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Whitman College Copy Style Guide

The purpose of following a uniform style in Whitman College communications is *consistency*. Consistency in voice and grammatical style supports and enhances our image as a distinguished institution with a positive reputation. It adds reliability and credibility to printed pieces as well as the website.

In large part, the Office of Communications uses and recommends “The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual.” This is the style used most frequently by newspapers and magazines, making it perhaps the most widely read style among our many constituents. However, there are instances in which this Whitman Copy Style Guide veers away from AP Style. Those instances, in large part, relate to certain aspects particular to Whitman culture and tradition. Also, this style guide is based on “Webster’s Dictionary” definitions and spellings. When two spellings are listed, use the first.

Remember that even with this guide, there will be times when selecting the correct style is tricky. Please feel free to seek help from the communications staff.

academic degrees – use lowercase: bachelor of arts (or science); bachelor’s degree; juris doctor; master of arts/fine arts/science; master’s degree, doctorate. Spelling out the degree is preferred. When abbreviating, use periods with these: B.A., B.S., M.A., M.F.A., M.S., J.D., Ph.D., Ed.D., LL.M. Do not use periods with MBA. Use Dr. before a name *only* with medical doctors. A person earns a degree, *not* receives a degree.

acronyms/initials – Spell out on first use followed by acronym in parentheses; don’t use periods, i.e., Associated Students of Whitman College (ASWC) holds elections annually. The ASWC vote takes place in March. No acronym needed after first reference when there is no second reference.

adviser – not advisor.

alumni – There is no such word as “alum” or “alums.” It is acceptable to use the slang term in casual conversation, but it should not be used in written communications.

ALUMNUS - This is a male who has graduated or has earned the required number of credits. It is a singular term, referring to one person, who is male.

ALUMNA - This is a female who has graduated or has earned the required number of credits. It is a singular term, referring to one person, who is female.

ALUMNI - This is a plural term, referring to a group or groups of two or more males only and/or groups of males and females who have graduated or earned the required credits.

ALUMNAE - This is a plural term, referring exclusively to a group or groups of two or more females who have graduated or earned the required credits.

Remembering that for every rule there is an exception, here is one — there are some people who use the term “alumni” for “alumnae,” largely because more readers are likely to understand the first term. For our purposes, it’s best to use the term that your audience would want.

See also, “class year” and “nondegree holder.”

a.m., p.m. – Use a.m. and p.m. in all cases. *Not* am, pm or AM, PM. Use a space after the number, e.g., 6 p.m.

ampersand (&) – Never use in text copy unless it is part of a formal name, such as with a law firm or business. Never substitute it for the word “and.” However, it may be used as a design element.

area codes/phone numbers – Always include the area code: (714) 532-6075.

Baccalaureate – capitalize when referring to Whitman’s event.

Board of Trustees, Board of Overseers – Capitalize only when used in their entirety, in the formal sense, i.e., The Board of Trustees meets monthly, and the Board of Overseers meets quarterly. Lower case in other uses, i.e., The trustees and overseers guide and support the college. Capitalize trustee or governor only when used before a name in a formal sense, i.e., Trustee Kari Glover lives in Seattle. John Stanton is a trustee; Dean Nichols is an overseer.

book/magazine/newspaper/movie/play titles – see composition titles.

center – upper case as part of the formal name, i.e., The Glover Alston Center hosts many campus events. On next references, use lower case, i.e., The center is located at 26 Boyer Ave.

citywide – also, countywide, statewide, nationwide, worldwide.

class year – Whitman class years should be listed like this: Michael Whitman ’98. For alumni couples: Paul ’98 and Kristi Marcus Whitman ’00. For couples with only one alumnus/a: Paul and Kristi Marcus Whitman ’00 or Paul ’98 and Kristi Whitman. (Also see “maiden name.”) The apostrophe before the class year must curve to the left – ’ *not* ‘ – and must be created manually; one way is to hit the key twice and then delete the first one.

co – see “hyphens.”

college – see “upper/lower case.”

commas – Do not use commas before the words “and” and “or” in a series, i.e., Please complete sections one, two and three of the financial aid application. Exceptions include some official documents, such as the Commencement program and the college catalog.

Use commas before and after a spouse's name, i.e., He and his wife, Veronica, have two children. Do not use commas with "Inc.," i.e., Cisco Systems Inc.

