

Webster University Style Guide

The purpose of this style guide is to provide a clear and consistent message from Webster University. The guide is not meant to be a rulebook, but instead a reference document for all non-academic publications.

The primary resource for the establishment of this style guide was the Associated Press stylebook. For questions or concerns not addressed in the Webster University Style Guide, consult the *AP stylebook*.

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 (See [academic degrees](#), [buildings](#), [states](#).)

academic degrees

Two-year undergraduate degrees are associate degrees. When referring to generic *bachelor's* or *master's degrees*, make them lowercase and possessive. When referring to a specific degree, write *bachelor of science, master of arts*, and so forth. When referring to the PhD in general, use *doctorate* for the noun and *doctoral* for the adjective. Consider your audience when deciding whether to abbreviate or spell out on first reference. If abbreviating, don't use periods: *BA, BS, MS, MA, MAT, MBA, MD, PhD*.

The discipline in which the degree was earned should not be capitalized: *bachelor of arts degree in music, master's degree in management and leadership*.

Do not routinely list all degrees in copy, but use as needed in the context. MD and RN are the two degrees most often needed to clarify a person's position of medical authority.

If listing a degree is necessitated by the audience and the degree is listed after a

name, it must be set off with commas: *John Joseph, MS in biology, will lead the discussion*.

academic ranks

The following are official full-time faculty ranks used at the University (from lowest to highest rank). Double-check any other ranks in the university telephone directory. This listing does not include part-time teachers who are usually called adjunct professors or lecturers: *instructor [in], assistant professor [of], associate professor [of], professor [of]*.

academic titles (See [professor](#), [titles](#).)

academic year

When referring to the academic year (June through May), use the format 2004-05. Capitalize *Fall I, Fall II, Spring I, Spring II* or similar terms.

accents (and other foreign marks)

Use accents when possible. The following key strokes are designed to assist Mac users locate the appropriate accent or mark:

`	option-` then letter
´	option-e then letter
^	option-I then letter
œ	option-q
ç	option-c
¨	option-u then letter
ø	option-o
å	option-a
~	option-n then letter

- i option-1
- ¿ option-shift-/

acronyms

- College of Arts & Sciences — no acronym
- Community Music School of Webster University — CMS
- Daniel Webster Society — DWS
- Leigh Gerding College of Fine Arts — no acronym
- George Herbert Walker School of Business & Technology — GHWSBT. Use “the Walker School” on second reference.
- School of Communications — SOC
- School of Education — SOE
- University Center — UC
- United States — U.S. (with periods) Use U.S. only as an adjective; spell out United States for use as a noun.

addresses

Abbreviate St., Ave., Blvd. when using a numerical address: *470 E. Lockwood Ave.* For guidelines in abbreviating state names, see [states](#).

When a single street address is needed for the entire University, use the physical address of Webster Hall: *470 E. Lockwood Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63119.*

When referring to a post office box in editorial copy, place periods in the abbreviation P.O. Box.

admissions

Capitalize the formal name (Office of Undergraduate Admissions or Graduate and Evening Student Admissions) but not the casual admissions office. The recruitment officers are admissions (not plural) counselors.

adjunct faculty

People not on tenure track whose association with the University is more permanent.

advisor

Not adviser.

affect, effect

Affect is almost always a verb (unless used as a psychological term). Effect is always a noun, unless you're effecting change.

African-American

Hyphenate, although black is the preferred term, according to the *AP Stylebook*.

ages

Always use figures: *The student is 19 years old. The student, 24, has a daughter 6 months old. The policy is 4 years old.*

Ages used as a noun or an adjective before a noun require hyphens: *The 19-year-old student ran for office. The racetrack features 3-year-olds today.* See [compound modifiers](#).

An age range requires no apostrophe: *The instructor was in her 30s.*

alma mater

Refers to the institution one has attended for higher education. No caps and no italics; considered an English word by now.

alumni

Alumnus refers to one male who attended a college or to a former student of unspecified gender. Alumna refers to one female. Alumni refers to two or more former students, all or some of whom are all male. Alumnae refers to two or more females. The casual alum should be avoided.

Alumni who have changed their names since graduating, such as alumnae who assumed the last name of their husbands, will be listed by both the new name and the name by which they were known while attending Webster: *Jane Smith Johnson*

alumni class years

- Regular use — In most cases, use the apostrophe and the last two digits of the graduating year one space immediately after the alumni names without a comma: *John Smith '90*
- Couples — For both alumni, generally list the year with each of their names, and be sure the woman, if she has a maiden name and married name, is listed last to avoid repeating the last name: *John '84 and Jamie Taylor Smith '85*. Be sensitive to exceptions, such as when the woman is the subject and her spouse, whether alumnus or not, is also mentioned. When just the man is an alumnus, do not list the woman's maiden name: *John '84 and Jamie Smith* or *Jamie and John Smith '84* unless that is also her married name: *John Smith '84 and Jamie Taylor*. When just the woman is an alumna, list the couple as follows: *John and Jamie Taylor Smith '85* (woman has new married name) or *Jane Taylor '85 and John Smith* (women kept her maiden name).

a.m., p.m.

Lowercase with periods. Avoid redundancies such as 10 a.m. Tuesday morning.

See [time duration](#).

American Indian

Preferred term to Native American, unless used in quotes or in reference to a specific organization.

ampersand (&)

Avoid, unless it is part of a company, school or institution's formal name: *College of Arts & Sciences, George Herbert Walker School of Business & Technology, Procter & Gamble (P&G)*.

Ampersand, the

A magazine produced every semester by students in the School of Communications.

anniversaries

Use lowercase for centennial, sesquicentennial, bicentennial when referring to general anniversaries.

annual

Never say first annual. It's redundant. Second annual is acceptable.

annual meeting

Lowercase in all uses.

and also

Avoid using this construction.

and/or

Don't use together. Reword sentence.

anxious

Use when referring to anxiety, not eagerness.

area codes (See [telephone numbers](#).)

