Introduction

These guidelines serve to ensure consistency and accuracy in the print and digital communications of Mount Holyoke College. In particular, please note the correct spelling and style of terms specific to the College. If you have questions, suggestions or corrections, please contact the Office of Communications and Marketing at 413-538-2899 or online.

The latest online edition of the Associated Press Stylebook Online serves as Mount Holyoke’s primary reference for style. Check this source first for questions of language, style, usage and spelling. The AP style guide can be accessed through LITS:

● Start at the LITS website: lits.mtholyoke.edu
● Under the research menu, choose Databases A-Z
● Choose AP Stylebook

You can also search for it in the main search box. The Chicago Manual of Style Online is in the same Database A-Z list and can also be found by searching.

If you are accessing the guide on campus, you will connect directly without any need to log in. From off campus, you will be prompted to enter your Mount Holyoke credentials.

AP uses the latest online edition of Webster’s New World College Dictionary, so that’s what the College uses. When alternate spellings of a word are included in the dictionary, use the first.
Why the Associated Press

The Associated Press style guide was instituted in January 2017 as the basis of Mount Holyoke’s editorial style in large part because most media outlets worldwide follow it. An informal survey of communications professionals in higher education found overwhelmingly that AP is the style of choice for colleges and universities. Providing content in AP style — or very close to it — makes it easier for the media to repurpose.

The AP, which The New York Times notes “has long been the gold standard for uniformity among most international news publications,” also provides a universality and consistency of language in publications around the world. The AP is a not-for-profit cooperative and its editorial decisions are informed by its vast membership. According to the wire service’s website, more than 15,000 news outlets and a variety of businesses worldwide use its content, which is viewed by more than half the world’s population every day. This range perhaps explains why some of the AP’s language choices may at times seem cautious. Mount Holyoke deviates from that style where appropriate.

The goal of Mount Holyoke’s editorial style is to provide guidance around written language. Given that language is organic and constantly changing, this guide, like the AP style guide it’s based on, is updated frequently. Suggestions and feedback are invited and always welcomed.
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Writing for the web
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COVID-19

The Associated Press has issued what it calls a topical guide about COVID-19. Using “COVID-19,” “the new coronavirus” or “the new virus” are all acceptable terms on first reference for COVID-19. Note that it takes the article “the,” similar to the AIDS virus. Because COVID-19 is the name of the disease, not the virus, it is not accurate to write “a new virus called COVID-19.” Do not identify it as the Chinese virus or similar.

Physical distancing (compound n., not hyphenated), physical-distance (v., but to physically distance is preferred). Preferred to social distancing

Related terms, borrowed from BuzzFeed:

- boomer (lowercase)
- canceled, canceling, cancellation
- Defense Production Act (not Protection)
- drive-through clinic
- elbow bump (n.), elbow-bump (v.)
- face mask (two words)
- flulike (no hyphen)
- front line (n.), frontline (adj.)
- handwashing (one word, no hyphen)
- health care (two words)
- lockdown
- N95 (capitalize N when referring to the air filtration certification)
- nonessential (no hyphen)
- self-isolate
- to shelter in place (v.), shelter-in-place order (adj.)

6 (not six) feet apart (We use numerals for measures of distance.) The 1918 flu pandemic, not the Spanish flu

Academia and Mount Holyoke College terms

Mount Holyoke College, Mount Holyoke, the College
Use the full formal name on first mention.
Never use Holyoke or Mt. Holyoke. (Mt. Holyoke refers to the mountain.)
Exception: The College's internal website is my.mtholyoke

Mount Holyoke is a women’s college that affirms gender diversity.

As of July 1, 2018:
President Sonya Stephens
Sonya Stephens, president
She does not typically use her middle name, which is Clare. Sonya Stephens was inaugurated as the College’s 19th president on September 29, 2018.

Academic and professional titles
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 Alison Jones
Alison Jones, associate professor of biological sciences
President Barack Obama
Barack Obama, president

Use Dr. in first reference only as a formal title before the name of a physician, veterinarian or dentist. Do not capitalize an occupational designation, only a true title.
We met President Obama.
The president will speak at the dinner.
Our speaker will be Alison Jones, associate dean for engagement.
Please meet Jane Smith, master electrician.

Capitalize the official names of honorary chaired and university professorships even when title comes after the name. For those titles that are not honorary or for references after the name of the professor, use lowercase.
Indira V. Peterson, David B. Truman Professor of Asian Studies, was the keynote speaker. But:
Her years of hard work were acknowledged when she was promoted to professor.

Capitalize the formal names of groups and committees. Lowercase the words such as “committee” or “council” when they stand alone.
Student Government Association, Academic Priorities Committee, the committee, the council

See also Courtesy titles.

Alumni and alumnae
Alumna refers to one woman. Alumnae (rhymes with “knee”) refers to women. Alumnus refers to one man. Alumni (rhymes with “eye”) refers to men or men and women. As with many schools, anyone who attended the Mount Holyoke is considered an alumna, not just those who graduated. See Emily Dickinson.

The College uses alumnae for everyone who has earned a bachelor’s degree. Use alumnae/i for those who attended the College’s graduate programs.

The College uses recent alumnae to refer to those who graduated from Mount Holyoke 10 years ago or fewer. Avoid young alumnae.

Avoid alum except in casual reference. Identify matriculating students or alumnae by their graduation years on first mention.

**Academic terms**

**Class and year**
Always identify a current student or an alumna’s class year on first mention. Referring to a student’s class year rather than anticipated graduation year makes the writing more timeless. *Alison Jones ’19 versus Alison Jones, sophomore*

Do not include two years, as students occasionally do. That is, do not use Jane Smith ’17/’18. Use whichever year is in the student directory. In doubt, ask the registrar.

Terms designating academic years are lowercase: first-year students (never freshman), sophomore, junior, senior. Always include “student” when referring to first-year students. Only use “firsties” or “first-years” in casual references.

Add the century as needed. *Elizabeth Holloway Marston, class of 1915.*

class of ...
Don’t capitalize in running text

Identify alumnae by their preferred class year, rather than actual graduation year. This information is available in the Colleague database. There is no such thing as a recent alumna finishing up final credits; a student does not graduate until all requirements are complete.

Students finishing a degree in December have their degree conferred the following March and will be considered the class of that May, even if they have walked or processed in a previous Commencement ceremony. *Jane Smith ‘17 finished her degree in December 2016.*
Students finishing a degree in late summer have their degree conferred that October and will be considered the class of the previous May, regardless of the past or future May Commencement ceremony in which they participate.

*Jane Smith ’16 finished her degree in August 2016.*

Graduation years do not have a comma:
- Bachelor’s degree: Jane Smith ’17
- Frances Perkins scholars: Jane Smith FP’17
- Master of Arts degree recipient: June Smith MA’17
- Master of Science degree recipient: June Smith MS’17
- Master of Arts in Teaching degree recipients: June Smith MAT’17
- Note: Master of Arts in Teaching degrees are referred to as MAT regardless of the subject area (e.g., mathematics teaching or teacher leadership).

- Parent or guardian of student: Janice Smith P’17
- Certificate recipient: Judy Smith CG’17
- Note: Currently, a certificate is issued to undergraduate foreign-exchange students and post-baccalaureate students. It does not convey an actual credential or certification.

**Multiple degrees**
List the degrees in the order in which they were received. *Elizabeth Jones ’17, MAT’18.*

**Courses and majors**
- Capitalize course titles.
  - *She took Black Migrations. The professor was teaching Chemistry 223: Analytical Chemistry.*

- 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 chemistry.
  - *He is a French major.*
  - *She majored in Romance languages.*

**College**
- Capitalize “College” and “Collegewide” when referring specifically to Mount Holyoke.
  - Mount Holyoke has a commitment to a Collegewide environment of inclusion. See the Mount Holyoke College entry.

- Capitalize a common noun when it is part of the name: Hampshire College
  - But do not capitalize when the common noun is separated from its proper name: *Mount Holyoke, Smith and Wellesley colleges*
Departments and offices
Capitalized the formal names of departments, divisions and offices. Lowercase when using informal descriptions. Proper nouns are always capitalized. See Courses and majors.
Office of Admission; admission office
Department of Music; music department
Department of English; English department
The program is sponsored by the Department of Russian and Eurasian Studies. I am majoring in Asian studies.
But, the departments of Music, Art History and Physics.

Degrees
Avoid listing degrees. If they must be included, spell them out rather than using their abbreviations.
John Smith, who has a doctorate in chemistry, spoke on campus Thursday.

In running text, spell out and don’t capitalize.
bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, doctorate

Some professors who have trained outside of the United States list an Lic., or licentiate degree. This is essentially the equivalent of a master’s degree and can translate to licenciatura (Spanish), licentiate (Belgian), licentiaat (Dutch), or licencié (French). Consult Wikipedia for more information.

