

USAGE GRAMMAR STYLE

UMSL Style Guide

University of Missouri–St. Louis
Marketing and Communications
policies and guidelines for usage
grammar and style across all media

UMSL | Marketing &
Communications

Introduction

University Marketing and Communications is responsible for integrating both internal and external communications from the University of Missouri–St. Louis in a way that upholds and promotes the institution’s positive brand identity. We publish the UMSL Style Guide to help fellow UMSL employees navigate communicating with various audiences in a manner that’s consistent, engaging and effective.

While certainly not an exhaustive list, the following pages are meant to offer clarity on many of the commonly occurring terms and punctuation rules that we find writers often have questions about in official communications.

Sources for the UMSL Style Guide include: The Associated Press Stylebook 2016; Webster’s New World College Dictionary, Fifth Edition; The Chicago Manual of Style, 17th edition, and The Elements of Style, Fourth Edition. These publications are also an acceptable reference for material not covered within the guide.

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INFORMATION

about **logotype usage, website and electronic communications policies** and other related content is located at the Marketing and Communications website. Please visit:
umsl.edu/marketing.

The UMSL STYLE GUIDE can be downloaded at:

umsl.edu/print.

To request a hard copy of the guide, simply email:
umslnews@umsl.edu.

abbreviations, acronyms

- An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word or phrase. “CIA,” “FBI” and “GOP” are examples of abbreviations formed by using an organization’s initials.
- An acronym is a word formed from the first letter or letters of a series of words. “BIG,” for example, stands for “Biological Information Group.”
- Do not use acronyms or abbreviations the reader would not quickly recognize.
- Do not follow an organization’s full name with an acronym or abbreviation in parentheses or set off by dashes or commas. If an acronym or abbreviation would not be clear on second reference without this arrangement, do not use the acronym or abbreviation.

academic degrees

- If mention of a degree is necessary to establish someone’s credentials or their relationship with UMSL, there are two acceptable forms. Examples:

Bill Doe, who earned a bachelor’s degree in philosophy in 2009, won the Outstanding Salesman of the Year award. Jim Smith, BS chemistry 1989, is an operations manager at the company.

- Use an apostrophe in “bachelor’s” and “master’s.”
- Acceptable first-reference abbreviations for degrees are:

BA, BFA, BGS, BS, BSBA, BSN, BSW, DBA, DNP, EdD, JD, MA, MAcc, MBA, MEd, MFA, MPPA, MS, MSIS, MSN, MSW, OD, PhD and ScD.
- When used after a name, an academic abbreviation is set off by commas: Bill Doe, PhD, spoke to the class.
- Do not precede a name with an informal title or courtesy title for an academic degree and follow the name with the abbreviation for the degree in the same reference.

WRONG: Criminology Professor Bill Doe, PhD, was hired last year.

RIGHT: Bill Doe, PhD, is the newest faculty member in the criminology department.

- Do not capitalize degrees unless abbreviated.

Examples:

Bill Doe, MA philosophy 1995, serves as president of his local Optimist Club. Bill Doe earned a master's degree in English from Smith College in 1995.

- Write: an MA (not a MA). But write: a master's degree (not an master's degree).

See **alumnus; titles, academic;** and **titles, doctor.**

academic units

- Capitalize all names of UMSL colleges, schools, departments, divisions, offices, institutes and centers when using the unit's full, proper name. Examples:

Department of History, College of Education and Center for Eye Care.

- Academic units are lowercased when used informally. Examples:

history department, department, nursing college and center.

- After the full, proper name of a school, college, office or department has been used in a first reference, do not overuse the formal name throughout the copy. Use second references, such as: school, college, office or department.

- Proper names of UMSL colleges and schools:

- * College of Arts and Sciences
- * College of Business Administration
- * College of Education
- * College of Nursing
- * College of Optometry
- * Graduate School
- * Pierre Laclède Honors College
- * School of Fine and Performing Arts
- * School of Social Work
- * UMSL/WUSTL Joint Undergraduate Engineering Program

- Proper names of UMSL centers and institutes:

- * Center for Business and Industrial Studies
- * Center for Character and Citizenship
- * Center for Emerging Technologies
- * Center for Entrepreneurship and Economic Education
- * Center for Ethics in Public Life
- * Center for Excellence in Financial Counseling

- * Center for Excellence in Urban Education
- * Center for Eye Care
- * Center for Human Origin and Cultural Diversity
- * Center for the Humanities
- * Center for Nanoscience
- * Center for Neurodynamics
- * Center for Teaching and Learning
- * Center for Transportation Studies
- * Center for Trauma Recovery
- * Children's Advocacy Services of Greater St. Louis
- * Computer Education & Training Center
- * E. Desmond Lee Regional Institute of Tutorial Education
- * E. Desmond Lee Technology and Learning Center
- * Faculty Resource Center
- * German Culture Center
- * International Business Institute
- * Math Technology Learning Center
- * Missouri Institute of Mental Health
- * Missouri Small Business and Technology Development Center
- * Nicholas and Theodora Matsakis Hellenic Culture Center
- * Online Testing Center
- * Public Policy Research Center
- * Sue Shear Institute for Women in Public Life
- * Technology Support Center
- * University Child Development Center
- * Whitney R. Harris World Ecology Center

- Proper names of UMSL academic departments, divisions and areas:

- * Department of Accounting
- * Department of Anthropology, Sociology and Languages
- * Department of Art and Art History
- * Department of Biology
- * Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry
- * Department of Communication & Media
- * Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice
- * Department of Economics
- * Department of Education Sciences and Professional Programs
- * Department of Educator Preparation, Innovation, and Research
- * Department of English
- * Department of Finance and Legal Studies
- * Department of Global Leadership and Management
- * Department of History
- * Department of Information Systems
- * Department of Interdisciplinary Studies
- * Department of Language and Cultural Studies
- * Department of Marketing
- * Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
- * Department of Military and Veterans Studies
- * Department of Music

- * Department of Philosophy
- * Department of Physics and Astronomy
- * Department of Political Science
- * Department of Psychological Sciences
- * Department of Sociology, Gerontology & Gender
- * Department of Supply Chain & Analytics
- * Department of Theatre & Cinema Arts
- * Interdisciplinary Studies

- Some other UMSL proper names:

- * Division of Student Affairs
- * Facilities Management
- * International Studies and Programs
- * Office of Research Administration
- * Office of Residential Life and Housing
- * Office of Student Financial Aid
- * University Health Wellness & Counseling Services

See **Department of Athletics**.

acronyms

See **abbreviations, acronyms**.

address (noun)

Do not use “address” alone as a synonym for a speech or talk. Example:

Bill Doe's talk (not address) on the campus master plan impressed the faculty.

See **keynote address**.

address (verb)

Address a letter or an envelope but never address a problem. A problem should be: dealt with, taken up, considered, tackled, coped with or discussed. Example:

At the staff meeting, the dean and the chancellor discussed (not addressed) admission requirements.

addresses

- When writing a postal address with secondary delivery information (e.g., apartment, suite or building information), include the secondary information after a comma on the delivery address line. Example:

Don Draper
Sterling Cooper Draper Pryce
241 Madison Ave., Suite 101
New York, NY 10016

- When secondary delivery information (e.g., apartment, suite or building information) is part of an address but cannot fit on the delivery address line, write secondary information immediately above the delivery address line. Example:

Tim Jones
University of Missouri–St. Louis
101 Woods Hall
1 University Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63121

- Use the abbreviations “Ave.,” “Blvd.” and “St.” only with a numbered address. Example:

1500 Page Ave. Spell out when part of a formal street name without a number: Page Avenue. Lowercase and spell out when used alone or with more than one street: Page and University avenues.
- Do not abbreviate if number is omitted: East 42nd Street, West 43rd Street and K Street Northwest.
- Spell out similar words: alley, drive, road, terrace and place. Capitalize them when part of a formal name without a number. Lowercase when used alone or with two or more names.
- Always use figures for an address number:

3541 Boston Farm Drive, 1 University Blvd.
- Spell out and capitalize “First” through “Ninth” when used as street names. Use figures for “10th” and above.

- Abbreviate compass points used to indicate directional ends of a street or quadrants of a city in a numbered address: 222 E. 42nd St., 562 W. 43rd St. and 6700 K St. NW.

See **states**.

adjectives, adverbs

- Omit those used as intensifiers. Examples:

lovely building, fantastic party, urgently needed, strongly advise, comparatively small and new record.
- Avoid using “very” and “really.”

adopt, approve, enact, pass

The following are adopted or approved: amendments, ordinances, resolutions and rules. Bills are passed. Laws are enacted.

adviser, advisor

Either is acceptable as long as the usage remains consistent throughout the document.

African American

- It’s an acceptable term to describe an American black person of African descent. Also acceptable is “black.” The terms are not interchangeable. People from Caribbean nations, for example, generally refer to themselves as “Caribbean American.” Follow a person’s preference.
- It’s always capitalized.
- Do not hyphenate, unless “African–American” is part of a title or an organization’s proper name.

See **rac**es and **nati**onalities.

afterward

Not “afterwards.”

ages

Always use figures. When the context does not require “years” or “years old,” the figure is presumed to be years. Use hyphens for ages expressed as adjectives before a noun or as substitutes for a noun.

Examples:

Kelly is a 4-year-old girl. The girl is 4 years old. The man, 38, has a sister, 31. The toy is for 3-year-olds. The woman is in her 40s (no apostrophe).

air-conditioned (adjective)

air conditioner, air conditioning (nouns)

a la carte, a la king, a la mode

All-America, All-American

Individual team members are “All-Americans.” The Associated Press reserves “All-America” for players selected to the AP All-America teams.

all-around

Not “all-round.”

allow, enable, empower

- “Allow” means to let do or to let happen. Example:

Matt allowed the line drive to drop down in the gap.