Asian

Preferred over Asiatic or Oriental when referring to people.

Asian-American

Hyphenated.

attorney

A person legally empowered to act for another, usually but not always a lawyer. Lawyer is a generic term for anyone admitted to the bar to practice law. Consult *AP Stylebook* for a more detailed explanation.

B

bachelor's degree (See [academic degrees](#).)

basement

Generally, use lower level instead.

bi-

Generally no hyphen: *bimonthly*, *bilateral*, *bilingual*.

biannual, biennial

Biannual is twice a year or semiannual. Biennial is every two years.

bimonthly, biweekly

Means every other month or week. Sometimes confused with semimonthly and semiweekly. But for readability, twice a month is preferred to semimonthly; likewise twice a week is preferred to semiweekly.

black

Preferred term to African-American, according to *AP Stylebook*.

branch campus

Do not use. Preferred term is "extended campus" or "campus location" (general use) or more specifically, "international campus," "U.S. campus," or "military campus" when referring to campus locations other than the Webster University home campus in Webster Groves, Mo.

buildings, facilities

Be mindful of your audience when naming campus buildings and facilities. In many cases, an abbreviated name commonly used on campus would be misunderstood by external audiences. Below are the names of buildings or facilities that can be confusing. In some instances, the complete official name includes a middle initial. Although the Webster stylebook generally omits a middle initial, they are

included here because they are part of an official name.

When appropriate, use full names on first reference. For use on campus, however, certain unit, building and program names can be abbreviated on first reference if they are readily understood.

The following are official names for some Webster buildings. In some instances, their accepted abbreviations and locations are listed, as well:

- 40 North Rock Hill – Houses certain Information Technology staff and shipping/receiving warehouse
- 536 Garden — houses Multicultural Center and International Student Affairs at 536 Garden Ave.
- 540 Garden – Houses Counseling and Student Services at 540 Garden Ave.
- Carriage House — houses The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis.
- Club House — houses Webster Village Apartments offices; located at 520 Garden Ave.
- Community Music School Annex — located at 200 Hazel Ave.
- East Academic Building – Newly constructed academic building on Garden Ave.
- East Hall — residence hall.
- Emerson Library — houses Jazzman's Café; located at 101 Edgar Road.
- Facilities Operations — located west of Webster Hall along Plymouth Avenue.
- Faculty Senate House — located at 576 Garden Ave.
- Garden Park Plaza — includes parking garage; houses Academic Advising, Career Center, Graduate and Evening Student Admissions, and the University Bookstore; located at 538 Garden Ave.
- Cecille R. Hunt House — houses Art Department offices; located at 8342 Big Bend Blvd.

- Grant Gymnasium — part of the University Center; located at 175 Edgar Road.
- H. Sam Priest Center — Priest Center on second reference; houses the Center for International Education and the History, Politics and Law Department; located at 8270 Big Bend Blvd.
- Kirk House — houses School of Communications offices; south of the Visual Arts Studio.
- Loretto Hall — houses Academic Support Center, Accounts Payable and Collections, Counseling, Development and Alumni, Students and Enrollment Management, Executive Office, Finance and Administration, Health Services, Information Desk, Mail and Copy Solutions, Multicultural Center, Registrar, Public Affairs, Women's Resource Center; located adjacent to Webster Hall.
- Loretto-Hilton Center for the Performing Arts — Loretto-Hilton Center on second reference; includes Virginia Browning Theatre and Emerson Studio Theatre; located at 130 Edgar Road.
- Love Foundation Alumni House — Alumni House on second reference; houses Marketing Department's Media Planning and Placement team; located at 534 Garden Ave.
- Maria Hall — houses Public Safety; former residence hall; located behind Webster Hall.
- Marletto's Marketplace — cafeteria; located along Big Bend Boulevard behind Marin and Loretto halls.
- Music Annex — located between the Loretto-Hilton Center and the Thompson Music Building.
- Pearson House — houses English and Philosophy Departments; located at 8260 Big Bend Blvd.
- Quadrangle — the Quad on second reference, located between Emerson Library, the Sverdrup Complex and the University Center.
- Lief J. Sverdrup Business/Technology Complex — Sverdrup Complex on second reference; includes May Gallery, Media Center, classrooms; houses School of Business and Technology, School of Communications, IT User services; located at 8300 Big Bend Blvd.
- Stage III Theatre — located in the lower level of Webster Hall.
- Thompson Music Building — houses Music Department; located at 8282 Big Bend Blvd.
- Undergraduate Admissions — located at 8356 Big Bend Blvd.
- University Center — UC on second reference; includes Grant Gymnasium, Crossroads; located at 175 Edgar Road.
- Virginia Browning Theatre — Browning Theatre on second reference, also known as Main Stage.
- Visual Arts Studio — includes Cecille R. Hunt Gallery, located at 8342 Big Bend Blvd.
- Winifred Moore Auditorium — Moore Auditorium acceptable on second reference; includes Stage III Theatre; located in Webster Hall.
- Webster Hall — houses administrative and faculty offices, classrooms, science laboratories, shipping/receiving; located at 470 E. Lockwood Ave.
- Webster Village Apartments — Village Apartments on second reference.
- West Hall — residence hall.

C

campaign

Capitalize when referring to the full and proper title of a major fundraising drive, such as the Webster Works Campaign; use lowercase campaign in second reference. Always use lowercase when referring to an advertising campaign.

campuses

Webster has more than 100 campuses throughout the United States and around the world. A campus location provides student services and offers all classes a student would need to complete a degree.