When abbreviating degrees, use periods.
MBA and MD are exceptions (no periods).

Informally, lowercase the degree and add an apostrophe.
bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, doctoral degree

When formally referring to a degree, capitalize and do not use an apostrophe.
Bachelor of Arts, Master of Science
She holds a Master of Science from Rutgers University.

Emerita, emeritus, emeritae, emeriti
One woman is emerita; one man is emeritus.
More than one emerita is emeritae.
More than one emeritus, or an emeritus and an emerita, is emeriti.
At Mount Holyoke, emeritus or emerita is a specific honor. It is not automatically given to all retired professors.

Endowed chairs
An endowed chair is a funded position in a specific department.
Valerie Barr ’77 is the Jean E. Sammet Professor of Computer Science. She has been appointed to the Jean E. Sammet Chair in Computer Science.

Latin honors
Lowercase and roman font: cum laude, magna cum laude, summa cum laude, honoris causa

Theater
Use theater unless the proper name is spelled Theatre.
She is the chair of the Department of Theatre Arts. The performance is at the Rooke Theatre.
The class was called Introduction to Theatre Arts.
I teach in the theater arts department. She is majoring in theater. The theater is open.

Buildings and locations
The proper names of buildings should be capitalized.
Art Building, Porter Hall, Williston Library, Mary Lyon Hall

Lowercase terms such as the north wing, new residence hall and library.

Use helpful descriptors where possible. Spell out the full name on first reference.
Pratt Music Hall, Willits-Hallowell Conference Center

In general, use the donor or honoree’s last name, but not their first.
Groves Health Center

Some buildings are known by both names, such as Mary Woolley Hall and Mary Lyon Hall.

Refer to cultural centers as centers. Avoid calling them houses.

Building names
Names and locations of campus buildings and most offices are available on the online campus map.

1 Woodbridge Street
5 Faculty Lane
8 Park Street
25 Morgan Street
1837 Hall

Abbey Memorial Chapel. The Mary Deacon Bullard Garden is just outside.
Abbey Hall
Abbey-Buckland Multipurpose Room
Abbey Interfaith Sanctuary
Art Building
Asian Center for Empowerment (ACE) cultural center (not house)

Banteah Cultural Center
Betty Shabazz Cultural Center, Shabazz Cultural Center (not House)
Blanchard Art Gallery
Blanchard Hall. Refers to the historic building only — the Great Room is separate. Both are part of the Community Center. Do not use SuperBlanch. Blanchard is made up of the following:
- Ground floor: Cochary Pub & Kitchen, Grab ’n Go.
- Second floor: Art Gallery, Unity Space, Rotunda Room (Blanchard 226).
- Third floor: Weissman Student Commons.

Brigham Hall
Buckland Hall

Campus Police
Canoe House
Carr Laboratory
Cassani Seminar Room, Cassani Room (in Shattuck)
Central Heating Plant
Central Services Complex, Central Services
Chapin Auditorium (in Mary Woolley)
Ciruti Language Center, Ciruti Center
Clapp Laboratory
Cleveland Hall
Cochary Pub & Kitchen
College Archives and Special Collections, College Archives
Community Boathouse
Community Center. The Community Center refers to the entire complex and includes three distinct areas: Blanchard Hall, the Dining Commons and the Great Room. See Dining Commons.
Community Center bus stop. Formerly known as the Blanchard bus stop.
Creighton Hall

Dickinson House
Dining Commons. A part of the Community Center. Do not use “D.C.” or “the Commons.”
- Opened in January 2018. See Community Center.
Dining Services
Dwight Hall

Eliana Ortega Cultural Center, Ortega Cultural Center (not House)
Eliot House
Eliot House lounge
Equestrian Center

Field Gate (not Gates). Full name: Fidelia Nash Field Gate. But “the College gates” is acceptable.

Five College Women’s Studies Research Center, Women’s Studies Center

Gamble Auditorium, located in the Art Building, not the Art Museum Building
Richard Glenn Gettell Amphitheater (not Amphitheatre), Gettell Amphitheater
Golden Pears, residence hall kitchens
Gorse Children’s Center
Grab ’n Go
Graduate Programs, preferred over PaGE
Great Room. Located in the Community Center (not Blanchard)
Groves Health Center

Ham Hall
Ham-MacGregor Dining Hall
Harriet Newhall Center, where the Office of Admission is located
Hooker Auditorium (in Clapp Laboratory)

Info Commons, Williston Library

Jeannette Marks Cultural Center, Marks House
Jenkins Room, Newhall Center Admission Office. Not auditorium.
Jones Career Development Center, Jones Career Center
Joseph Allen Skinner Museum, the Skinner Museum

Kendade Hall and the Marion Craig Potter ’49 Atrium
Kendall Sports & Dance Complex, Kendall Complex. Note the ampersand, which is how the name appears outside the building. In the Complex is:
Kendall Hall, the Mount Holyoke Fitness Center, the Mildred S. Howard Gymnasium, the Mount Holyoke Natatorium, the Mount Holyoke Field House and the Mount Holyoke Dance Studios. It is surrounded on the outside by the Mount Holyoke Turf & Track Complex, the Mount Holyoke Soccer Field, the Mount Holyoke Activity Field and the Mount Holyoke Tennis Courts.
Kohler Building Facilities Management, Facilities Management

Language Resource Center
Lower Lake, Upper Lake

MacGregor Hall (not McGregor)
The Mandelles, the ‘Delles (informal)
Mandelle Hall North, Mandelle North
Mandelle Hall South, Mandelle South
Marion Craig Potter ’49 Atrium in Kendade Hall
Mary Deacon Bullard Garden, Bullard Garden
Mary Lyon Hall
Mary Woolley Hall (no middle initial E. even though that’s the formal name of the building)
McCulloch Auditorium (in Pratt)
McCulloch Center for Global Initiatives, McCulloch Center, the center
Mead Hall
Merrill House
Miller Worley Center for the Environment, Miller Worley Center, the center
Mount Holyoke College, Mount Holyoke, the College
    Use the full formal name on first mention. Use MHC for internal audiences only, except in
certain exceptions: MHC Semester in D.C., MHC Shakti Program.
Never use Holyoke or Mt. Holyoke. Exception: The College’s internal website is
my.mtholyoke.
Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, the Art Museum, MHCAM
Mount Holyoke College Botanic Garden, the Botanic Garden
    Note garden is singular. Encompasses the Talcott Greenhouse, the arboretum and
    numerous gardens. The entire campus is not a botanic garden.
Mount Holyoke Community Boathouse, the Community Boathouse

New York Room (in Mary Woolley Hall)
Newhall Center Admission Office, Admission Office

The Orchards Golf Club.
    The Orchards Golf Club is Mount Holyoke's 18-hole championship golf course. A shrine
to the game and to its creator, The Orchards remains a hidden gem for club members
and their guests. It was crafted in 1922 from 160 acres of sloping wooded terrain by the
legendary Donald Ross and is now famous across the Northeast for its course design.
The facility has hosted the 2004 U.S. Women's Open and the 2002 NCAA Women's
Division III National Championships.

Pearsons Annex
Pearsons Hall
Pageant Green
Porter Hall
Pratt Music Hall
President’s House
Prospect Hall

Reese Psychology & Education Building, Reese Building
Rockefeller Hall North, Rockefeller North, Rocky North, the Rockies
Rockefeller Hall South, Rockefeller South, Rocky South, the Rockies
Rooke Theatre

Safford Hall
Shattuck Hall
Skinner Hall
Skinner Museum - see Joseph Allen Skinner Museum
Stimson Room (in Williston Library)
Student Financial Services

Talcott Greenhouse (not “Arboretum”); The Mount Holyoke College Botanic Garden (singular) encompasses the Talcott Greenhouse, the arboretum and numerous gardens.
Torrey Hall

Unity Space (in Blanchard Hall)
Upper Lake, Lower Lake

Wa-Shin-An, the Japanese meditation garden and teahouse located on the top floor of Eliot House. Translates as “Peace-Mind House.”
Weissman Center for Leadership, Weissman Center, the center
Weissman Student Commons, located on the third floor of Blanchard Hall, opened in late 2017.
Takes a singular verb tense.
Wilder Hall
Willits-Hallowell Conference Center
Williston Observatory
Williston Library, the library. The open space outside of the circulation desk is referred to as the atrium, not the courtyard. The sculpture is by Dale Chihuly. From Archives: The College persuaded Andrew Carnegie to give $50,000 for a new library in spring 1904, with the condition that Mount Holyoke would raise an additional $50,000 by that June. The Carnegie Foundation gave a gift in the 1930s that provided $5,000 a year for five years for new books (7,400 total new books were purchased with those funds). Some time between 1901 and 1937 the Carnegie Foundation also gave a gift of $150,000 toward the endowment of library staff salaries. The library is one of about a half dozen in the world whose collection includes volumes that are organized by the Cutter system.

