Caribbean descendants generally refer to themselves as Caribbean-Americans. The term "black" is also acceptable. Follow an individual's preference.

### **Ages**

Always use figures.

- The student is 19 years old.
- The child is 4 years old.

Ages used as nouns or adjectives before a noun require hyphens.

- The Children's Center is hosting a party for 3-year-olds today.
- The 24-year-old student ran for office.

References to an age range or a decade require no apostrophes.

- The instructor was in her 30s. *Not* 30's.
- She grew up in the 1950s. *Not* 1950's.

### **Alumni**

"Alumnus" refers to one male graduate or former student; also to a graduate or former student of unspecified gender.

"Alumna" refers to one female graduate or former student.

"Alumni" refers to two or more graduates or former students, all or some of who are male. "Alumnae" refers to two or more female graduates or former students.

In general, avoid the use of "alum" as that term refers to a chemical compound. As an alternative, "graduate" may be used.

#### Designations:

John Smith '03 (History)

John Smith '68 (Teaching Credential Program)

John Smith '03 (History), M.A. '05 (Psychology), or Hon.D. '07 (Human Letters)

John Smith M.A. '76 (Music)

Note the direction of the apostrophe; it faces left.

John Smith '03, *not* John Smith '03.

Press releases are the exception of this rule.

- John Doe, who graduated from Cal State Northridge in 1998 with a master's in English, is sitting on the panel.

If a person attended CSUN but did not graduate, they are identified with the word "attended" and sometimes the year is shown. For example;

- Jane Doe, who attended CSUN, was also present.
- Jane Doe, who attended CSUN from 2000 to 2002, was also present.

### **a.m., p.m.**

(see also **Time of day**)

Use "a.m." and "p.m." in lowercase, with periods. Do not use ":00" for even hours.

Exception: On invitations, programs or other printed formal matter, defer to Chicago Manual of Style: Numerals are used with zeros for even hours.

11:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

See **Invitations, programs and other formal promotional and ceremonial contexts.**

Avoid redundancies, such as 10 a.m. on Tuesday morning.

### **American Indian**

The terms "American Indian" and "Native American" are both in current use to refer to a member of any of the indigenous people of the Americas. Either term can be used based on an individual's preference. Do not hyphenate the term.

### **Ampersand**

Avoid the use of "&" unless it is part of a company or institution's legal name, such as Procter & Gamble (P&G). The ampersand may also be used in charts and lists where space is limited.

- College of Applied Sciences and Arts  
*not* College of Applied Sciences & Arts

### **Athletics terminology**

Avoid using &s unless they are part of a formal title of a sporting event.

- track and field (*not* track & field)

### **Awards**

Capitalize the word “award” only if it is part of a proper name. Use lowercase in all other instances.

- Jodi Bonassai received a 2011 Outstanding Graduation Senior Award.
- The faculty awards function was held in the Grand Salon.
- The Dorothea “Granny” Heitz Award is presented annually.

## **B**

### **Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science**

A bachelor’s degree or bachelor’s is acceptable in any reference.

### **Bi-**

Generally no hyphen is used when writing bimonthly, bilateral or bilingual.

### **Blind**

See **Disabled/Handicapped/Impaired**

### **Book titles**

(see **Composition titles**)

### **Brackets**

Brackets are used to enclose information—usually added by someone other than the original writer or speaker in a direct quote—that does not form a part of the surrounding text.

Use parentheses instead of brackets or recast the material.

## **C**

### **California State University, Northridge**

First reference to the university should be California State University, Northridge. Accepted second references are CSUN, Cal State Northridge, Northridge, CSU Northridge and the university. Even though you may see it in legal documents, do not capitalize “university” when used alone as a second reference in correspondence or text.

(When there are space limitations, such as in a brochure, Cal State Northridge is acceptable on first reference. However, in these instances please make sure that the full name of the university is used in a secondary reference.)

### **Campus locations and addresses**

#### Building names

Building names are abbreviated only in class schedules, on maps and in other formats where space is limited. The proper form for a building abbreviation is generally to use the building’s initials, capitalized without periods or spaces in between. The word “hall” should be capitalized when used in the name of a building.

- Juniper Hall is JH
- University Student Union is USU

- Sierra Hall is SH

To add a room number to a building abbreviation: JH 210, SH 138, etc.

To describe campus locations, use the building name followed by the appropriate room number.

- Disability Resources is located in Bayramian Hall 110.
- The panel will take place in Sierra Hall 250.

*Do not use these forms*

- The program will take place in room 250.
- Sierra Hall, Room 250.

For a complete list of abbreviated building names, please see the campus directory.

Exception: On invitations, programs or other printed formal matter, always spell out the full name of the building.

See **Invitations, programs and other formal promotional and ceremonial contexts.**

## **Capitalization**

### Academic degrees

Academic degrees are capitalized only in specific references (Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, Doctor of Philosophy, etc.). They are not capitalized in general references (bachelor's degree, master's, doctorate).

