

# WHITMAN COLLEGE

## EDITORIAL STYLE GUIDE

The Whitman College Style Guide provides a resource for all employees to ensure consistency across our communications. Whether you are writing for the magazine, web, social media or writing letters to colleagues, students, alumni or friends, we want all our content to communicate who we are as a college. This style guide offers guidance on spelling, punctuation, capitalization and how we talk about Whitman College. It should be used in conjunction with the Whitman College Visual Identity Guide.

As a general rule, Whitman College follows “The Associated Press Stylebook,” or AP style. This style is designed to be easily read and understood by people from a wide variety of backgrounds, including those outside academia. This guide includes style examples that are specific to Whitman College and academia. For complete style guidelines, access the AP Stylebook at [apstylebook.com](http://apstylebook.com). Exceptions to AP style are indicated as such. For style questions not addressed here, refer to AP style and Webster’s New World Dictionary. Additional style questions can be sent to Director of Content Margie Reece at [reecemk@whitman.edu](mailto:reecemk@whitman.edu) or at 509-527-4917.

### A

**academic degrees** In biography copy, spell out and capitalize the full degree name on first reference. On second reference, use bachelor’s, master’s, doctorate, etc.

- Avoid abbreviating degree names in narrative text: “Bachelor of Arts in Psychology.” (See **majors**.)
- A person earns a degree, they do not receive a degree: “He earned a bachelor’s in Anthropology.”
- Use an apostrophe in “bachelor’s” and “master’s,” but not “associate degree.”
- Academic degrees should only be cited after a name if it is a terminal degree (Ph.D., J.D., etc.) or specialist certification, such as medical or nutritional certifications.
- Use periods when abbreviating degrees: Ph.D., J.D. (exception per AP: MBA).
- When used after a name, an academic degree abbreviation is set off by commas: “John Snow, Ph.D., joined the faculty.”
- Academic degrees should only be listed after a name if they are relevant to the content or upon request from the subject.
- The use of “Dr.” as a courtesy title is generally reserved for medical and veterinary degrees only. Being specific about the specialization is preferred. (Exceptions based on professional requests.)

**academic departments** (See **departments**.)

**academic or campus centers** Always use the full name and correct capitalization on first reference:

- “Academic Resource Center” (ARC or “the center” on second reference)
- “Career and Community Engagement Center” (CCEC or “the center” on second reference)
- “Sherwood Athletic Center” (Sherwood, second reference)

**academic titles** Capitalize and spell out formal titles such as provost, president, professor, chair, etc., when they precede or follow a name. Lowercase when the title stands alone. Do not use “professor” as a courtesy title, instead, use the correct earned title or rank. Lowercase modifiers, such as department in “department Chair Jerome Wiesner.” (See also **doctor, Ph.D.; endowed professorships; professor; titles**.)

- “President Sarah Bolton”
- “Sarah R. Bolton, President”
- “The president said”
- “Assistant Professor Maria Smith”
- “Maria Smith, Assistant Professor”
- “department Chair Jerome Wiesner”

**academic year** When indicating an academic year that spans a calendar year, use all four numbers for both years, separated by an en dash (–), not a hyphen (-):

- “The 2022–2023 academic year”
- Not: “2022-23” or “’22-’23”

**acronyms** In general, always state the full name on first reference, and use a parenthetical to indicate the acronym. If the acronym does not appear later in the content, there is no need to add it as a parenthetical. Do not use periods in an acronym.

Be wary about using multiple acronyms in a single piece. Acronyms can make content more difficult to read and understand. Only use acronyms when the meaning is clear and it does not hinder understanding or readability. When in doubt, use the full name or a generic name, such as “the center,” rather than the acronym. Avoid creating new acronyms.

- “The Career and Career Engagement Center (CCEC)”
- “The Center for Writing and Speaking (COWS)”

**addresses** Abbreviate the words avenue (Ave.), boulevard (Blvd.) and street (St.) when they include a house or building number and spell out when they do not. Also spell out when in direct quotes.

Do not abbreviate road, lane, circle or court even with an address.

- “The college is at 345 Boyer Ave.”
- “The college is on Boyer Avenue.”
- “He lives at 772 Alder Street,” Smith said.

**administration** Never capitalize unless part of a title. If possible, use the name of an administrator:

- “The committee was created by President Sarah R. Bolton.”
- Not: “The administration created the committee.”

**admission, admitted students** Singular.

- “Office of Admission” or “admission” (not “admissions”).
- Students whose applications are accepted by the college are “admitted.”
- If the student accepts the offer of admission, they “enroll.”
- The percentage of applicants who are admitted and then enroll is referred to as “yield.”