Campuses should not be confused with service centers, which provide student services but do not offer enough classes for a student to complete a degree there.

capitalization

Capitalize only proper names. Avoid capitalizing generic terms. Specific examples follow:

- academic calendar — Do not capitalize academic quarters: *fall term*.
- academic departments/subjects — Do not capitalize academic departments or subjects unless a word is a proper noun. *He is studying photography in the art department of the Leigh Gerding College of Fine Arts. But: English department.*
- administrative offices — Do not capitalize units unless using the full proper name of the department: *She is a groundskeeper for Facilities Operations. The Executive Office will be closed on Labor Day. The library staff held a party.*
- athletic teams — Webster University Gorloks and the Gorloks are both acceptable in context. Also do not capitalize the sport: *Gorlok baseball, Gorlok baseball team. Both men's and women's teams are known simply as the Gorloks (not the Lady Gorloks).*

- class titles — Use lowercase: *sophomore, senior*.
- colleges — Capitalize full names of colleges, schools, offices and divisions: *George Herbert Walker School of Business & Technology, School of Education, Office of Global Marketing and Communications*.
- committee names — Capitalize full names, lowercase otherwise.
- degrees — Lowercase: *bachelor of arts, master's degree, doctorate*.
- departments — Capitalize formal name of departments; lowercase department when speaking in general terms: *He is a member of the Finance department. The Finance Department*.
- majors — Lowercase all majors, with the exception of languages: *advertising and marketing communications, finance, international relations, Spanish, English*.
- programs — Lowercase programs: *computer science, interior design, musical theater*.
- proper names — Capitalize the proper name such as Daniel Webster Society, but lowercase the shorter form, the society, on second reference: *Center for International Education, the center; American Medical Association, the association; Webster University Board of Trustees, the board*.
- titles — see [titles](#).

captions

Identify people in photos by spelling out their direction, set off by commas. Do not use parentheses: *Fifty students attended the conference, including, from left, Joe Smith, Beatrice Potter and Earl Gray*.

catalog

Not catalogue.

Caucasian

Preferred word is white because common ancestry related to the Caucasus Mountains region should not be assumed.

centers and institutes

Capitalize center names when names are used in their entirety. Lowercase the word center when used alone. Use full name for first reference. Examples of preferred second references follow in parentheses:

- Academic Resources Center (ARC)
- Center for Ethics
- Center for Interdisciplinary Studies (CID)
- Center for International Education (CIE)
- Center for Professional Development (CPD)
- Faculty Development Center (FDC)
- Human Rights Education Project
- Institute for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
- International Business and Internship Exchange (IBIE)
- International Student Center
- Multicultural Center
- Writing Center

cents (see also [dollars](#).)

Always use numerals. Write out the word when there is no dollar figure. Do not use zeros after the dollars to indicate no cents: 5 cents, \$10.59, \$25.

century

Use the 20th century, not the 1900s.

chair

Preferred over chairperson. Chairman and chairwoman are also acceptable, especially if it is the preference of the person.

Chanukah

Use Hanukkah instead.

city of _____

Lowercase the word city: *the city of St. Louis, the city of Webster Groves.*

city, state

Place a comma between the city and state name, and another comma after the state name, unless ending a sentence: *Kansas City, Mo., is the site of the conference.*

classes

In prose, do not capitalize, even referring to specific classes: *the class of 1989, or class of '89, 50th reunion class.*

co-

Use hyphen only when forming words that indicate occupation or status: *co-worker.*

collective nouns

Some words can be singular or plural, depending upon their usage. Collective nouns can take a singular verb when they denote a single unit, but they can take a plural noun when they denote individual items:

- *The faculty is meeting today. (as a unit)*
- *Many faculty are working on their projects this weekend. (individual members)*
- *A million dollars is a large request. (a unit)*
- *A million dollars were collected. (individual items)*

colleges, schools (See also [capitalization](#).)

The university has five degree-granting units. This is the list of official names of colleges and other major divisions, with preferred second reference where applicable:

- College of Arts & Sciences
- Leigh Gerdine College of Fine Arts
- George Herbert Walker School of Business & Technology — GHWSBT (preferred the Walker School on second reference)
- School of Communications — SOC
- School of Education — SOE

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.*

commas

- In numbers — Use commas in numbers of four digits or more: *1,248 or 47,193.*
- In a series — Do not use a comma before the word “and” in a series, unless the sentence structure is so complex that a comma keeps its meaning clear: *Red, white and blue Popsicles are my favorites. The evidence includes a knife, cigarette butts and ashes, and a matchbook.* Exception: When writing for the College of Arts & Sciences, use a comma before the word “and” in a series.
- With Jr. or Sr.- Do not use in names: *Ron Culhane Jr.*
- With dates and times — Offset the date with commas, but not the time: *The president will address the faculty at 4 p.m. Wednesday, April 10, in Winifred Moore Auditorium*
- With which — Phrases beginning with the word which are non-essential clauses. Place commas before and after the phrase: *My car, which is a Ford, needs new tires.*

commencement

Lowercase in all references: *The commencement ceremony will begin at 9:30 a.m.*

Community Music School of Webster University, the

Community Music School, the school or CMS on second reference.

company names (See also [trademarks](#).)

Use caps and ampersands as the official company name dictates. Abbreviate Co. and Corp., unless doing so makes the name confusing. Do not uppercase the word the as part of the company name. Delete references to Inc.: *Anheuser Busch, Boeing, MasterCard, Procter & Gamble.*

compose, comprise, constitute

The whole comprises the parts. The parts compose or constitute the whole. The whole is composed of the parts. Never use the phrase comprised of. Consult *AP Stylebook* for more information.

composition titles (See also [publication titles](#) and [magazine, journal titles](#).)