The word degree is not capitalized.

- His objective is a Bachelor of Arts in History.
- The university offers several master's degree programs. One of these is the Master of Public Administration.

Capitalize degrees and use periods when they are referred to by initials: B.S., M.A., Ph.D. When using these abbreviations with a name, follow the name with a comma and then the abbreviation.

- Sylvia Alva, Ph.D.

When using an academic degree in a title, *do not* use both Dr. and Ph.D.

- Dr. Elizabeth Say or Elizabeth Say, Ph.D. (*not* Dr. Elizabeth Say, Ph.D.)

(see **Doctor**)

### Administrative Offices:

Administrative office names are capitalized only if the reference is specific.

- The Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs is hosting a discussion.
- The Office of Marketing and Communications is fielding the calls.
- The Division of Academic Affairs is the largest within the university.
- Students have been directed to the student affairs office for more information.

### Building names

Building names are capitalized.

- Jerome Richfield Hall or Richfield Hall
- Delmar T. Oviatt Library or Oviatt Library

### Class-level references

Class-level references are not capitalized except when referring to the formal name of a group.

- A group of seniors provided tutoring for freshmen.
- The Senior Class donated a gift of \$50,000 to the university.

### Colleges and departments

Colleges and departments are capitalized only if the reference is specific.

- Some colleges have many departments.
- The Department of Chemistry is part of the College of Science and Mathematics.
- The Michael D. Eisner College of Education has a great number of international students.
- Many alumni attended the banquet at the engineering college.

### Derivatives

Derivatives should not be capitalized.

- California State University, Northridge is often simply referred to as the university.

### Directions

Directions are not capitalized if they refer to a compass direction. They should be capitalized, however, if they refer to a region, are part of a proper name or denote a widely known section of a city or state.

When in doubt, use lowercase.

- Professor Hall's move east took him as far as the Midwest, where his Southern California customs were the source of much amusement.

### Disciplines

Disciplines—such as art, accounting, geography and engineering—are capitalized only when referring to a specific department or course.

- She is planning to major in geography. The Department of Geography offers many courses. One of these is Geography 101.

#### Disciplines derived from proper nouns

Disciplines derived from proper nouns (French, German, Spanish, etc.) are always capitalized.

#### Nationalities, peoples, races and tribes

Nationalities, peoples, races and tribes are capitalized.

- American, Chicano, Vietnamese, Shoshone, Caucasian, African

However, do not capitalize black, white, etc. when referring to race.

#### Seasons and semesters

Seasons and semesters are not capitalized.

- We are looking forward to summer vacation after the spring semester.

#### State and Federal

“State” when used as a generic adjective or as a noun is not capitalized.

“Federal” is capitalized as part of the formal names of corporate or government bodies. Use lowercase when it is used as an adjective to distinguish something from state, county, city, town or private entities.

- Inform the people of the state of California.
- Professor Carrie Saetermoe received a federal grant.
- The Federal Communications Commission has awarded several grants.
- Several programs received state funding.

#### Titles

Titles are capitalized only when they precede a person’s name.

- President Dianne F. Harrison
- Dianne F. Harrison, president of the university
- Dean Jerry Stinner
- Jerry Stinner, dean of the College of Science and Mathematics
- The proposal presented by the college deans and department chairs is subject to approval by the president.

The only exception is in reference to professors. Common usage does not differentiate between associate, lecturers, assistant and tenured professor. The honorific “professor” in general vernacular applies to all four categories.

- Kinesiology professor Steven Loy is meeting with city officials.
- Theatre professor Doug Kaback is director of CSUN’s Teenage Drama Workshop.

### City

Capitalize city as part of a proper name.

- Kansas City, New York City, Oklahoma City

Lowercase elsewhere, including all “city of” phrases.

- A California city
- city government
- city of Los Angeles

### **Captions**

Whenever possible, keep captions to no more than two concise sentences, while including the relevant information. Try to anticipate what information the reader will need. The first sentence describes what is being seen in the photo in present tense. The following sentence adds additional relevant information. Our style for the photo credit is to appear at the end of the text as “Photo by TK” with a period.

- Distinguished Alumni Award recipient John J. Harris walks to the stage to accept his award. Harris has been listed as one of the world’s “Twenty Rising Stars” of black leadership in Ebony magazine and included in Black Enterprise magazine’s list of “100 Most Powerful in Corporate America.”  
Photo by Lee Choo.

### **Century**

Lowercase, spelling out numbers less than 10.

- The first century
- The 20<sup>th</sup> century

### **Children**

In general, call children 15 or younger by their first name on second reference. For ages 16 and 17, use judgment, but generally go with the surname. Use the surname for those 18 and older.

