



MARCH 2025

California Community Colleges Communications Style Guide

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office | Sonya Christian, Chancellor

CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES COMMUNICATIONS STYLE GUIDE

Prepared By

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
Office of Communications and Marketing

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CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE STYLE GUIDE

Updated March 2025

As the largest system of higher education in the nation, serving 2.1 million students at 116 colleges and 73 districts, the California Community Colleges has a very visible and responsible presence; we are the official voice for higher education to many audiences. All of us strive to inspire our readers by providing information about the critical role community colleges play in California's future. As such, it is important to serve the goal of effective communication in a common voice and with consistent visual branding. The Office of Communications and Marketing created the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Style Guide as a reference for all who write and edit documents for our external audiences.

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (Chancellor's Office) provides guidelines to help produce consistency throughout the agency's publications and website.

The guidelines are based on the Associated Press (AP) Stylebook and local usage. In cases of conflict, the Chancellor's Office style guide supersedes the AP Stylebook. Entries address questions that may commonly arise when writing about the agency and system, such as names and proper reference to various system entities.

The Office of Communications and Marketing has made available access to the AP Stylebook for agency use. The AP Stylebook link is accessible only at the Chancellor's Office when connected to the office Wi-Fi or when connected to the VPN. Please refer to the Stylebook for reference and/or extended explanations. Access the AP Stylebook. (<https://www.apstylebook.com/california-community-colleges-2>)

Please contact Carrie Tan at CTan@CCCCO.edu with any questions about the style guide's use or applications, or if you wish to offer an idea or example for consideration in its future updates.

If you are seeking information about the Chancellor's Office brand guidelines, including logo, colors, fonts, website style and templates, please visit the [California Community Colleges Brand](https://cccco.edu/About-Us/News-and-Media/Brand/basics) web page (cccco.edu/About-Us/News-and-Media/Brand/basics)

MARCH 2024 UPDATES

1. [Official System Name And Uses](#)
2. [Oxford Comma](#)
3. [Updated Division Names](#)

MOST CORRECTED MISTAKES

4. [Use of CCC or CCCCCO](#)
5. [Percents](#)
6. [Periods](#)
7. [Capitalization](#)

CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE STYLE AS A QUICK TOP TEN LIST

1. **Board of Governors** – Capitalize Board of Governors in all cases.
2. **Chancellor** – In text, capitalize titles, including chancellor, only when they precede the name: Chancellor Sonya Christian. Lowercase titles when used alone or when following names: the chancellor or Sonya Christian, chancellor.
3. **California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office** – To shorten: The California Community Colleges (the system) or the Chancellor's Office (replaces system office). Not CCC or CCCCCO.
4. **Divisions** – Refer to the divisions by their full name on first reference, with acronym in parenthesis following the name. Acronyms are acceptable on second reference. Example: Information Security, Technology, and Innovation (ISTI) employees are critical to keeping Chancellor's Office systems running smoothly. Executive Vice Chancellor John Hetts overseas ISTI. When the division name is used alone, it retains its capitals: Government Relations. If division alone refers to a specific division, it is not capitalized: The division's staff will respond to the green jobs proposal. As of March 2024, the Chancellor's Office divisions are as follows:
 - College Finance and Facilities Planning (CFFP)
 - Information Security, Technology, and Innovation (ISTI) (previously DII)
 - Educational Services and Support (ESS)
 - Student Services
 - Academic Affairs
 - Executive Office (EO)
 - Government Relations (GR)
 - Institutional Effectiveness (IE)
 - Office of Communications and Marketing (Comms)
 - Office of the General Counsel (OGC)
 - People and Culture Operations Office (PCO)
 - Research, Analytics and Data (RAD)
 - Workforce and Economic Development (WED)
5. **116 California Community Colleges** – When referring to the colleges: the California community colleges, the campuses or California's community colleges. Use college with the names of the colleges: Mendocino College, not Mendocino. Use the full name of the college: College of the Sequoias, not Sequoia College.

- 6. Programs, services, initiatives, and committees** – Capitalize only when part of a formal name: The Chancellor’s Office Steering Committee is listed on the agenda. When mentioned alone in text, no capitals: The steering committee is on the agenda.
- 7. Academic year** – Use a dash for an academic/fiscal year: 2018-19.
- 8. Numbers** – Spell out one through nine, except as noted on page 20.
 - a. Following dates, omit th, rd, st, nd: not March 21st; March 21.
 - b. In bulleted lists, numbers and percent symbols (8%) may replace words, especially for data.
- 9. Apostrophes** – Use an apostrophe to show missing letters or numbers, plurals and possession. It is often overused.
- 10. Abbreviations** – In general, avoid unnecessary use of acronyms or abbreviations whenever possible.