Commencement – capitalize when referring to Whitman's event.

composition titles – Put in quotes the titles of: blogs, books, journals, movies, television programs, plays, poems, musical pieces/songs, lectures, speeches, articles and works of art. Italicize titles of newspapers and magazines.

couples (listing order for class notes) – If both people in a couple attended Whitman, list under the class year of the person who submitted the information and then cross reference with the other person's class year, i.e., Jennifer Smith '02 married Edward Black '99 on May 3, 2010.

course titles – put in quotes, e.g., "Philosophy of Religion." Lower case when describing courses in general, e.g., biology, mathematics and the classics.

dashes – When setting off text with a dash, use a long dash — with a space on either side of the dash.

dates – Abbreviate the month when used with a specific date, and use a comma after the year when it does not end the sentence: They were married on Dec. 15, 2010, in Seattle. Names of five months are not abbreviated. See below:

Jan.	May	Sept.
Feb.	June	Oct.
March	July	Nov.
April	Aug.	Dec.

Spell out the month when used only with a year, e.g., January 2010. Spell out when used simply in reference to a month, i.e., The event will be held in January. Don't use ordinal abbreviations, e.g., Jan. 2, *not* Jan. 2nd. Always spell out days of the week.

decades – Using the 1950s as an example: To abbreviate it, '50s, i.e., The skirts were popular in the '50s.

To use for an age range, 50s, i.e., The shirt might appeal to a man in his 50s.

To make it possessive, 50's, i.e., It's a 50's thing.

departments – see "upper case vs. lower case."

directions – Lowercase north, south, northeast, etc., when they indicate compass direction; capitalize when they designate regions. Uppercase when denoting widely known regions, including for our audiences, Western Washington, Eastern Washington, Eastern Oregon, Southern California.

dollars – Do not include .00 as you would when the dollar amount includes cents, i.e., Tickets cost \$50; *not* Tickets cost \$50.00. For amounts less than \$1, use the word cents,

i.e., Raffle tickets cost 50 cents each, *not* \$.50. For amounts of \$1 up to \$999,999.99, use the dollar sign. For amounts of \$1 million or more, omit zeroes and spell out the word.

ellipses – no spaces between ellipses (dots), but a space before and after: The ... dog.

e-mail – always use a hyphen; don't capitalize: e-mail, *not* email or Email. Also, e-book, e-commerce, e-business.

emeritus, emerita – Indicates that an individual has retired but retains his or her rank or title. Follows the title, e.g., professor emeritus, *not* emeritus professor. Use emeritus for a man, emerita for a woman.

exclamation point – in general, do not use; the need and proper usage in the type of external writing we do is virtually nonexistent, with the possible exceptions of a design element in a poster or promotional piece, or in quoted material.

faculty – the faculty is; faculty members are.

fewer than/less than – In general, use fewer for individual items, less for bulk or quantity, i.e., Fewer than 10 applicants (individuals) called. I had less than \$50 (amount) in my pocket. But: I had fewer than 50 \$1 bills (individual items) in my pocket.

filmmaking – is one word, not two

former – always lower case when used with a title, e.g., former President Tom Cronin.

fundraising, fundraiser – one word in all uses (*AP Stylebook, 2009*)

freshman/freshmen – Whitman College style is to refer to them as first years or first-year students. However, for reference, freshman is singular, freshmen is plural, i.e., He is a freshman. The freshman class is the largest on record. The freshmen come from 40 different states.

grade-point average – hyphenate and spell out on first reference; GPA on second and future references

graduate/grad (n.) – There is no such word as “grad” or “grads.” It is acceptable to use the slang term in casual conversation, but it should not be used in written communications.

health care – two words except when used to modify, as in health-care profession.

hyphens – In general, do not hyphenate words beginning with “post,” “pre” and “co,” e.g., postdoctorate, preregister, cocurricular, coeducational. However, retain the hyphen with “co” when forming nouns, adjectives and verbs that indicate occupation or status, e.g., co-author, co-founder, co-chairman, co-worker. For “non,” the rules of prefixes

apply, but in general no hyphen when forming a compound that does not have special meaning and can be understood if *not* is used before the base word, e.g., nontraditional. Use a hyphen before proper nouns or in awkward combinations, e.g., Non-Western, non-nuclear.

Also: Do not use hyphens with adverbs ending in “ly,” e.g., highly developed technology, environmentally responsible students.

initials – When using two or more initials, use periods without spaces, e.g., S.B. Penrose.