### **Colleges**

The university has nine colleges. This is the list of official names of colleges with preferred second references where applicable:

- Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication  
(*Acceptable second reference: Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication*)
- College of Business and Economics
- College of Engineering and Computer Science
- Michael D. Eisner College of Education  
(*Acceptable second reference: Eisner College of Education*)
- College of Health and Human Development
- College of Humanities
- College of Science and Mathematics
- College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
- The Tseng College

### **Colons**

Capitalize the first word following the colon if it begins a complete sentence or is a proper noun.

- The goal was simple: Keep customers first.
- Three words best describe the day: wet, dreary, disappointing.

Colons and semicolons are never enclosed within the ending quotation marks unless they are part of the quotation.

Colons and semicolons are followed by a single space in a manuscript.

- He had not read professor Chang's monograph, "Alzheimer's Disease: New Research."

### **Commas**

Use commas to separate items in a simple series but not before the conjunction.

- The items on the dean's agenda included sabbaticals, collective bargaining and parking.

However, use a comma before the conjunction if there is a possibility of confusion without it.

- Among those attending the conference were the deans of social sciences, applied sciences and the arts, and humanities and the arts.

Use a comma to separate a name and academic degree.

- Deborah Cours, Ph.D.

When used with quotation marks, commas and periods are always enclosed within the quotation marks.

- "The parking lot is crowded," he said. "I should have taken a distance education course through The Tseng College."

A comma is needed before the word "including."

- Film professor Nate Thomas had several requirements for his project, including a year's editing experience, time spent on a movie set and the willingness to work long hours.

### **Company, corporate, product names**

In general, follow the spelling and capitalization used by the company: in Circle, eBay, iPod, MasterCard, Macintosh, Kmart.

Use ampersands as the official company or product name dictates.

Abbreviate Co. and Corp., and delete references to Inc., unless doing so makes the name confusing.

Use “the” lowercase unless it is part of the company’s formal name.

- Procter & Gamble, Gannett Co., Microsoft Corp., the Kroger Co., the Los Angeles Times, General Electric Aircraft Engine Group, The New York Times

Regardless of corporate policy, do not use all capital letters in a corporate name unless all the letters are pronounced or the name is an acronym.

- BMW, IBM, ESPN, Big East, Imax, Ikea (*not* BIG EAST, IMAX, IKEA)

When using a genuine acronym that is not widely known, be sure to explain what the letters stand for on first reference.

Although clever graphic elements may be part of a company’s logo, in text never use typographic symbols or unusual fonts in a name, including exclamation points, quotation marks, plus signs, asterisks, bold type or italic type.

- Yahoo, Toys R Us, E-Trade (*not* Yahoo!, Toys“R”Us, E\*Trade)

To check on the formal names of companies, consult the national stock exchanges:

New York Stock Exchange ([www.nyse.com](http://www.nyse.com)), Nasdaq ([www.nasdaq.com](http://www.nasdaq.com)) or the American Stock Exchange ([www.amex.com](http://www.amex.com)).

### **Composition titles**

Capitalize the principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters. Capitalize an article—the, a, an—or works of fewer than four letters if it is the first or last word in a title. Put quotation marks around the names of all such works except the Bible and books that are primarily catalogs of reference material. Translate a foreign title into English unless a work is known to the American public by its foreign name.

- “Gone With the Wind”
- “Of Mice and Men”
- “CBS Evening News”

Reference works:

- Encyclopedia Britannica
- Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition

Foreign works:

- Rousseau’s “War” (*not* Rousseau’s “La Guerra”)
- Leonard da Vinci’s “Mona Lisa”
- Mozart’s “The Marriage of Figaro” and “The Magic Flute”
- “Die Walkuere” and “Gotterdammerung” from Wagner’s “The Ring of the Nibelungen”

### **Compose, comprise, constitute**

“Compose” means to create or put together. It commonly is used in both the

active and passive voices.

- She composed a song.
- The United States is composed of 50 states.
- The zoo is composed of many animals.

“Comprise” means to contain, to include all or embrace. It is best used only in the active voice, followed by a direct object.

- The United States comprises 50 states.
- The jury comprises five men and seven women.
- The zoo comprises many animals.

“Constitute,” in the sense of form or make up, may be the best word if neither “compose” nor “comprise” seems to fit.

- Fifty states constitute the United States.
- Five men and seven women constitute the jury.
- A collection of animals can constitute a zoo.

Use “include” when what follows is only part of the total.

- The price includes breakfast.
- The zoo includes lions and tigers.

### **Compound modifiers**

When two or more adjectives are used to express a single concept in modifying a noun, they become compound modifiers. Compound modifiers are linked with hyphens.

- Long-term assignment
- Full-scale investigations
- Small-business owner
- Part-time or full-time worker
- African-American women
- 20<sup>th</sup>-century art

An exception occurs when two words are so commonly associated together that no confusion would occur.

- She works part time.
- He is a real estate agent.