EDITORIAL STYLE GUIDE A-Z

- [A, An, And](#)
- [Abbreviations and Acronyms](#)
- [Academic Degrees](#)
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A, AN, AND

Use the article “a” before consonant sounds and “an” before vowel sounds:

- a historic event
- an honorable person (the h is silent)

Avoid using the ampersand (&) except in business names that formally contain it (e.g., Tiffany & Co.).

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

An acronym is the grouping of a series of initials, or initial letters, for an entity or organization that make up a unique word used as the shorthand for the name of that organization (OPEC, NATO, NASA, etc.), as distinct from abbreviations, which are a series of initials used as the shorthand name for that organization (FBI, CIA, etc.). Acronyms and abbreviations often are used in a similar manner.

In general, avoid unnecessary use of acronyms or abbreviations whenever possible:

- The California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office (Chancellor’s Office) is located in Sacramento. The Chancellor’s Office (not “CCCCO”) has 150 employees. The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation. The system (not “CCC”) has 2.1 million students.
- The California Department of Education created a class action team to study charter schools. The agency (not “CDE”) will review laws governing charter schools and provide recommendations on needed changes.

When necessary, spell out the first reference followed by the acronym or abbreviation in parentheses; the acronym or abbreviation may be used for subsequent references:

- There most common measure of enrollment is a simple headcount of students. Enrollment can also be measured as full time equivalent students (FTES).

Acronyms and abbreviations may be used for the first reference if they are widely recognized:

- FBI, CIA, NASA

Use periods in two-letter abbreviations. Use all caps but no periods in longer abbreviations:

U.S., U.N., PhD. (even though it has the small “h”), BSE, YMCA, CIA

ACADEMIC DEGREES

The preferred form is to spell out degrees and avoid abbreviations.

Formal Use	General Use 1	General Use 2	Abbreviated Use
Associate in Arts	associate degree	—	A.A.
Associate in Science	associate degree	—	A.S.
Associate Degree for Transfer in Arts	associate degree	—	AA-T
Associate Degree for Transfer in Science	associate degree	—	AS-T
Bachelor of Arts	bachelor's degree	bachelor's	B.A.
Bachelor of Science	bachelor's degree	bachelor's	B.S.
Bachelor of Science in Engineering	bachelor's degree	bachelor's	BSE
Master of Business Administration	master's degree	Master's	MBA
Master of Arts	master's degree	master's	M.A.
Doctor of Philosophy	doctoral degree	doctorate	PhD.

The word “degree” should not follow an abbreviation:

- She has an A.A. in film production.
- She has an associate degree in film production.

ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS

Use lowercase except for words that are proper nouns or adjectives; the department of history, the history department, the department of English, the English department, or when department is part of the official name: University of Connecticut Department of Economics.

ADDRESSES

Use the abbreviations “Ave.” “Blvd.” and “St.” only with a numbered address: “1600 Cedar St.”

- Spell these words out when used without a number: “Ocean Park Boulevard.”
- These three terms are the ONLY ones that can be abbreviated. Related terms such as “alley,” “drive,” “road” and “terrace” must always be spelled out.
- Always use and capitalize First through Ninth when referring to a street name: “Third Street.”

ADVISER

Use “adviser,” not “advisor.”

ALUMNI

Avoid using only class years behind the names of students and alumni (e.g., Jane Jones ‘12) unless the material is designated primarily for an internal audience, and/or there is a long list and/or it is clear that these are students and alumni within the context of the material.

- Preferred style for undergraduates: Refer to “lower” and “upper” division, or “First Year” students, “transferring” students and “continuing” students.
- The following variations are used for alumni: (Male) Alumnus, singular; (Female) Alumna, singular; we also use “Alum” and “Alums” to refer to either male and or female.
- Preferred for alumni in external publications: Inonge Wina, a 1962 SMC alumna, is vice president of Zambia. She is the first woman to hold the position.
- Preferred style for alumni who did not graduate: Sara Jones, who attended Shasta College from 2008 to 2011.

AMPERSAND (&)

Avoid using the ampersand (&) except in business names that formally contain it (e.g., Tiffany & Co.).