Set off in italics all titles of books, magazines, newspapers, songs, plays, movies, trains, ships, works of art and foreign phrases appearing within passages of text. Use quotation marks for specific articles or chapters within a book, newspaper, etc. Also use these guidelines:

- Capitalize all words of four or more letters;
- Capitalize articles (the, a, an) and all shorter words only if they are the first or last words in a title;
- In general, translate a foreign title into English unless the work is generally known by its foreign name: *Wagner's operas Die Walküre and Gotterdammerung.* Consider carefully the extent to which foreign titles will be “generally” known for your particular audience.
- For course names, capitalize only, do not use quotation marks or italics.

compound modifiers

When two or more modifiers express a single concept before a noun, link the modifiers with hyphens: *long-term assignment, full-scale investigations, small-business owner, part-time or full-time worker.* But: She works part time. The point is to clarify which word modifies which word: Squad helps dog bite victim. Squad helps dog-bite victim.

An exception is very or words ending in “ly,” which are never hyphenated: *very good food, organically grown food, frequently asked questions.* Another exception occurs when two words are so commonly associated together that no confusion would occur: *real estate agent.*

computer terms (See also [Internet.](#))

- World Wide Web (a proper name)
- the Web
- web site
- web cast
- web master
- Also: cyberspace
- download
- dot-com (informal adjective)
- DNS (domain name system)
- DSL (digital subscriber line)
- firewall
- freeware
- FTP (file transfer protocol)
- home page
- hyperlink
- Internet
- Internet2
- intranet
- IP address (Internet protocol address)
- Java (a trademark)
- listserv
- login
- logoff
- logon
- MP3
- RSS feed
- screen saver
- shareware
- URL (Uniform Resource Locator)
- Zip drive
- Zip disks (registered trademarks)

Connections

The online portal for students, faculty and staff to check email; manage and share appointments; collaborate in groups and courses; and access e-services and library resources.

convocation

Generally, use lowercase in prose: *president's convocation*.

copyright symbol ©

Mac users can place © by keying option-g.

corporation

Generally, capitalize and abbreviate Corp. when part of a company's official title.

course names (See also [composition titles.](#))

Capitalize only, use no quotation marks or italics: Organizational Management, Advanced Research Methods. When using the full course name and number, write as follows: MNGT 5000 Management, COAP 2000 Introduction to XHTML, FILM 2060 Modern World Cinema.

course work

Two words.

cum laude

Italic type, lowercase. Latin for "with honors."

D

dangling modifiers

Make sure your modifiers actually refer to the proper word.

- Incorrect: *Looking for safer ways to treat drinking water, the University's \$750,000 grant will investigate The University is looking, not the grant.*
- Correct: *Looking for safer ways to treat drinking water, the University has applied for and received a \$750,000 grant from the Safer Water Association.*

dashes

Dashes are longer than hyphens. Hyphens should not be used in the place of dashes. Dashes are always preceded and followed by a space, except at the start of a paragraph and sports agate summaries. Publishing systems enable you to create an em-dash (the length of a capital M). Word-processing programs feature dashes as a "symbol," found under the "Insert" menu. Most software programs also allow

the character to be key stroked. The help menu will provide instructions for your software. When dashes cannot be produced, two hyphens typed together are substituted.

dates (See also [months](#) and [years](#).)

For readability and clarity, express dates of events in this sequence: time, day, date, place: *The colloquium will be held at 4 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 1, at the Faculty Senate.*

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

Use only Arabic numbers after the month, not first or 1st.

dean's list

Use lowercase and possessive.

degrees (See [academic degrees](#).)

departments (See [capitalization](#).)

dilemma

Refers to facing two unpleasant courses of action. Not a synonym for predicament.

directions and regions

Lowercase compass directions. Capitalize words that denote specific regions: *He drove west. The Midwest is known for*

E

.edu

The blog of the School of Education.

effect (See [affect](#).)

electronic media

Spelled out on first reference. On second reference, e-media is acceptable.

ellipses

The three dots represent omitted words or a pause in speaking. They are preceded

great basketball. (Consult *AP Stylebook* for additional information.)

disabilities

Don't refer to people in terms of their disabilities, refer to them as people with disabilities or special needs.

doctor

Do not use Dr. and MD together: *Dr. David Davis, MD.*

In most instances, Dr. is unnecessary — assuming the copy adequately explains the person's position.

Dr. only appears before a name on first reference and when the person is a physician. Do not use the title Dr. for PhDs because the average reader associates it with an MD. When usage is required for someone with a PhD, copy should clearly explain the individual's type of degree.

dollars (See also [cents](#).)

Use numerals like \$5, rather than 5 dollars except in casual references or amounts without a figure: *My aunt gave me a dollar. For amounts of more than \$1 million, use the \$ and up to two decimal places: He proposed a \$4.5 billion budget.*

dormitories or dorms

The preferred term is residence halls.

and followed by spaces: *She talked about the morning traffic, her previous vacation, her son's wedding plans ... and enough topics to bore everyone.*

When using an ellipsis right before other punctuation, one should still insert a space after the three dots: *"We gather here to dedicate this new exciting program ... ," the chairman announced.*

email

Not hyphenated, lower case. For email references that appear as titles, generally, write the names uppercase with quotation marks, separated by commas when needed, treating them as titles to distinguish them from generic words: *To send the same message again, click on "Message," "Send Again."*

emeritus

Not the same as 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 Arts & Sciences.*

Emeriti (all men or both men and women) and emeritae (all women) are plural nouns. Emeritus and emerita can be singular nouns or adjectives for singular and plural nouns: among the ranks of emeriti (plural noun), among the ranks of emeritus professors (singular adjective). You can, however, change emeritus to emeriti when it follows a plural word: *among the ranks of professors emeriti.*

F

facilities (See [buildings, facilities.](#))

faculty

When used alone, treat it as a singular noun (our faculty is the best). When referring to the people who make up the faculty, say "faculty members."

farther, further

Farther refers to physical distance. Further refers to an extension of time or degree.

fax

Acceptable as a shortened version of facsimile or facsimile machine. Use as a

English as a second language

Capitalize only English, but acronym is ESL.

entitled

Means a right to do or have something. Does not mean titled: She was entitled to the promotion. The book was titled "Gone With the Wind."