- “Enable” means to provide with the means, opportunity, power or authority. Example:

The coach started Guerrero as designated hitter, enabling the old-timer to play both games of the doubleheader.

- “Empower” means to give power or authority.

Example:

After the head coach was ejected, the newly empowered pitching coach removed the pitcher from the game.

all ready, already

“All ready” means everyone is ready. “Already” is an adverb. Examples:

She waited until we were all ready to leave. He already owns a car.

all right (adverb)

Never “alright.”

all time (noun)

all-time (adjective)

alphabetizing

- Use the letter-by-letter method to alphabetize up to the first comma that is not part of a series. Spaces, hyphens, apostrophes and slashes and the letters that follow them are considered part of one word. For example:

- * east
- * East, Far
- * East, Middle
- * East Bay
- * eastern
- * Eastern Hemisphere
- * easternmost
- * east-northeast
- * eastward
- * East-West Gateway Council
- * Eastwood, Clint
- * Eastwood, Michigan
- * Eastwood Elementary School

- In personal names, an initial or initials used in place of a given name come before any name beginning with the same letter. For example:

- * Fitzgerald, F. Scott
- * Fitzgerald, Frank
- * Heinz II, H.J.
- * Heinz, Henry J.

- Alphabetize acronyms and abbreviations letter by letter.

- Alphabetize numbers as if they were spelled out.
- Letters with a diacritical mark – such as an accent or umlaut – should be alphabetized as though the letter is unmarked.
- Words that begin with “Mac” and “Mc” are alphabetized letter-by-letter. For example:

MacArthur
Macintosh
magazine
McClellan
McIntosh
meander

alum

Although formal writing on behalf of the institution should avoid this casual term, contexts such as tweets sometimes lend themselves to this shortcut.

See **alumnus, alumni, alumna, alumnae.**

alumni association

See **University of Missouri–St. Louis Alumni Association.**

alumnus, alumni, alumna, alumnae

- “Alumnus” (“alumni” is plural) is a man who has graduated from a school.
- “Alumna” (“alumnae” is plural) is a woman who has graduated from a school.
- “Alumni” refers to a group of men or a group of men and women.
- When identifying UMSL alumni and their degrees in a run of copy, there are two acceptable forms. Examples:

Jim Smith, BSBA 1974, won the award last year. John Foster, who earned a master’s degree in political science in 1971, will run for alderman next year.

- Use an apostrophe in “bachelor’s” and “master’s.”

- Acceptable first-reference abbreviations for degrees are:

BA, FA, BGS, BS, BSBA, BSN, BSW, DBA, DNP, EdD, JD, MA, MAcc, MBA, MEd, MFA, MPPA, MS, MSIS, MSN, MSW, OD, PhD and ScD.

See **academic degrees.**

ampersand (&)

- Use the ampersand when it’s part of a proper noun.

Examples:

Social Sciences & Business Building and Tom & Harry’s Oyster Bar.

- The ampersand should not otherwise be used in place of “and.”

and/or

It’s a shortcut that can damage a sentence and lead to confusion or ambiguity. Use either word, but not both words in a sentence. If necessary, use an “or both” phrase. Example:

Please hand me the salt or pepper or both.

annual

Do not describe an event as “annual” until the event has been held in at least two successive years. In other words, do not use the phrase “first annual.” Instead, note that an organization plans to sponsor an event annually. “Inaugural” is an acceptable adjective to describe an event the first time it’s held.

anxious

It means fearful, apprehensive or worried. Never use as a synonym for “eager.”

anyone, anybody

Use a singular verb and pronoun.

WRONG: Anyone can be president if they know the right people.
RIGHT: Anyone can be president if he or she knows the right people.

assure, ensure, insure

- “Assure” goes with some reference to people, and means to convince of to give confidence. Example:
He assured her that he would arrive to the meeting on time.
- “Ensure” means to guarantee. Example:
Winning the lottery might not ensure his happiness, but at least he could pay his mortgage.
- “Insure” involves monetary coverage according to policy. Example:
She wants to insure her home in case of a fire or bad weather.

athletic facilities

- Use an athletic facility’s full, proper name on first reference. Acceptable second references include: field, court, facility and center.
- The proper names of UMSL athletic facilities are:
 - * Chuck Smith Court
 - * Don Dallas Soccer Field
 - * Mark Twain Athletic & Fitness Center
 - * UMSL Baseball Field
 - * UMSL Softball Field
 - * UMSL Tennis Courts
 - * WingHaven Country Club

See **Department of Athletics**.

athletics

See **athletic facilities, Department of Athletics, Louie** and **UMSL Tritons**.

attribution

See **says, said**.

a while (noun)

awhile (adverb)

bachelor’s degree

See **academic degrees**.

backward

Not “backwards.”

bandleader

Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts Center

- It’s the full, proper name of that building. Use it on first reference. Acceptable second references: center, the Touhill and Touhill Performing Arts Center.
- The center houses two performance spaces: Anheuser-Busch Performance Hall and E. Desmond and Mary Ann Lee Theater. Use those names on first reference. Acceptable second references: performance hall and Lee Theater.
- Additional areas in the Touhill: Patron Room, Whitaker Rehearsal Hall, Promenade Lobby, Terrace Lobby, Promenade Level, Terrace Level and Ticket Office.

See **buildings on campus**.

Bugg Lake

buildings on campus

- Use a building’s full, proper name on first reference. Acceptable second references: building, hall, garage and center.
- The proper names of buildings at UMSL are:
 - * Anheuser-Busch Ecology and Conservation Complex
 - * Anheuser-Busch Hall
 - * Bellerive Hall
 - * Benton Hall
 - * Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts Center
 - * Boiler Garage

- * Campus Police Building (or “Gallery 210” when referring to the art gallery that shares the building)
- * Catholic Newman Center
- * Chancellor’s Residence
- * Clark Hall
- * Education Administration Building
- * Express Scripts Hall
- * Fine Arts Building
- * Gallery 210 (or “Campus Police Building” when referring to the police department that shares the building)
- * J.C. Penney Building/Conference Center (J.C. Penney Building is acceptable on all references)
- * Kathy J. Weinman Children’s Advocacy Centre
- * Lucas Hall
- * Mansion Hills
- * Marillac Hall
- * Mark Twain Athletic & Fitness Center
- * Millennium Student Center
- * Millennium Student Center Garage North
- * Millennium Student Center Garage South
- * Music Building
- * Normandie Hall
- * Nursing Administration Building
- * Oak Hall
- * Parking and Transportation Building
- * Patient Care Center
- * Provincial House
- * Recreation and Wellness Center
- * Regional Center for Education & Work
- * Research Building
- * Richard D. Schwartz Observatory
- * Sassin Building
- * Science Learning Building
- * Sculpture and Ceramics Annex
- * Seton Center Hall
- * Social Sciences & Business Building
- * Social Sciences & Business Building Tower
- * South Campus Classrooms Building
- * South Campus Computer Building
- * South Campus Garage
- * Stadler Hall
- * Thomas Jefferson Library
- * UMSL at Grand Center
- * UMSL Postal Services
- * University Meadows Apartments
- * Villa Building
- * West Drive Garage South
- * William L. Clay Center for Nanoscience
- * Woods Hall

- When referring to locations, list the room number and then the building.

See **athletic facilities** and **Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts Center**.

build up (verb)

buildup (noun, adjective)

Business, Technology and Research Park

See **University of Missouri–St. Louis Business, Technology and Research Park**.

bylaw, byline, byproduct

campus

- It’s an acceptable second reference for the University of Missouri–St. Louis and other University of Missouri System campuses. Example:

Tim visited the University of Missouri–St. Louis, and he enjoyed his time on campus.

- Lowercase in all uses, except when writing “North Campus” or “South Campus.”

See **North Campus**, **South Campus** and **University of Missouri–St. Louis**.

campuswide

Canada

Use Montreal, Quebec City and Toronto alone without additional description. For all other Canadian cities, use the city name and the name of the province it’s located in. Example:

Vancouver, British Columbia.

captions

- Captions, like headlines, are important because they are read more often than the entire story. Every photo should include a caption unless it's only used for design purposes. Captions should provide the reader with pertinent information, such as: first and last name of the subject(s), when the image was taken and where the action occurred.
- Always write captions as complete sentences. Avoid writing captions longer than two concise sentences.
- Write in present tense whenever possible. Never mix verb tenses in a caption.
- The description of a subject's placement should be wrapped in parentheses and placed directly after the subject's name.

RIGHT: Wayne Campbell (left), professor of media studies, shows Garth Algar, assistant professor of media studies, how the camera works.

WRONG: Wayne Campbell, professor of media studies, (left) shows Garth Algar, assistant professor of media studies, how the camera works.

- Write "from left" wrapped in parentheses rather than "from left to right." Example:

Representing the St. Louis Cardinals at the 2010 All-Star Game are (from left) Chris Carpenter, Adam Wainwright, Yadier Molina, Albert Pujols and Matt Holliday.

- Write to the photo's focus point when possible.
Example:
UMSL Chancellor Tom George (right) presents Thomas Jones with a diploma.
- After the focus point, or if there is none, list names in order from left to right unless doing so makes the caption difficult to read.
RIGHT: UMSL students (from left) John Smith, Steve Johnson and Mary Williams play touch football in front of Oak Hall.
BETTER: UMSL student Steve Johnson carries the ball past classmates John Smith (left) and Mary Williams while playing touch football in front of Oak Hall.
- Avoid using "is pictured," "is shown" or "pose for a picture."