Exception: the ampersand can be used when space or character limit is an issue

BULLETS

While the AP Stylebook does not make provision for bullets, the Office of Communications and Marketing recognizes the value of using bullets to present lists in some instances. Here are our guidelines:

Use a colon to introduce a list only when the text following the colon does not flow naturally from it.

See punctuation:

- The students in the Tuesday afternoon seminar were asked to
 - read a chapter in a novel from the 18th century;
 - write an essay comparing it with a chapter in a novel from the 20th century;
 - and complete both assignments by 5 p.m.;
 - read pages 12, 13 and 36.

- The students in the Tuesday afternoon seminar have three assignments:
 - Read a chapter in a novel from the 18th century.
 - Write an essay comparing it with a chapter in a novel from the 20th century.
 - Complete both projects by 5 p.m.

Bulleted items may be capped or lowercase, depending on preference. Be consistent throughout the document. Generally, items that are complete sentences should be capped, and those that are fragments should be lowercase.

Terminal punctuation for the bulleted items is optional for phrases, and is preferred for complete sentences — again depending on the style of the document; consistency is the key.

CAPITALIZATION

Headline

Capitalize all words in a title or headline except articles (a, an, the) and prepositions (of, on, to, at, in). Do not use all caps. (Student Engages in Community Outreach).

People

Capitalize a job title when it immediately precedes a person's name. The title is not capitalized when it is an incomplete designation, follows a name, or is on second reference:

- California Community Colleges Chancellor Sonya Christian
- Sonya Christian, chancellor of the California Community Colleges.
- the chancellor
- Professor of Psychology Lisa Farwell
- Lisa Farwell, professor of psychology
- professor Lisa Farwell
- the professor

Departments, Offices, the Board of Governors

- Capitalize the formal names of departments and offices, as well as the Board of Governors; do not capitalize informal names and incomplete designations:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Chemistry • the chemistry department • the department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Office of Admissions and Records. • the admissions office • the office
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CITIES AND STATES

Use commas to separate the name of a state when it follows a city:

- The flight landed in San Diego, California, at 5 p.m.

Spell out the names of the 50 U.S. states when they stand alone and when a state is listed with a city, town, village, etc.

Note about use of United States: Use “U.S.” only as an adjective; otherwise, spell it out. “She studied U.S. culture of the 1950s.” “She studied the culture of the United States from the 1950s.”

Do not use states in narrative text with these U.S. cities:

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

Do not use country names with these cities:

- Amsterdam, Bangkok, Beijing, Baghdad, Beirut, Berlin, Brussels, Cairo, Djibouti, Dublin, Geneva, Gibraltar, Guatemala City, Havana, Helsinki, Hong Kong, Islamabad, Istanbul, Jerusalem, Johannesburg, Kuwait City, London, Luxembourg, Macau, Madrid, Mexico City, Milan, Monaco, Montreal, Moscow, Munich, New Delhi, Panama City, Paris, Prague, Quebec City, Rio de Janeiro, Rome, San Marino, Sao Paulo, Shanghai, Singapore, Stockholm, Sydney, Tokyo, Toronto, Vatican City, Vienna, Zurich.

CULTURE/ETHNIC DESIGNATIONS

Use “people of color” or “underrepresented” in stories where it is appropriate to identify people by race; avoid using the term “minority,” if possible.

Do not use a hyphen when African American is used as a noun or an adjective. This applies to all such ethnic classifications.

DATES AND TIMES

Use figures for days of the month. Omit the ordinal designations of nd, rd, st, th.

Place a comma between the month and the year when the day is mentioned:

- On April 27, 2017, Chancellor Sonya Christian attended an event at the State Capitol.

Do not place a comma between the month and the year when the day is not mentioned:

- In April 2017, Chancellor Sonya Christian attended an event at the State Capitol.

When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate the month according to AP style: Jan., Feb., Aug. Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. (all others spelled out). Spell out when using alone or with a year alone:

- Nov. 23, 2014
- November
- November 2014

Use figures for years without commas:

- 2014

Use the year, a hyphen and the last two digits to refer to a period of time within the same century as an adjective, but full years joined by a hyphen when the range crosses into another century:

- the 2017-18 academic year
- the 1999-2000 academic year

Use “to” instead of a hyphen when the year or time is a noun:

- from 1989 to 2005
- The meetings will take place from 8 to 11 a.m. Monday through Friday.