ethnic references

In most general uses, the preferred terms are:

- American Indian
- Asian
- Asian-American
- black
- Hispanic
- Mexican-American
- Pacific Islander
- white

See individual entries for more information.

extended campus location

Do not capitalize unless specifically referring to a single campus: *Space Coast campuses; Albuquerque Campus. San Antonio campuses; Fort Sam Houston Campus.*

verb is also acceptable: *He faxed the results of the survey to his clients.*

federal

Use lowercase unless it is part of a formal name: *Federal Bureau of Investigation, federal District Court.*

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.*

firm

Only refers to a business partnership (law firm, engineering firm, architectural firm), not just any business entity. Edward Jones is not a firm.

first-year student

May be used instead of freshman.

fiscal year

Webster University's fiscal year runs from June 1 through May 31.

foreign words

Italicize those that are not common English expressions. Many previously foreign words are now accepted as part of the English language and should not be italicized, such as *alma mater*, *rendezvous*, *spiel*.

fort

Avoid abbreviating cities and military forts, unless necessary for space reasons: *Fort Leonard Wood*, *Fort Sill*, *Fort Sam Houston*.

fractions

Spell out amounts less than one, using hyphens: *two-thirds*, *seven-sixteenths*.

G

gender (See also [sexist language](#).)

When possible, avoid words that assume maleness. Use *humanity*, instead of *mankind*. Male pronouns (*he*, *his*) are acceptable when the antecedent could be male or female — and are preferred over combination pronoun forms: *he* or *she*, *his/her*. Yet a better option is to revise nouns to plural forms: *they*, *theirs*. Avoid forcing neutrality with a construction that calls attention to itself. Avoid manufactured words such as *spokesperson*, *chairperson*.

Use figures for precise amounts larger than one, converting to decimals whenever practical. In tabular material, use figures exclusively.

freshman, freshmen

To avoid gender bias, *first-year student* is acceptable.

As an adjective, use *freshman*, not *freshmen*, which is always a noun: *Student Government is hosting a welcome party for the freshman class. All freshmen are invited.*

Fullbright program

The two main categories for U.S. applicants/recipients of these awards for international educational exchange are the Fullbright Student Program (for graduating seniors, young professionals, artists and graduate students) and the Fullbright Scholar Program (for faculty and professionals).

Fund raising, fund-raising, fund-raiser

Fund raising is difficult. They planned a fund-raising campaign. A fund-raiser was hired. The organization is planning a fund-raiser.

geographical regions (See [directions and regions](#).)**Global Thinking**

The blog of the College of Arts & Sciences.

grade point average

GPA acceptable in all references.

greater (regional)

Capitalize when referring to a specific community: *Greater St. Louis*.

H

handicaps (See [disabilities.](#))

Hanukkah

This spelling is preferred over Chanukah.

Help Desk

Hispanic

Preferred over Latino when referring to people with a cultural heritage related to Spain. Latino/Latina refers to people specifically from Latin America.

Holden Public Policy Forum at Webster University

A speaker series at the Old Post Office founded by former Missouri Gov. Bob Holden; the public policy forum or the forum on second reference.

home campus

Lowercase, even when referring to the St. Louis home campus; not main campus; the home campus is located in Webster Groves, Mo., a St. Louis suburb.

honorary degree

honorary doctorate

hopefully

Means with hope, not I hope or it is hoped.

- *Correct: We hope the budget will pass.*
- *Incorrect: Hopefully, the budget will pass.*

Human Resources Office

Note plural.

hyphens (see also [dashes.](#))

In type, hyphens are different than dashes. Hyphens are sometimes used to avoid ambiguity: *He recovered from financial collapse. He re-covered his sofa in gray leather.* They are also used to join compound modifiers.

I

importantly

Do not use. Correct use is: *More important, enrollment is on the rise.*

initials

Generally avoid using middle initials. When two initials are used together, omit the space in the middle: *M.J. Nicholson.*

interdisciplinary (See [multidisciplinary.](#))

International Business Internship Exchange

IBIE on second reference.

Internet (See also [computer terms,](#) [links,](#) and [Web addresses.](#))

Uppercase as a proper name to distinguish it from other kinds of nets. May also be referred to as the Net, also uppercase. Spelling of Internet-related words are aligned with the AP stylebook, including: *World Wide Web (a proper name), Web site, the Web, webcast, webmaster. Also: dot-com (informal adjective), DSL (digital subscriber line), FTP (file transfer protocol), home page, Internet, intranet, IP address (Internet protocol address), Java (a trademark), listserv, login, logoff, logon, MP3, screen saver, shareware.*

intranet

Lowercase, generic reference to internal online portal.

its, it's

The first is possessive; the second is a contraction of *it is*.

J

junior, senior

Abbreviate as Jr. and Sr. with full names. Do not precede by, or follow with, a comma: *Howard Smith Jr.*

K

Koran

Preferred spelling for the sacred book of Muslims.

Kwanzaa

Midwinter African-American celebration.

L

landmarks

Certain landmarks on campus are referred to with familiar shorthand. Be sure to use official names or designate locations before resorting to shorthand, as required by context for clarity:

- *(the) Quad — the grassy area between Emerson Library, the Sverdrup Complex and the University Center*
- *(the) Winnie Moore — Winifred Moore Auditorium*
- *(the) UC — University Center*

last

Not a synonym for past.

Latin honors

Italic type, lowercase: *cum laude*, *magna cum laude* and *summa cum laude*.

Latino/Latina

Latino is the masculine word; Latina, the feminine. Refers to people of Latin American descent. When referring to

Latinos plus all people with a cultural heritage related to Spain, use Hispanic. Use specific nationalities when available: *Peruvian*, *Bolivian*, *Mexican*, *Cuban*, *Puerto Rican*, *Colombian*.

law firms

Generally drop the initials LLP or LLA at the end of a name.

lay, lie

The action word is "lay." It takes a direct object. Laid is the form for its past tense and its past participle. Its present participle is laying. "Lie" indicates a state of reclining along a horizontal plane. It does not take a direct object. Its past tense is lay. Its past participle is lain. Its present participle is lying. For examples, consult the *AP Stylebook*.

