



## Print and Web Editorial Style Guide

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The following are some conventions that are commonly observed when writing and editing copy, whether for print publications or for the Web. Also provided are correct spellings for many terms that are specific to Mount Holyoke. If there's a difference in how something is styled in print and on the Web, guidelines for both forms of communication are given.

### Academic Degrees

In running text, spell out and don't capitalize: bachelor's degree, master's degree, doctor's degree or doctorate.

When abbreviating degrees, use points: B.A., M.S., Ph.D., B.F.A.

### Academic and Professional Titles See **Titles, Academic and Professional**

### Academic Years

Terms designating academic years are lowercased: first-year, sophomore, junior, senior.

### Acronyms

Generally, it's fine to use acronyms if you feel they're commonly recognized or if it helps avoid repetition. But always spell out the full name, title, or phrase the first time you refer to it, followed immediately by the acronym in parentheses. It is not necessary to note the acronym in parentheses if there is only one reference.

### Addresses

These rules apply to addresses within body copy, not to addresses on envelopes.

Use the abbreviations Ave., Blvd., Rd., Dr., and St. only when you can include a numbered address.

Send mail to 405 W. 25th St.  
Our office is on 25th Street.

Spell out all street names and use lowercase when you're referring to more than one in a phrase.

**Right:** The parking lot is on San Antonio and Nueces streets.  
**Wrong:** The parking lot is on San Antonio and Nueces Sts.

### Administrative Offices

Capitalize the formal names of departments, divisions, and offices. Lowercase when using casual descriptions.

Office of Admission; admission office  
Department of Music; music department

### adviser

**African American** (no hyphen, whether noun or adjective)

### ALANA

Use all caps. African American, Latina, Asian American, and Native American students.

### *Alumnae Quarterly*

### **Alumni/Alumnae**

“Alumna” refers to one woman; “alumnae” refers to women; “alumnus” refers to one man; “alumni” refers to men or men and women. Also, “alumnus” can refer to anyone who attended a school, not just one who graduated.

### **am / pm**

On the Web, use lowercase and no points: am and pm. In print, use small caps: AM, PM. See **Time**

### **APAU; Association of Pan African Unity**

**Apostrophes** In print, apostrophes go backwards for class years: '99. On the Web, use straight (not curled) apostrophes.

### **Art Exhibition Titles**

Put art exhibition titles in italics.

### **Asian Center for Empowerment; ACE**

### **Zowie Banteah Cultural Center**

**Blanchard Campus Center** but **campus center** by itself

### **Building Names**

All proper names of buildings should be capitalized. Terms such as “north wing” and “new residence hall” should not be capitalized.

Art Building, Porter Hall, Williston Library

### **Bulleted Lists**

Introduce a bulleted list with a colon.

There are a number of things to keep in mind when writing a style guide: ...

Capitalize the first letter of the first word of each bulleted item. Bulleted items should be parallel in construction. End bulleted sentences with periods (not semicolons or commas), and do not punctuate the end of fragments.

### **Centuries**

In most cases, spell out: twenty-first century.

### **City, State**

Place a comma between the city and the state name, and another comma after the state name, unless ending a sentence. Spell out names of states in running text. In addresses, use postal abbreviations.

**Right:** They moved from Phoenix, Arizona, to South Hadley, Massachusetts.

**Wrong:** Kansas City, Mo. is the site of the conference.

### **Class of 2010**

In running text, don't capitalize “class of ...”

### **College**

Capitalize the word “college” when it refers specifically to Mount Holyoke.

### Colons, Semicolons

Use a colon at the end of a sentence to introduce lists and after an introductory statement that uses the words “as follows” or “the following.”

**Right:** They asked everyone: her sister, brother, cousin, and mother.

**Right:** They asked others, such as her sister, brother, cousin, and mother.

**Wrong:** The topics were: leadership; motivation; enthusiasm; creativity.

Use a semicolon to divide the two parts of a compound sentence (two independent clauses) when the clauses are not connected by a conjunction.

We have received your report; a follow-up mailing is not needed.

A semicolon also connects two independent clauses that use a connecting word, such as “therefore” or “however.”