When abbreviating years to two digits, put an apostrophe in front of the years:

- the Class of ‘76
- the summer of ‘66

Dates following a day of the week should be set apart by commas:

- He decided that Friday, Oct. 12, would be a convenient date.

Times generally come before days and dates:

- The performance will take place at 3 p.m. Friday, Oct. 12.

When emphasizing the exact time, or when using a.m. or p.m., use figures (omitting 00 for on the hour):

- 7 p.m.; 7:30 p.m.

12 a.m. should be referred to as midnight; 12 p.m. should be referred to as noon.

Spell out the units of measurement in time sequences:

- “40 hours, 25 minutes, 14 seconds.”

Hyphens may be used with dates, and should always be used with dates when both days of the week and dates are included.

- The workshop is set for Monday through Thursday, July 18-21.

Centuries and Decades

- Noun: the 20th century
- Adjective: 20th-century literature
- the 1960s
- '60s fashion



Exception

The Office of Communications and Marketing recognizes some publications, such as posters and invitations, call for a design treatment that demands the more elegant presentation offered by Chicago style (such as spelling out a month).

DISABILITIES

In general, do not describe an individual as disabled or handicapped, unless it is relevant to the story. If it is relevant to the material and you must use a description, try to be specific:

- Muhammad Ali, boxing hero and former Olympic champion, defied the symptoms of Parkinson's to light the torch in a rare public appearance.

Use “accessible parking,” rather than disabled or handicapped parking.

Avoiding writing that implies ableism: the belief that typical abilities – those of people who aren't disabled – are superior.

Some people view their disability as central to their identity, and use identity-first language, such as an autistic woman or an autistic. Others prefer person-first language such as a woman with autism or a woman who has autism.

In describing groups of people, or when individual preferences can't be determined, use identity-first language.

When possible, avoid the terms special needs and special education. While they remain in wide use in education and law, many view them as euphemistic and offensive. Instead, aim to be specific about the needs or services in question.

Don't use words that suggest pity, such as afflicted with, battling or suffers from any disability or illness, or that a person overcame her disability.

Instead: living with dementia, has cancer, being treated for ADHD, etc.

FILE FORMATS

If a file format acronym is being used in a sentence, it should be set in all caps.

- I used three GIF images in my design.

If a file format acronym is being used to indicate the type of downloadable file in a link, it should be set in lowercase with a “.” preceding it.

- The image (.gif) is available for download.
- Commencement 2011 press release (.pdf)

FUNDRAISING AND FUNDRAISER

Always one word

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Use nonsexist language and follow these recommendations:

Don't say "he" when referring to an unspecified person. Instead, recast the sentence into the plural, or avoid the use of pronouns altogether.

- (Incorrect) Each student is expected to turn in his paper by the deadline.
- (Correct) Students are expected to turn in **their** papers by the deadline.

If it's impossible to solve the problem using these approaches, remember that "he or she" is preferable to "he/she."

Use "they" for individuals who do not wish to specify "he" or "she."

Avoid gender-specific titles or terms, such as:

Instead of	Use
chairman	chair
businessman	business executive, manager
cameraman	camera operator
coed	female student
congressman	representative, senator
fireman	firefighter
foreman	supervisor
founding fathers	founders
mailman	mail carrier
to man	to staff, to run, to operate
mankind	people, humanity
manpower	workforce, employees
policeman	police officer



Exception

For organizations outside the Chancellor's Office, use the language exactly as in their official title.

MENU LINKS AND HEADERS

Initial caps for all words in menu links, page headers and sub headers.



Exception

short (less than four letters) conjunctions, prepositions, and other words that do not come first, such as:

- the, in, but (exception: pronouns)
- see section on A, An, And

NAMES

It is important to use the correct name when referring to the Chancellor's Office or the California Community Colleges.

The following are appropriate uses of these names:

- California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office or Chancellor's Office: Use when referring to the systemwide office.
- California Community Colleges: Use when referring to the institution as a single entity, i.e., the system comprising the 116 community colleges, 73 districts and the Chancellor's Office. Note that "California Community Colleges" is singular, not plural.
- When referring to our colleges, and not the system, it is lowercase, i.e., There are 116 California community colleges.

REMINDER: "California Community College System" is not the official name of the institution. It is, however, acceptable to refer to the institution as: the California Community Colleges system," the community college system," or "system." For example:

- There are 116 colleges in the California Community Colleges system.
- OR There are 116 colleges in the community college system.