Leigh Gerding College of Fine Arts

The College on second reference.

links

Generally, write the names of Internet links uppercase with quotation marks, separated by commas when needed, treating them as titles to distinguish them from generic words: *When you visit*

http://explore.webster.edu, click on "Undergraduate Students," "Apply Online" to submit an application.

M

majors (See [capitalization](#).)

master class

Lowercase. No apostrophe s.

master's degree (See [academic degrees](#).)

MA, MAT, MS (See [academic degrees](#).)

No periods.

MAT (See [academic degrees](#).)

Acronym for master of arts in teaching.

magazine, journal titles (See also [publication titles](#).)

Set off in italics all titles of books, magazines, newspapers, movies, trains, ships, works of art and foreign phrases appearing within passages of text. Use quotation marks for specific articles or chapters within a book, newspaper, etc. Also use these guidelines:

- Capitalize all words of four or more letters;
- Capitalize articles (the, a, an) and all shorter words only if they are the first or last words in a title;
- In general, translate a foreign title into English unless the work is generally known by its foreign name: *Wagner's operas Die Walküre and Gotterdammerung*. Consider carefully the extent to which foreign titles will be "generally" known for your particular audience.
- For course names, capitalize only, do not use quotation marks or italics.

MD (See [doctor](#).)

See doctor. As with all academic degrees, do not use periods. (This is an exception to AP.)

Mexican-American

Hyphenated.

mid- (See also [directions and regions](#).)

Use a hyphen only when a capitalized word follows: mid-American, midterm. But the geographic region Midwest is capitalized.

Also use a hyphen when connecting a word with a numeral: mid-'70s.

military campuses

Campus locations on or near military bases, usually named after that particular base. Lackland Air Force Base Campus (Lackland AFB on second reference)

military institutions

The Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard. Inserting "U.S." before any distinguishes clearly for international audiences.

military titles

See AP Stylebook for abbreviations, such as:

Gen. (general)
Lt. Gen. (lieutenant general)
Maj. Gen. (major general)
Brig. Gen. (brigadier general)
Col. (colonel)
Lt. Col. (lieutenant colonel)
Maj. (major)
Capt. (captain)

Chief Master Sgt. (chief master sergeant)
Plural Titles: add "s" to the principal element, such as Majs. John Jones and Robert Smith.

money (See also [dollars](#), [cents](#))
Use numerals. When forming a compound adjective, use a hyphen: *He gave \$50. His gift was \$1 million. He presented a \$1-million gift.*

months (See also [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 on record. When using a month, date and year, set

off the year with commas: June 6, 1944, was D-Day.

multidisciplinary
Multidisciplinary means many disciplines are present. Interdisciplinary means many disciplines are not only present, but are working together to accomplish something. *A multidisciplinary meeting might attract faculty from several colleges, each making individual presentations. An interdisciplinary meeting would attract the same experts, but instead of just listening to one another's presentation, they work together toward a common goal.*

N

Native American
Preferred term is American Indian, unless used in quotes or in reference to a specific organization.

Netherlands
In prose, the Netherlands (lowercase "the") or Netherlands as the construction of a sentence dictates.

No.
Use this capitalized abbreviation for number when referring to a position or rank: *No. 1 city in America; No. 3 choice.*

non-
Generally, hyphens are not used for words with this prefix. Hyphens are necessary before proper nouns or when a word is not listed in the dictionary.

nonprofit
No hyphen.

noon
Use word noon instead of 12 p.m. in all instances.

NotaBene
One word, with a capital "B"; the annual magazine of the George Herbert Walker School of Business & Technology.

numbers
Use Arabic numerals for numbers 10 and higher. Spell out numbers under 10. This holds true for all casual uses and distances: hundreds of items, two miles. The exceptions, which use numerals exclusively, are ages (the 4-year-old child), acres, cents, dimensions (the rug is 6 feet wide), dollar amounts (\$1 million), formulas, heights, military and political designations (2nd District Court, 7th Fleet), percentages (7 percent), ratios (a 2-1 ratio), sizes (a size 9 shoe), speeds (50 mph), temperatures (except zero), volume (2 ounces) and weights.

Numerals in proper names are written as the organization writes them. When the word number is used with a figure to express a concept, use "No.": *No. 1 team, No. 3 choice.* Consult the *AP Stylebook* entry for numerals.

O

online

One word.

P

P.O. Box

Periods in the abbreviation when used in editorial copy.

people

In general, use people instead of persons.

percent

Use as one word, preceded by numerals: *5 percent*.

PhD (see [academic degrees](#).)

No periods.

phone numbers (See [telephone](#).)

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*.
- Multiple letters — Add an s with no apostrophe: *ABCs, VIPs*.
- 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*.

pompous words

Be wary of words such as conceptualize, signage, health-care delivery systems, explicate, linkages, interface, replicate, input, output, utilize. Never use a big word when a small one will do.

possessives

- Descriptive phrases — An apostrophe is usually omitted on a plural word ending in s, when the word is part of a descriptive phrase and does not show possession. To determine if that is the case, usually the word for or by could be appropriately inserted rather than of: *citizens band radio (a radio band for citizens), writers guide (guide for writers), children's hospital (because children does not end in s) and the boy's dog (the dog belonging to the boy)*.
- Double possessive — A double possessive is a phrase such as the friend of Joe's. (The possessive apostrophe seems duplicative because the word "of" already denotes possession.) An apostrophe is not used in all cases. To determine if a possessive form of the word following of (thus an apostrophe) is needed, two things must exist: The word after "of" must be animate, and the word before "of" must include only a portion of the animate object's belongings: *a few friends of Joe's, the theories of Marx, the friends of the program*.
- Joint possession — Use 's only with the last name in a series: *Ted, Tom and Mary's car*.
- Individual possession — Use 's with both names: *Tom's and Mary's clothes*.
- Singular proper names ending in s — Use only an apostrophe: *Dickens' novel*.