Internet – Always uppercase the word, but lowercase Internet addresses, e.g., www.whitman.edu. Also see “website.”

less than/fewer than – see “fewer than/less than”

long time/longtime – They have known each other a long time. They are longtime partners.

maiden name – always use for alumnae; do not use for nonalumnae.

names, proper references – on first use, always include the person’s complete proper name; on second reference, use only the last name, i.e., “Enrollment in the program has risen,” according to David Harris. “It has continued to grow throughout the last five years,” Harris said. You may use first names on second reference when subjects within the same article have the same last name, such as siblings, spouses, etc.

ALSO:

- Do not use courtesy titles, e.g., Mr., Mrs., Ms., Miss.
- Abbreviate as Jr. and Sr. only with full names. Do not precede by a comma, e.g., John Jones Jr.
- Nicknames may be included on first reference after the formal name, e.g., “Jonathan David “J.D.” Hall ’95.
- In alumni magazine news: Follow the last-name-on-second-reference rule throughout, EXCEPT Class Notes, where the first name is used on second reference.

non – see “hyphens”

nondegree holders – If someone attended Whitman but did not earn a degree, still list the class year in which they would have graduated.

noon – use the word instead of 12 p.m.

numbers/numerals – Spell out zero through nine, use numerals for 10 and above. Spell out numbers at the beginning of a sentence, or if necessary, recast or rewrite the sentence. However, a number that identifies a calendar year may be used at the start of a sentence, i.e., 2010 was a very good year.

SOME EXCEPTIONS in which numerals are always used for zero through nine:

- ages: She has a 2-year-old daughter. Her daughter is 2 years old. They have three sons, 2, 4 and 6.
- times: 2 a.m., *not* two a.m.
- dimensions: He built a 4-foot-long fence. He is 5 feet 6 inches tall. The storm left 5 inches of snow.
- *ALSO*: No. 3 choice, 5 percent pay raise, a ratio of 2-to-1.
- *For more, see “numerals” in the AP Stylebook.*

online – online is one word.

organizations – Use abbreviations *only* for the following:

- AAUW (formerly known as American Association of University Women)
- P.E.O. (women’s educational organization uses periods in its formal title)

over/more than – “over” is a descriptor of physical location; “more than” is a descriptor of quantity. Use more than when referring to quantities, i.e., The event raised more than \$1 million; *not* over \$1 million. Or, More than 800 individuals attended the concert; *not* Over 800 individuals attended.

percent – spell out the word unless used in a columned data report, i.e., We increased revenue by 25 percent, *not* We increased revenue by 25%. No hyphen necessary with percent, i.e., The man received a 5 percent raise, *not* The man received a 5-percent raise.

post – see “hyphens”

pre – see “hyphens”

president – capitalize when used before the name in the formal sense, e.g., President George Bridges. Use lower case when used in reference to the position or the individual holding it, i.e., “The president is pleased.”

professor – capitalize before a full name. Endowed chairs: capitalize only proper name, i.e., Robert Bode, Alma Meisnest endowed chair of the humanities.

program – uppercase as part of the formal name, i.e., The Outdoor Program is housed in Reid Campus Center basement. On next references, lower case, i.e., The program offers a range of activities.

quarter – fall quarter, summer quarter, etc.; often used in financial reporting.

quotation marks – periods and commas always go inside the quotation marks, i.e., “Whitman is great.” The dash, semicolon and question mark go within the quotation marks when they apply exclusively to the matter being quoted. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence.

rivers, streets, buildings – When referring to more than one street (or river, etc.), lowercase street or river following the names, i.e., They rafted on the Snake and Columbia rivers. Renovation is complete in Maxey and Olin halls.

schools, colleges – use full and formal names on first reference, e.g. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, *not* Virginia Tech.

semester – fall semester, spring semester.

ships — Names of specific ships, submarines, aircraft, spacecraft and artificial satellites are italicized but *not* the abbreviations preceding them, e.g., SS *Narcissa Whitman*. (*Chicago Style*)

spacing – Use only one space after a period at the end of a sentence.

split infinitives – Do not separate an infinitive by an adjective, i.e. “to really want,” “to quickly run,” “to determinedly block,” etc.

staff – singular, as in the staff is. Or, staff members are.

states – Lowercase state when it follows a state name, i.e. Washington state. However, capitalize if it is part of a title, i.e. Washington State Bar Association.

state names – Spell out state names in key publications, i.e., *Whitman Magazine*, *Fifty Year Plus*.