We have received your report; therefore, a follow-up mailing is unnecessary.

### Commas

There are many rules regarding commas; see *The Chicago Manual of Style* for a comprehensive discussion. Here are some common instances where commas are, or are not, used.

A comma should always be used between each element in a series: We are comparing apples, oranges, and nectarines.

Do not use a comma before “Jr.” or “Sr.” after a person’s name: John Smith Jr.

Watch for missing commas. Use a comma at the beginning and end of an interruptive clause.

**Right:** Joanne V. Creighton, president of Mount Holyoke College, spoke at the meeting.

**Wrong:** Joanne V. Creighton, president of Mount Holyoke College spoke at the meeting.

### Committees

Capitalize the formal names of groups and committees: Student Government Association, Academic Priorities Committee. Use lowercase for the words “committee” or “council” when they stand alone.

### Company Names

Follow their lead. Use Co. or Cos. or Inc. or Ltd. if it appears that way in the formal title of the organization. When in doubt check the company’s Web site for guidance.

When you refer to a company without its formal title, use the term “company,” not “co.”

Where a company name is spelled with an initial lowercase letter, do not capitalize the name at the beginning of a sentence. For example, eBay.

**Compound words and words with prefixes and suffixes** In general, consult *Webster’s* first. Refer to *Chicago Manual of Style* for guidance on compounds that do not appear in *Webster’s*. Some examples of often-used words that are not hyphenated: coauthor, cocurricular, multifith, nonmajor, postgraduate, preregistration, socioeconomic.

**Conference Titles** See **Lecture and Conference Titles**

**Course titles** are capitalized but are not italicized or placed within quotation marks.

### **Courtesy Titles**

In general, do not use titles such as Dr., Ms., Mr. After giving an individual's full name, use their last name only. The title Dr. should be used for medical doctors.

Chemistry professor Sheila Browne was awarded the Lifetime Mentor Award by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Browne was honored for her efforts to increase the number of women, and especially minorities, in the fields of science.

**Joanne V. Creighton** Seventeenth president of Mount Holyoke College

### **Dashes**

There should be no spaces before or after dashes. On the Web, use two hyphens in the place of em dashes.

8–10 am

Your mission—should you choose to accept it—is to use em dashes judiciously.

### **Dates**

In general, spell out months. Abbreviations may be used when space is at a premium. When using a month and a year only, do not separate with commas. When a phrase is used with a month, date, and year, set both the date and year off with commas.

January 2006

November 3, 2004

When referencing a span of years, use an em dash and use all four numbers of the second year: 1979–1981

Do not use the word “on” before a date or day of the week when its absence would not lead to confusion.

**Right:** The meeting will be held Monday.

**Wrong:** He will return on February 22.

To describe sequences of dates or inclusive dates, use an en dash (with no spaces before or after) instead of “to” or “through.”

The box office is open Monday–Friday.

The performance will run September 14–22.

Do not use suffixes with dates.

**Right:** Oct. 14

**Wrong:** Oct. 14th

Use an “s” without an apostrophe after the year to indicate spans of decades or centuries. Use an apostrophe before the year for class years.

The university was founded in the 1880s.

Suzan-Lori Parks '85

An apostrophe after the year is needed for possessives.

The presidential election was 1980's biggest news story.

### **Departments and Offices See Administrative Offices**

#### **Dollars**

Abbreviate with a dollar sign (\$) when used to describe an amount. Spell out only when discussing the type of currency itself.

**Dorm** Try to use residence hall. Avoid dormitory.

### **Eliana Ortega Cultural Center; Ortega Center**

#### **Ellipses**

To indicate an omission within a sentence, use three points, separated from each other and from the text before and after by a space. To indicate an omission following a sentence, use four points, with no space before the first point:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights ... life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.... To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

#### **Email**

Do not use a hyphen; don't capitalize email unless it's the first word in a sentence.

#### **Email Addresses**

On the Web, set them up as hyperlinks. In print (in running text), italicize email addresses.

#### **Eras**

In print, use small caps without points: BC, AD, BCE. On the Web, use regular caps: BC, AD.

#### **Fax**

Lowercase fax when used in a sentence. If you're providing a fax number on your business card or in a listing, it's okay to use an initial cap.