- Be specific. "The six-story residence hall" is better than "the tall residence hall."
- Never editorialize by describing emotions of those photographed. If readers can see that the subject is angry, sad or having a good time, the picture will speak for itself. If not, let it be.
- Photo credits should be wrapped in parentheses and placed at the end of a caption. Example:

Thomas Yorke reads from his book "The World's Ugliest Holiday Sweaters" Tuesday in the Millennium Student Center.

(Photo by August Jennewein)

- Photos sent to the news media should be credited as follows:

(UMSL photo-August Jennewein).

carmaker

carwash

centers

See **academic units**.

CEO, CFO, COO

- CEO is acceptable in all references for "chief executive officer," who typically has the primary decision-making authority. The role is separate from "chief financial officer" and "chief operating officer," but an individual may hold more than one of these positions at a time.
- Use "chief financial officer" and "chief operating officer" on first reference, and "CFO" and "COO" thereafter.
- Always spell out lesser-known "C-level" positions such as "chief administrative officer" or "chief risk officer."

chair

- It's a noun. Do not use it as a verb.
- Use it to describe a UMSL faculty member who heads an academic unit or formal committee.
Example:

Lars Beetlestein, chair of the Department of English, has written three critically acclaimed novels.
- Capitalize when written as part of a full, proper title that appears before a name. Example:

Department of History Chair Jane Smith overhauled the performance evaluation process.
- Lowercase when appearing elsewhere or for casual, temporary positions. Examples:

The search committee is headed by Joe Foster, chair of the Department of Philosophy. The meeting chair David Hetfield didn't have much to say.
- If a non-UMSL organization uses "chairperson," "chairman" or "chairwoman" as part of a formal title for an office, using "chairperson," "chairman" or "chairwoman" is acceptable.

chairman, chairwoman

See **chair**.

chancellor

See **George, Tom** and **titles, academic**.

Chancellor's Council

See **University of Missouri–St. Louis Chancellor's Council**.

cities

- Use the name of the city, town or village with the state. A comma separates the city and state, and a second comma separates the state from the rest of the sentence. Example:

Shelly will travel to Hazelwood, Missouri, and Springfield, Missouri.

- The following U.S. cities stand alone without a state:

Atlanta	Milwaukee
Baltimore	Minneapolis
Boston	New Orleans
Chicago	New York
Cincinnati	Oklahoma City
Cleveland	Philadelphia
Dallas	Phoenix
Denver	Pittsburgh
Detroit	St. Louis
Honolulu	Salt Lake City
Houston	San Antonio
Indianapolis	San Diego
Las Vegas	San Francisco
Los Angeles	Seattle
Miami	Washington

See **states**.

citywide

classes

Lowercase names of classes: graduate, senior, junior, sophomore or freshman. Do not use "postgraduate."

See **freshman**.

class names

See **course names**.

clichés

Avoid them.

CO-

- Use a hyphen when forming nouns, adjectives and verbs that indicate occupation or status. Examples:

co-author, co-pilot, co-defendant, co-star, co-worker and co-owner.

- Avoid redundancies.

WRONG: Woodward and Bernstein co-wrote "All the President's Men."

RIGHT: Woodward co-wrote "All the President's Men."
Woodward and Bernstein wrote "All the President's Men."

- Do not use a hyphen in other instances. Examples:
coed, coeducation, coexist, cooperate and coordinate.
- NOTE: "Cooperate," "coordinate" and related words are exceptions to the rule that a hyphen is used if a prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows begins with the same vowel.

collective nouns

- Collective nouns are nouns that are singular in form, but mean a group of things, such as:
board, class, committee, crowd, family, faculty or team.
- Use a singular verb or pronoun if the noun is being used in the sense of a single unit operating together in agreement. Use a plural pronoun or verb if the noun is used to name a group operating as individuals or in disagreement. Examples:
The jury reached its (not their) verdict. The committee set its (not their) agenda. The faculty (acting separately) have written books. The faculty (acting at same time) has left the building.
- NOTE: Check with the story's source when collective nouns are used and it's not clear whether the group acted individually or as a unit.
See **faculty**.

colleges

See **academic units**.

collegewide

colloquia, colloquium

"Colloquia" is plural. "Colloquium" is singular.

commas

- Use commas to separate elements in a series, but do not put a comma before the conjunction in a simple series. Examples:
The uniforms are red, white and gold. She likes Jeff, Justin and Tom.
- But put a comma before the concluding conjunction in a series if an integral part of the series requires a conjunction. Example:
I had coffee, toast, and bacon and eggs for brunch.
- Also use a comma before the concluding conjunction in a complex series of phrases. Example:
The most important attributes the candidate has are her ability to complete multiple tasks while under pressure, knowledge of industry standards and regulations, and willingness and desire to regularly travel.
- Use commas to separate a series of adjectives that are equal in rank. Example:
He is a kind, generous man.
- Use commas to introduce a complete one-sentence quotation within a paragraph. Example:
Tom Jones said, "I can't understand her fascination with matchbooks."
- Use commas instead of periods at the end of a quote that is followed by attribution. Example:
"Give me that back," Jennifer Smith said.
- Use commas to separate a city and state or a city and country. A second comma should separate the state from the rest of the sentence. Examples:
Shelly will travel to Hazelwood, Missouri, and Springfield, Missouri. The film will be shot in Vancouver, British Columbia, and Los Angeles.
- When a conjunction such as "and," "but" or "for" links two clauses that could stand alone as separate sentences, use a comma before the conjunction. Example:
White killed the opening number, and he never looked back.

commencement

Lowercase in all uses.

committees

Uppercase names of committees. Example:

Smith is a member of the Web Planning Group.

company names

Use proper name of the company – as the company identifies itself – on first reference. Use the organization’s website for guidance (e.g., If The Boeing Company, refers to itself as “Boeing” on first reference on its website, then UMSL should use “Boeing” on first reference, too.)

compose, comprise

- Compose means to form by putting together, to form the substance of, to constitute. Example:

The School of Fine and Performing Arts at UMSL is composed of three departments.

- Comprise means to be made of, include. Example:

The School of Fine and Performing Arts comprises three departments.

- Never say “comprised of”; say “composed of.”

concept, conceptualize

- In general, avoid using these vague words. Instead, substitute: idea, notion, scheme or envision.
- It’s acceptable to use “concept” when referring to something complex.

WRONG: Dean Jim Smith’s concept of parking lot use.

RIGHT: Einstein’s concept of the universe.

Coordinating Board for Higher Education

Not Coordinating Board of Higher Education.

countless, myriad

Avoid these terms when possible.

course names

- When the full, proper names of courses are used, capitalize the names. If course numbers appear with course names, use Arabic numbers. Examples:

Bob Jones enrolled in Introduction to Communication and Contemporary Political Ideologies. Professor Bill Smith teaches Quality Management 430 and Management Science Methods 482.

- For informal use of course names, do not capitalize. Examples:

Jean Taylor took ethics and economics this semester.
Jim Jones earned A’s in both of his history classes.

course work

Two words.

curator

First reference: Joe Smith, curator, or Curator Joe Smith. Your run of copy determines whether you identify the University of Missouri System along with a curator’s name and title. Second reference: Smith or curator.

See **Curators of the University of Missouri System**.

Curators of the University of Missouri System

- It’s the first reference to the governing body of the University of Missouri System. The body is composed of an appointed member from each congressional district. University of Missouri System Board of Curators is also acceptable on first reference. Acceptable second references: curators, board and board of curators.

- Use the singular pronoun “it” when the group acts as a unit or in agreement. Use the plural pronoun “they” when the group acts as individuals or in disagreement.
- Do not capitalize “curator” or “curators” when used alone.

See **collective nouns**.

Curators’ Professor

- It’s a title awarded to a faculty member who holds the prestigious academic appointment known as a “Curators’ Professorship.” Outstanding University of Missouri System scholars with established reputations earn these professorships.
- It’s a proper noun. Always capitalize. Use an apostrophe at the end of “Curators,” per the UM System Collected Rules and Regulations. Examples:

Joe Smith is a Curators’ Professor of Biology. Joe Smith, Curators’ Professor of Biology, has worked at the university for 20 years. She is a Curators’ Professor.

Curators Scholar

- It’s a title earned by University of Missouri System students who are selected in recognition of outstanding academic achievement in high school and potential for outstanding academic achievement in college.
- It’s a proper noun. Always capitalize. Do not use an apostrophe, per the UM System Collected Rules and Regulations. Examples:

Bud Jones is a Curators Scholar. Bud Jones, Curators Scholar, is a gifted public speaker. Second reference: Jones, scholar (the person) or scholarship (the award).

Curators’ Teaching Professor

- It’s a title awarded to a faculty member who holds the prestigious academic appointment known as a “Curators’ Teaching Professorship.” Outstanding University of Missouri System teachers with established reputations earn these professorships.

- It’s a proper noun. Always capitalize. Use an apostrophe at the end of “Curators”, per the UM System Collected Rules and Regulations. Examples:

Joe Smith is a Curators’ Teaching Professor of Biology. Joe Smith, Curators’ Teaching Professor of Biology, has worked at the university for 20 years. She is a Curators’ Teaching Professor.

cutting edge and leading edge

Trite, vague phrases that tell readers nothing. Be more specific.

See **state of the art**.

cutlines

See **captions**.

cybersecurity (adjective, noun)

dash, en dash

- A dash is a punctuation mark that’s longer than a hyphen and is used differently.
- An en dash is a specific kind of dash that’s about the width of the letter “N.”
- To type an en dash on a PC, simultaneously press the control and minus keys. The minus key is on the numeric keypad. For a Mac, simultaneously press the option and hyphen keys.
- Use a single en dash, with no spaces to punctuate “University of Missouri–St. Louis” and other similar constructions. An en dash can join one word to a compound (e.g. “a jazz–rock ‘n’ roll hybrid”), but a hyphen cannot. “St. Louis” must be joined to “University of Missouri” with an en dash.
- Use dashes to denote an abrupt change in thought in a sentence or an emphatic pause. Examples:

They will drive to Detroit next week – if his car is repaired in time. Jones created the sculpture – he sketched the first concept in 1978 – for the Bank of America branch on 13th Street.