**advisor** Preferred spelling for one who advises. This is an exception to AP style.

**African American** (See *race, ethnicity, protected class.*)

**Asian American** (See *race, ethnicity, protected class.*)

**afterward, backward, forward, toward** Most words ending with this suffix do not end in “s.”

**alumna, alumnus, alumnae, alumni** The forms shown are the feminine singular, masculine singular, feminine plural and masculine plural. When referring to a group of more than one gender, use alumni. In general, a gender-neutral term is preferred, “alum” or “alums.” “Graduates” or “graduate” is an accepted alternative. Class year is denoted after the name.

- “They are Whitman College alums.”
- “She is a graduate of Whitman College.”
- “As an alum, Jane Doe ’09 has returned to campus numerous times.”
- “Whitman welcomed its alumni from the Class of 1961 to campus.”

Any individuals who have attended the college and completed the required number of credits may be considered alumni. Note that students who did not graduate are still considered to be alumni of the college. (See also **class years; non degree holders and pronouns.**)

**alumni association** “Whitman College Alumni Association” on first reference; “alumni association” on second reference.

**author** Resist the temptation to use this word as a verb. Instead use “write” or “wrote”:

- “He was the author of the paper.”
- “He wrote the paper.”

**ampersand (&)** Avoid using ampersands in editorial copy unless it is officially part of a name. It is OK to use the & in display type, such as headlines, logos/wordmarks and invitations.

**amphitheatre** Use the -re spelling. (See also **theater, theatre.**)

- “Many plays and musical performances take place at Whitman’s outdoor amphitheatre.”
- Hint: Physical spaces at Whitman are “-re” and the major/minor are “-er.”

**annual** An event cannot be described as annual until it has happened at least two consecutive years. Instead of “first annual,” say the organizers intend to host it annually.

**area codes** Area codes should always be included with all phone numbers. Use hyphens to offset the numbers. Do not use parentheses. (See also **phone numbers.**)

- “509-527-5116”

**athletic teams** Lowercase team names, except on listings, such as for calendars and score reports. Blues is always capitalized.

- “The women’s soccer team had an outstanding season.”
- “He was a star on the Whitman cross country team.”
- “The Blues were victorious against their opponent.”
- “Men’s Basketball vs. Colby, Monday, 5 p.m.”

**attribution verbs** “Says” is the preferred verb for attributing quotations, both direct and indirect. Avoid “exclaimed,” “shouted,” “laughed,” “explained,” etc. “Asked” is acceptable when the quote is a question. Attribution should go in the middle of the quote at the first natural sentence break. If the quotation is only one sentence, the attribution should go at the end. Preferred order for attribution is subject-verb, unless a title or explainer needs to be given.

Quotations should nearly always start a new paragraph.

- “The first sentence of a quotation ends in a comma,” Georgia Peterson says. “It can then continue after an attribution is given.”
- “Sometimes a long title is given with the identity of the quoted speaker,” says Georgia Peterson, Vice President of Whistles and Springs Inc. “In that situation, the attribution verb should be first.”

## B

**Baccalaureate** Capitalize when referencing the college’s event during Commencement weekend. Lowercase in all other references:

- “The 2023 Baccalaureate ceremony is 5 p.m. on Thursday.”
- “One of his favorite memories of Whitman was participating in baccalaureate.”

**Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science** Capitalize when using the full name of the degree. Lowercase “bachelor’s” when it stands alone. The term “bachelor’s degree” is acceptable in most references, as Whitman College does not confer a Bachelor of Science. (See also **academic degrees.**)

**Board of Trustees** Uppercase only when used in its entirety, lowercase in other uses. Capitalize trustee or governor only when used before a name as a title, but lowercase after a name:

- “The Board of Trustees meets monthly.”
- “The trustees guide and support the college.”
- “Trustee John Smith”
- “John Smith, a Trustee”

**bookstore** Uppercase as part of the official name of the bookstore. Lowercase on second reference:

- “The Whitman College Bookstore will hold its annual sale this weekend.”
- “The bookstore has many great deals on T-shirts.”

**boy, girl, child** Use only to refer to children (ages 0-17); preference “child” to be gender-inclusive. College students should always be referred to as adults. In referring to a collective, gender-inclusive language is always preferred. (See **gender-inclusive language.**)

**breaks, vacations** Always lowercase, even when referring to specific breaks in the academic calendar year:

- “He worked on campus over winter break.”
- “She went to Honduras during spring break.”

**building names** When referring to the official name of the building, capitalize all principal words. When using a generic name, don't capitalize. Avoid using abbreviations except in reference to room numbers:

- “The Office of the President is in the Memorial Building.”
- “I'll meet you in Memorial.”
- “Her office is MEM 321.”

C

**campuswide** One word, not hyphenated. Also “citywide,” “countywide,” “statewide,” “nationwide,” “worldwide.”

**Center for Writing and Speaking** Also referred to as the COWS.

**chair, co-chair, vice chair** Use the gender-neutral term “chair,” not “chairman” or “chairwoman.” “Co-chair” is hyphenated. “Vice chair” is not hyphenated. Capitalize when include before or after a person's name.