Only officials of the Chancellor's Office may use the name and/or system seal/logo for any purpose including informational, advertising, marketing and promotional items. Any individual or groups not associated with or working with the Chancellor's Office must have prior written permission from the communications director to use any part of the office name and/or system seal/logo. Unauthorized use, whether or not such intended use is related to commercial or non- profit activities, is explicitly prohibited.

NUMBERS

Spell out numbers one through nine and general numbers in narrative text:

- There were eight people at the meeting.
- There were 33 students in the class.

- There are approximately 62,000 students.
- There are a thousand reasons.

When a number is the first word of a sentence, spell it out.

In a series, apply the appropriate guideline:

- There are 120 students in the history department, eleven in the film department, and eight in the modern languages department, making a total of 139 students in the three departments.

Express all percentages as figures:

- Use the % sign when paired with a numeral, with no space, in most cases: Average hourly pay rose 3.1% from a year ago; her mortgage rate is 4.75%; about 60% of Americans agreed; he won 56.2% of the vote. Use figures: 1%, 4 percentage points.

For very large sums of money, use figures with a dollar sign; spell out million or billion:

- \$1.7 million
- between \$1 and \$2 billion

Place a comma after digits signifying thousands, except when reference is made to temperature:

- 1,360 students
- 2400 degrees Fahrenheit

POSSESSIVES ENDING IN ‘S’

For most possessives, simply add an apostrophe and an “s”

- The horse’s shoe is loose.

Follow the AP style rules for possessives ending in “s”:

For plural nouns ending in “s,” add only an apostrophe:

- the horses’ shoes

For singular common nouns ending in “s,” add an apostrophe and an “s” unless the next word begins with an “s”:

- the bus’s tire
- the bus’ seat

For singular proper names ending in “s,” use only an apostrophe:

- Achilles’ heel

- Dickens' novels
- Tennessee Williams' plays

PUNCTUATION

Colons

Use a colon to introduce long lists — see section on Bullets

Leave a colon outside quotation marks unless it is part of a quotation.

Follow the colon with a single space.

Use a colon to introduce a direct quotation if it is more than one sentence.

Capitalize the first word after a colon if it is a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence; make the first word lowercase if it is part of a sentence.

- His reason for staying was simple: The snowstorm had shut down all routes out of town.
- There were three reasons to stay: the warmth of the fireplace; the friendliness of the company; and the aroma of the food.

Commas

Here are guidelines for some common uses of the comma.

- **Oxford Comma:** While AP style does not require the use of the Oxford comma, also called the serial comma, it is widely used across other academic style guides to promote clarity. For consistency, the Oxford comma can now be used across all agency communications.
- **A series of adjectives equal in importance:** The California Community Colleges is an open-access, diverse system.
- **Complete sentences that are combined with a conjunction:** The event is open to the public free of charge, but reservations are required.
- **An introductory phrase from the rest of a sentence:** First, we must double the amount of external support.
- **A nonessential phrase (a phrase that is not essential to the meaning of the sentence) from the rest of a sentence and days from dates:** The Cosumnes River College Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Brian Stone, will perform on Friday, Oct. 30, at the Broad Stage.
- **More on nonessential and essential phrases:** “My wife, Janet, loves to golf” (you have only one wife), but “His brother Jeff is a sailor” (he has more than one brother);

and “Allan Hancock College provides many intercollegiate sports, such as basketball, football, and soccer,” (phrase is nonessential information), but “Sports such as soccer are played in the spring” (phrase is essential information).

- **Direct quotes:** “We must support students in any way we can,” Dr. Jeffery said.
- **Cities from names of states:** John Jones, of Newark, Delaware, is the president of the organization.
- **Yes and no; and names/titles in a direct address:** Yes, officer, I’ll obey the traffic laws.

Dashes

Use an em dash to relay a break in thought. Place a single space on either side of the em dash. This is the longer dash (“—”) as compared to the shorter en dash (“–”) or two hyphens (“--”). Em dashes are created by holding down the SHIFT+OPTION+MINUS SIGN keys on a Mac or the ALT+CTRL+MINUS SIGN keys on a PC.

- Founded in 1929 as “Santa Monica Junior College”—as a pioneer of the uniquely American community college movement —Santa Monica College continues to be a leader among two-year colleges nationwide.