#### **First-year (noun), first-year student (adjective)**

First year (no hyphen) is used when you're talking about a year, not a student.

First-years are encouraged to take first-year seminars during their first year at Mount Holyoke.

### **Five Colleges, Five College Consortium**

Don't hyphenate and always spell out five.

**Foreign words and phrases** should not be italicized unless they are unfamiliar. In general, if the word or phrase appears in Webster's foreign-word section, it is considered familiar. If a definition follows, it is enclosed in parentheses or quotation marks.

### **Fundraising**

### **Richard Glenn Gettell Amphitheater; Gettell Amphitheater**

**GPA** grade point average

## **Anne Pitt Heckel '34 and Robert Heckel Staircase Gardens**

**Home page** is two words.

### **Honors**

Lowercase and italicize *cum laude*, *magna cum laude* and *summa cum laude*.

### **Hyphens**

There are too many rules regarding hyphenation to list here. If you are unsure whether a word contains a hyphen, check *Webster's* first. If the word or phrase is not in *Webster's*, consult *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

### **ID, IDs**

**i.e., e.g.**, Use comma.

### **Initials**

Use points in initials in personal names, except when people are referred to by the initials of their family and given names—some American presidents, for example. Put a space between initials. Don't use points in acronyms or abbreviations with all caps, except U.S.

C. J. Law; FDR; NOW; IRS

**Internet, the Net** Capitalize Internet, per *Webster's*.

**Introductory phrases** do not require commas.

**Right:** Last year the board approved a tuition increase.

**Wrong:** In 1996, Joanne V. Creighton became the College's seventeenth president.

**ISIS** Internet Student Information System

### **January Term; J-Term**

### **Kosher/halal**

Mount Holyoke's kosher/halal dining facility is located in Wilder Hall.

### **Lecture and Conference Titles**

In running text, the name of a lecture series or conference should be italicized; the names of individual lectures and other events within a series are put in quotation marks. On the Web or on posters, choose a style that offers the greatest clarity and readability.

### **listserv**

**Log in (v.); log-in (n., adj.)**

**Log out (v.); log-out (n., adj.)**

### **M & Cs**

"Milk and crackers" are evening snacks served in residence halls.

### **Jeannette Marks House**

## Majors

Do not capitalize majors, programs, specializations, or concentrations of study when they are not part of an official department name or title. Exception: proper nouns.

She received a bachelor's degree in history.

He is a French major.

She majored in American studies.

The program is sponsored by the Department of Russian and Eurasian Studies.

## Measurements

Spell out inches, feet, miles, pages, pounds, yards

Use the following (and don't spell out when preceded by a numeric value):

cm	(centimeter)
dpi	(dots per inch)
fps	(frames per second)
GB	(gigabyte)
Ghz	(gigahertz)
Hz	(hertz)
Kb	(kilobit)
Kbps	(kilobits per second)
KB	(kilobyte)
KBps	(kilobytes per second)
KHz	(kilohertz)
Mb	(megabit)
Mbps	(megabits per second)
MB	(megabyte)
MBps	(megabytes per second)
MHz	(megahertz)
mm	(millimeter)
mph	(miles per hour)
ms	(millisecond)
ppm	(pages per minute)

## Million, billion

One *million* is equal to 1,000,000, and can be abbreviated by *M*.

Mom & Pop Co. took a \$23M accounting charge in 2002.

One *billion* is equal to 1,000,000,000, and can be abbreviated by *B*.

**Minorities** Avoid; use "people of color" instead.

**Mount Holyoke** is located in Skinner State Park and is sometimes called Skinner Mountain, but the correct name is Mount Holyoke.

## Mount Holyoke College

Try to refer to the College using the full formal name on at least the first mention of the school in a publication. Always referring to the College as "Mount Holyoke" can give the impression that we are a religious school. For less formal publications, MHC can be used, making copy less cumbersome.