post

When referring to the Internet, avoid confusion with publish. You publish on a

site and post responses to a site or in a chat room.

post-season

pre-

When a word begins with the prefix *pre*, hyphenate the word if the first letter after the prefix is an *e*: *pre-eminent*, *pre-election*. Otherwise, follow Webster's New World Dictionary usage. If a coined word uses the *pre* suffix and is not listed in Webster's, use a hyphen: *pre-convention*, *pre-dawn*.

presently

One of its meanings is in the near future. To avoid confusion, use *currently*.

principal, principle

Principal (n., adj.) refers to someone or something first in authority or importance: *school principal*, *principal player*, *principal problem*. *Principle* (n.) refers to a fundamental truth: *principle of self-determination*.

professor (See also [titles](#).)

Spell out and lowercase in all uses.

programs

Titles of programs are lowercase: *the media communications program*.

publication titles (See also [magazine](#), [journal titles](#) and [composition title](#).)

Set off in italics all titles of books, magazines, newspapers, movies, trains, ships, works of art and foreign phrases appearing within passages of text. Use quotation marks for specific articles or chapters within a book, newspaper, etc. Also use these guidelines:

- Capitalize all words of four or more letters;
- Capitalize articles (*the*, *a*, *an*) and all shorter words only if they are the first or last words in a title;
- In general, translate a foreign title into English unless the work is generally known by its foreign name: *Wagner's operas Die Walküre and Gotterdammerung*. Consider carefully the extent to which foreign titles will be "generally" known for your particular audience.
- For course names, capitalize only, do not use quotation marks or italics.
- Capitalize only words that are part of the publication's formal name: *Time magazine*, *the journal Science*. Check the mastheads to confirm formal names.

punctuation

See [colons](#), [commas](#), [dashes](#), [ellipses](#), [hyphens](#), [quotation marks](#), [semicolons](#), [that/which](#).

Q

quotation marks (See also [publication titles](#).)

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: *You never saw "The Wizard of Oz"? Ask him, "How do you plan to implement the proposal?"*

R

RA

Acronym for resident assistant; no periods; plural is RAs, or resident assistants.

re-

When a word begins with the prefix *re*, hyphenate the word if the first letter after the prefix is an "e:" *re-elect*, *re-enter*. Otherwise, follow Webster's and common sense: *resign (quit)*, *re-sign (sign again)*.

refer, revert

Don't refer back or revert back to something. It's redundant. Back is the only way to go.

regard

Be careful of the phrase in regard to (never in regards to).

regions (See [directions and regions](#).)

registered mark ®

Mac users can place ® by keying option-r.

resumé

Mac users may place the appropriate accents by hitting option-e and then e again.

riverfront

room numbers

For consistency (after building names), use the following format: *The class will meet in Webster Hall, Room 120.*

S

Saint, Sainte

Abbreviate as St. and Ste. in city name or person's name.

St. Louis, not Saint Louis. But note local institutions that differentiate, such as the "Opera Theatre of Saint Louis"

SCAN

School of Communications Alumni Newsletter; the blog of the School of Communications; SCAN acceptable on all references.

seasons

All four seasons should use lowercase: spring, summer, fall and winter. Uppercase all words in a formal name: SGA Spring Fling.

secondly, thirdly

There's no firstly, so you can't have a secondly, either. It's first, second, third.

semicolon

When semicolons are needed in a series to clarify individual elements requiring extra commas, then use the semicolon before the word and: *They will honor Mary Smith, media communications professor; Bob Brown, engineer; and Barb Jones, George Herbert Walker School of Business & Technology.*

senior (See [junior](#).)

sexist language

Unless referring to a known gender in context, avoid the use of masculine and feminine forms and masculine- or feminine-marked words as much as possible. This avoidance includes using

alternatives to generic terms that contain masculine or feminine markers. 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 marital status.

Also be cautious about pronoun usage. Plural pronouns can eliminate the need for gender-specific pronouns. Avoid: A student nurse gains a clinical experience after she completes a certain amount of class work. Preferred: Student nurses have clinical experiences after they complete a certain amount of class work.

Sisters of Loretto

The Catholic religious order that founded Webster University in 1915.

spring break

St. Louis home campus (See [home campus](#).)

staff

When used alone, it is a singular noun. Use staff members when referring to the people who make up the staff.

T

T-shirt

teaching assistant

No period for acronym, TA; plural is TAs, or teaching assistants.

telephone numbers

Use this format: 314-968-2600, ext. 7002.

states (See also [addresses](#).)

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.) and 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 in general editorial copy.

Never abbreviate states written without a city: *We are going to Florida for vacation.*

In editorial copy, state names must be included along with city names except in the following cases: *Denver, Los Angeles, St. Louis, Salt Lake City* and other well-known cities as listed in the *AP Stylebook*.

In general editorial uses, lowercase the word state: *state of Missouri, state Rep. John Doe.*

temperatures

Use figures for all except zero. Use a word, not a minus sign, to indicate temperatures below zero: *The day's low was minus 10, or 10 below zero.*

terms

Capitalize as proper names the divisions of the academic year: **Fall I, Fall II, Summer, Spring I, Spring II.**

theatre

This is Webster's style for all references to proper and general nouns: *Browning Theatre; regional theatre major.*

time of day

Use noon or midnight, rather than 12 a.m. or 12 p.m., which are confusing. Avoid redundancy as in 10 a.m. this morning. Do not use :00. *Example: 8 p.m.*

time, duration

Consistently use either the format from 3 to 5 p.m., or 3-5 p.m. In most cases, use only the starting time. The ending time is relevant only when listing a series of events: *Jeremy Johnson will be at the Sverdrup Complex from 8 to 9 a.m. and in Moore Auditorium from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.*

In general, list the time, day and date in that order: *2 p.m., Wednesday, April 1.*

that/which

That and which are two pronouns that are often used incorrectly. In general, if the clause in question could be omitted without leaving the noun it modifies incomplete or without altering the meaning, which should be used to introduce the clause, preceded by a comma. If the clause is limiting or defining, that is the word to use.