- “Committee Chair Bob Jones”
- “Bob Jones, Committee Chair”

Use primarily as a title or noun, not as a verb. Avoid phrases like “He holds the chair ...” or “She chairs the committee ...” Instead use “leads” or rephrase, “She is the chair of the committee.”

**class** Capitalize only when referring to specific class years. Lowercase when indicating more than one class:

- “The Class of 2027”
- “This year's Reunion welcomes back the classes of 1985, 1986, 1995 and 1996.”
- “I am really enjoying my class.”

**class years** Students and alumni are identified with the last two numbers of their class year after their names. The punctuation placed before the class year is an apostrophe, signifying the omitted two digits of the year. The apostrophe should face away from the remaining two numbers ( '08, not '08) and should be curly or “smart.” See below for examples of handling couples and alumni status. (See also **names**.)

- If one of the two people in a couple is featured in the article, list them first, otherwise list the names alphabetically.
- “Kristi Marcus Williams '00” and Paul Williams '98”
- “Liz Mills '93 and Michelle Gordon” (Liz is the featured subject.)

Do not use a comma between a student's name and their class/graduation year. People who attended Whitman but did not graduate are treated as alumni, unless they have requested to be unaffiliated. They are treated as members of the class in which they entered:

- “John Smith '00 ran the marathon.”

**coach** Capitalize when combined either before or after the person's name. Lowercase in other uses:

“Head Basketball Coach Mary Jackson”

“Mary Jackson, Head Basketball Coach”

“The Athletics Department is looking for a new coach.”

**co-curricular** Hyphenated.

**coed or co-ed** These terms are not preferred when referring to Whitman students. (See **gender-inclusive language**.)

**coeducational** Not hyphenated.

**college** Uppercase when part of a proper name. Lowercase when used alone, even when specifically referencing Whitman:

- “She was accepted into Whitman College.”
- “The college is pleased to announce ... ”

**commas** Whitman College does not use the serial or Oxford comma in a simple series, except where needed to clarify meaning:

- “We bought pens, paper and pencils.”
- “He enjoys reading, mowing the lawn, and his neighbors. (So as not to imply one would enjoy mowing their neighbors).”

In a complex list, semicolons or dashes can be used to avoid confusion.

**commencement** Lowercase in all references, except as a formal event name:

- “This year’s commencement speaker is Joe Smith.”
- “The 2023 commencement ceremony is on June 1.”
- “As part of the 128th Whitman College Commencement Ceremony, ... “

**committee names** Capitalize when the full, formal name is used; lowercase when not using the full name:

- “Whitman College Strategic Planning Committee”
- “The committee for strategic planning”

**composition titles** Put titles of works, including lecture names, papers and articles, books, plays, poems, songs, movies and TV shows, in quotation marks. (For full guidelines on composition titles, see AP Stylebook.)

**Convocation** Always uppercase when referring to the Whitman College academic ceremony that takes place before the beginning of the fall semester.

**course names** Capitalize when referring to a specific course, but do not put in quotes. Lowercase when referring to general course topics. If including the course title and number, a colon should follow the course number.

- “This year, she is teaching Geology 110: The Physical Earth.”
- “This year, he is teaching biology and mathematics.”

**coursework** One word.

**courtesy titles** Whitman College does not use courtesy titles, such as Dr., Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms., Mx., except in formal, printed letters.

**COVID-19, coronavirus** COVID-19 refers to the disease caused by the coronavirus. Use “COVID-19” in all instances. Note the hyphen. Do not use “Covid,” “covid-19,” or “Covid-19.”

**curriculum vitae** Spell out on first reference. “CV” is acceptable on second reference. “Curricula vitae” or “CVs” for plural.

## D

**dashes** In editorial copy, use an em dash (—) to set off clauses when not using a comma. Do not use a space on either side of the dash. The use of an em dash over commas to set off hyphens is a stylistic and often visual decision. Either can be correct. En dashes (–) should be used to show spans of time or dates. (See also **times**.)

- “George—a junior from Texas—is going to the conference.”
- “The conference runs from Jan. 3–6, 2023.”
- “The hours are 9–11 a.m.”

**dates** Spell out all months when they stand alone or with a year, such as “January 2023.” Abbreviate months when paired with a date as shown below. It is OK to leave months spelled out as a design element or treatment.

- “January” or “Jan. 12” (not 12th)
- “February” or “Feb. 1” (not 1st)
- “December” or “Dec. 12”
- Do not abbreviate March, April, May, June or July.
- When using month, date and year, commas always surround the year: “On Dec. 31, 2023, the college will be closed.”

**date, time, place** It is preferred that events be listed in date-time-place format. For clarity, list the day of the week and date with event listings.

- “It will take place on Friday, March 3 at 3 p.m. in the Reid Campus Center.”
- “The performances are held Friday, March 3, 2023, through Sunday, March 5 at 7 p.m.”