## Mount Holyoke College Art Museum

## Mount Holyoke College Campus Store; campus store

## Mount Holyoke College Science Center; Science Center

### Noun plus gerund

Unless these compounds appear closed or hyphenated in *Webster's*, they should be open.

decision making  
problem solving  
bookbinding

### Noun plus participle

Adjectival compounds consisting of a noun plus a participle are usually hyphenated.

decision-making process  
interest-bearing loan

### Numbers

Fractions. Spell out amounts less than one, using hyphens between the words: Two-thirds, three-quarters.

Spell out numbers from one through ten. Use numerals for all numbers above ten. Exceptions are noted below.

Use figures for ages, percentages, equipment specifications, page numbers, and sums of money (when using the symbol "\$"). Don't use extra zeros with sums of money: \$6 not \$6.00.

She has a daughter, 2, and a son, 8.  
8 megabytes, 240 RAM  
According to the chart on page 4, nearly half of the elementary-age children in Texas  
receive a \$5 weekly allowance.

Avoid starting a sentence with a number, but, if you must, spell out the number unless it's a year.

Twenty students registered.  
1914 was an important year.

Numbers less than 100 should be hyphenated when they consist of two words:

**Right:** Two thousand students attend the College.  
Eighty-eight percent of our students live on campus.  
One-half of the class was late.

### Offline

#### On to

Do not shorten (to *onto*) unless the combination is used to mean "end up on top of." For example, *Let's move on to better things; You can log on to the server; He jumped onto the car.*

### One Card

### Online

### The Orchards

## **Ortega Center; Eliana Ortega Cultural Center**

**People of color** Use this term rather than “minorities.”

## **Percentages**

Use figures and the word “percent” for numbers expressing percentages, e.g., 95 percent. In financially oriented copy it is acceptable to use figures with the percent sign, e.g., 95%.

## **Frances Perkins Program**

## **Pioneer Valley; the valley**

*The Plan for Mount Holyoke 2010; The Plan for Mount Holyoke 2003; the Plan*

## **PO Box**

**Marion Craig Potter '49 Atrium** is the name of the atrium in Kendade Hall.

## **Quotes and Quotations**

On the Web, use straight quotes instead of curly quotes. In print, use curly quotes.

The period and the comma always go inside the quotation marks.

He said, “I’m going to the store.”  
She told us “stay in school,” which was good advice.

The dash, the exclamation point, and the question mark go inside the quotation marks when they apply to the quote only. When they apply to the whole sentence, they go outside the marks.

Sgt. Carter gave the following order: “Peel potatoes—then lights out!”  
Gomer Pyle said, “Golly, Sergeant!” when he heard the news.  
What did Martin Luther King mean when he said, “I have a dream”?

In running quotations, each new paragraph should begin with open quotation marks (no closing marks). Only the final paragraph should contain the closing quotation mark.

When including a quote or “highlighted” word inside another quotation, use single quotes (‘) instead of double (“).

In his charge to the committee, the chair said, “I have often told you, ‘don’t give up the ship.’ Thanks to your efforts, we’ve been able to reach our goal.”

The chair said, “I have often told you, ‘don’t give up the ship.’ ”

When a double quotation mark immediately follows a single (as in the previous example), put a space between the single and double quotation marks.

## **Race**

Capitalize names of races (African American, Caucasian, Asian, Native American), but do not capitalize “black” or “white” when referring to race.

## Regions

Region names are capitalized when they stand alone and are widely understood to designate a specific geographic area.

the West Coast, the Midwest  
the east coast of Florida, the midwestern United States  
western Massachusetts

## Rooms

Capitalize only if the room has been named:

New York Room  
Stimson Room  
Ham Hall dining room  
Eliot House lounge

## Seasons and Semesters

Capitalize only when used in a title or as part of a formal name. Use lowercase when these words stand alone.

Convocation takes place at the beginning of the fall semester.  
She'll be studying abroad next spring.

## Second\*Saturday

## Senior Art Majors' Exhibition

## Betty Shabazz Cultural Center; Betty Shabazz House

## States and Regions

Spell out the names of the 50 United States in running text. In mailing addresses, use postal codes. Abbreviations may be used in lists, especially if space is a consideration. State abbreviations and postal codes are available in *The Chicago Manual of Style* and at <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0110468.html>.

Use Washington, D.C. Don't abbreviate to D.C. or DC.