- Correct: *He has invented a process that will supply the world with free fuel. The process, which was invented by A.J. Smith, will supply the world with free fuel.*
- Incorrect: *He has invented a process, which will supply the world with free fuel. Consult AP Stylebook entries for essential clauses and non-essential clauses.*

titles (See also [composition titles](#), [professor](#), [publication titles](#).)

Lowercase and spell out most titles relating to people.

- Formal titles — The only title to ever be uppercase is a formal title appearing directly before a name. Formal titles reflect positions so impressive that they are as much a part of people's identities as their names: *President Elizabeth Stroble, former President Gerdine, Dean David Wilson, but the University president, the dean.*
- Formal titles appearing before a name are lowercase when they are set off with commas: *The president, Elizabeth Stroble, will address the meeting.*
- Occupational titles — Lowercase titles that mostly describe occupations: *professor Art Silverblatt, head coach Chris Bunch, astronaut Eileen Collins.*
- Abbreviated formal titles — These formal titles are capitalized and abbreviated when used before a name outside quotations: Dr., Gov., Lt. Gov., Rep., Sen. and certain military ranks. Consult *AP Stylebook* entry for military titles.

toward

Not towards.

trademarks

Trademarks must be capitalized, yet certain trademarks have become so common in English usage that we forget they are trademarks. Here is a sampling: *Allen wrench, AstroTurf, Band-Aid, Breathalyzer, Dumpster, Fiberglas, Freon, Frisbee, Heimlich Maneuver, Jacuzzi, Jaws of Life, Jazzercise, Jell-O, Kleenex, LaserJet printer, Laundromat, Lucite, Mace tear gas, Magic Marker, Muzak, Photostat, Plexiglas, Realtor, Rolodex, Scotch Tape, Seeing Eye dogs, Sno-Kone, Styrofoam, Xerox.*

Trademarks should be followed with generic terms, when appropriate: *Kleenex tissues.* Better yet, avoid trademarks and just use the generic term as long as it is easily understood. For a more complete listing of trademarks, visit the

International Trademark Association's Web site.

Bistate (See also [directions and regions.](#))

Uppercase when referring to the specific geographical Bistate area involving Missouri and Illinois area of Greater St. Louis.

U

UC

To signify the University Center, use UC, without periods.

under way

Two words in virtually all uses. According to AP, *underway* is used as an adjective before a noun only in a nautical sense: *an underway flotilla*.

unique

Not a synonym for unusual. It means strictly one of a kind.

university

Capitalize university when referring to Webster University on second reference. *Classes begin at Webster University on Sept. 22. The University began classes Sept. 22.* The same usage does not apply to college, center, board, council or any other university.

URLs (See [Web addresses.](#))

U.S., United States

To signify the United States, use U.S., with periods. The abbreviation is acceptable as a noun and an adjective.

V

versus

Abbreviate as vs. in all uses.

vice

In titles, use as a separate word without a hyphen: *vice president*.

virtual

Not a synonym for actual or nearly. It means something has the effect but not the form: When the president resigned, the vice president became the virtual head

of the company, even though he had not been so named.

visiting professors and visiting instructors

Temporary hires for sabbatical replacements or occasional courses.

visiting scholars

International scholars who may be here to teach or to conduct research, often part of an exchange program.

W

Walker Speaker Series

The speaker series organized by the George Herbert Walker School of Business & Technology

web (See also [Internet](#) and [computer terms.](#))

As an abbreviation of the original proper name World Wide Web, but lowercase and

abbreviated to: *the web, website, web cast, web master.*

web addresses

To save space, do not include `http://` if followed by `www`. If the URL does not fall under `www`, the `http://` is necessary to avoid confusion.

Always include a period at the end of a sentence even if a web address or email address appears at the end: *My email address is `gorlok@webster.edu`.* When possible, enclose URLs and email addresses in parentheses or brackets: *Please send me the file via email (`gorlok@webster.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.

web page

Two words.

Web site/web cam/web cast

In each instance, one word, lower-case.

X

X-ray

Use X-ray in all uses, whether noun, verb or adjective. Use for both the

Webster University

Webster or the University acceptable on second reference.

Webster University Film Series

Not Webster Film Series. The film series on second reference.

Webster Works Worldwide

Three words; capitalize; WWW on second reference.

Westport

One word when referring to the Westport Campus; not Westport Plaza.

which (See [that/which](#).)

white

Lower case. Preferred term over Caucasian because common ancestry related to the Caucasus Mountains region should not be assumed.

WingHaven

Webster's campus location in O'Fallon, Mo. One word with a capital "H."

Y

years (See also [dates](#) and [months](#).)

Set the year off with two commas when it appears with a full date: *Jan. 15, 1993, was the target date.*

For decades, use an s without an apostrophe: *1960s and '60s, not the*

photographic process and the radiation particles themselves.

1960's and 60's. On first reference, use 1960s, not '60s.

For centuries, the preferred format is the 20th century, not the 1900s.

Do not routinely name the current year unless it is necessary to avoid confusion.

- Correct: *the April 1 meeting.*
- Incorrect: *the April 1, 2004, meeting.*

Z

zero

Spell out.

ZIP codes

The ZIP is uppercase because it stands for Zoning Improvement Plan. See addresses for on-campus ZIP code usage.