**days of the week** Never abbreviate days of the week in editorial copy, except in the case of a course schedule or list. Use of “MWF” or “T/TH” may be appropriate in tables or lists showing course schedules. For events, use the day of the week and date for clarity.

- “The meeting was Monday, Nov. 2, 2022.”

**dean** Capitalize when used as a title. Do not capitalize when used as a description.

- “Dean John Doe “
- “Jane Doe, Dean”

**decades** When referring to a specific decade (as long as the century is clear), use numerals (1960s or '60s). To specify a timeframe within the decade, only hyphenate when using “mid”:

- “the mid-1940s”
- “late '30s, early '40s.”

**degrees** (See **academic degrees**.)

**departments** The full formal name of the department should be capitalized. You may leave the department name uppercase if referring to the official department name in a commonly accepted way. If referring generally to subject matter, do not capitalize the name.

- “The Office of Communications is sponsoring the event.”
- “The English Department will host the lecture series.”
- “Staff from Admission will be attending.”
- “Phil Cook is a history professor at Whitman.”

**directions** Capitalize when they designate widely known regions such as “Southern California” or regions relevant to our audiences, such as “Western Washington,” “Southeastern Washington,” or “Eastern Oregon.”

**disability** A general term used for a physical, mental, developmental or intellectual disability. In general, do not describe an individual as disabled unless it is clearly pertinent to a story. When a description must be used, try to determine the individual’s preferred terminology. (See also **race, ethnicity, protected class**. For more guidance, see AP Stylebook’s **disabilities** entry.)

- Do not use “mentally retarded” or “handicapped.”
- Avoid euphemisms such as “handi-capable” or “differently abled” except as requested by the subject.
- Avoid using disability-related words or phrases lightly or in unrelated situations (“lame,” “blind,” “the warning falls on deaf ears,” “the award show was schizophrenic”).

**doctor, Ph.D.** Generally, use “doctor” only when referring to someone who holds a medical or veterinary degree. When referring to those with medical degrees, it is preferred to refer to their specialty. For a Ph.D., only mention the doctorate or add “Dr.” if it is relevant to the

content or by the request of the subject. In some formal documents, the use of “Dr.” for dignitaries is acceptable.

- “Professor Jane Doe has a doctorate from the University of Florida.”
- “John Smith, M.D., '91 is a doctor of internal medicine. Jane Doe, M.D., '71 is a cardiologist.” “Dr. Smith” and “Dr. Doe” on second reference.

**doctorate, doctoral** “Doctorate” is a noun, referring to the degree, title or rank of Ph.D. “Doctoral” is an adjective:

- “He has a doctorate in physics.”
- “Her doctoral dissertation is in physics.”

**dormitory, dorm** Students at Whitman College live in “residence halls.” Do not use “dorm” or “dormitory” to refer to these spaces. Do not capitalize “residence hall.” Capitalize the name of the hall in all uses. (See **residence halls**.)

## E

**ellipsis** Constructed with three periods (with no spaces between them) and one space before and after as shown here: ( ... ) Use an ellipsis to indicate the deletion of word(s) when condensing quotes, texts and documents. Avoid deleting words that would distort the meaning.

**email** Not hyphenated.

**emerita, emeritus, emeritae, emeriti** This title indicates that an individual has retired but retains his or her rank or title. The forms shown are feminine, masculine, feminine plural and masculine/mixed plural. When referring to a group of more than one gender, use *emeriti*. Capitalize when used in a verified formal title.

“Gary Barlow, Professor Emeritus of English”

“Professor Emeritus Gary Barlow”

**endowed professorships** Capitalize and use the full title in most uses, both before and after the professor’s name. May use “the” before to clarify professorship.

- “Robert Smith, the John P. Stewart Professor of English”
- “John P. Stewart Professor of English Robert Smith”

**enroll** (See **admission, admitted students**.)

**entitled, titled** “Entitled” means having a right to do or have something. Do not use it in reference to the “title” of a composition.

- “She was entitled to the promotion.”
- “The book was titled “The Great Gatsby.””

## F

**Facebook** One word. Only the F is capitalized.

**faculty** A singular collective noun. Add the word “members” to make it plural.

- “John joined the faculty at Whitman College in 2019.”
- “All the faculty members agreed.”
- “Jane was the only faculty member who disagreed.”

**FAQ** Acceptable on all references as an abbreviation for “frequently asked questions.”

**fellows** Current students who hold fellowships are students first, and fellows second:

- “Marcus Johnson ’22, biology, is this year’s fellow for the Career and Community Engagement Center.”
- “Fellow” is capitalized when used as an official title of as the official name of a fellowship:
- “Career and Community Engagement Center Marketing and Engagement Fellow Marcus Johnson ... “
- “The Career and Community Engagement Center is interviewing candidates for next year’s Marketing and Engagement Fellow.”