College traditions and events

Baccalaureate
the ceremony the night before Commencement to commemorate the graduating class. The event includes music and speeches from students and faculty.
Big/Little Program
This tradition, formerly known as Big Sister/Little Sister and Big Sibling/Little Sibling, builds community and connections between classes. The junior class serves as the Bigs to the first-year students' Littles. The program began in the early 1900s.

Blessing and Sending
Occurs the Friday before Commencement and hosted by the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life, this event includes an exchange of roses in a ceremony that is spiritual more than religious. Seniors, accompanied by family and friends, are given a blessing and a send-off as they commence their new lives.

BOOM! Building on Our Momentum Learning Conference, BOOM! conference
BOOM! has been held annually since March 2017.

Chef Jeff cookies
created by Jeff Sadowski, who worked for dining services in the early 2000s.

Class colors and mascots or symbols
green griffin, red pegasus, yellow sphinx, blue lion, purple phoenix (Frances Perkins scholars)
Not capitalized. Plural forms: pegasi, sphinxes, phoenixes. The MHC class color chart lists class years with their colors. The graduating class of 2019 is yellow sphinx, which makes the class of 2023 yellow sphinx as well.

Mount Holyoke classes had been voting on a variety of class colors since the late 1800s, but it wasn't until 1901 that the classes voted for the colors that are still in use today. The animal symbols were finalized nearly a decade later. Today class colors and symbols decorate everything from key holders and library banners to window decals and sweatshirts. Each class proudly displays its class color at class-related activities such as Convocation, and it is an integral part of student identity.

Commencement
Commencement ceremony; Commencement weekend

Common Read
not Reading
a topical book read by incoming first-year students and the College community

Convocation
the all-College ceremony in early September signifying the beginning of the academic year

Crafting a Life in the Arts
department at-homes
receptions typically held the day before Commencement for majors who are about to graduate and their families

“Dirty Dancing”
The 1987 movie traditionally shown during Orientation because of the line “Baby’s starting Mount Holyoke in the fall.” (Note: She is not “going to Mount Holyoke in the fall.”) The real name of Baby, the lead female character, is Frances, named after one of the College’s most notable alumnae, Frances Perkins, class of 1902, the first female to serve in the Cabinet, as U.S. Secretary of Labor.

DisOrientation
This ever-evolving tradition builds camaraderie between the senior and first-year classes.

Elfing
During the fall semester, sophomores become “Elves,” leaving notes of encouragement for first-year students over the course of a week. A similar time frame is held for spring admits, who are “Bunnied” by the first-year class board during the spring semester.

Faculty Show
Occurs every four years. Faculty and staff put on a variety show that pokes fun at popular culture, campus traditions and the faculty themselves. Began in 1903.

Family and Friends Weekend
A mid-fall event designed to offer families and friends to get a taste of the academic and social life of the College. The weekend features two and a half days of events planned by a committee of students and administrators in cooperation with the Office of Student Programs. Events include academic highlights, musical performances, and athletic and cultural events.

New-student Plants
The Botanic Garden’s gift to every new student, a tradition since 1971. Originally known as “Firstie Plants” or “First-year Plants,” this name was revised in 2019 to be more inclusive to all new students.

Flower Show
Hosted by the Botanic Garden, this event occurs during the first two weeks in March.

Founder’s Day
Celebrates the founding of Mount Holyoke Female Seminary by Mary Lyon, and is held on November 8, the date the seminary opened in 1837. Ice cream became a featured treat in the 1920s.

Honor Code Ceremony
occurs at Orientation, when new students sign a pledge to follow the honor code.

Hortense Parker Celebration
This celebration for students and alumnae of color is named after the College’s first known African-American student and the first known student of color to graduate from Mount Holyoke. Two Native American non-graduates were here in the 1840s, two sisters whose father was Cherokee: Mary Harriet Boudinot, a non-graduate of the class of 1849, and Eleanor Susan Boudinot, a non-graduate of the class of 1846. The name is sometimes spelled Boudinott.

Inauguration

Irma Rabbino Award, in fond memory of Rose and Murray Rabbino. Not the Maurice Rabbino Award, per Advancement.

Junior Show, J-Show
A source of entertainment and general merriment on campus for more than a century. It features an original play that is typically heavy on humor and parody. Over the years, returning alumnae have been known to sing the songs from their show.

January Intersession, Intersession

Jean Sammet ’48 Lecture
The Sammet Fund is shared by the computer science and math departments and they alternate hosting events.

Laurel Parade

LEAP Symposium
Stands for “Learning From Application” Symposium. The annual fall event showcasing students’ summer internships and research.

M&Cs
Originally milk and crackers, now known as milk and cookies. A light evening snack provided as a study break and social event. Held in residence halls Monday through Thursday and in the Dining Commons on Sunday. No spaces.

Maria Scholarship Award, Maria scholarships

mini-reunion
A gathering of classmates (informal or formal) in the years between official, campus reunions. Not capped. See Reunion.

Mountain Day
First celebrated in spring 1838, a few months after Mount Holyoke was founded. One hundred peals of the single bell in Mary Lyon Hall announce the day. Many students climb or ride to the Summit House atop nearby Mount Holyoke — the College’s namesake — which is just shy of 1,000 feet to eat ice cream and savor panoramic views of the Connecticut River Valley.

Orientation

Pangy Day
Short for Pangyneskeia, an invented Greek word that roughly means “whole-woman making” and pronounced “pawn goon ah SKAY ah.” Debuted as a College tradition in 1979. Part Earth Day and part May Day, it features an all-College picnic and festivities for the entire campus, including music, games, a ritual maypole and a spiral dance. Occurs on the last Friday of classes in the spring semester. Note: Pangyneskeia was suggested to Mary Lyon as a possible name for her new seminary, she did not consider it as a name.

Reunion I and II
see also mini-reunion

Ring and Roses Ceremony
Held in the spring semester to acknowledge the halfway mark of a student’s Mount Holyoke College career. The class celebrates with a semi-formal dance, presentations and a dessert reception. To memorialize the event, each sophomore present receives a rose. Sophomores who ordered class rings also receive them this night.

Senior Symposium
occurs in April

Sophomore Institute
Not a program. No article in the name — not “the Sophomore Institute.” Occurs in February.

spring break (lowercase)

Snow Ball
A relatively new tradition. The first-year class board partners with the Orientation team in January to host a semi-formal dance for all members of the first-year class, including spring admits, through music, dancing and a night of fun and socializing.

Strawberries and Champagne (no ampersand)
The original event is sponsored by the Alumnae Association and the Office of Advancement and welcomes members of the senior class as Mount Holyoke’s newest alumnae. Occurs on the last day of classes in each semester. Strawberries and Champagne is now offered at other times of the year to mark other occasions.
The Mount Holyoke Fund

Vespers
Held in some form on campus each December since 1899, this holiday tradition is much anticipated and reliably fills Abbey Memorial Chapel.

Department and program names
Capitalize the formal names of departments and programs. Lowercase when using informal descriptions. Proper nouns are always capitalized. A program is not a department. Department of Art & Art History, Program in Africana Studies.
Majors and minors are not the equivalent of a department. When departments have two names, do not use a single name. Department of Sociology & Anthropology
Links to these offices and the names of the current chairs and department coordinators can be found online. See also Departments and offices.

Africana Studies (program)
Art & Art History
Asian Studies (program)
Astronomy
Biochemistry (program)
Biological Sciences
Chemistry
Classics and Italian
Computer Science
Critical Social Thought (program)
Dance
Economics
English
Environmental Studies
Film Studies (program)
French
Gender Studies
Geology & Geography
German Studies
History
International Relations
Jewish Studies (program)
Mathematics and Statistics
Music
Neuroscience and Behavior (program)
Philosophy
Physical Education and Athletics
Physics
Politics
Psychology and Education
Religion
Romance Languages and Literatures (program)
Russian/Russian and Eurasian Studies
Sociology & Anthropology
Spanish, Latina/o, and Latin American Studies
Theatre Arts

Professional and Graduate Education, PaGE, graduate programs.
Note that PaGE is not a department or a program, it’s a division.

**Miscellaneous College terms and references**

700+ campus acres
Total land holdings are 725.4 acres. The “800 acres” description is no longer accurate, as it reflects past total land holdings.

AccessAbility Services

ALANA

“Alma Mater”
The school song, but lowercase when alumnae refer to the College.
_I sing the “Alma Mater” at my alma mater._

Alumnae Quarterly

Arts and Technology Initiative

Be Well at Mount Holyoke, Be Well initiative (lowercase)
Note that the wordmark uses BeWell.
Begun in 2016, this initiative was rolled out at the fall 2017 Orientation. It focuses on health in four general areas: healthy mind, healthy body, healthy life and health community. Be Well’s many efforts include launching the first wellness space on campus, MoAsis, a relaxation space based in health services.