### **Computer terms**

Capitalize the word Internet as a proper name to distinguish it from other kinds of nets. It may also be referred to as the Net, also capitalized.

Some of the spellings of Internet-related words below are aligned with the “AP Stylebook.”

- cyberspace
- download
- dot-com (informal adjective)

DNS (domain name system)  
DSL (digital subscriber line)  
email  
firewall  
freeware  
FTP (file transfer protocol)  
home page  
hyperlink  
Internet  
intranet  
IP address (Internet protocol address)  
Java (a trademark)  
listserv  
login  
logoff  
logon  
MP3  
online  
screen saver  
shareware  
URL (Uniform Resource Locator)  
World Wide Web (a proper name)  
the Web, website, webcast, webmaster

When writing URLs, in most cases there is no need to prefix the web address with `http://`. However, always check to see that the URL launches without the use of `http://`. In a few cases, domain sites require both prefixes

Always include a period at the end of a sentence even if a web address or email address appears at the end.

- You can share an idea online at [blogs.csun.edu/atcsun/share-an-idea/](http://blogs.csun.edu/atcsun/share-an-idea/).
- For more information, email the Alumni Association at [alumni@csun.edu](mailto:alumni@csun.edu).

If a web address cannot be kept together on one line of copy, never add a hyphen or other punctuation to a URL. Only allow a line-break to occur before a period, slash, dash or underscore, so it remains obvious that the two lines belong together.

### **Course numbers**

Use Arabic numerals and capitalize the subject when used with a numeral.

- History 101
- Biology 460

### **Course work**

Course work is two separate words.

### **cum laude**

Written as *cum laude*, all italics and lowercase. It's Latin for "with honors."

Also *magna cum laude* (with high honors) and *summa cum laude* (with highest honors).

## **D**

### **Dashes**

Dashes are longer than hyphens. Single hyphens should not be used in the place of dashes. No spaces are needed before and after dashes. Publishing systems enable you to create a long dash (called an "em dash"). Word-processing programs allow you to create the character with key strokes. When dashes cannot be produced, two hyphens typed together are substituted. For Internet use, two hyphens may be used for a dash because some browsers have trouble reading the symbol that some software applications use to create the dash. If using two hyphens, insert a space before and after the pair.

#### Em dashes

Em dashes can be used in the following instances:

To denote a change in thought or add emphasis to a pause.

- The actor spent nine hours improvising—and wrinkling—in a hot tub.

To set off a list of items in place of commas because the extra punctuation would be confusing.

- Most movies shot on location have poor sound quality because of the environment—planes, traffic and people making noise.

To set off attribution of a quote.

- "Wherever you go, go with all your heart."  
—Confucius

(Note: The period goes at the end of the sentence, not at the end of the attribution.)

#### En dashes

En dashes are used to denote a range.

- 18–20 months
- The years 1993–2000 were heady ones for the computer literate.
- For documentation and indexing, see chapters 14–16.
- Join us on Thursday, 11 a.m.–4 p.m. to celebrate the New Year.
- I have blocked out December 2012–March 2013 to complete my manuscript.

*but*

For the sake of parallel construction, the word “to,” never the en dash, should be used if the word “from” precedes the first element in such a pair; similarly, “and,” never the en dash, should be used if “between” precedes the first element.

- She was in college from 1998 to 2002.

### Hyphens

Hyphens are used to hyphenate.

- Pre-war

### **Dates**

(see also Months, Years and Time of day)

For readability and clarity in text, express dates of events in the sequence of time, day, date and place.

- The colloquium will be held at 4 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 1, in Sierra Hall 201.

Abbreviate all months except March, April, May, June and July.

Exception: Spell out months on invitations, programs and other formal printed matter.

### **Deaf**

(See Disabled/Handicapped/Impaired)

When referring to the community, capitalize.

### **Dean**

Capitalize when used as a formal title. Lowercase in other uses.

- Dean William Jennings
- Deans William Jennings and Elizabeth Say
- Elizabeth Say, dean of the College of Humanities

### **Degrees**

(See Academic degrees under **Capitalization.**)

### **Departments**

(See Colleges and departments under **Capitalization.**)

### **Dianne F. Harrison**

*Not* Diane. (There are two “n”s.)

### **Disabled/Handicapped/Impaired**

In general, writers should avoid the terms “handicapped” and “impaired” and use the term “disability” when referring to the function of limitations resulting from a

person's disability. When referring to the person with a disability, "people first" language should always be used, as in:

- a person with a disability
- a person who is blind
- a person who is deaf or hard of hearing
- a person with a cognitive disability
- a person who is unable to speak
- a person with a physical disability
- a person with a psychiatric disability
- a person who uses a wheelchair

A person with a disability should never be described as having a disability unless that information is pertinent to what is being written. Avoid all descriptive language that might lead a reader to believe the person is an object of pity or a victim, such as "confined to a wheelchair," "afflicted with" or "overcome their disability."