**female, woman** Avoid using unless relevant to the story. “Female” should only be used when needing to refer to biological sex. “Woman” or “women” is preferred in place of “female” whenever possible. “Woman/women” refers to gender and is inclusive of transgender individuals who identify as women. (See also **gender-inclusive language**.)

**fieldwork** One word.

**first-year student** Preferred term for freshman. Hyphenate in all cases except when referring to “First Year Seminar.”

**former** Always lowercase when used with a title.

- “The lecture was by former President Kathy Murray.”

**fraternities** (See **sorority and fraternity life**.)

## G

**gender-inclusive** Hyphenate.

**gender-inclusive language** In general, terms that can apply to any gender are preferred. Avoid highlighting a person’s gender unless it is pertinent to the story. Always ask how a person identifies; do not assume. Do not use “ladies” or “gentlemen.” (See also **alumna, alumnus, alumnae, alumni; boy, girl, child; chair, co-chair, vice chair; emerita, emeritus, emeritae, emeriti; female, woman; LGBTQIA+; male, man; pronouns; race, ethnicity, protected class; they, them, their; transgender**. For more guidance, see AP Stylebook’s **gender-neutral language and gender, sex and sexual orientation** entries.)

**gentlemen** Do not use “gentlemen” to refer to people who identify as men, except as requested by the subject. Avoid the phrase “ladies and gentlemen” in preference to more inclusive language.

**GPA** Acceptable in all references as an abbreviation for grade-point average: “A student’s GPA is protected under FERPA and cannot be released without permission.”

**graduate** “Alum of the college” is preferred to “graduate of the college,” except where needed for clarification. Do not use “grad” or “grads” in formal communication. (See **alumna, alumnus, alumnae, alumni**.)

**Greek life** (See **sorority and fraternity life**.)

## H

**Hispanic** (See **race, ethnicity, protected class.**)

**homepage** One word.

**hyphens** Hyphens are joiners. Use them to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words. Use of the hyphen is far from standardized. It is optional in most cases, a matter of taste, judgment and style sense. But the fewer hyphens the better; use them only when not using them causes confusion.

## I

**Inauguration** Capitalize when referring to the Inauguration of a new Whitman College president: “Many college and university presidents were invited to the Inauguration of President Sarah R. Bolton.”

**initials** When using two or more initials, use periods without spaces between the initials: “J.R.R. Tolkien.”

**Instagram** One word. The I is capitalized.

**interim faculty** Follow capitalization rules for academic titles.

**internet** Lowercase on all references to refer to the worldwide network of computers and other devices that can communicate with each other.

**intranet** Lowercase on all references to refer to a private network internal to a company or organization.

**its, it's** “Its” indicates possession. “It’s” is a contraction for “it is” or “it has.” Use “it” as the pronoun for non-living objects, such as departments, offices or programs. Do not refer to organizations as “they,” “them” or “their”: “The Career and Community Engagement Center will sponsor its third annual forum this week.”

## K

**kick off, kickoff, kick-off** “Kick off” is the verb, “kickoff” the noun and “kick-off” the adjective. Avoid using “kicking off” when writing about anything that is not related to athletics.

## L

**ladies** Do not use “ladies” to refer to people who identify as women, except as requested by the subject.. Avoid the phrase “ladies and gentlemen” in preference to more inclusive language.

**Latino, Latina, Latinx** (See **race, ethnicity, protected class.**)

**lectures** Capitalize the title. If it is a named lecture, capitalize that as well. Place the lecture title in quotations.

- “Bob Smith will deliver the lecture ‘Acoustics: The Physics and Math of Sound.’”
- “Stephen H. Loomis will deliver this year’s Jean C. Tempel ’65 Professor of Biology Endowed Chair Lecture. His talk is titled ‘Thirty-Five Years in Suspended Animation: Survival of Tough Environmental Challenges.’”

**LGBTQIA+** Stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual and other identities not represented in the main acronym. LGBTQIA+ is acceptable on all references. It does not need to be defined. Avoid using “queer” except in quotations or by request, as it is controversial. It has often been used in a derogatory way, but is reclaimed by many members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Be aware that some still find it offensive. Only identify a person as LGBTQIA+ if it is relevant to the story and you have received their permission to do so. In those cases, always ask how a person identifies and use their specific terms whenever possible. (For more about identities, see **gender-inclusive language; race, ethnicity, protected class.** See also AP Stylebook’s **gender, sex and sexual orientation** entry.)



**login, logon, logoff** One word when used as a noun. Two words when used as a verb. Do not hyphenate.

- “The login changes every 30 days.”
- “I log in to my email every day.”

**long term, long-term** Hyphenate when using as a modifier:

- “He will win in the long term.”
- “He has a long-term assignment.”

**long time, longtime** One word when used as a modifier:

- “They have known each other a long time.”
- “They are longtime partners.”

## M

**majors** Capitalize the formal name of a program. The word “major” remains lowercase.

- “She is an Economics major.”
- “He earned a Computer Science degree.”
- “He is an English major.”
- “They are in the Environmental Studies program.”