- Use a dash before an author’s or composer’s name at the end of a quotation. Example:

“If you tell the truth you don’t have to remember anything.”
– Mark Twain.

See **University of Missouri–St. Louis**.

database

dates

- Always use Arabic figures, without “st,” “nd,” “rd” or “th.”
- If referring to the most recent date (past tense) or the most immediate date (future tense), avoid using the year in copy. For example, if copy is published on Dec. 2, 2010, any dates on or between Dec. 3, 2009, and Dec. 1, 2011, can be written without the year. Examples:

Jim left for Russia on June 1. Marc Jones will be eligible for parole on Feb. 15, 2020.

- If referring to a day of the week that is within the previous six days (past tense) or upcoming six days (future tense), use only the day of the week. If the day is outside that range, use only the date. Examples:

John bought groceries on Tuesday. Jane’s co-workers will throw her a birthday party on Friday. Jim’s last appointment was April 9.

- The construction “Wednesday, Oct. 8” is redundant. The date “Oct. 8” alone is preferred.
- Ranges of dates within a single month can be written two ways: Oct. 8–10 or Oct. 8 to Oct. 10. But ranges of dates that span two, or more, different months must be written: Oct. 8 to Dec. 2.

See **days of the week; months; time, date and place; and years**.

day care (noun)

day-care (adjective)

daylong

days of the week

- Capitalize them.
- Do not abbreviate, except when needed in tabular format. Use three letters without a period: Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri and Sat.
- Ranges of days can be written two ways: Monday–Thursday or Monday to Thursday.
- If referring to a day of the week that is within the previous six days (past tense) or upcoming six days (future tense), use only the day of the week. If the day is outside that range, use only the date. Examples:

John bought groceries on Tuesday. Jane’s co-workers will throw her a birthday party on Friday. Jim’s last appointment was April 9.

- The construction “Wednesday, Oct. 8” is redundant. The date “Oct. 8” alone is sufficient.

See **dates and time, date and place**.

daytime

dean’s list

Lowercase in all uses.

decade-long (adjective)

decision making (noun)

decision-making (adjective)

Department of Athletics

It's the full, proper name for the department. Use it on first reference. Acceptable second references: department and athletics department.

See **athletic facilities, Louie** and **UMSL Tritons**.

departments

See **academic units**.

Des Lee Collaborative Vision

- It's the full, proper name for an organization housed at UMSL. Acceptable second references: DLCV and organization. Do not use “collaborative” (adjective) as a second reference.

dilemma

Not a synonym for: predicament, jam, trouble or problem. A dilemma is a situation in which someone faces two alternative courses of action, both of which are likely to be unpleasant, such as: the devil or the deep blue sea.

WRONG: Professor Doe's dilemma is finding time to publish papers. The dilemma our department faces is not having enough money.

RIGHT: Professor Doe's problem is that he can't find enough time to publish papers. The problem our department faces is not having enough money.

dimensions

- Use figures, and spell out “inches,” “feet,” “yards,” etc. to indicate depth, height, length and width. Hyphenate dimensions that are used as adjectives. Examples:

He is 5 feet 6 inches tall. The baseball team drafted a 7-foot pitcher. The trailer is 10 feet long. The tile is 12 inches by 12 inches, the 12-by-12 tile.
- Use an apostrophe and quotation marks to indicate feet and inches (6'2") in technical contexts only.

directions and regions

When indicating a compass direction, lowercase: north, south, east, northern, northeast, etc. Capitalize when these words designate a region. Examples:

The bird flew east. The tornado headed south. Crop yields are low in the Midwest. He has a Southern accent. Snowstorms pounded the East Coast.

disabled

- In general, do not describe an individual as disabled unless clearly pertinent. If a description must be used, identify the disability and how much the person's physical or mental performance is affected.

WRONG: Professor Doe is disabled.

RIGHT: Professor Doe is visually impaired, hearing-impaired, has cerebral palsy, a partial hearing loss or a speech impairment.

- Do not use “handicapped” or “crippled” when referring to a person with a disability. The words are offensive.
- Do not sensationalize by writing a person: is afflicted with, is crippled with, suffers from or is a victim of.
- Put people first, not their disability. Examples:

people who have arthritis, children who cannot hear or people with disabilities.
- Do not use the term wheelchair-bound or variations. Consider writing: uses a wheelchair or braces, walks with crutches, etc.
- Use the term “interpreter” for those who assist people who are hearing-impaired.

WRONG: Bill Doe is a signer.
RIGHT: Bill Doe is an interpreter for people who are hearing-impaired.
- When it's necessary to make a distinction, people without disabilities should be referred to as non-disabled.

disadvantaged

See **underserved**.

disc, disk

- Use “disc” for phonograph records and related terms (“disc jockey”), optical and laser-based devices (“laserdisc” and “videodisc”) and for “disc brake.”
- Use “disk” for computer-related references and medical references, such as “slipped disk.”

doctor

See **titles, doctor**.

doctoral, doctorate

- A person: is a doctoral candidate in a program; works on a doctoral degree; or works on a doctorate.
- Don’t write “doctorate degree” because “doctorate” is a degree. Examples:

Bill Doe earned a doctorate. Jim Smith earned a doctoral degree.

editor-in-chief

Use hyphens. Capitalize when used as a formal title before a name. Example:

Editor-in-Chief Dan Jones has worked at the newspaper for 20 years.

elderly

It’s a sensitive word for some people. Use it sparingly and carefully. Don’t use as a description for an individual, but the word can be used generically, as in: home for the elderly or concern for the elderly. Likewise, watch such descriptions as: old man, old woman, old people and senior citizen.

elected officials

See **titles, elected**.

ellipsis (...)

- In general, treat an ellipsis as a three-letter word, constructed with three periods and two spaces as shown.
- Use an ellipsis to indicate the deletion of one or more words in condensing quotes, texts and documents. Do not delete copy that would distort meaning.

email

- Acceptable in all references for “electronic mail.”
- It can function as a noun, verb and adjective.

emeritus

Denotes individuals who have retired and retain their rank or title. Place “emeritus” after the formal title. Examples:

Bill Doe, associate professor emeritus of journalism, and Professor Emeritus Bill Doe.

The plural is “emeriti.” Example:

Bill Doe, Bob Doe and Ruth Doe, professors emeriti of journalism, will speak tomorrow.

ensure

See **assure, ensure, insure**.

entitled

It’s the right to do or have something, not a synonym for “titled” or “called.” Examples:

That company’s employees normally are entitled to severance pay. The book is titled “The Night of the Gun.”

equal opportunity/ADA institution

It’s the correct phrase to use on publications, instead of: equal opportunity employer. “ADA” is an abbreviation for the Americans with Disabilities Act. The article “an” may precede the phrase. Example:

UMSL is an equal opportunity/ADA institution.

events

Random events occur. Planned events take place. Both happen.

every day (adverb)

everyday (adjective)

faculty

- Use only when referring to the singular, collective body of instructors at the university. Example:
The faculty at UMSL is known for its research and teaching excellence.
- Use “faculty member” or “faculty members” when referring to an individual instructor or small group within the collective body of instructors. Examples:
The faculty member’s research was written about in The New York Times. The criminology and criminal justice faculty members were honored for their research.
- The phrase “student–faculty ratio” is incorrect. UMSL has only one faculty. Use “student–instructor ratio” or “student–teacher ratio.”
- “Staff” follows the same rules as faculty.

fellow, fellowship

- Uppercase in combination with the name of a granting organization or when used as a title preceding a name. Examples:
Public Policy Research Center Fellow, Fulbright Fellowship, Faculty Fellow Elliott Smith.
- When used alone, use lowercase. Example:
Elliott Smith is a faculty fellow of academic affairs.
- Write “fellow of” (not “fellow in”) an organization.

financial aid office

See **Office of Student Financial Aid**.

firsthand

first names

See **names and titles, courtesy**.

fiscal year

- Always use figures without commas, and write as single-year or range. Examples:
Jim completed accounting for fiscal year 2004-05. He did not have the figures for fiscal year 1999 or fiscal year 2003.
- The abbreviation “fy” or “FY” only is acceptable in tabular material or in a run of copy that “fiscal year” often is repeated.
See **years**.

following and follow(ed)

Avoid using as a preposition. Instead, recast sentence to use either “after” or “afterward.”

WRONG: He spoke following dinner.
RIGHT: He spoke after dinner.

follow up (verb)

follow-up (noun, adjective)

foreign, foreigner

Do not use when referring to students or countries. Instead, write: international student(s), country(ies) and international(s). Use “foreign” to describe: words, languages, money or names.

forward

Not “forwards.”

Founders Dinner

It’s the full, proper name for the annual event that recognizes distinguished UMSL alumni, donors, faculty and staff. The apostrophe is not used in “Founders Dinner.” Acceptable second references: dinner and event.

Founders Professor

- It’s a title awarded to a tenured faculty member who has demonstrated excellence, retired and remained a member of the university faculty.
- It’s a proper noun. Always capitalize. Examples:

Joe Doe is a Founders Professor of Political Science. Joe Doe, Founders Professor of Political Science, has worked at the university for 40 years. He is a Founders Professor.

fractions

- Spell out amounts less than one, using hyphens between the words: one-half, two-thirds, four-fifths.
- Use figures for precise amounts greater than one, converting to decimals when practical.
- Some computer–software programs provide a function for creating fractions combined with whole numbers. When that option is not available, use figures with a space between the whole number and the fraction: 2 1/3, 5 9/10 or 8 13/16.

freelance, freelancer

“Freelance” is a verb and adjective. “Freelancer” is a noun.

freshman

It describes the class and a member of that class. Use “freshmen” as a plural noun.

from ... to

- This construction denotes a logical progression, not a range. Examples:

from A to Z; from girlhood to womanhood; and from stockroom to boardroom.