### **Doctor**

Use Dr. in first reference as a formal title before the name of an individual who holds a doctor of dental surgery, doctor of medicine, doctor of osteopathy, or a doctor of podiatric medicine degree.

- Dr. Jonas Salk

If appropriate in the context, Dr. also may be used on first reference before the names of individuals who hold other types of doctoral degrees. However, keep in mind that the public associates the word "doctor" with physicians, i.e., someone who can diagnose a rash on their arm.

## **E**

### **Ellipses**

The three dots represent omitted words or a pause in speaking. They are preceded and followed by spaces.

- She talked about the morning traffic, her previous vacation, her son's wedding plans ... and enough other topics to bore everyone.

When using ellipses right before other punctuation, one should still insert a space after the three dots to make both punctuation marks distinct.

- "We gather here to dedicate this new building to a generous alumnus ... ," the dean announced.

### **e.g.**

Meaning "for example," it is always followed by a comma.

### **Email**

Use lower case and do not hyphenate.

- For any queries regarding the event, please email the public affairs office.

### **Emeritus**

“Emeritus” is not a synonym for retired. The titles emeritus (male) or emerita (female) are bestowed on many, but not all, retiring faculty. Place the word emeritus after the formal title.

- Professor emeritus of biology
- President emeritus
- Dean Emerita of the University Library Susan Curzon

A group of men or both men and women is called “emeriti” and a group of women is called “emeritae.”

## **F**

### **Facility Names**

Use the whole name on first reference. The commonly used shorter name is appropriate on second reference. It is not necessary to capitalize when using a generic reference such as the library.

- Students were told to gather in front of the Delmar T. Oviatt Library. At 6 p.m., they were then to proceed to the library’s second floor.
- The first screening will be held at 7 p.m. in the Alan and Elaine Armer Theater.

- The class met in the Charles H. Noski Auditorium.
- The festivities will be held on the James and Mary Cleary Walk. Booths will be set up along Cleary Walk featuring the wares of several vendors.

### **Faculty**

When referring to the faculty of the university, college or department as a unit, faculty is a singular noun and takes a singular verb.

- The faculty is meeting today in Jacaranda Hall 189.
- The faculty is represented by the Academic Senate.

To refer to faculty members as individuals, add the word members and use a plural verb:

- Many faculty members are part of the organization.
- Several members of the geology faculty are among the presenters.

### **Farther, further**

“Farther” refers to physical distance.

“Further” refers to an extension of time or degree.

- The house was farther down the road than she remembered.
- He asked what further side effects he could expect.

### **Fewer, less**

“Fewer” applies to numbers and modifies a plural noun. Less applies to

quantities and modifies a singular noun.

- She now eats fewer meals and less candy.

### **Foreign words**

Some foreign words and abbreviations have been accepted universally into the English language: “bon voyage,” “versus,” “vs.,” “et cetera,” “etc.” They may be used without explanation if they are clear in the context.

Many foreign words and their abbreviations are not understood universally, although they may be used in special applications such as medical or legal terminology. If such a word or phrase is needed in a story, place it in quotation marks and provide an explanation: “ad astra per aspera,” a Latin phrase meaning “to the stars through difficulty.”

### **Freshman, freshmen**

To avoid gender bias, the term “first-year student” is acceptable.

As an adjective, use “freshman,” not “freshmen,” which is always a noun. Another acceptable term is “frosh.”

- Student Government is hosting a welcome party for the freshman class.
- All first-year students are invited.

### **Fundraising, fundraiser**

It is one word in all forms and uses. Do not hyphenate.

## **G**

### **Gender**

Copy intended to apply to both sexes should be free of gender references. Use of the second person or the plural form helps avoid awkwardness.

- All students may pick up their checks on Monday.
- You may pick up your check on Monday.
  - not* Each student may pick up his check on Monday.
  - not* Each student may pick up his/her check on Monday.
- *Preferred* Student nurses qualify for clinical experiences after they complete a certain amount of class work.
- *Avoid* A student nurse qualifies for a clinical experience after she completes a certain amount of class work.

Use parallel terms for both sexes: men and women, husband and wife, mothers and fathers. Don't refer to men as husbands and fathers unless women are also being identified as wives and mothers.

Be alert to phrases that suggest all readers are men. Use “graduate students and their spouses were invited,” rather than “graduate students and their wives were invited.”

Avoid unnecessary references to a person's gender.

- Businessperson, business executive, business manager (*not* businessman)
- Camera operator or videographer (*not* cameraman)
- Chair or chairperson (*not* chairman)
- Member of Congress, or representative (*not* congressman)
- Firefighter (*not* fireman)
- Police officer (*not* policeman)
- Mail carrier (*not* mailman)
- Flight attendant (*not* stewardess)
- Humanity (*not* mankind)
- Workforce, workers, employees (*not* manpower)
- Leader, public servant (*not* statesman)

## H

### Headlines

Capitalize the first and last words in titles and subtitles, and capitalize all other major words (nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and some conjunctions—lowercase “and,” “but,” “for,” “or, and “nor”).