Campus Living Laboratory, Campus Living Lab. Avoid the acronym, CLL.
The Campus Living Lab transforms the College’s more than 700 acres of both natural and built landscape into an opportunity for multidisciplinary undergraduate research and teaching, from the lakes and trails and Botanic Garden to four miles of trails and an online database with decades of student and faculty monitoring stations sampling water, fire and other ecological field sites.

Campus Sustainability Task Force, the task force

Carol Hoffmann Collins Global Scholars-in-Residence
“Scholar” is not plural when referring to only one.
She was the 2015 Carol Hoffmann Collins Global Scholar-in-Residence.

C.J. Law
director of intercollegiate coaching and varsity hunter seat team coach. No space between the initials, per AP style, as well as C.J.’s.

Community-Based Learning

Dean of Faculty, not Dean of the Faculty

Department of Art and Art History
Architectural studies and art studio are majors within this department.

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiative; diversity, equity and inclusion.
Avoid D.E.I. or DEI.

dorm
Use residence hall. Avoid dorm or dormitory.

early decision
Avoid ED.

Eco-Reps

Emily Dickinson, class of 1849
The Amherst poet attended Mount Holyoke for one academic year, from 1847 to 1848. At that time the course of study at the Seminary was for three years total, divided into three classes: junior, middle and senior. Dickinson placed in the middle class, based on her entrance exams. If she had chosen to stay, she would have been a graduating member of the class of 1849. In the Archives she is categorized as a non-graduate of the class of 1849.

exhibit: what Archives and Special Collections presents
exhibition: what the Art Museum presents

Fimbel Maker & Innovation Lab, the Fimbel Lab
Opening at the start of spring semester 2019, the $3.5 million, 8,000-square-foot is located in the former dining and lounge areas of Prospect Hall. Students, faculty, staff and alumnae gather in the Fimbel Lab to create and invent. They can learn using a variety of technical equipment, including a laser cutter, a vacuum former, two 3D printers, sewing machines, soldering tools and computers. New equipment is added regularly. The previous makerspace, located in 211 Art Building, will be converted into a production studio. See Mount Holyoke College Makerspace.

fiscal year 2019-2020
Spell out in general communications. Avoid FY. The College’s fiscal year starts on July 1 so use both the current and next year. Fiscal year 2019-2020 starts July 1, 2019 and ends June 30, 2020.

First-year Seminars Program; first-year seminar class

FLIP: First Generation and Low Income Partnership

Frances Perkins
One of the College’s most notable alumnae, Perkins, class of 1902, the first woman to serve in the Cabinet, as U.S. Secretary of Labor.

Frances Perkins Program, Frances Perkins Scholar, Frances Perkins scholars
This program is open to students 25 years and older who have experienced an interruption in their education. Use nontraditional-age students and traditional-age students.
Jane Doe FP’17

Hope of Haiti
not Hope for...

Innovation Hire
a new position that invites faculty to shape innovative, collaborative and interdisciplinary directions in curriculum. Currently these professors are Thomas Ciufo and Peter Klemperer. This is an internal designation. Avoid in external communications.

Jeannette Marks
English professor and partner to President Mary Woolley. Two n's in Jeannette.

JobX
Laurel Fellowships. Mount Holyoke offers need-based Laurel Fellowships to support students whose own resources are not sufficient to cover the cost of study abroad. They are the only form of financial aid given by Mount Holyoke for study abroad.

Living-Learning Community, Living-Learning Communities. Avoid the acronym, LLC.

The Lynk (cap “The”)  
The Lynk initiative or experience on first reference. It is not a program. The Lynk connects each student’s academic work with practical applications of the liberal arts and sciences. It does this through rigorous coursework, advising, alumnae mentoring, professional development, and experiential learning on and off campus. Intentional reflection and assessment are essential parts of the process.

Lynk Universal Application Funding (UAF) program provides funding for sophomores and juniors to pursue unpaid internship and research opportunities.

The Lynk on the Road

makerspace. Not a proper name. See Mount Holyoke Makerspace. See Fimbel Maker & Innovation Lab.

MEDIAL Project  
Stands for “MHC Empowering Discovery, Innovation and Artistic Learning”

MHC Semester in D.C.  
This program does not take an article — that is, not “The MHC Semester in D.C.”  
Program is not part of the official title. In conjunction with the University of California Washington Center (UCDC)

MoAsis  
A relaxation space at health services. See Be Well.

MoHo — avoid except in casual reference

MoHome

MoZone

Mount Holyoke College, Mount Holyoke, the College  
Use the full formal name on first mention. Use MHC for internal audiences only, except in certain exceptions: MHC Semester in D.C., MHC Shakti Program.  
Never use Holyoke or Mt. Holyoke.  
Exception: The College’s internal website is my.mtholyoke
Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, the Art Museum
Always include Mount Holyoke College on first reference.

Mount Holyoke College Board of Trustees, the Board, the trustees
Seven trustees, all members of the Board of Trustees, voted on Thursday.

Mount Holyoke College Botanic Garden, the Botanic Garden
The Botanic Garden encompasses the Talcott Greenhouse, the arboretum and numerous gardens. The entire College campus is no longer a botanic garden.

The Mount Holyoke Fund
cap “The”

Mount Holyoke College Makerspace
The Makerspace, located in 211 Art Building, closed as a makerspace in January 2019. The space will be converted into a production studio. See the Fimbel Maker & Innovation Lab.

Mount Holyoke College Shakti Program, the MHC Shakti Program
Not, Shakti or the Shakti program.

Mount Holyoke College Science Center, the Science Center

Mt. Holyoke
Located in Skinner State Park, this peak is sometimes called Skinner, but the correct name is Mt. Holyoke. According to Google it is a traprock mountain, with an elevation of 935 feet, and is the western-most peak of the Holyoke Range. Note: Mount Holyoke College is located several miles away from Skinner State Park, not inside the park, as some websites claim.

Nancie L. Fimbel ’68

Never fear / change
Do not use.

Nexus, the Nexus concentration. Explain on first use: Nexus: Curriculum to Career, provides a way for students to gain interdisciplinary expertise in a variety of subject areas. Nexus is not a minor, program or initiative.

Office of Student Involvement
The name changed from the Office of Student Programs as of August 1, 2019.

ombudsperson, ombuds
OneCard

Professional and Graduate Education, PaGE, graduate programs

Posse Scholar, Posse scholars
Since 2010, Mount Holyoke has partnered with the Posse Foundation, a national organization that identifies and recruits diverse students with academic and leadership potential who risk being overlooked. Typically the students are admitted in groups — or posses — of about 10 students to one of the foundation’s 53 partner institutions across the country. It’s important to note that Mount Holyoke provides a full-tuition scholarship to each Posse student.

purposeful engagement in the world
not “with” the world

regular decision

Seven Sisters
The female equivalent of the once all-male Ivy League; sometimes called the Seven Siblings (not preferred). These are Mount Holyoke, Smith, Wellesley, Barnard, Bryn Mawr (all still women-only), Vassar (now coed) and Radcliffe, which is now part of Harvard. Do not use the terms “traditional women’s college” or “historical women’s college.”

The Plan for Mount Holyoke 2021, the strategic plan, the plan

Tianhui Ng, Tian

V8s

VariAsians
annual Asian cultural festival

Vice President for …
not Vice President of …

Abbreviations
“Abbreviations” is both a specific term and an umbrella term for initialisms, acronyms and contractions. The Chicago Manual of Style, chapter 10.2, and the Associated Press section on abbreviations and acronyms have fuller explanations of these terms. While exceptions can always be found — initialisms are not typically spelled out on first mention, but the United States is; “IMAX” and “JPEG” are acronym-initialism combinations — the following rules are generally applicable. In general, avoid them.
Abbreviations, the first letter or letters in a word or series of words. Do not use.
prof.
pres.
vol.

Contractions are abbreviations that include the first and last letters of a single word. Avoid.
Mr. (See Courtesy titles.)
amt.

Sometimes a symbol stands for a term. Avoid.
@
=
+

Do not use an abbreviation to avoid repetition of an organization's full name. Only use an abbreviation if the general reader will easily recognize it in subsequent references. Always spell out abbreviations on first mention.
National Institutes of Health, NIH
National Public Radio, NPR

Do not follow the full name of an organization with its abbreviation or acronym in parentheses. Use a recognizable shortened version of the name.
Fimbel Maker & Innovation Lab, the Fimbel Lab (not, MIL)
Miller Worley Center for the Environment, the Center (not, MWCE)

Acronyms are nouns formed by the initial letters of various words and read as single word.
laser, scuba, NASA, NATO
These are not usually preceded by an article. Generally, omit periods unless the result spells out an unrelated word.

Initialisms are nouns made up by a series of initials and each letter is pronounced. Most take an article — a, an, the — but not all, and not all the time. Use periods in most two-letter abbreviations. See the AP Stylebook for specific questions.