- To write “activities that range from bowling to fishing” makes readers wonder what goes in between. To write “from bowling to fishing to golfing to swimming” is worse. Instead, write: activities as diverse as bowling, fishing, golfing and swimming.

See **to ... from**.

full time, full-time

Hyphenate when used as a compound modifier.

Examples:

Bill Doe works full time as a chemist. Our department has 45 full-time students.

fundraiser, fundraising

It’s one word in all cases.

general assembly

See **Missouri General Assembly**.

goodbye

grade point average

- The abbreviation “GPA” is acceptable on first reference when used with figures. Example:

We require a GPA of 2.5 (A=4.0).

- Spell out and do not hyphenate when used alone. Example:

Your grade point average is important.

grades

Write: three A's, two B's and one C; and an A+ and a C-.

graduate admissions

See **Office of Graduate Admissions**.

graduate assistantships

Graduate School

- It's a proper noun. Capitalize it. Acceptable second reference: school.
- Students who seek master's and doctoral degrees at UMSL are enrolled in the Graduate School, except for those in optometry.

See **majors**.

gray

Not grey. But write "greyhound" when describing the animal or the bus company.

groundbreaking

handicapped

See **disabled**.

headlines

- They are the most important part of stories; headlines are read five times more often than body copy.
- They should be written as if the reader will read nothing else. Headlines must be accurate, clear and compatible with the story. Avoid using clichés.
- Capitalize only the first word and proper nouns.

- Proper nouns are often too long to present in their entirety within a headline. When proper nouns are too long, abbreviate them. And capitalize the abbreviated versions in the headline. Example:

Business College launches new degree program ("Business College" was used in lieu of "College of Business Administration.")

- Use Arabic numerals for all numbers in headlines, even numbers appearing at the beginning of headlines.

- Use single quotes for quotation marks. Example:

Author of 'South City Son' captivates sold-out audience

- Use "US," "UK" and "UN" (no periods) in all headlines.
- Use "to" not "will" when expressing future tense.

RIGHT: U2 to perform at UMSL.

WRONG: U2 will perform at UMSL.

- Avoid using "a," "an," "the" or "and" unless part of a title or formal name. Use commas in place of "and." Example:

Cardinals, Red Sox advance to World Series.

headquarters

Takes singular or plural verb. Don't use "headquartered" as a verb.

health care (noun)

health-care (adjective)

hip-hop

home page

incorporated

See **company names**.

indoor (adjective)

indoors (adverb)

Innovative Technology Enterprises

A UMSL incubator for startup companies. ITE is acceptable on second reference.

instructor

A faculty member is an “instructor in an area.”
Examples:

Joe Williams is an instructor in English. Bill Ward, instructor in business administration, has taught at the university for a long time.

See **titles, academic.**

internet

internet addresses

See **URL.**

interschool

interstate

Use the form “Interstate 70” on first reference. Thereafter, use “I-70” or “interstate.” This rule applies to all interstate highways.

in the ... at the

See **locations of events.**

it

- Avoid using the vague “it” when referring to something mentioned three or four paragraphs earlier.

- If at all possible, explain all “its.” Your readers will appreciate it.

italic type

- Use quotation marks around the titles of: books, movies, television programs, recordings, paintings, artwork, photographs, ships, spacecraft, theater productions, legal cases, books of the Bible and works of music.
- Do not use italic type or quotation marks for the Bible and reference books, such as almanacs, dictionaries, encyclopedias and handbooks.
- Do not use italic type or quotation marks for newspapers, magazines or journals.

RIGHT: The New York Times.

WRONG: The *New York Times* and “The New York Times.”

See **quotation marks** and **titles, composition.**

judgment

Not judgement.

junior and senior

- Abbreviate as “Jr.” and “Sr.” only with full names of people. Do not precede by a comma.

WRONG: Billy Doe, Jr.

RIGHT: Billy Doe Jr.

- When necessary to distinguish between father and son in second reference: the elder Doe or the younger Doe.

keynote address

Not keynote speech.

kick off (verb)

kickoff (noun)

land-grant

Hyphenate when used as an adjective. Example:

The University of Missouri became a land-grant institution in 1870.

laptop

lecturer

A faculty member is a “lecturer in an area.”

Examples:

Joe Williams is a lecturer in English. Bill Ward, lecturer in business administration, has taught at the university for a long time.

See **titles, academic**.

legislature

See **Missouri General Assembly**.

libraries

- “University Libraries” is the full, proper name of the organization that provides information and resources to UMSL.
- The full, proper names of UMSL’s libraries and archives are:
 - * St. Louis Mercantile Library
 - * Thomas Jefferson Library
 - * University Archives
 - * Western Historical Manuscript Collection
- On first reference, use the proper names of the libraries. Acceptable second references: Jefferson library, Mercantile library, archives, collection and library.

lifelong, lifestyle, lifetime

lists

- Run-in lists and vertical lists are the two primary list styles. Both have pros and cons. Run-in lists take up less space. Vertical lists are easier to read. Use a run-in list if the list and entries are concise. Otherwise, use a vertical list. Vertical lists also are recommended whenever list entries are complete sentences.
- When using enumeration in run-in and vertical lists, use numbers when it is important for the list to be sequential or prioritized. Use letters when the element of choice is involved or to avoid confusion, such as when list entries are numbers. Example:

Attendance at the last three concerts was (a) 1,007, (b) 559 and (c) 888.

- Run-in lists are cast within a sentence. They differ from vertical lists in that they are not broken out into bulleted outline form.
- Separate run-in lists with commas. Semicolons can also be used to separate run-in lists if entries are long or include commas. Examples:

The colors of the flag are red, white and blue. Susan has lived in Springfield, Illinois; Hannibal, Missouri; and Dayton, Ohio.

- Letters and numbers used in a run-in list should be wrapped in parentheses. Example:

Creating UMSL Magazine involves (1) reporting, (2) writing, (3) editing, (4) photographing, (5) designing, (6) printing and (7) distributing.
- Vertical lists are depicted in outline form. Use a bullet, asterisk, letter or number to begin each entry. Do not capitalize the first letter of a list entry unless it is a complete sentence. Never use commas or conjunctions between list entries. Example:

In his speech, the chancellor reported:

 - * New records were set for enrollment this year.
 - * External funding for research experienced a 75 percent increase since 2000.
 - * The university received an award for its positive impact on the St. Louis-area business community.

- Letters and numbers used in a vertical list should be followed with a period. Example:

Several UMSL Tritons received all-conference honors, including:

- a. Frank Black, men's basketball
- b. Carrie Brownstein, women's basketball
- c. Win Butler, baseball
- d. Kim Deal, women's tennis
- e. Jack White, baseball

locations of events

- When writing the location of an event, use the “in the ... at the” construction. Examples:

The blood drive will take place in the Century Rooms at the Millennium Student Center. The concert will begin at 7 p.m. Tuesday in the auditorium at the J.C. Penney Conference Center.

- For locations with a room number, follow these examples:

The class meets in 401 Clark Hall. The client and designer will meet in 252 General Services Building.

long term (noun)

long-term (adjective)

long time (noun)

longtime (adjective)

Louie

- It's the name of the mascot of UMSL and the UMSL Tritons.
- On first reference, give the reader a quick definition. Examples:

Louie the Triton burst onto the court on the band's opening note. Louie, the UMSL mascot, waved his hand at the fans.

Children flocked around the UMSL mascot, Louie.

majors

- When identifying undergraduate students at UMSL and their majors and school years in a run of copy, refer to the following examples:

Joe Smith, a junior anthropology major at UMSL, is running for treasurer. Jane Lemp, a sophomore nursing major at UMSL, wrote a paper about sexually transmitted diseases.

- When identifying students who graduated from UMSL or who are pursuing master's degrees and their fields of study, refer to the following example:

Jim Smith, who's pursuing a master's degree in biology at UMSL, ran the meeting Tuesday.

- When identifying students who are pursuing doctoral degrees at UMSL and their fields of study, refer to the following example:

Jenny Hutton, who's pursuing a doctoral degree in chemistry at UMSL, completed the exam early.

- When identifying students who are pursuing optometry degrees at UMSL and their fields of study, refer to the following example:

Joe Smith, a second-year optometry student at UMSL, began his clinical work at the Center for Eye Care.

master's degree

See **academic degrees**.

media

- It's a noun. It's the plural form of “medium.”
- It's the means of communication – or the tools used to store and deliver information – such as newspapers, radio, television, books, films, etc.
- “Media” also is used to refer to “news media,” a specific part of the media that focuses on presenting news to the public.

midnight

Midnight is part of the day that is ending, not the one that is beginning. Write:

midnight (not 12 a.m. or 12 midnight).

See **noon**.

Midwest, Midwestern

See **directions** and **regions**.

Missouri General Assembly

Use on first reference when identifying the state's legislative body. Acceptable second references: assembly and legislature.

Missouri University of Science and Technology

It's the full, proper name for the university in Rolla, Mo. Use it on first reference. Acceptable second references: Missouri S&T, university, campus and Rolla campus.

mix, mixture

“Mix” is a verb. “Mixture” is a noun.

WRONG: The department has a mix of students.

RIGHT: The department has a mixture of students.

modifiers

Avoid vague, overused, all-purpose modifiers, such as: a lot, kind of, sort of, very, really, quite, somewhat, both, new, rather and wide.

monthlong

months

- Capitalize them.