## Take the Lead; take the lead!

The College's annual leadership program for high school juniors. In running text (letters, newspaper articles), it is styled Take the Lead (capitalized and no exclamation point). In posters, brochures, and headlines, it is lowercased and bold, and the exclamation point is included.

## Talcott Greenhouse (not Talcott Arboretum)

## Telephone Extensions

Use lowercase x, with no space: x2304.

## Telephone Numbers

Use hyphens, not parentheses or periods: 413-538-2000.

**Theatre** According to *Webster's*, this word may be spelled theater or theatre. But to be consistent with the spelling of our Department of Theatre Arts, use theatre.

## Time

On the Web, use lowercase without points: am, pm. In print, use small caps: AM, PM. Use noon and midnight rather than 12 pm or 12 am. Never write 12 noon or 12 midnight—this is redundant.

## Titles

Italicize titles of books, periodicals, newspapers, plays, motion pictures, television and radio programs, and long musical compositions. Put titles of songs, poems, short stories, and newspaper and magazine articles in quotation marks.

Do not capitalize “magazine” unless it’s part of the publication’s title or masthead and don’t capitalize “the” unless it is the first word of a sentence.

*Time* magazine, the *New Yorker*, the *Washington Post*

When listing several publications or periodicals, lowercase the initial “the” and eliminate additional references of “the” from the list.

We read the *New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, and *Wall Street Journal* every morning.

## Title Capitalization

Capitalize all words except articles (a, an, the), coordinating conjunctions (and, but, or, for, nor), and prepositions, regardless of length. Prepositions that are part of a verb (grow up, speak out) are capitalized.

## Titles, Academic and Professional

In running text, capitalize and spell out formal titles such as president, chancellor, chairman, etc. when they precede a name, but lowercase in other uses. In lists, titles are usually capitalized.

Associate Professor Bacon  
Sarah Bacon, associate professor of biological sciences  
President Creighton  
Joanne V. Creighton, president of Mount Holyoke College

Do not use Dr. unless the individual is a medical doctor: Dr. Marcus Welby.

Do not capitalize an occupational designation, only a true title.

We met President Creighton.  
The president will speak at the dinner.  
Our speaker will be artist William Cooper.

Capitalize the official names of honorary chaired and university professorships. For those titles that are not honorary or for references after the name of the professor, use lowercase.

Sean Decatur, Marilyn Dawson Sarles, M.D., Professor of Life Sciences, was recently named the associate dean of faculty for science.  
Her years of hard work were acknowledged when she earned the rank of professor.

### Trademarks

Words that are registered trademarks should be capitalized.

Cyclone fence (but chain-link fence)

Dumpster

Kleenex (but tissue)

Xerox (but photocopier)

The symbols ® and ™, which often appear on product packaging and in advertisements, need not be used in running text.

**UMass** (not UMASS)

### U.S. / United States

We suggest using “United States” on first reference, rather than “U.S.,” “USA,” or “America.” Be consistent with usages for the second reference and thereafter; choose one option and use it consistently.

### V-8s

**VariAsians** (annual Asian cultural festival)

**Wa-Shin-An** “Peace-Mind-House,” the Japanese teahouse and meditation garden located in Eliot House

### Web Addresses

When a URL must be broken over a line in a printed work, breaking after a slash is preferable (also break after a double slash). On the other hand, breaking a URL after a dot (leaving what looks like a period at the end of a line) might cause difficulties for the reader. Using a hyphen to break a long word at the end of a line is not a good idea, since URLs contain hyphens as part of the address; moreover a hyphen that’s part of a URL should never appear at the end of a line.

### Web Words

Although references to the Web itself use a cap W, these Web-based words use a lowercase w.

Web site

webcast

weblog

webmaster

webzine

A live broadcast on the Web

Sometimes shortened to blog

The creator of a site

Media of the Web and for the Web

### Web Links

Use hyperlinks selectively, and keep them short. When linking text, link from a noun or noun phrase if possible, but link to a verb phrase if necessary to avoid confusion.

### Sources:

*AP Stylebook*

*Chicago Manual of Style*

*The Elements of Style*

*Wired Style*

*Webgrammar’s References*