\*Dual or Combined 3-2 majors: Whitman College offers students three years study at Whitman, followed by two years at a partner institution to earn their degree in engineering, forestry and environmental management or oceanography.

**male, man** Avoid using unless relevant to the story. “Male” should only be used when needing to refer to biological sex. “Man” or “men” is preferred in place of “male” whenever possible. “Man/men” refers to gender and is inclusive of transgender individuals who identify as men. (See also **gender-inclusive language**.)

**matriculate** Students matriculate when they enroll in the college and begin classes.

**monthlong, yearlong** One word.

## N

**names** In editorial copy, always refer to someone by their full name on first reference. On second reference, use only the last name. Do not include courtesy titles (Mr., Mrs., Dr., etc.). In articles with individuals who share a last name, you may use the full name throughout, or choose to refer to the subjects by their first name. Those under 18 may be referred to by their first name on second reference.

- “Enrollment in the program has risen, according to David Harris. ‘It has continued to grow throughout the last five years,’ Harris said.”
- Use Jr., Sr., III, etc., designations only with full names, and do not precede by a comma.
- “John Jones Jr.”
- Nicknames may be included on first reference after the formal name, and are placed in quotations.
- “Jonathan David ‘J.D.’ Hall ’95”

It may be helpful to mention a former name some alums went by when they attended school. Ask alums if they have another name they would like to include. Do not include a former name without the individual’s permission, as it can be offensive. (See **transgender**.) When indicating a former last name only, the former name precedes the current last name (no parentheses). When indicating a former full name, it is included in parentheses before the class year:

- “Rebecca Jones Smith ’18”
- “Xandi Arnold (Arnold Jones) ’18”

**nationalities** (See **race, ethnicity, protected class**.)

**Native American** (See **race, ethnicity, protected class**.)

**non degree holders** Not hyphenated. If someone attended Whitman but did not earn a degree, list the class year in which they would have graduated.

**nonmajor** One word. Not hyphenated.

## O

**Oxford comma** (See **commas**.)

**Off-Campus Studies** Capitalize and hyphenate when referring to Whitman’s “Office of Off-Campus Studies.”

**off-campus study** “Off-campus studies” is preferred for current students and other internal audiences. “Study abroad” is acceptable for messaging purposes for prospective and admitted students.

## P

**Pacific Northwest** Capitalize.

**parentheticals, parentheses** (See **acronyms**.)

**perspective, prospective** “Perspective” is a noun meaning opinion or viewpoint. “Prospective” is an adjective meaning potential or future:

- “Her perspective as a parent was important.”
- “The prospective student is visiting liberal arts colleges this summer.”

**phone numbers** Always include area code with phone numbers and punctuate with hyphens. Do not include “1” before the area code. Do not use periods in place of hyphens. Do not use parentheses around the area code: “509-527-1485.”

**president** Uppercase when used before the name in the formal sense. Lowercase when used in reference to the position or the individual holding it. (See also **titles**.)

- “President Sarah R. Bolton”
- “The president gave a welcome address.”

**Presidents’ Day** The official federal name of the holiday celebrated on the third Monday in February is “Washington’s Birthday,” however, it is popularly known as “Presidents’ Day” and that is also how it is designated in Washington state. This is an exception to AP style.

**professor** Capitalize a faculty member’s professorial title when it appears either before or after the person’s name. Do not use “professor” as a generic title; it is an earned academic rank. If you are unsure of a person’s official academic rank, use “instructor.” Do not use any “professor” rank as a courtesy title on second reference (“Associate Professor Smith ...”). Do not abbreviate professor titles:

- “Associate Professor Vanessa Smith”
- “Joe Collins, Clinical Assistant Professor”

**program** The formal/official name of a program is capitalized. Lowercase when referring to generic subject matter in the program. Only capitalize “program” if it is part of a formal name:

- “She is a student in the Environmental Studies program.”
- “She is majoring in Environmental Studies.”
- “The Outdoor Program is located in the Reid Campus Center. The program has lots of equipment for rent.”

**pronouns** When writing about individuals, ask/confirm pronouns if possible. When gender is unknown or unspecified, it is acceptable to use “they/them/their” as a gender-neutral singular pronoun to avoid awkward constructions. Do not refer to pronouns as “preferred” or “chosen.” Avoid using the phrase “he or she.” Do not refer to a person as “it/its” unless by request. It is generally not necessary to call out a person’s pronouns in narrative, but it is appropriate to identify them on people’s bios with their approval. (See also **gender-inclusive language**.)

- “When your student comes home for the holidays, ask them about their classes.”
- “Kylie Sheridan ’22 majored in Biology. They are currently attending medical school.”

## Q

**queer** Often used as an umbrella term covering people who are not heterosexual or cisgender. Avoid except in quotations or by request, as it can be controversial. It has often been used in a derogatory way, but is reclaimed by many members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Be aware that some still find it offensive. (See also **LGBTQIA+**.)