Omit periods in initialisms that are pronounced.
LGBT, AOL, DNA, TLC, KFC, NBC

Common initialisms do not need to be spelled out on first use.
Alphabetization

For lists of foundations, funds, awards and individual names:

- alphabetize an organization under the first significant word
  - This includes a fund, an award or a foundation
  - Disregard “the” in front of the name
    - The Merry Gregg Foundation goes under M
    - Sally Montgomery Individual Prize in Community-Based Learning goes under S
- alphabetical by letter (not by word), ignoring spaces and punctuation
  - Acronyms are alphabetized by their letters, not how they are spelled out
    - The MLA Writing Grant goes under MLA, not Modern Languages Association
- alphabetize an individual donor by surname
  - Merry Gregg goes under G
  - In the case of two surnames (hyphenated or not), alphabetize by the first surname
    - Harriet Beecher Stowe is filed under Beecher, not Stowe
    - See the Associated Press Style Guide for information on Spanish names.
- years are ordered numerically, from earlier to later
  - Class of 1950 Award precedes Class of 2000 Award.
- numerals go at the top of the list, ascending in value.
  - The 1905 Fellowship precedes the Alumnae Fellowship. (“The” is dropped, alphabetically.)
- these rules are followed even when the list is a mix of different types of names (but it’s preferable to have list categories separately):
  - Merry Gregg
  - Jonathan N. Lipman Award in East Asian Studies
  - Merry Gregg Foundation
  - Sally Montgomery Individual Prize in Community-Based Learning
- For readability, list foundations, funds, organizations, awards and scholarships in separate sections, where possible.

Geography and locations

Lowercase compass directions.

Travel north five miles.
The wind came in from the south.

Region names are capitalized when they stand alone and are widely understood to designate a specific geographic area, people or political entity.

the Northeast, the West Coast, the Midwest, Eastern Europe, the Middle East

High temperatures will prevail in the West.
He is a Northerner.

Spell out the names of the 50 states in running text, whether standing alone or in conjunction with a city, town, village or military base.

Fires burned in California. She grew up in Newton, Massachusetts.

Place a comma between the city and the state name, and another comma after the state name, unless ending a sentence.

She was driving from Fort Lee, New Jersey, to South Hadley, Massachusetts.

These are the AP state abbreviations, which are used outside of running text (ZIP code abbreviations in parentheses):

- Ala. (AL)
- Ariz. (AZ)
- Ark. (AR)
- Calif. (CA)
- Colo. (CO)
- Conn. (CT)
- Del. (DE)
- Fla. (FL)
- Ga. (GA)
- Ill. (IL)
- Ind. (IN)
- Kan. (KS)
- Ky. (KY)
- La. (LA)
- Md. (MD)
- Mass. (MA)
- Mich. (MI)
- Minn. (MN)
- Miss. (MS)
- Mo. (MO)
- Mont. (MT)
- Nev. (NE)
- N.J. (NJ)
- N.M. (NM)
- N.Y. (NY)
- N.C. (NC)
- N.D. (ND)
- Okla. (OK)
- Ore. (OR)
- Pa. (PA)
- R.I. (RI)
- S.C. (SC)
- S.D. (SD)
- Tenn. (TN)
- Va. (VA)
- Wash. (WA)
- W.Va. (WV)
- Wis. (WI)
- Wyo (WY)

*The names of eight states are never abbreviated (with ZIP code abbreviations): Alaska (AK), Hawaii (HI), Idaho (ID), Iowa (IA), Maine (ME), Ohio (OH), Texas (TX) and Utah (UT).

In the age of the internet and readers from around the world, include the state or country name of a major city.


In mailing addresses, use postal codes. Only abbreviate Ave., Blvd., and St. when referring to a numbered address. All other similar words, such as road, terrace, drive, etc., are always spelled out.

The area known as western Massachusetts is not capitalized. Do not use western Mass.

The Pioneer Valley, the Connecticut River Valley of western Massachusetts, the valley, the river.
Washington, D.C.
From the AP style guide: In AP usage, it's Washington, D.C., within a sentence or headline, setting off D.C. with commas.
_She worked for the Stimson Center in Washington, D.C., and as a Peace Corps volunteer._
Washington often stands alone within an AP story if it's obviously the national capital rather than the state of Washington. Also acceptable is to use District of Columbia on first reference and the District subsequently. Do not use only D.C. only except in quotations.

University of Massachusetts Amherst.
UMass Amherst on second reference.

U.S. or United States
Use “United States” on first reference. Thereafter, use “U.S.” (do not use “U.S.A.” or “America”).

**Names and titles**

**Company and organization names**
Check the company website and follow their lead. Use Co. or Cos. or Inc. or Ltd. if it appears that way in the formal title of the organization. Do not include a comma even if the company does. Do not capitalize unless the letters are individually pronounced.
_BMW but USA Today_

Do not use symbols such as exclamation points that might confuse the reader.
_Toy R Us, not Toys “R” Us_
_Yahoo not Yahoo!_

Include “The” if it’s part of the company name.
_He worked at The Walt Disney Co._

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

Where a company name is spelled with an initial lowercase letter, capitalize the letter at the beginning of a sentence.
_IDesign Studio always has a waitlist._

**Conferences, lectures, symposia and seminars**
Conference and program titles are capitalized.
_Women of Color Trailblazers Leadership Conference_
_Crafting a Life in the Arts_

Individual lecture titles within a series should be set in quotes.
Abby Wambach opened the 2016-2017 Imagination series with her talk, “Beyond the Win: Leadership for Life.”

**Courtesy titles**

Do not use Mr., Mrs. or Ms. Use Dr. in first reference only as a formal title before the name of a physician, veterinarian or dentist.

In general, only capitalize formal titles used directly before an individual’s name. Lowercase and spell out titles when they are not used with an individual's name.

*We met President Obama.*

*The president will speak at the dinner.*

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

*Our speaker will be artist Alison Jones.*

Separate a long title from a name with commas.

*Jane Smith, the dean of students, published a book.*

*The dean of students, Jane Smith, wrote a book.*

Mention credentials to indicate someone’s professional training only where relevant.

*Alison Jones, chemistry professor, was awarded the Lifetime Mentor Award by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Jones was honored for her efforts to increase the number of women, and especially people of color, in the field of chemistry.*

See also [Academic and Professional Titles](#).

**Personal names**

Use first and last names on first mention and only the last name on subsequent references. If someone is an alumna, always use their class year on first reference.

Use middle names only when the person is publicly known that way, or to prevent confusion.

*James Earl Jones*

Use middle initials according to a person’s preference and to prevent confusion.

George W. Bush but not Mickey C. Mantle

Students: In general, use the first and last name they request. Be sure to check the student’s class year via the [College directory](#). With the Commencement program only, the registrar’s office provides a list of the correct names of graduating students. For students who are not graduating, use their name as it appears in the [College directory](#).
Professors: Use the first and last names that appear on their department profile. If they are alumnae, always use their class year.

Staff: Use the first and last names that appear on their office or department page. If they don’t appear on the website, use their name as it appears in the directory. If they are alumnae, always use their class year.

Alumnae: Use the name from the Alumnae Directory. The typical format is: first name, (nickname if applicable) undergrad name if applicable, current last name and class year.

Alexandra (Lexi) Armstrong Jones ’95

Visitors: Use the name as it appears on their personal website, book jacket, etc. Otherwise, use the name they request. If they are alumnae, always use their class year.

**Titles of works**

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

Use quotations for albums, books, computer games, movies, opera, plays, poems, radio and TV programs, song titles, podcasts and works of art. Episodes, such as those in a TV show or podcast, also take quotations.

Use quotations for art exhibitions and archives exhibits. Note: These terms are specific to the presenting field. The Art Museum puts on exhibitions, and Archives puts on exhibits.

“Piece Together: The Quilts of Mary Lee Bendolph,” is on display at the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum and features 18 quilts.

“Laurel Parade” is an exhibition curated by Samantha Snodgrass ’18, who is interning in the College archives.

The Bible, Quran and other holy books, along with reference books, such as almanacs, dictionaries and encyclopedias, do not take quotation marks.

Software and most websites and apps do not take quotation marks.

The titles of magazines and newspapers do not take quotation marks or italics.

Do not capitalize “magazine” or “the” unless these words are part of the publication’s title.

Time magazine
ESPN The Magazine
The Boston Globe

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 Washington Post every morning.
Dates and times

Dates
When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec.

January 1972 was cold.
Jan. 5 was the coldest day of the year.

When using a month and a year only, do not separate with commas.
January 2010

When a phrase is used with a month, date and year, set both the date and year off with commas.
Jan. 2, 1979, was the coldest day in the decade.

Use commas around a phrase with a day, date and time.
The concert was held Tuesday, Jan. 24, at 7 p.m.