- When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec.
- Spell out when using alone.
- When a phrase lists only a month and a year, spell out the month, and do not separate the month and year with a comma. Example:

She left the country in January 2003.

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

He was sentenced Jan. 11, 1999, in Florissant, Mo.

- If referring to the most recent date (past tense) or the most immediate date (future tense), avoid using the year in copy. Examples:

Jim left for Russia on June 1. That prisoner will be eligible for parole on Feb. 15, 2020.

See **dates; time, date and place; and years**.

more important, most important

Use. It's not “importantly.”

multi- and semi-

In general, do not use a hyphen. Examples:

semifinal, semiannual, multicultural and multipurpose.

Hyphenate to avoid repeated vowels. Example:

semi-invalid.

multicultural

multidisciplinary

names

- Use first and last names of the person. Examples:
Bernard Campbell and Mitch Martin. On second reference: Campbell and Martin.

- In general, call children 15 or younger by their first name on second reference.

- For a married person who has a two-word surname joined by a hyphen, use the entire surname on second reference. Example:

Michele Lee-Smith works at the service station. Lee-Smith has worked there for five years.

- For a married person who has a two-word surname not joined by a hyphen, use the second name on second reference. Example:

Jackie Brandt McDonald lives near an office complex. McDonald walks to work every day.

- When it is necessary to distinguish between two people with the same last name, use the first name on second reference. Example:

Jake and Elwood Blues merely borrowed the car to complete their mission. Elwood did most of the driving.

- In certain situations, use both names or add a title to the last name to avoid confusion. Example:

UMSL Chancellor Tom George met with Express Scripts President and Chief Executive Officer George Paz. Chancellor George gave a presentation.

See **junior and senior** and **titles, courtesy**.

nicknames

Place nicknames in quotes, not parentheses.

Examples:

Bernard "Beanie" Campbell and Frank "The Tank" Ricardo.

9/11

See Sept. 11.

non-

In general, do not hyphenate. Use a hyphen, however, before proper nouns or in awkward combinations, such as: non-nuclear. Examples without hyphen:

noncredit, nonprofit, nonvoting and nontraditional.

nonprofit

noon

Noon is the middle part of the day. Write:

noon (not 12 p.m. or 12 noon).

See **midnight**.

North Campus

numerals

- Use Arabic numerals for: addresses, ages, aircraft, spacecraft, clothes sizes, dates, dimensions, highways, recipes, speeds, sports, time, weights, years and percentages (except at the beginning of a sentence).

- Use Arabic numerals before: millions, billions or trillions.

- Use Arabic numerals for money. Starting with a single million, write as:

\$12 million, not \$12,000,000.

- Use Arabic numerals for number designations.

Examples:

No. 1, No. 15 and Nos. 1 and 15.

- Use Arabic numerals for temperatures. But spell out "zero." And below "zero," spell out "minus."

Examples:

This afternoon, the high temperature may reach 35 degrees. The temperature may drop to zero. The average temperature for January was minus 5 degrees.

- Use Arabic numerals for all numbers, even numbers appearing at the beginning of the headline.

- Numbers with suffixes -nd, -rd, -st and -th are used for: political divisions (1st Ward); military sequences (1st Lt. or 7th Fleet); courts (2nd District Court);

streets after the ninth; and amendments to the U.S. Constitution after Ninth. Examples:

First Amendment and 10th Amendment.

- Use words instead of figures for: numbers less than 10; numbers starting a sentence, except for a year; casual uses of numbers (Thanks a million!); and fractions less than one (one-third).
- Use Roman numerals for: man who is the third or later in his family to bear a name; king; queen; pope; or world war. Examples:

John D. Rockefeller III, Pope John Paul II, Queen Elizabeth II and World War I. NOTE: Do not insert commas between the last word and Roman numeral.

See **fractions**.

office

Capitalize when used as part of a full, proper name. Examples:

Kate is an administrative assistant in the Office of Alumni Relations. Jim is a counselor in the Office of Graduate Admissions.

Office of Student Financial Aid

Use it on first reference. Acceptable second references: financial aid, financial aid office and office.

OK, OK'd, OK'ing, OKs

- “OK” is an abbreviation for “oll korrekt,” a facetious misspelling of “all correct.”
- Do not use “okay.”

ongoing

It means still in existence. Do not use “ongoing” as a modifier. Doing so is redundant.

WRONG: The ongoing exhibit runs through March.
RIGHT: The exhibit runs through March.

online

Do not capitalize unless part of a proper name.

op-ed

It’s a noun or adjective that designates an opinion column or newspaper page, usually the one opposite the editorial page. Examples:

The op-ed on gun control stirred debate. Jim edits the op-ed page.

open-minded

page numbers

- Always use figures, and capitalize “page” when used with a figure. Examples:

Page 1 and Page 10.

- When a letter is appended to the figure, capitalize it, but do not use a hyphen. Example:

Page 20A.

- Exception: a Page One story.

part time, part-time

Hyphenate as a compound modifier. Examples:

Two part-time students work here. He attends school part time.

per

Save this word for such Latinate uses as: per capita and per diem. Use “a” or “each” instead. Examples:

Bill Doe signs up for three credit hours each semester. The fee is \$54 a credit hour.

percent

- It's one word. It takes a singular verb when standing alone. It also takes a singular verb when a singular direct object follows the construction "a percentage of." Examples:

Professor Doe said 60 percent was a failing grade. The candidate said 60 percent of the vote was enough to win.

- "Percent" takes a plural verb when a plural direct object follows the construction "a percentage of." Example:

Fifty percent of the staff members were on vacation last week.

percentages

Use figures: 1 percent, 2.5 percent or 0.6 percent.

See **ranges**.

person, people

When speaking of an individual, use "person." In plural uses, it's "people." Examples:

One person went to the seminar. Thousands of people attended the concert.

poor

"Underserved" or "disadvantaged" are preferred.

See **underserved**.

postdoctoral

One word. Do not use "postdoc."

pre-

Use hyphen if a prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows begins with same vowel, as in: pre-elect, pre-empt and pre-exist. Otherwise, most "pre-" words are treated as one. Examples:

prearrange, preregister, precollegiate, preprofessional and preseason.

presently

Use it to mean in a little while or shortly, but not to mean now or currently: Bill Doe will speak presently, not Bill Doe presently is the speaker. The latter is redundant.

prior to

"Before" is preferred. Examples:

Professor Bill Doe will speak in Kansas City, Mo., before coming to Chicago. Students will be given a quiz before spring break.

professor

- Be cognizant of academic rank when using this term, both when it is part of a formal title and in lowercase instances. Casual use is generally acceptable in more informal and necessarily brief contexts, such as Twitter and in headlines, but keep in mind that "professor" typically implies a "full professor" rather than an instructor, assistant professor, lecturer or even associate professor and be specific where feasible.
- A faculty member is a "professor of an area."

Examples:

Dave Johnson is a professor of English. Professor of Accounting Walter Smith has taught the introductory course for 20 years.

See **titles, academic**.

Quad

The quadrangle area on North Campus bordered by Thomas Jefferson Library, Social Sciences & Business Building/Tower, Express Scripts Hall, Lucas Hall and Clark Hall.

quotation marks

- Quotation marks should surround the exact words of a speaker or writer. Always identify the speaker or writer with attribution.

- Quotation marks should always surround titles of: poems, songs, presentations, talks, music movements, speeches, lectures, research articles and papers, individual television episodes, short stories, book chapters, magazine articles and news headlines (if used in run of copy).
- Use quotation marks around the titles of: books, movies, television programs, recordings, paintings, artwork, photographs, ships, spacecraft, theater productions, legal cases, books of the Bible and works of music.
- Do not use quotation marks or italic type for the Bible and reference books, such as almanacs, dictionaries, encyclopedias and handbooks.
- Do not use quotation marks or italic type for newspapers, magazines or journals. Example:

The New York Times, not *The New York Times* or “The New York Times.”

See **italic type and titles, composition and words as words.**

races and nationalities

Capitalize proper names of races, nationalities, tribes and people. Examples:

African American, Caucasian, Italian, Eskimo, Cherokee or Chinese.

See **African American.**

radio stations

- On first reference, identify a radio station with its four call letters followed by its frequency, which should be enclosed in parentheses. Example:

Bob Slydell works at KDHX (88.1 FM). On second reference: KDHX, radio station or station.
- Exception: St. Louis Public Radio | 90.7 FM. On second reference: St. Louis Public Radio, radio station or station.

- For radio stations outside the St. Louis area, provide the city where the station is located. Examples:

Peter Gibbons was featured in a story on WBEZ (91.5 FM) in Chicago. Bob Porter works at WHYN (560 AM) in Springfield, Illinois.

See **St. Louis Public Radio | 90.7 FM.**

ranges

- Write: \$12 million to \$14 million.
Do not write: \$12 to \$14 million.

See **to ... from.**

re-

- In general, use a hyphen if the word that follows “re” begins with an “e.” Examples:

re-elect, re-election, re-enlist, re-establish and re-equip.

- For other words, the sense of the word should govern whether to use a hyphen. Examples:

recover (regain) and re-cover (cover again); reform (improve) and re-form (form again); and resign (quit) and re-sign (sign again).

really

Avoid using.

regions

See **directions and regions.**

rock ‘n’ roll

RSVP

- The abbreviation for the French “repondez s’il vous plait,” it means “please reply.”
- Do not use periods: R.S.V.P.

round-trip

St. Louis

- Use it alone without additional description when identifying the city in Missouri. Do not use “city of St. Louis” or “ St. Louis City.”

RIGHT: Bill lives in St. Louis. Steve works in north St. Louis.
 WRONG: Jennifer lives in the City of St. Louis.