**quotation marks** Always use curly quotes, also referred to as typographer’s quotes ( ‘ ’ “ ” ) for written copy. Punctuation goes inside quotation marks.

- “Whitman is great,” he said. “I love all of my classes—and my professors.”

Quotation marks can be used to introduce an unfamiliar or foreign word or a word used in an ironical sense. Avoid arbitrarily placing words inside quotation marks, as it can unintentionally change the meaning and make it imply something else.

## R

**race, ethnicity, protected class** Identifying a person by their race, ethnicity, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation or other protected class is a sensitive issue. Always be careful when feeling the need to highlight that someone is different from the mainstream. These items should only be identified when they are relevant to the content and with the individual’s permission. Relevancy is determined on a case-by-case basis but may include situations when their identity played an important role in the story being told.

Whitman College follows AP style for identifying race, ethnicity and other protected classes. Overall, it is best to ask an individual how they identify and to be specific whenever possible. When necessary, it is best to identify a person’s specific group membership rather than a generality. For example, identify a student as a member of the Nez Perce tribe rather than saying Native American, or say someone is from El Salvador rather than Latino.

General rules are:

- Do not hyphenate compound identities, such as “African American,” “Asian American,” etc.
- Hyphenate only when referring to dual citizenship.
- “African American” and “Black” are both acceptable, but are not interchangeable. Not all dark-skinned people are of African descent. “Black” is usually preferred in most cases.
- “Native American” is acceptable for indigenous people in North, South, and Central America.
- “Alaska Native” is preferred for tribes from Alaska.
- “First Nations” is preferred for tribes from Canada.
- “Indigenous people” is acceptable when referring to tribal populations.

- It is preferred to identify a person as a member of a specific tribe, and confirm with the subject how they would like their tribal affiliation described.
- In lists, use parentheses to indicate tribal affiliation, i.e. “Roger Amerman ‘80 (Choctaw)”
- In narrative text, incorporating it into the text is preferred, i.e. “Roger Amerman, an enrolled member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma...”
- “Hispanic,” “Latino” (male), “Latina” (female) or “Latinx” (gender-neutral) are all appropriate for individuals from a Spanish-speaking land or culture. “Latinx” may be seen as controversial for some people. Ask the person how they prefer to be identified. The plural form of “Latinx” is “Latinxs.”

(See also **disability; gender-inclusive language; LGBTQIA+**. See also AP Stylebook’s **race-related coverage** entry.)

**residence halls** Students at Whitman College live in residence halls. Do not use “dorm” or “dormitory” to refer to these spaces. Do not capitalize “residence hall.” Capitalize the name of the hall in all uses.

Whitman’s residence halls are:

- “Anderson Hall”
- “College House”
- “Douglas Hall”
- “North Hall”
- “Jewett Hall”
- “Lyman House”
- “Prentiss Hall”
- “Stanton Hall”

**reunion** Capitalize only when referring to the Whitman College event:

- “The reunion was widely attended.”
- “This year, Reunion is in June.”

## S

**Sarah R. Bolton** In formal documents, invitations and news releases, use the complete name “Sarah R. Bolton” when referring to Whitman’s 15th president. For Whitman Magazine and informal documents, invitations and more personal pieces, “Sarah Bolton” is acceptable. President Bolton’s pronouns are “she/her.”

**SAT** Use only the initials in referring to what used to be called the Scholastic Aptitude Test or the Scholastic Assessment Test. The official name is “SAT.”

**says, said** Use “says” in most writing instances. Use “said” in press releases when introducing direct quotes or when paraphrasing:

- “I want to make my students feel the way I did in a Nancy production: supported, important and safe to take risks,” Lisa Battle says.
- In a press release: “Bolton said the tool, which has also been highlighted in The New York Times, is one of her greatest sources of pride as president.”

**student-athlete** The preferred term for members of Whitman’s athletic teams.

**seasons and semesters** The four seasons are lowercase except when used to denote specific academic semesters. Do not capitalize the word “semester” when it stands alone:

- “The campus is beautiful in the fall.”
- “This fall semester, she is enrolled in four courses.”
- “She enrolled in four courses for Fall 2023.”

**serial comma** (See **commas**.)

**sexual assault** People who have experienced a sexual assault are “survivors” not “victims.”

**sorority and fraternity life** The term “sorority and fraternity life” is preferred to “Greek life.” The organizations represented at Whitman are:

Sororities

- Alpha Phi
- Delta Gamma
- Kappa Alpha Theta
- Kappa Kappa Gamma

Fraternities

- Beta Theta Pi
- Phi Delta Theta
- Sigma Chi
- Tau Kappa Epsilon

**spacing** Always use a single spaces within narrative text.

**staff, staff members** “Staff” is a singular collective noun. “Staff members” is preferred.

- “All staff is invited to the concert.”
- “Staff members are encouraged to not work over the winter break.”