When referencing a span of years, use a hyphen and all four numbers of the second year, even if the span is within the same decade: 1980-1987.
See also Dashes and hyphens.

It's not necessary to use the word “on” before a date or day of the week when its absence would not lead to confusion.
The meeting will be held Monday.

When writing dates or inclusive dates, you may use a hyphen instead of “to” or “through” but only if the word “from” or “between” doesn’t precede the range.
The box office is open Monday-Friday.
The performance will run Sept. 14-22.
The style of painting was popular from the 14th to 16th centuries.
The party was from 1 to 3 p.m.
She was in college from 1998 to 2002.
She was put in charge between April and July.

Use an “s” without an apostrophe after the year to indicate spans of decades or centuries. Decades may be written out or abbreviated. If abbreviating, use an apostrophe.

1950s and 1960s
’50s and ’60s
Suzan-Lori Parks ’85
With centuries, use figures for numbers 10 or higher.

- the first century
- the 19th century

The university was founded in the 1880s.

An apostrophe after the year is needed for possessives:

- The presidential election was 1980's biggest news story. (or rework as “the biggest news story of 1980.”)

Daylight saving time (lowercase, not savings, and no hyphen)

**Seasons and semesters**
- Lowercase.
- autumn, fall, winter, spring, summer

**Time**

Use figures for time of day, except for noon and midnight, and to express duration of times.

- 1 p.m.
- 5 o’clock
- The play lasted 2 hours and 15 minutes.

Use noon and midnight instead of 12 p.m. or 12 a.m. Never write 12 noon or 12 midnight — this is redundant.

- Lowercase with periods: a.m., p.m.
- 3:30 p.m.
- If it’s on the hour, don’t use minutes.
- 3 p.m., not 3:00 p.m.

Note that you need both a.m. and p.m. only when the range calls for it, and that en dashes are used instead of hyphens:

- 8:30–10 p.m.
- noon–2 p.m.
- 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

There are no periods after a.m. and p.m. in online content.

The day usually precedes the time, with hours preceded by a comma. No comma if order is reversed.

- Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.–8 p.m. EST.
- We are available 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- The reading is on Wednesday, March 28, at 7 p.m. at the Odyssey Bookshop in South Hadley.

Use commas around a phrase with a day, date and time.

The concert was held Tuesday, Jan. 24, at 7 p.m.
In print pieces, house style permits small caps with no periods and zeros after times on the hour.

10:30 AM–4:00 PM
10:30 AM–NOON

**Numerals**

Spell out numbers from one through nine (standing alone or used as modifiers).

*I’ll be there in five minutes.*

*He scored with two seconds left.*

*An eight-hour day.*

*The two-minute warning.*

Use figures for all numbers 10 and above — and use figures with a unit of measurement, ratios, percentages, page numbers, sums of money or when referring to ages of people, animals, events or things.

*He ran 5 miles.*

*Her test grade was 8% higher than the last one.*

*We had 6 inches of snow.*

*The student-to-faculty ratio is 10 to 1.*

*She has a daughter, 2, and a son, 8.*

*She is in her 30s.*

*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.*

Use figures for academic course numbers.

*History 306*

Spell out numbers that start a sentence. Rephrase if this is awkward.

Twenty-one students were in the class.

Exception: Use figures when a sentence begins with a year.

*1945 saw the end of the war.*

Fractions: Spell out amounts less than one, using hyphens between the words.

*two-thirds, three-quarters, nine-tenths, seven-sixteenths*

**Money**

Abbreviate with a dollar sign ($) when used to describe an amount. Spell out only when discussing the type of currency itself. Don’t use extra zeros with sums of money: *$6 not $6.00.*

**Telephone numbers**
Use hyphens, not parentheses or periods: 413-538-2000.
Use lowercase x, with no space, for extensions: 413-538-2000 x2304

Punctuation

Asterisks
In general, if an asterisk occurs with other punctuation (period, comma, etc.), place it after the punctuation. An exception is the dash — place the asterisk before the dash.
Sample rates for a $10,000 charitable gift annuity.*

Bulleted lists
Introduce a list of bulleted items by a colon. The items should be:
● Two or greater in number (don’t use a list with just one or two bullets).
● Parallel in construction (all complete sentences or all sentence fragments, for example).
● Consistent in style and verb tense (such as all directives in present tense, or all questions in past tense).
● Introduced by efficient wording that avoids repetition in the bullets.
● Appropriately punctuated, whether complete sentences or sentence fragments:
  ○ Capitalize the first letter of each bullet.
  ○ End each bullet with a period (or exclamation or question marks, if appropriate).
    Do not use a semicolon or comma.
If an item just won’t fit the style of the others in the list, write it as a complete sentence beneath the bulleted list.

Capitalization
As a rule, only proper nouns are capitalized. See Academia and Mount Holyoke College terms for exceptions.

In a headline, only the first letter and proper nouns are capitalized.

Colons and 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.”
They asked everyone: her sister, brother, cousin and mother.
They asked the following: her sister, brother, cousin and mother.

Uppercase the first letter after a colon if the first word is a proper noun or begins a complete sentence.
The flag was a mix of colors: red, green, blue and orange.
The flag was a mix of colors: It was red, green, blue and orange.
Avoid semicolons. But 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**

Following AP style, we do not use serial commas, aka the Oxford comma.

Use commas to separate elements in a series but do not include a comma before the conjunction.

*She studied history, sociology and biology. She would read Lorde, Woolf or Eliot.*

It’s interesting to note that Oxford University Press, for whom the serial comma is named, does not recommend the practice. According to the [Chicago Manual of Style’s April 2019 Q&A](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/qanda.html):

“The latest iteration of Oxford’s venerable style guide (New Hart’s Rules, 2nd ed., 2014; this guide, like Chicago’s, has its origins in the 1890s) supports its use but allows it to be omitted: ‘For a century it has been a part of Oxford University Press style to retain or impose this last comma consistently, to the extent that the convention has also come to be called the Oxford comma. . . . The general rule is that one style or the other should be used consistently. However, the last comma can serve to resolve ambiguity’ (p. 77). Butcher’s Copy-Editing, published by Cambridge University Press (4th ed., 2006), likewise treats serial commas as optional: ‘A comma should be consistently omitted or included before the final “and” or “or” in lists of three or more items’ (p. 156). In its own text, the guide by Cambridge omits serial commas; Oxford’s retains them. So for British English, use serial commas or omit them, but do so consistently. And if you go without, make sure to add a comma wherever its absence might create ambiguity.”

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

Use a comma at the beginning and end of an interruptive clause.

*Sonya Stephens, president of Mount Holyoke College, spoke at the meeting.*

Use a comma after an exclamation point or question mark that appears in a title:

*All the band’s releases — “A Hard Day’s Night,” “Help!,” “Yellow Submarine” and “Magical Mystery Tour” — were popular.*

**Dashes and hyphens**

Three types of lines in punctuation:
Hyphens -
en dashes –
em dashes —

An em dash is created using shift-option-hyphen keys.
An en dash is created by using option-hyphen.

**Hyphens** are the shortest. The AP revised its hyphen entry in spring 2019, including this excerpt: “Use of the hyphen is far from standardized. It is optional in most cases … the fewer hyphens the better; use them only when not using them causes confusion (loose-knit group, but tax code changes). Think of hyphens as an aid to readers’ comprehension. If a hyphen makes the meaning clearer, use it. If it just adds clutter and distraction to the sentence, don't use it. ... try rephrasing.”

The main rule about hyphen use is to avoid ambiguity. So, typically, they join together words to create a compound adjective.
*free-standing platform, special-interest money, little-known song*

But no hyphen is needed the meaning is clear and if the modifier is commonly recognized as one phrase.

Adverb modifiers preceding nouns do not take a hyphen, as in *commonly used words.*
Use a hyphen after well-, as in *well-known singer.*

See below for prefixes.

Hyphens also used for ranges (of time, dollar amounts). No spaces around hyphens. Don’t use a hyphen when the words “from” or “between” precede the range. See Dates and times.
*2008-2012*
*$85-$100 a month*
*January-March*
*1-3 p.m.*

**En dashes** are shorter than em dashes and longer than hyphens. They are used for combining open compounds. No spaces around en dashes.
*Justin Bieber–style lyrics*

**Em dashes** are longer than hyphens and en dashes. They create an emphasis slightly stronger than commas. Single spaces are used before and after em dashes.
*The dog — the one that lived in the corner house — got out of her yard.*
*The leaves were red — actually, more of a deep maroon.*
*I believed — before coming to Mount Holyoke and meeting Professor Jones — that I couldn’t write.*
Ellipses
Treat an ellipsis as a three-letter word, with three periods together and a space on either side. If the words preceding the ellipsis constitute a complete sentence, whether in the original or in the condensation, add a period at the end of the sentence, a space and then the ellipsis.
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.