- But when referring to St. Louis’ municipal government, use “city of St. Louis.” Example:

The city of St. Louis began a major clean-up project of downtown.

- Other entities must be distinguished from the St. Louis. Examples:

Mary lives in St. Louis County. Jen is a St. Louis-area sales representative. Bill is from west St. Louis County.

See **cities**.

St. Louis Public Radio | 90.7 KWMU

It’s a public radio station that’s a service of UMSL. On first reference, identify the station as “ St. Louis Public Radio | 90.7 KWMU.” Acceptable second references are: St. Louis Public Radio, KWMU, radio station or station.

See **radio stations**.

says, said

- Among attributive verbs, “says” and “said” usually say it best. They’re short, clear, neutral and accurate. To avoid monotony, use substitutes: went on, continued or added. Avoid using: stated, declared, pointed out, noted, warned, charged, claimed or admitted.
- Never use verbs denoting non-verbal processes as attribution, such as: smiled, wept and laughed. One doesn’t smile or laugh words. One says them, smiling or laughing.

WRONG: “I’m fond of him,” she smiled.

RIGHT: “I’m fond of him,” she said, smiling.

- Generally place after the source in a quote.

RIGHT: “St. Louis is nice this time of year,” she said. “I’ll have what she’s having,” Wayne Campbell says.

WRONG: “St. Louis is nice this time of year,” said she. “I’ll have what she’s having,” says Wayne Campbell.

- Exception: “We need to play a hard nine,” said Tony La Russa, manager of the St. Louis Cardinals. When the title precedes the name, however, write: “We need to play a hard nine,” St. Louis Cardinals Manager Tony La Russa said.
- Attribution is needed when using quoting verbal or written words.

schools

See **academic units**.

seasons

Lowercase: spring, summer, fall and winter. Also lowercase derivatives, such as “springtime.” Make exceptions when it’s part of a formal name.

Examples:

Summer Olympics and Winter Olympics.

semi-

See **multi- and semi-**.

Sept. 11

It’s the term for describing the terrorist attacks in the United States on Sept. 11, 2001. Use “2001” if needed for clarity. Also acceptable is “9/11.”

sexism

When a description assumes both sexes are involved, avoid the masculine references “he” and “his.” In most cases, sentences can be rewritten from singular to plural without damaging meaning or structure.

WRONG: After a student has completed the application process, he is assigned an adviser.

RIGHT: After students have applied to the university, they are assigned advisers.

sign-up (noun and adjective)

sign up (verb)

South Campus

staff

See **faculty**.

state of the art

- Avoid this cliché. Instead, specifically describe the upgrade or improvement to office or equipment.

See **cutting edge** and **leading edge**.

State of the University Address

It's the full, proper name for the annual event held in the fall at UMSL. Use it on first reference. Acceptable second references: event and address.

states

- For postal addresses, use standard two-letter designations without punctuation: MO, IL and KS.
- Spell out state names when they stand alone and in tabular material or when combined with a city name. Examples:

She lives in Illinois. Tracy will stop in Springfield, Illinois, and Litchfield, Illinois.

See **addresses**.

statewide

step family, stepbrother, stepfather, stepmother, stepsister

structures

See **buildings on campus**.

Student Government Chamber

student identification

See **majors**.

systemwide

teaching assistant

Use it on first reference. Abbreviation is "TA." Plural is "TAs." The abbreviations are acceptable on second reference.

teen, teenager (nouns)

teenage (adjective)

Not teenaged.

telephone numbers

- Use figures.
- Use this form: 314-555-5555 (hyphens, not periods).
- For international numbers (from the United States), use "011" – the country code and telephone number. Example:

011-44-20-7534-1616 (hyphens, not periods).

- If extension numbers are needed, write: ext. 2 or ext. 4071. Use a comma to separate the main number from the extension. Example:

314-555-5555, ext. 101.

television stations

- On first reference, identify a television station with its four call letters followed by its channel, which should be enclosed in parentheses. Example:

Jim Smith works at KPLR (Channel 11). Acceptable second references: KPLR, television station or station.

- For television stations outside the St. Louis area, provide the city where the station is located.

Examples:

Milton Waddams was featured in a story on WGN (Channel 9) in Chicago. Bill Lumbergh works at WICS (Channel 20) in Springfield, Illinois.

that, which

- The defining or restrictive pronoun is “that.” Use “that” when introducing non-parenthetical clauses, and don’t set these clauses off with commas. Example:

She works in the office that was remodeled.

- The non-defining or non-restrictive pronoun is “which.” Use “which” when introducing parenthetical clauses, and set these clauses off with commas. Example:

The book, which was published in 1996, won a Caldecott Medal.

- In general, consider whether the meaning of the sentence would be changed if the clause were removed. If it would, use “that” with no comma. If it wouldn’t, use “which” with a comma.

that, who

Use “that” for objects and “who” for people.

WRONG: She’s the professor that won the award.

RIGHT: She’s the professor who won the award.

theater

In all uses write theater, not theatre, with exceptions for proper names.

time

- Use figures except for “noon” and “midnight.” Use a colon to separate hours from minutes. Examples:

11 a.m.; 1 p.m.; 3:30 p.m.; 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; and 3 to 5:15 p.m.

- Avoid redundant writing.

WRONG: 10 a.m. this morning or 10 p.m. tonight.

RIGHT: 10 a.m. or 10 p.m.

See **midnight; noon; and time, date and place.**

time, date, place

Try to structure sentences with the time appearing first, then date, then place. Also try to locate the time and date as close to a sentence’s verb as possible.

Examples:

Tim left the airport at 6 p.m. Feb. 12. Bill Doe’s class meets from 10 a.m. to noon Mondays and Fridays in 350 Macintosh Hall. Jim attended the annual convention Oct. 14 and 15 in Arlington, Virginia.

See **dates, months and time.**

titles

- In general, confine capitalization to formal job titles used directly before an individual’s name. Lowercase and spell out titles (separated by commas) when they are not used with an individual’s name or when they follow a name. Examples:

Ben Stone, online editor, was hired in the fall. Online Editor Ben Stone was hired in the fall.

- Lowercase titles that serve primarily as occupational descriptions. Examples:

novelist, movie star and farmer.

- Never use an occupational title with a single name.

WRONG: novelist Clancy and singer Jones.

RIGHT: novelist Tom Clancy and singer Tom Jones.

titles, academic

- Capitalize and spell out formal titles such as professor, associate professor, dean, director, chair, president or chancellor only when they precede a name. Examples:

Associate Professor Jonathan Hamm;
Jonathan Hamm, associate professor;
Professor and Chair Regina Fischer;
Regina Fischer, professor and chair.

- Lowercase modifiers unless it's a proper noun or full title. Examples:

political science Chair Frank Underwood;
Department of Political Science Chair Claire Underwood;
Professor of Music Antoine Batiste

- Lowercase academic titles when they appear elsewhere or when not written as full, proper titles. Examples:

The course will be taught by Sally Jones, associate professor of biology. The magazine was edited by instructor Jennifer Dodge. Bill Wayne, dean of the College of Education, accepted an offer to teach abroad.

- When writing titles for faculty members, do not allow the names of faculty members' colleges or departments to excessively influence your writing. Rather, make titles specific and accurate.

RIGHT: Ben Shipmen, associate professor of counseling and family therapy (specific).
WRONG: Ben Shipmen, associate professor of education (generic).
RIGHT: Laura Jones, professor of mathematics (accurate).
WRONG: Laura Jones, professor of mathematics and computer science (not accurate).

See **academic degrees; chairman, chairwoman; George, Tom;** and **titles, doctor.**

titles, composition

- Quotation marks should always surround titles of: poems, songs, presentations, talks, music movements, speeches, lectures, research articles and papers, individual television episodes, short stories, book chapters, magazine articles and news headlines (if used in run of copy).

- Use quotation marks around the titles of: books, movies, television programs, recordings, paintings, artwork, photographs, ships, spacecraft, theater productions, legal cases, books of the Bible and works of music.

- Do not use quotation marks or italic type for the Bible and reference books, such as almanacs, dictionaries, encyclopedias and handbooks.

- Do not use quotation marks or italic type for newspapers, magazines or journals. Example:

The New York Times, not *The New York Times* or "The New York Times."

See **italic type** and **quotation marks.**

titles, courtesy

- In general, do not use the courtesy titles: Miss, Ms., Mr. or Mrs. Use first and last names of the person: Sally Ray or Bill Doe. On second reference: Ray or Doe.
- Only use courtesy titles when needed to distinguish between or among people with the same last name.

See **junior** and **senior** and **names.**

titles, doctor

On first reference, use the title "Dr." for practitioners of the healing arts (including osteopaths, dentists and optometrists) but not holders of doctoral or honorary degrees.

See **titles, academic.**

titles, elected

- As formal titles before one or more names in regular text, use: Rep., Reps., Sen. and Sens. Examples:

Sen. Bill Wright; Sens. Wright and Smith; Rep. Tim Daly; and Reps. Daly and Davis. In other uses, spell out and lowercase: representative and senator.

- Add "U.S." or "state" before a title only if necessary to avoid confusion. Example:

U.S. Rep. Tim Daly and state Sen. Tom Williams spoke Tuesday on campus.

- Spell out other elective titles in all uses. Capitalize when they are used before a name. Lowercase in other uses.

titles, formal

- Formal titles generally denote a unique scope of authority, professional activity or academic accomplishment so specific that the designation becomes almost as much an integral part of an individual's identity as a proper name itself.
- Capitalize formal titles when they are used immediately before one or more names. Examples:

President Barack Obama or President Obama; Gov. Eric Greitens or Gov. Greitens; and Chancellor Tom George or Chancellor George.