An em dash can be used to set off elements within a sentence.

- The materials used by the artist — wood, steel and plastic — created a powerful contrast.

Ellipses

In a sentence, add a space before and after a three-dot ellipsis:

- She reported what the speaker said ... and then followed up with her own comments.

If the words that precede an ellipsis make up a complete sentence, insert a period at the end of the last word before the ellipsis and follow it with a space and an ellipsis:

- The speaker said that he was happy to be running for office again. ...

Hyphens

Hyphen: - (“-” on keyboard)

Do not hyphenate words beginning with non, unless if there is a proper noun:

- non-American; nonscholarship

Do not place a hyphen between the prefixes pre, semi, anti, sub, etc., and nouns or adjectives, except before proper nouns, but avoid duplicated vowels or consonants:

- reapply

- semidetached
- antiwar
- pre-enroll

Use hyphens to connect compound modifiers, being careful about meaning:

- white-hot metal or white hot metal (depending on which is meant)
- calculator-wielding graduate student

Do not use a hyphen on adverbs ending in -ly:

- an easily hit ball
- a badly cooked egg
- a loudly ringing phone

Hyphenate part-time and full-time only when used as adjectives:

- She has a full-time job at San Diego City College. She works at San Diego City College full time.

Use a hyphen between numbers:

- 231-29-0002
- 2002-03

Use a comma to separate institutions from their city locations, unless the institution uses a different format.

- the University of California, Berkeley
- the University of Nevada, Reno
- the University of Texas at Austin

Periods

Use a single space after a period at the end of a sentence.

Quotation Marks

The period and comma always go inside the quotation marks:

- “He will stop by tomorrow,” she said.

The question mark goes inside when part of the direct quote and outside when applying to quoted material within an entire sentence.

- “Will you explain distribution requirements to me?” asked the student.
- What is meant by “distribution requirements”?

The semicolon goes outside quoted material within a sentence:

- Refer to them as “conference participants”; all others should be known as “guests.”

Use a comma to introduce a direct quotation when it is one sentence; use a colon when the quoted material is more than one sentence.

Semicolons

Use the semicolon to set off a series that includes commas:

The main offices are in Los Angeles, California; Scottsdale, Arizona; and Austin, Texas.

RACE-RELATED TERMS

AP’s style is now to capitalize Black in a racial, ethnic, or cultural sense, conveying an essential and shared sense of history, identity, and community among people who identify as Black, including those in the African diaspora and within Africa. The lowercase black is a color, not a person. We also now capitalize Indigenous in reference to original inhabitants of a place. These changes align with long-standing capitalization of other racial and ethnic identifiers such as Latino and Native American.

Reporting and writing about issues involving race calls for thoughtful consideration, precise language, and an openness to discussions with others of diverse backgrounds about how to frame coverage or what language is most appropriate, accurate and fair.

Avoid broad generalizations and labels; race and ethnicity are one part of a person’s identity. Identifying people by race and reporting on actions that have to do with race often go beyond simple style questions, challenging [writers] to think broadly about racial issues before having to make decisions on specific situations and stories.

In all coverage—not just race-related coverage—strive to accurately represent the world, or a particular community, and its diversity through the people you quote and depict in all formats. Omissions and lack of inclusion can render people invisible and cause anguish.

Recent updates also include:

Black(s), white(s) (n.)

Do not use either term as a singular noun. For plurals, phrasing such as Black people, white people, Black teachers, white students is often preferable when clearly relevant. White officers account for 64% of the police force, Black officers 21% and Latino officers 15%. The gunman targeted Black churchgoers. The plural nouns Blacks and whites are generally acceptable when clearly relevant and needed for reasons of space or sentence construction. He helped integrate dance halls among Blacks, whites, Latinos and Asian Americans. Black and white are acceptable as adjectives when relevant.

Indigenous (adj.)

Capitalize this term used to refer to original inhabitants of a place. Aboriginal leaders welcomed a new era of Indigenous relations in Australia. Bolivia's Indigenous peoples represent some 62% of the population.

people of color

The term is acceptable when necessary in broad references to multiple races other than white: We will hire more people of color. Nine playwrights of color collaborated on the script.

Be aware, however, that many people of various races object to the term for various reasons, including that it lumps together into one monolithic group anyone who isn't white.