EXCEPTIONS:

- Use AP Style state abbreviations in Class Notes in the magazine and, if desired, in brochures, posters, etc. (*See AP Stylebook for the list of those abbreviations.*)
- Use U.S. Postal Service abbreviations (listed below) when using complete addresses, e.g., The college is located at 345 Boyer Ave., Walla Walla, WA 99362.

Post office abbreviations noted in parentheses:

Alabama (AL)	Louisiana (LA)	Oklahoma (OK)
Alaska (AK)	Maine (ME)	Oregon (OR)
Arizona (AZ)	Maryland (MD)	Pennsylvania (PA)
Arkansas (AR)	Massachusetts (MA)	Rhode Island (RI)
California (CA)	Michigan (MI)	Ohio (OH)
Colorado (CO)	Minnesota (MN)	South Carolina (SC)
Connecticut (CT)	Mississippi (MS)	South Dakota (SD)
Delaware (DE)	Missouri (MO)	Tennessee (TN)
Florida (FL)	Montana (MT)	Texas (TX)
Georgia (GA)	Nebraska (NE)	Utah (UT)

Hawaii (HI)	Nevada (NV)	Vermont (VT)
Idaho (ID)	New Hampshire (NH)	Virginia (VA)
Illinois (IL)	New Jersey (NJ)	Washington (WA)
Indiana (IN)	New Mexico (NM)	West Virginia (WV)
Iowa (IA)	New York (NY)	Wisconsin (WI)
Kansas (KS)	North Carolina (NC)	Wyoming (WY)
Kentucky (KY)	North Dakota (ND)	

Other notes about state names:

- Use a comma before and after the state, i.e., The event was held in Helena, Montana, on Nov. 15, 2010. They live in Washington, D.C., and work at the White House.
- Do not include the state name for cities well known to our audiences, e.g., Portland, Seattle, Walla Walla, and for other well-known cities nationwide, e.g., Atlanta and Chicago. (*See list below*)

U.S. cities that do NOT require a state name:

Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Honolulu, Houston, Indianapolis, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, New Orleans, New York, Oklahoma City, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, Portland (when it's Oregon), Spokane, St. Louis, Salt Lake City, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Walla Walla.

International cities that do NOT require a country name:

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

times – When a time is on the hour, do not use a colon and zeroes, e.g., 9 a.m., *not* 9:00 a.m.

theatre/theater – theatre refers to the physical place, e.g., Harper Joy Theatre. For Whitman, also use theatre major and theatre department. Theater is the art form, i.e., “They love the theater” or “The theater professors have written a play.”

toward – not towards

under way – two words in virtually all uses. One word only when used as an adjective before a noun in a nautical sense, e.g., an underway flotilla.

United States vs. U.S. – When used as a noun, spell it out, i.e., We live in the United States. Abbreviate when used as an adjective, i.e., The U.S. economy is sluggish.

upper case vs. lower case – Determine if the usage is a formal name. If so, upper case. If not, lower case.

- **departments and programs** – Department of Biology is the formal name; biology department is the reference. Office of Communications is the formal name; communications office is the reference. However, if any of the words for a department or program are formal names, capitalize only those words, but do not capitalize the word program or department, e.g., English department.
- **job titles** – Capitalize and spell out when the title is used in its formal sense before the name, i.e., Associate Professor of Computer Sciences Paul Whitman has published his research on Web use. Preferred use is to put the title after the name and use lower case, i.e., Paul Whitman, associate professor of computer sciences, has published his research.
- **college** – Whitman College is the formal name; college is a reference, i.e., We work at Whitman College. I like working at the college. The college offers great opportunities for a variety of constituencies.

Wars – World War I, the First World War; the Great War; the war; the two world wars (and same for World War II.) (*Chicago Manual of Style*)

Web address – Remove hyperlink so text is not underlined. If Web or e-mail listing comes at the end of a sentence, place a period following the listing. Make sure Web site addresses are not underlined or hyperlinked. Http:// and www. are not necessary for most addresses. Include whitman.edu in every promotional piece, i.e., “Save the Date” cards and fliers, unless advised otherwise.

website, Web page – Use website, webcam, webcast and webmaster. However, the Web is upper case as a short form of World Wide Web, as are Web page, Web feed. (*AP Style 2010*)