- Determination, Hard Work Pay Off as Students Look to Graduation and Beyond
- CSUN Cements Deal to Offer Accelerated Master's Degree With Chinese University

### Hispanic

The terms “Hispanic” and “Latino/Latina” can be interchangeably used when referring to people with a cultural heritage related to Spain or Latin America. Usage varies depending on context and the audience being addressed.

### Honorary degrees

- David Fleming Hon. D.'09 (Law)

### Hyphens

In type, hyphens are different from dashes. (See Dashes.) Hyphens are sometimes used to avoid ambiguity.

- He recovered from financial collapse.
- He re-covered his sofa in gray leather.

## I

### Identity

Racial, ethnic, sexual and gender identity is personal. Ethnicity is not synonymous with race; gender is not synonymous with sex; and gender identity is not synonymous with sexual orientation.

Although you should avoid labeling whenever possible, it is sometimes relevant to the article, press release or report. In general, you should call people what they prefer to be called, especially when dealing with race and ethnicity. But sometimes the common conventions of language inadvertently contain biases towards certain populations, e.g. using “normal” in contrast to someone identified as “disabled.” Therefore, you should be aware of how your choice of terminology may come across to your reader, particularly if the reader identifies with the population in question.

**i.e.**

Abbreviation for the Latin *id est* or *that is* and is always followed by a comma.

**Internet**

See Computer terms

**Invitations, programs and other formal promotional and ceremonial context**

Names and terms:

In promotional or ceremonial contexts such as a displayed list of donors, an invitation or a list of officers in an annual report, titles are usually capitalized even when following a personal name. Exceptions may also be called for in other contexts for reasons of courtesy or diplomacy.

- Maria Martinez, Director of Development

A title used alone, in place of a personal name, is capitalized only in such contexts as a toast or a formal introduction, or when used in direct address.

- Ladies and Gentlemen, the Prime Minister.
- I would have done it, Captain, but the ship was sinking.
- Thank you, Mr. President.

Place:

Confirm the correct name of the campus building. Do not abbreviate.

Date:

The date may be noted numerically or spelled out:

- Monday, November 19, 2012
  - on Monday, the nineteenth of November
- Two thousand and seven

Always include the year on the invitation

Time:

Be consistent with date and time—write both numerically or have both spelled out (for more formal events). When written numerically, use “:00” for even hours. Use “a.m.” and “p.m.” in lowercase, with periods

- 7:00 p.m.
- 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
- at seven o’clock (in the morning, afternoon or evening)

- at half past seven o'clock
- cocktails at seven o'clock, dinner at eight o'clock

Twelve o'clock noon is expressed as "twelve o'clock" or "12:00 p.m." When noting a span of time numerically, a colon and zeroes and "a.m." or "p.m." should follow each time

- 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (*not* 7:00–8:30 p.m.)

Never combine numerals with the word "o'clock" (*not* 7 o'clock)

### **Its, it's**

Its is a possessive pronoun, while it's contracts "it is" or "it has."

- Nothing can take its place.
- The dodo is known for its inability to fly.
- It's a small world.
- It's been good to know you.
- Although it's not yet fall, this tree is losing its leaves.

A simple way to determine which term you need is to read the sentence using "it is." If the sentence doesn't make sense, you need its, not it's.

## **J**

### **Jargon**

Avoid the use of jargon, clichés and colloquialisms in university communications. Copy filled with technical "insider's" language confuses and discourages readers.

## **K**

### **Kids**

Use "children" unless you are talking goats.

## **L**

### **Latino/Latina**

"Latino" is the masculine word while "Latina" is the feminine. Latino can refer to a mixed group of both genders. The terms Latino/Latina and Hispanic can be interchangeably used when referring to people with a cultural heritage related to Latin America.

Usage varies depending on context and the audience being addressed.

Use specific nationalities when available.

- Bolivian, Colombian, Cuban, Mexican, Peruvian, Puerto Rican

### **Lecture titles**

(see **Composition titles**)

## **Logo**

The California State University, Northridge logo consists of two elements: the logomark and the logotype. Together they form the official California State University, Northridge logo that is used by all academic, administrative and auxiliary units.

Use of the university's logo is protected under trademark laws. The logo elements cannot be separated, altered, retyped or recreated in any way. Please refer to the CSUN Graphic Standards Manual online <http://www.csun.edu/graphic-standards/> for complete information. An updated version is expected soon. For any questions about the university's graphic standards, call Stacy Lieberman in the Office of Marketing and Communications at (818) 677-2130 or [pubinfo@csun.edu](mailto:pubinfo@csun.edu).

For use of the logo on specialty items such as T-shirts, mugs and banners, contact the University Corporation's Licensing Office at (818) 677-2744. Any use of the logo by non-university entities and other uses not covered by the guidelines must also be approved by the licensing office.