- Lowercase titles that serve primarily as occupational descriptions. Examples:

novelist, movie star and farmer.

- Never use an occupational title with a single name.

WRONG: novelist Clancy and singer Jones.

RIGHT: novelist Tom Clancy and singer Tom Jones.

See **titles**.

to ... from

- Use the construction to express an increase, decrease, relocation, etc. Examples:

Jim Jones, an accountant at Miller Paints, moved to St. Louis from Detroit. The raise increased Jenny's annual salary to \$45,000 from \$38,000.

- Never use "from ... to" when expressing this type of increase, decrease or move.

See **from ... to**.

toward

Not "towards."

trident

See **UMSL Tritons**.

Triton Card

Triton Store

- The name of the store located on the second floor of the Millennium Student Center.

Tritons

See **Department of Athletics, Louie** and **UMSL Tritons**.

Truman, Harry S.

Use a period after the initial. According to The Associated Press Stylebook, Truman once said there was no need for the period, because the "S" did not stand for a name. But Truman was asked in the early 1960s about his preference. He replied, "It makes no difference to me." Also, the Harry S. Truman Library & Museum in Independence, Missouri, punctuates the initial with a period.

T-shirt

Not: tee-shirt, t-shirt, teeshirt or tea shirt.

UMSL

- It's the preferred second reference for the "University of Missouri–St. Louis."
- When used as an adjective, "UMSL" requires the article "a."

WRONG: She is an UMSL student.

RIGHT: She is a UMSL student.

- Exception: When writing a speech, a script or any copy intended to be read aloud, the article “an” may be used with the adjective “UMSL” based on the speaker’s preference.

See **University of Missouri–St. Louis.**

UMSL Magazine

It’s the full, proper name of the biannual magazine for UMSL.

UM– St. Louis

- Do not use “UM– St. Louis.” It is not an acceptable second reference for “University of Missouri–St. Louis.”

See **UMSL and University of Missouri–St. Louis.**

UMSL Tritons

- It’s the official nickname of the men’s and women’s teams that are part of the Department of Athletics at UMSL. On first reference in a run of copy, “Tritons” must appear with “University of Missouri–St. Louis” or “UMSL.” Example:

The UMSL Tritons hosted the basketball tournament last month.

- “Tritons” refers to “Triton,” the mythological Greek god who is the messenger of the deep. Like his father, Poseidon, Triton carries a trident, a three-pronged spear. The trident, not Triton, is what’s depicted in the UMSL Tritons logo.

See **Department of Athletics and Louie.**

underserved

This adjective is typically preferred over “poor” or “disadvantaged.”

unique

It means one of a kind. Do not use it as a synonym for: different, outstanding or exceptional. Avoid using: more unique, very unique, most unique, quite unique, rather unique and somewhat unique.

university

It’s an acceptable second reference for the University of Missouri–St. Louis and other University of Missouri System campuses. Examples:

He attended UMSL. He enjoyed his time at the university (lowercase).

University Advancement

University of Missouri–Columbia

- It’s the full, proper name for the university in Columbia, Mo. Use it on first reference. Acceptable second references: MU, Columbia campus, university and campus.
- Despite the previous guideline, the collected rules of the University of Missouri System include a rule that the “University of Missouri” can be written on first reference for the Columbia campus when relating to student and faculty recruitment, advancement, intercollegiate athletics and other similar public relations functions. To avoid confusion, however, using “University of Missouri” is not recommended, particularly in instances when that organization’s name appears in the same run of copy as “University of Missouri–St. Louis,” “University of Missouri System,” etc.
- Use a single en dash, with no spaces to punctuate “University of Missouri–Columbia.” An en dash can join one word to a compound (e.g. “a jazz–rock ‘n’ roll hybrid”), but a hyphen cannot. “Columbia” must be joined to “University of Missouri” with an en dash.

See **dash, en dash.**

University of Missouri–Kansas City

- It's the full, proper name for the organization. Use it on first reference. Acceptable second references: UMKC, Kansas City campus, university and campus.
- Use a single en dash, with no spaces to punctuate. An en dash can join one word to a compound (e.g. “a jazz–rock ‘n’ roll hybrid”), but a hyphen cannot. “Kansas City” must be joined to “University of Missouri” with an en dash.

See **dash, en dash**.

University of Missouri–St. Louis

- It's the full, proper name of the organization. Use it on first reference. Acceptable second references: UMSL, St. Louis campus, university and campus.
- Use a single en dash, with no spaces to punctuate. An en dash can join one word to a compound (e.g. “a jazz–rock ‘n’ roll hybrid”), but a hyphen cannot. “St. Louis” must be joined to “University of Missouri” with an en dash.

See **dash, en dash**.

University of Missouri–St. Louis Alumni Association

It's the full, proper name of that organization. On first reference: University of Missouri–St. Louis Alumni Association. The run of copy determines how the university is identified with the association. If the preceding run of copy includes “University of Missouri–St. Louis” (spelled out), then “UMSL Alumni Association” is an acceptable first reference. Acceptable second references: alumni association and association.

University of Missouri–St. Louis Business, Technology and Research Park

It's the full, proper name for the park. On first reference: University of Missouri–St. Louis Business, Technology and Research Park. The run of copy

determines how the university is identified with the park. If the preceding run of copy includes “University of Missouri–St. Louis” (spelled out), then “UMSL Business, Technology and Research Park” is acceptable on first reference. Acceptable second references: park and research park.

University of Missouri–St. Louis Chancellor's Council

It's the full, proper name of the organization. On first reference: University of Missouri–St. Louis Chancellor's Council. The run of copy determines how the university is identified with the council. If the preceding run of copy includes “University of Missouri–St. Louis” (spelled out), then “UMSL Chancellor's Council” is acceptable on first reference. Acceptable second references: chancellor's council and council.

University of Missouri System

- It's the full, proper name of the unified, statewide, multicampus University of Missouri System and the administration for the system. Acceptable second references: UM System, university system and system.
- Do not use “University of Missouri” to represent the “University of Missouri System.”

University of Missouri System Board of Curators

See **Curators of the University of Missouri System**.

universitywide

The term was dropped long ago because of its double meaning of reference to both the University of Missouri System and individual campuses. On first reference to all four campuses, use “University of Missouri System.” Acceptable second references: UM System, university system or system.

See **University of Missouri System**.

upward

Not “upwards.”

URL

- When identifying a URL in a run of copy, dropping “http://www” from the beginning of the address is preferred. Always ensure that a shortened URL, as presented to readers, is enough information to accurately identify the Web page and effectively drive readers to the desired page. Examples:

The information can be found at umsl.edu. Visit wonderschool.com and download the photograph.

- Exception: When a URL begins with “https://” the full URL must be presented. Example:

You can access your account at https://youraccount.com as early as Tuesday morning.

U.S.

- The abbreviation is acceptable as a noun or adjective for “United States.” “U.S.” can be used on first reference.
- In headlines, it’s “US” (no periods).

U-turn

versus

- When comparing two items in ordinary writing and speech, spell out. Example:

Bill Smith’s plan to improve highways versus John Butler’s proposal to overhaul the train depot was on the committee’s agenda.

- In short expressions, “vs.” is permitted. Examples:

The Buster James vs. Bill Legend bout was a classic. Students debated the long-standing issue of free vs. paid parking.

- For court cases, use “v.” Example:

Marbury v. Madison.

very

Avoid using.

veterans

Write without an apostrophe. Examples:

Veterans Administration, Veterans Day and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

video game

Washington

When the context requires distinction between the federal district and state, use: Washington, D.C., and Washington state.

See **cities and states**.

web, webpage, webfeed, World Wide Web, web address, webcam, webcast, webmaster, website

weeklong, weekdays, weeknights

whether or not, as to whether

“Whether” alone is sufficient in most cases. “Whether or not” means in any case. Example:

The football team will play whether or not it rains.

which

See **that, which**.

who, whom

- “Who” is the pronoun used for references to human beings and to animals with a name. Write “the person who is in charge,” not “the person that is in charge.”

- “Who” is grammatically the subject (never the object) of a sentence. Example:

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. Example:

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

-wide

No hyphen, as in:

citywide, continentwide, countrywide, industrywide, campuswide, nationwide, statewide or worldwide.

workforce, workplace, workstation

year-end (noun and adjective)

yearlong, year-round

years

- Always use figures without commas. Example:
The tornadoes struck in 1975 and 2001.
- Use commas only with a month and date. Example:
Sept. 12, 1974, was a great day.
- Use an “s” without an apostrophe to indicate spans of decades or centuries, and do not use shortened forms. Wrong: ‘30s, ‘40s and ‘50s. Right: the 1800s and the 1890s.
- Avoid the phrase: by the year 2030. Instead, use: by 2030.
- Years are the lone exception to the general rule that a figure is not used to start a sentence. Example:
1974 was an awful year.

- For ranges of years, refer to the following examples: 1968–1988, 1968 to 1988, or 1968–88. When the spread involves two centuries, use full figures.

Examples:

1987 to 2007 or 1987–2007.

- For academic years and athletic seasons, refer to the following examples: John Blutarsky completed his degree requirements during the 1998–99 academic year. Bill Brasky retired from professional basketball after the 2001–02 season.

See **dates, fiscal year** and **months**.

ZIP codes

- Use the abbreviation “ZIP” for Zone Improvement Program, but always lowercase “code.”
- Do not put a comma between state name and the ZIP code. Example:

Palm Springs, CA 00000.

“Type is visible speech, in which gods and men, saints and sinners, poets and business executives are treated fundamentally alike. Typographers, in keeping with the virtue of their trade, honor the stewardship of texts and implicitly oppose private ownership of words.”

— Robert Bringhurst, *The Elements of Typographic Style*