Be specific whenever possible by referring to, for instance, Black Americans, Chinese Americans or members of the Seminole Tribe of Florida. Examples: The poll found that Black and Latino Americans are bearing the brunt of the pandemic's financial impact, not people of color are bearing the brunt of the pandemic's financial impact. Most of the magazine's readers are Black women, not most of the magazine's readers are women of color.

In some cases, other wording may be appropriate. Examples: people from various racial and ethnic backgrounds; diverse groups; various heritages; different cultures.

Do not use person of color for an individual.

Do not use the term Black, Indigenous and people of color, which some see as more inclusive by distinguishing the experiences of Black and Indigenous people but others see as less inclusive by diminishing the experiences of everyone else. Similarly, do not use the term Black, Asian and minority ethnic.

Do not use the shorthand POC, BIPOC or BAME unless necessary in a direct quotation; when used, explain it.

SCIENTIFIC TERMINOLOGY

Use italics for scientific terminology, in particular reference to genus and species, e.g., The professor spent five years studying the toxic and invasive plant, *Solanum campylacanthum*, in Kenya.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Use area codes with hyphens for all telephone numbers, or at least once with a listing. This practice has become necessary because of the increasing use of cell phones:

- 609-258-3000
- For international numbers (country code, city code, telephone number):
011-44-20-7535-1515
- For 800 numbers: 800-222-7474

While the AP Stylebook recommends the above format, please note that the parenthesis

creates a short pause between the first three digits and the last seven when a user uses a screen reader. If your content will be chiefly accessed online, you may consider simply using the (XXX) XXX-XXXX format.

THAT AND WHICH

If you're using which properly, it typically is preceded by a comma:

- The announcement about his department's hiring efforts, which was reported in the media, pleased the director.
- The director was pleased with the announcement in the media that reported on his department's hiring efforts.

TITLES

Courtesy Titles

Do not use courtesy titles (Mr., Miss, Ms., Mrs.).

Names followed by Jr., Sr., or a Roman numeral do not have a comma after the last name:

- Martin Luther King Jr.
- James Hart III

Dr.

Use Dr. preceding the name of anyone with a medical degree, but only on first reference. Not for use with other doctoral degrees unless in quoted material.

Publications, Course Listings, Films, Music, Works of Art

As a general rule, put titles of books and articles in initial caps and quotation marks:

- "The Grapes of Wrath"

Put titles of newspapers, magazines, and journals in initial caps with NO quotation marks:

- The Los Angeles Times
- Vanity Fair
- The Corsair

Capitalize the principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters.

Capitalize "the" in a publication's name, if that is how it appears in the masthead:

- The New York Times

In text, put the course name in quotation marks:

- The student selected “Business Internship” after meeting with his adviser.

Do not capitalize the word after a hyphen in a title:

- The professor’s lecture is titled “An Introduction to 14th-century Franciscan Manuscripts.”

Do not capitalize major areas of study, unless referring to a language:

- The student is studying economics and French.

Capitalize the titles of lectures, theses, and dissertations:

- The professor gave the lecture “In Pursuit of Flight” to the class of auditors.

Titles of songs are usually set in quotation marks:

- “You are my sunshine.”

Use quotation marks around a musical composition’s nickname but not a composition identified by its sequence.

- Dvorak’s “New World Symphony,” Dvorak’s Symphony No. 9

Titles of paintings, drawings, statues, and other works of art are put in quotation marks.

- Leonardo da Vinci’s “Mona Lisa”



Exception:

For materials with bibliographic listings, it may be clearer to use *The Chicago Manual of Style*, which allows italics for major titles.

WEB TERMINOLOGY

- email (or Email at the beginning of a sentence)
- enews
- Facebook page
- homepage
- internet
- Instagram post
- log in, log out (verb)
- login (noun)
- online

- the web
- webpage
- X (formerly Twitter) feed
- Website
- Web (related to World Wide Web, e.g. Web page, Web browser)

URLs

Use the shortest URL possible.

For root-level sites, do not use “http://” or the “trailing slash”:

- google.com, not http://www.google.com/ (link is external)

Style on Social Media

Sometimes when text appears on Facebook and other social media sites, editorial style is more relaxed to save space on short posts.

WIDE (AS A SUFFIX)

No hyphens: campuswide, systemwide, statewide

Front cover photo:
Long Beach City College Pacific

Photo at right:
San Joaquin Delta College

Back cover photo:
San Diego Mesa College



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Chancellor Sonya Christian Twitter Feed
twitter.com/sonyachristian

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