Exclamation marks
Avoid excessive use of exclamation marks. Do not use them for emphasis. A good rule of thumb is one per page. Better to use none except in dialogue when someone is shouting, or in titles: he His favorite album was “Help!”.

Italics
AP does not use italics. Genus and species names are not exceptions: Ursus americanus

See also Titles.

Non-English words and phrases
Use quotation marks for non-English words in an English-language context. This is to prevent them being misunderstood or seen as a mistake. Quotation marks aren't automatically necessary for non-English words, however, if it’s obvious in context.

Non-English phrases should be put in quotation marks when they are unfamiliar. If a definition follows, enclose it in parentheses or quotation marks.
“Le cœur a ses raisons que le raison ne connaît point” (The heart has reasons that reason does not know).

Commonplace phrases in non-English languages do not need to be in quotes.
Our money says e pluribus unum. Go forth and carpe diem!

See also Latin honors under Academia and Mount Holyoke College terms.

Prefixes and suffixes
Generally, do not hyphenate except as noted in AP and Webster’s New World College Dictionary.

AP, as of spring 2019: Do not hyphenate double-e combinations with pre- and re-.
preeclampsia, preelection, preeminent, preempt, preestablished, preexisting reelect, reemerge, reemphasize, reemploy, reenact, reengage, reenlist, reenter, reequip
Use a hyphen if the word that follows is capitalized.
*The song was written by ex-Beatle Ringo Starr.*

Retain the hyphen when forming nouns, adjectives and verbs that indicate occupation or status:
*co-pilot, co-chairman, co-host*

But: Check Webster’s New World College Dictionary.
*coauthor, copilot*

Do not hyphenate when using a prefix with a word that starts with a consonant.
*prenatal, predate, pregame*

In general, no hyphen is needed with sub-, post-, or non-.
*subtotal, subcommittee, nonaligned, postdoctoral*

See also [Commonly used words and phrases](#).

**Possessives**

Plural nouns not ending in *s*, add ‘s.
*men’s clothing*
*the justice’s verdict*
*Marx’s theories*

Singular common nouns ending in *s*, add ‘s. This is a change from previous editions.
*the hostess’s invitation, the hostess’s seat*
*the witness’s answer, the witness’s story.*

Singular proper names ending in *s*, use only an apostrophe.
*Jones’ music*
*Achilles’ heel*

For singular nouns not ending in *s*, add ‘s.
*The school’s playground.*

This applies to words ending in *x* or *z* as well.
*The fox’s den.*

**Quotation marks**

Use smart quotes, a.k.a. curly quotes. Make sure the quote curls the correct way: *class of ’19*.

The period and the comma always go inside the quotation marks.
*She told us “stay in school,” which was good advice.*

“*That gender studies class,” the student said, “was a life-changing experience.*”
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.*

“That gender studies class,” the student said, “was a life-changing experience!”

*My favorite Beatles album is “Help!”*

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 (“”).

AP style does not require a space between single and double quotes.

*De Quincey’s essay is called “On the Knocking at the Gate in ‘Macbeth.’”*

*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.”*

Quotation marks are used when needed to prevent misreading the word or letter as literally part of the grammatical sentence. Use your judgment. The Chicago Manual of Style says, “The more unlikely a word is to be known to your reader, the more appropriate the quotation marks. Likewise for terms that may be misunderstood if not set off from the rest of the sentence. There’s no rule that will fit every circumstance.”

*Type “Ruth” into the search box. The word “search” was starting to bother me.*

Avoid scare quotes, such as using them to indicate a term is used as slang or to signal the reader that the term is not the writer’s, or is being applied in an unusual way. Use sparingly. Don’t apologize with quotes, find a better word.

*The debate turned into a free-for-all, not The “debate” turned into a free-for-all.*

Unfamiliar language and terms not in the dictionary, such as those listed here that are common with some students, should be defined on first reference. See *Some Notes on Language.*

Ally, allyship - someone expressing solidarity with an oppressed group

See *Non-English words and phrases* for additional guidance on quotation marks.

**Slashed constructions**

Avoid slashed constructions where possible: internship/research experience

Use instead “and” or “or” construction instead.

*internship or research experience*
If slashes are used, no spaces before or after them.

**internship/research experience**

Exception: when used to show a line break in quoted poetry.

**Spaces**

One space after period ending a sentence.

No space between initials.

*T.S. Eliot*

*C.J. Law*

**Tenses**

Headlines are in present tense.

Stories are in past tense.

**Commonly used words and phrases**

3D

9/11 is most commonly used

advisor, not adviser

Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop

(preface with “Adobe”)

African American (n., adj.)

No hyphen. Use African American when the person is of African descent (vs. Caribbean, e.g.).

all right (never alright)

alumna, alumnae (avoid alum)

antisemitism

Asian, not Oriental

Asian American (no hyphen)

Black when referring to race

cannabis, not marijuana

catalog

change-maker (per A.P.)

check-in (n. and adj.)

campuswide

citywide

class of … lowercase in running text

collegewide (Collegewide when referring to the College)

coauthor

co-captain

co-chair

cocurricular, not extracurricular

co-founder

codirector

coed

commonwealth of Massachusetts, not state consensus, not general consensus

counselor

cross-disciplinary

data (n.) takes a singular verb and pronouns when writing for general audiences; plural in scientific/academic writing

daylight

decision-making (all uses)

dehyde

disabled, not handicapped

Division III in the NCAA

Diwali, the autumn festival of lights

editor-in-chief

email

fax

fieldwork
filmmakers
filmmaking
first-come, first-served
firsthand
firsties
first-year (adj.) Not a noun. First-year students take first-year seminars during their first year at Mount Holyoke. Do not use freshman.

First-Year Seminar Program
Five Colleges, singular because “Consortium” is understood
Five College Consortium
Five Colleges, Inc.
Five College system
full-time (adj.)
full time (noun)
fundraising
GPA
green (in terms of sustainability)
handy-on, but avoid as a cliche
health care
Hilltowns
hip-hop
home page
Indigenous (capped)
interdisciplinary
initiative, not new initiative
interlibrary
internet
kosher/halal
LGBT and LGBTQ are both acceptable
Latinx
liberal arts education (no hyphen)
lifelong
livestream, livestreaming
log in (v.)
login (n., adj.)
log out (v.)
logout (n., adj.)
long-range (adj.)
long-standing
long-term (adj.)
RSVP
same-sex marriage, not gay marriage
self-consciousness
self-knowledge
small-scale
short- and long-term
socioeconomic
STEM, acceptable on first reference but
  spell out shortly thereafter: science,
  technology, engineering and math
Student-athlete
Swastika, see below under Race and
  Ethnicity
task force
trailblazing students, trailblazer
traditional-age student
ultimate, when referring to the sport. Do not
  use Frisbee, which is trademarked.
underrepresented
United States (n.)
URL, URLs
U.S. (adj., as in U.S. government) and noun
versus, not vs., in running text
vs., in athletic events
well-being
West Coast
Western culture
western Massachusetts
western New England
website, the web, webinar
white when referring to race. Do not use
  Caucasian.
work-study (n., adj.)
world-wide
yearlong

**Trademarked terms**

Words that are registered trademarks should be capitalized. Avoid using where possible. If a
trademarked term must be used, make sure the term is actually appropriate. That is, be sure the
photocopier is actually a Xerox, not a Canon.

Cyclone fence (chain-link fence)
Frisbee (flying disc)
Geopiers (rammed aggregate pier system)
Kleenex (tissue)
Listserv (email lists)
Xerox (photocopier)

Write the company name following copy editing standards.
Adidas, not adidas
Toys R Us, not Toys “R” Us

The symbols ® and ™, which often appear on product packaging and in advertisements, are not
required and should be avoided wherever possible, and always in running text. Friendly Military
Schools may be the exception.
Usage dos and don’ts

affect and effect
Affect is usually a verb, and effect is usually a noun. But effect functions as a verb when it bears the sense to bring about, such as regarding changes or solutions.
*Mount Holyoke is affected by students who want to face, embrace and effect change.*

fact-checking
Do not assume you know the correct name of a proper noun, even Mount Holyoke terms. Be sure to check, typically on an official website. If you don’t want to use the formal name, you can lowercase the part that is not official.
Big Y World Class Market — but Big Y supermarket
Which Fulbright program, the Fulbright U.S. Student Program or the Fulbright Scholar Program?
“The Godfather” — “The” is part of the title
Cate Blanchett has a c and two t’s.
Gamble Auditorium is in the Art Building, not the Art Museum Building.

first generation
Use the term only when describing someone as the first in their family to attend college.
As an adjective it is hyphenated. Do not use first-gen.
*She is a first-generation college student.*

Avoid the term when describing one’s personal or familial immigration status, as dictionary entries vary: “First-generation American” can refer to either people who were foreign-born and have taken up permanent residence in the United States, or to the native-born children of foreign-born parents who have taken up permanent residence in the United States.
*Her parents immigrated from China when they were teenagers.*

i.e., e.g., Use periods and a comma.
i.e. means “in other words” or “that is”
e.g. means “for example”

Impact — a noun, not a verb.
*This effort will have a positive impact. Avoid: This effort was very impactful.*

lay and lie
Lay is a transitive verb. It requires a direct object. lay–laid–laid
*Now I lay me down to sleep. Lay your pencils down.*
*I laid the bowl there yesterday.*
*These rumors have been laid to rest.*
Lie is an intransitive verb. It never takes a direct object. lie–lay–lain

*Lie down and rest.*
*She lay down on the bed.*
*He hasn’t yet lain down.*

**lesser and fewer**
Less is for amounts or mass nouns such as less salt, dirt, water. Fewer is for countable things such as fewer people, calories, suggestions.