## **M**

### **Magazine names**

(See **Newspaper/Magazine/Journal names**)

### **Mexican American**

Do not hyphenate unless using as an adjective. This term describes Americans of Mexican ancestry.

### **Months**

(Also see **Dates**)

Abbreviate Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. when used with a specific date.

- My birthday is Jan. 15.

Spell out when used alone or only with a year.

- January 1989 was the coldest month on record.

When using a month, date and year, set off the year with commas.

- June 6, 1944, was D-Day.

### **Movie titles**

(see **Composition titles**)

## **N**

### **Native American**

The term “Native American” or “American Indian” refers to a member of any of the indigenous people of the Americas. Either term can be used based on an individual’s preference.

### **Newspaper/Magazine/Journal names**

Capitalize the “the” in a newspaper’s name if that is the way the publication prefers to be known. Do not place name in quotes.

- The New York Times

Where the location is needed but is not part of the official name, use parentheses.

- The Huntsville (Ala.) Times

Capitalize the magazine or journal name, but do not place it in quotes.

Lowercase “magazine” or “journal” unless it is part of the publication’s formal title.

Check the masthead to confirm the formal name.

- Harper’s Magazine
- Newsweek magazine
- Time magazine
- Journal of Medicinal Plant Research

Although clever typographic elements may be part of a publication’s nameplate, editorial content never uses graphic symbols or stylized fonts, including exclamation points, quotation marks, plus signs, asterisks, bold type or italic type.

- the Cincinnati Enquirer (*not* The Cincinnati Enquirer)
- ESPN the Magazine (*not* ESPN The Magazine)
- Lifetimes (*not* LIFETIMES)

### **Numbers and numerical references**

As a general rule, numbers from one to nine should be spelled out; numbers 10 and above should be left in numerical form. Use numerical figures, however, when referring to sections of a book, grade point average and scores.

- A GPA of 3.0
- An ACT score of 9

Spell out the word percent in text. Do not use the symbol “%” except in tables and technical text.

- More than 20 percent passed the test with a score of 85 or better.

Spell out ordinal numbers (first, second, third) first through ninth. For the 10th ordinal and above, use figures.

- First, second, 10th, 23rd, 31st

When describing money in text, do not include the decimal places for whole dollars.

- Tickets cost \$5 for general admission, \$3 for students and \$2.50 for

children under 12.

When describing time, do not use minute placeholders for whole hours. To avoid confusion, always use noon, not 12 p.m., to refer to middle of the day.

- The program will run from 8 a.m. to noon, with a coffee break at 10:15 a.m.

### Telephone Numbers

When writing telephone numbers, use parentheses around the area code, a format that telephone companies have agreed upon for domestic and international calls. (This is an exception to AP style, which recommends not using parentheses but instead using a dash and running in the numerals: 818-677-1200.)

- Call (818) 677-1200 for information.
- Call toll-free (800) 555-1468.

Always include the area code since there are multiple area codes in this region.

If extension numbers are needed, use a comma to separate the main number from the extension, and use “ext.” and the numeral: (818) 677-1200, ext. 2.

## **P**

### **Percentages**

Use figures and always spell out “percent.”

- 1 percent
- 6.5 percent

For amounts less than 1 percent, precede the decimal with a zero.

- Housing sales rose by 0.2 percent

Repeat percent with each individual figure.

### **Ph.D.**

The preferred form is to say a person “holds a doctorate” and name the individual’s area of specialty. (See **Doctor**.)

### **Plurals**

#### Compound words

For those terms that include two or more separate words or a hyphenated word, add the s to the most significant word.

- Attorneys general
- Daughters-in-law
- Deputy chiefs of staff

- Lieutenant colonels

#### Numerals

Add an “s” with no apostrophe.

- 1990s

#### Single letters

Add “ ’s” to avoid confusion.

- His report card was full of A’s and B’s.
- Mind your p’s and q’s.

#### Multiple letters

Add an “s” with no apostrophe.

- ABCs
- VIPs

#### **Poem titles**

(see **Composition titles**)

#### **Presentation titles**

(see **Composition titles**)

#### **Principal, principle**

Principal refers to someone or something first in authority or importance.

- School principal, principal player, principal problem

Principle refers to a fundamental truth.

- Principle of self-determination

#### **Professor**

Never abbreviate. Lowercase before a name. Do not continue to use the word in second reference unless part of a quotation.

- professor Doug Kaback
- “I found professor Kaback’s speech inspiring,” biology student Jane Smith said.

## Q

#### **Quotation marks**

In text, place quotation marks around names of songs, poems, lecture titles, articles and presentations. Periods and commas, when used with quotation marks, always go within the quotation marks.

- The project is “long overdue,” said Angela.

Dashes, semicolons, question marks and exclamation points go within quotation

marks only when they relate to the quoted matter.