**state names** State names are spelled out in editorial copy, even when paired with a city name. When pairing a city/state name, follow the name of the state with a comma:

- “The play is set in Spokane, Washington, in the 1920s.”

Two-letter postal codes should be used only in letter and envelope addresses. Postal code abbreviations are also used in the Class Notes section of Whitman Magazine, due to space constraints.

**statewide** One word.

**study abroad** “Study abroad” is acceptable for messaging purposes for prospective and admitted students. “Off-campus studies” is preferred for current students and other internal audiences.

## T

**team names** (See **athletic teams**.)

**tenure, tenure-track** Faculty members can earn or be awarded “tenure,” a promotion granted by a committee. It is always lowercase. A faculty member who is working toward tenure is a “tenure-track faculty member,” which is hyphenated. These terms are not titles and are mostly of interest to internal audiences.

**theater, theatre** Use -er spelling for the subject, major and department at Whitman College. Use -re spelling in formal names or when referring to a physical building or space.

- “Department of Theater and Dance”
- “We’re going to the movie theater.”
- “Harper Joy Theatre”

**they, them, their** Acceptable to use as a singular or plural gender-neutral pronoun when gender is unknown or unspecified; avoid using “he or she.” Individuals may also identify as “they/them/their.” (See also **pronouns**.)

- “When your student comes home for the holidays, ask them about their classes.”
- “Kylie Sheridan ‘22 majored in biology. They are currently attending medical school.”

**TikTok** One word. Both T’s are capitalized.

**times** Lowercase with two periods in “a.m.” or “p.m.” Use a colon to separate hours from minutes. When showing a span of time, use an en dash (–), not a hyphen (-), if it is within a.m. or p.m. If it crosses between morning and afternoon, indicate with “to.”

- “Noon” is preferred to “12 p.m.”
- “Midnight” is preferred to “12 a.m.”
- “The center’s hours are 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.”
- “The event is 6–8 a.m.”
- “The meeting is at 3:30 p.m.”

**titles** Lowercase when following a name. Uppercase if preceding a name. Never capitalize a title when it stands alone. Always spell out titles like “associate,” “professor” and “assistant.” (For more examples, see AP Stylebook. See also **doctor, Ph.D.**)

- “Jack Black, dean”
- “Dean Jack Black”
- “The dean said classes were canceled.”

**trademark names** Substitute with a generic name unless unavoidable. Capitalize when it is a registered trademark.

Do not use the ©, ®, ™ or other symbols in copy. The capitalization is enough to signal a trademark. If the trademark is relevant to the story, spell out the ownership.

**transgender** Used to describe people whose gender does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. Only identify a person as transgender if it is relevant to the story and you have received their permission to do so. Always ask sources to tell you their name and pronouns. (See also **pronouns; they, them, their**. For more guidance, see AP Stylebook’s **gender, sex and sexual orientation** entry.)

- “Transgender” is an adjective, not a noun. Do not use the term “transgendered.”
- “Transition” may be used to describe the legal, medical or social processes some transgender people undergo to match their gender identity, including name changes, pronoun changes, changes in gender expression, hormone therapy or gender-confirmation surgery. Not all transgender people undergo all these changes.
- Do not refer to “gender-confirmation surgery” as a “sex change.” Only reference “gender-confirmation surgery” if relevant.
- Avoid the outdated term “transsexual” unless the subject requests its use.
- “Deadnaming,” or referring to transgender people who have changed their name by the name they used before their transition, is offensive. Include a person’s previous name only if requested by the person.

**trustee** (See **Board of Trustees**.)

## U

**undocumented** This term to indicate that someone is in a country without proper legal documentation can be viewed as offensive. Be sensitive in referring to an individual as “undocumented” unless they self-identify that way. Whitman College protects student records, including immigration status.

**URLs, web addresses** In printed material, it is acceptable to leave out the “http://www.” for internal web addresses, such as “whitman.edu/admission.” Only type out “http://” when not doing so prevents the link from working. For web content, it is preferred to hyperlink relevant words rather than type out a URL. Spell out URLs and social handles in press releases.

## V

**voicemail** One word.

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## W

**Walla Walla Valley** Capitalize when used to refer to the region surrounding Walla Walla.

**Whitman College** Spell out on first reference. In subsequent references, “Whitman” or “the college” is acceptable.

**Whitties** Alumni and students of Whitman College are called “Whitties” [pronounced WIT-eez]. However, this term can be easily misread and is best limited or explained in prospective student communication. More casual use; generally avoid in news stories, press releases, etc.

- “All Whitties are invited to come to Reunion in June.”
- “Congratulations on becoming a Whittie.”

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## Y

**yield** The percentage of students who are admitted to the college and then choose to enroll is referred to as “yield.” (See **admission, admitted students.**)

**YouTube** One word, capital Y and T.