*less money, fewer dollars*

**more important** — not more importantly.

**noun plus gerund**
Unless these compounds appear closed or hyphenated in Webster’s New World College Dictionary, 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*

**on to**
Do not use onto unless the combination is used to mean “end up on top of.”
Let’s move on to better things. You can log on to the server. But: He jumped onto the car.

**Quoting**
Condensing a statement within quotations is acceptable if the exact meaning is not lost. This is particularly true when showing the person quoted the story in advance of publication. Ellipses in such quotes are therefore to be avoided. At times, paraphrasing without using quotes may be preferable as long as the exact meaning is retained."

When attributing a quote, use “said.” Avoid “explained,” “replied,” “laughed,” “added,” etc.

**that and which**
Use “that” for nonrestrictive clauses. *The cups that broke were red.*
Use “which” for restrictive clauses. *The cups, which were red, broke when I dropped them.*
Some Notes on Language

In general, the Conscious Style Guide is a good resource for writing about ability, age, appearance, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, etc. The AP style guide addresses these issues as well, including a recently revised section on https://www.apstylebook.com/ap_stylebook/race-related-coverage.

Specifically, the Mount Holyoke community is wide-ranging in many areas, including age, nationality and fluency in English. In order to be respectful and inclusive, it’s important not to assume a common frame of reference. Not everyone knows the 1950s TV show “I Love Lucy,” or hip-hop founder DJ Kool Herc or the Dickens novel “Great Expectations.”

Above all, respect, clarity and simplicity are key. Below are a few tips, followed by a selection of terms to be aware of.

1. Avoid jargon and exclusive language.
   Insider language, especially academic jargon, can be confusing and off-putting. Be specific. She taught four courses a year. Not: Her teaching load was four courses.
   In the interest of inclusivity and in recognition of the College’s diverse populations, don’t assume every reader will know what common terms are. If there’s room, spell out what might seem like common terms. Define on first mention.
   Advanced Placement, or AP, is a high school course that offers college credit. International Baccalaureate, or IB, is a school for students ages 3-19 who study a specific international curriculum.

2. Avoid sexist language.
   Be conscious of language. Avoid language overt and subtle, such as lady doctor, lady luck, manhunt, man cave.
   doctor, not lady doctor
   letter carrier or postal worker, not mailman
   firefighter, not fireman
   humanity, not mankind

3. Singular they/them/themself is acceptable.
   The use of singular they, aka epicene they has been around for centuries and can be found in Chaucer, Shakespeare and the King James Bible. It is acceptable in the style guides of the Associated Press and the Chicago Manual of Style, as well as academic style guides such as MLA and APA. The following guidelines are adapted from the AP’s online style guide.
Always respect a person’s chosen pronouns, while noting that clarity is an essential priority. Many of our readers are unfamiliar with the use of they/them as a personal pronoun to indicate gender neutrality. Use the person’s name or rewrite the sentence where possible. *The professor said Dana could get the paper Tuesday.*

When using singular they, explain in the text that the person uses gender-neutral pronouns. Be sure that the phrasing does not imply more than one person. *Dana said they liked studying Chinese.*

Do not use the generic male voice to indicate gender neutrality. Reword where possible to avoid gender. Avoid s/he or his/hers. Avoid xe or ze and other gender-neutral pronouns. Do not confuse the use of singular they with transgender issues.

In most cases, a plural pronoun should agree in number with the antecedent. *The students loved the movie their professor showed them.*

Singular they is also acceptable at times. *Everyone should grab their jacket and hike on Mountain Day.*

But this can also be revised to avoid singular they. *Faculty, staff and students should grab their jackets and hike on Mountain Day.*

4. **Race and ethnicity**

Race and ethnic groups should not be mentioned unless relevant to the story. When used, follow the person’s preference. Do not use a hyphen unless the term is a compound adjective. *Polish American* but *Polish-American food*

**Common terms**

Asian, not Oriental

African American or Black
The adjective African American or Black are acceptable for an American Black person of African descent. Note that Black and African American are not interchangeable. People from the Caribbean, for instance, often refer to themselves as Caribbean American, or by specific country: *Haitian American.* Follow the person’s preference.

American Indian or Native American
Follow the person’s preference. Where possible, be precise and use the name of the tribe. *Cherokee, Aleut, Diné*

Ally, allyship
expressing solidarity with an oppressed group
cannabis
Do not use marijuana, which has racist origins.

Caucasian but white is lowercase

cisgender (not cis, or cis gender, or cis gendered)
A person whose gender identity matches their anatomical identity at birth. Used if necessary to refer to people who are not transgender in stories about gender, as a means to distinguish people from one another. Do not use a term such as normal. Not synonymous with heterosexual, which refers to sexuality.

COVID-19
The Associated Press has issued what they call a topical guide about COVID-19. Using COVID-19, the new coronavirus or the new virus are all acceptable terms on first reference for COVID-19. Note that it takes the article the. Because COVID-19 is the name of the disease, not the virus, it is not accurate to write “a new virus called COVID-19.”

gender nonconforming (n.), gender-nonconforming (adj.)
Acceptable in broad references as a term for people who do not conform to the traditional view of two genders. Not synonymous with transgender.
The organization is offering a weekly lunch for gender-nonconforming students.

Indigenous (capitalized)

Latinx
a gender-neutral form of Latino or Latina to describe of, relating to, or marked by Latin American heritage.

LGBT, LGBTQ
Stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (and questioning and/or queer). Both are acceptable per AP.

microaggression (n.)
Brief, casual remarks or actions that send denigrating messages to individuals because of their group membership.

nonbinary, adj.
a term that relates to, or being a person who, identifies with or expresses a gender identity that is neither entirely male nor entirely female

swastika
When the swastika is displayed in the West as a symbol of antisemitism and white supremacy, it is referencing Nazi symbolism from the 1930s. But versions of it also have deep meaning
throughout the world, ancient and modern, as a symbol of prosperity and good fortune, in particular to Hindus, Jains and Buddhists. Use sensitivity when writing about it and be sure to put it into context.

transgender, adj., trans on second reference
denoting or relating to a person whose sex assigned at birth does not match their gender identity. Identify people as transgender only if relevant and use the name by which they live publicly. Use transgender on first reference. Trans may be used on subsequent references. Do not use transgender as a noun. Do not use the term transgendered.

Sam is a transgender man. Alison is transgender.

Writing for the web

At least two-thirds of Americans have smartphones, and most people read online text on their phones.

- Keep online text in short paragraphs.
- Use bullet points, **bolding** and other tools for readability.
- Avoid *italics*, which are very hard to read online.
- Never **underline** for any reason other than linked text.
- All images must have alt text, per federal law, for accessibility purposes.
- All photos should have captions, which can also serve as alt text and hover text. Identify who is in the picture and where they were, where possible.
  - All artwork posted online must have a credit, as provided by the collection from which it was borrowed. The typical format is "Title of Work," year. Medium/materials, dimensions. Housing institution or collection. 


**Hyperlinks**

Online text that is underlined indicates a hyperlink, so do not underline unless the text includes a URL.

Avoid spelling out a URL in running text online: “The program may be found here: [https://www.mtholyoke.edu/](https://www.mtholyoke.edu/).”

Avoid language such as, “The program may be found here” or, “Click here.” Rather, link to noun phrase or a couple of appropriate words so the reader knows what exactly they are clicking on. The story about Mountain Day mentioned my friend.
Do not spell out an email address. Set email addresses up as hyperlinks using the person’s name where appropriate. Email [Sasha Nyary](mailto:Sasha.Nyary@mountholyoke.edu) or call her at x2809.

Keep a balance on what is hyperlinked in online text. Link where appropriate but don’t overlink. Keep the user on the Mount Holyoke site, where possible.

Avoid spelling out URL in print, and if you must, be careful where breaking the address. When a URL must be broken over a line in a printed work, breaking after a slash or a double slash is preferred. In order to avoid confusion, do not break a URL after a period — leaving what looks like a period at the end of a line — or a hyphen in the actual address.

NOTE: No periods in am and pm in online content.

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