- Ask him, “How do you plan to implement the proposal?”

## **S**

**Seasons, semesters**  
(See **Capitalization.**)

### **Semicolon**

Use the semicolon to indicate a greater separation of thought and information than a comma can convey, but less than what a period implies.

- He leaves a daughter, Susan Jones of Los Angeles; three sons, Jim Smith of Los Angeles, John Smith of Chicago and Jay Smith of Denver; and a sister, Tammy Hill of New York.

### **Spaces**

One space should be placed after all punctuation, including periods and question marks, at the end of sentences.

The use of two spaces was preferred with typewriters because mono-spaced characters made it difficult to determine the end of sentences. Books and newspapers, however, never used double spaces. The typographer took care of setting the proper spacing regardless of the text that had been turned in. Today, most computer software applications use proportionally spaced fonts, which automatically insert the proper amount of space after punctuation. As a result, single spaces are appropriate for all copy. When preparing copy for campus publications, including on the Web, use single spaces only.

### **States**

When using a state name with a city name in editorial copy, surround the state name with commas.

- Her office in Evansville, Ind., has shown great profits.

Follow the guidelines below for deciding when and how to abbreviate the state’s name. Preferred abbreviations in editorial copy are:

Ala., Ariz., Ark., Calif., Colo., Conn., Del., D.C., Fla., Ga., Ill., Ind., Kan., Ky., La., Md., Mass., Mich., Minn., Miss., Mo., Mont., Neb., Nev., N.H., N.J., N.M., N.Y., N.C., N.D., Okla., Ore., Pa., R.I., S.C., S.D., Tenn., Vt., Va., Wash., W. Va., Wis., Wyo.

Eight state names are never abbreviated:

Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah

The U.S. Postal Service’s two-letter state abbreviations are not used in general editorial copy. For addresses and other uses, however, they are:

AL, AK, AZ, AR, CA, CO, CT, DE, DC, FL, GA, HI, ID, IA, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MS, MO, MT, NE, NV, NH, NJ, NM, NY, NC,

ND, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VT, VA, WA, WV, WI, WY

Never abbreviate names of states when used without a city.

- We are going to Florida for vacation.

## **T**

**Television show titles**  
(see **Composition titles**)

**Time of day**  
(See also **a.m.**, **p.m.**)

Use “noon” or “midnight,” rather than 12 p.m. or 12 a.m., which might be confusing. Avoid redundancy, such as: 10 a.m. this morning.

Use en-dashes or the word “to” to denote ranges in time. Use a.m. or p.m. only once for time ranges that begin and end either in the morning or in the afternoon.

- The Honors Convocation is scheduled for 4–6 p.m. on Friday, April 24.
- The class meeting from 10 to 11 a.m. has been moved to 1 to 2 p.m.
- The workshop is scheduled for 10 a.m.– 2 p.m. on Friday, April 24.

## **Titles**

Use quotes around the names of books, plays, films and exhibitions.

- “Pride and Prejudice”
- “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”
- “The Dark Night”
- “Pacific Standard Time” exhibition

The exception is the Bible.

Use regular font in quotation marks for songs and television shows.

- “Rolling in the Deep” by Adele
- “I Wanna Go” by Britney Spears
- “Breaking Bad”
- “Happy Days”

Use regular font with no quotations marks and not italics for titles of magazines and newspapers.

- The New York Times
- Los Angeles Times
- Time magazine

## **Toward**

Not “towards”

## U

### University

Do not capitalize university, except when used in a proper name.

- Classes begin at California State University, Northridge on Aug. 27.
- The university will be closed for Veteran's Day on Nov. 11.

### University president

Upon first reference: President Dianne F. Harrison.

Accepted second references: President Harrison or Harrison.

### URLs

(See **Computer terms**)

## V

### Valley (to refer to "San Fernando Valley")

Uppercase "Valley" when referring to the San Fernando Valley.

- Example: The appearance of the candidates here this morning particularly underscores the importance of both CSUN and the Valley in Los Angeles.

## W

### Who, Whom

"Who" is the pronoun used for references to human beings and to animals with a name. It is grammatically the subject (never the object) of a sentence, clause or phrase.

- The woman who rented the room left the window open.
- Who is there?

"Whom" is used when someone is the object of a verb or preposition.

- The woman to whom the room was rented left the window open.
- Whom do you wish to see?

## Y

### Years

When a phrase refers to a month, day and year, set off the year with a comma.

- Feb. 14, 2014, is the target date.

For decades, use an "s" without an apostrophe.

- 1960s and '60s (*not* the 1960's and 60's)

On first reference, use 1960s (*not* '60s)

For centuries, the preferred format is the 20<sup>th</sup> century (*not* the 1900s)

For periods covering multiple years, use 2006–07 (*not* 2006–2007)

Exception: In writing about the end of a century, use 1999–2000.