Quick Reference for Writers and Editors

This style guide is intended to promote consistency of style for written and electronic materials produced by Worcester State University. It presents a set of editorial rules reflecting WSU's preferences on questions of word usage, grammar, punctuation, and more. It also presents information specific to Worcester State University.

If you have questions about this quick reference, please contact the Marketing Office at 508-929-8428.

A

abbreviations, state

Use state postal abbreviations only in mailing addresses. When using state names within text, abbreviate state names only when listed with a city (Worcester, Mass.). Spell out the names when they stand alone. (He lives in Missouri.) Do not abbreviate Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, and Utah. All other state names should be abbreviated as follows:

Ala.	Del.	Ky.	Miss.	N.J.	Ore.	Tex.	Wyo.
Ariz.	Fla.	La.	Mo.	N.M.	Pa.	Vt.	
Ark.	Ga.	Md.	Mont.	N.Y.	R.I.	Va.	
Calif.	Ill.	Mass.	Neb.	N.C.	S.C.	W. Va.	
Colo.	Ind.	Mich.	Nev.	N.D.	S.D.	Wash.	
Conn.	Kan.	Minn.	N.H.	Okla.	Tenn.	Wis.	

academic degrees

Capitalize degrees identified by their initials.

B.A. (bachelor of arts)
B.S. (bachelor of science)
M.A. (master of arts)
M.S. (master of science)
M.B.A. (master of business administration)
M.Ed. (master of education)
M.F.A. (master of fine arts)
M.O.T. (master of occupational therapy)
M.D. (doctor of medicine)
Ed.D. (doctor of education)
Ed.S. (education specialist)
Ph.D. (doctor of philosophy)

Capitalize degrees identified by their initials and written out when they are referencing a WSU program.

Ex:
- He received a Bachelor of Arts in Communication.
- She earned a Master of Science in Health Care Administration in 2010.
- Anita graduated in 2003 with a Master of Education in School Leadership Administration.
- John, a recipient of an Education Specialist in School Psychology, recently gave a presentation to colleagues in the school district.

Do not capitalize informal references to degrees.

Ex:
- She received a master's degree in nursing.
- She has a doctorate in chemistry.
- He earned a bachelor's degree in visual and performing arts.

academic department/administrative offices/university divisions

Use the name of the discipline or office/division before the word "department," "office," and "division."

>   **Ex:**   Criminal Justice Department
>   Health Services Office
>   Academic Affairs Division

acronyms

After the first appearance of the full name, you should feel free to abbreviate with the acronym, just as you would in normal conversation. It's not necessary to insert an acronym after the first use of the full name.

advisor

not adviser

alumna/alumnae

a female graduate/more than one female graduate

alumnus/alumni

a male graduate/more than one graduate (male or female)

annual

Refrain from describing an event held for the very first time as the "first annual." You have no way of knowing with certainty that your new event will be held once a year. Rather, use adjectives like "inaugural" or "premier" to describe such an event.

Only use "annual" in the title of an event or an event description after it has been held at least two consecutive years.

Do not capitalize second annual, etc. as part of an event's title in running text.

(Adapted from Copyediting.com and the Vanderbilt University style guide, www. vanderbilt.edu/styleguide.pdf.)

B

boards and associations on campus

  Alumni Association's Advisory Board
  Student Government Association
  Worcester State Foundation
  Worcester State University Board of Trustees

buildings, rooms, and other campus sites

  athletic fields
  John F. Coughlin Memorial Field
  Kevin D. Lyons Baseball Diamond at Rockwood Field
  Rockwood Field

  auditoriums and lecture halls
  Eager Auditorium (in Sullivan Academic Center)
  Multimedia Auditorium (Room 102, Ghosh Center)
  Sullivan Auditorium (south wing of Sullivan Academic Center)

  buildings
  Campus Ministry House
  Chandler Village
  Dowden Hall
  Ghosh Science and Technology Center (also the Ghosh Center)
  Latino Education Institute
  Learning Resource Center
  Helen G. Shaughnessy Administration Building (also the Shaughnessy Administration
   Building)
  Sheehan Hall
  Student Center
  Sullivan Academic Center (also Sullivan Building)
  Wellness Center
  Wasylean Hall
  Worcester Center for Crafts

  function rooms
  Blue Lounge (in Student Center)
  Charter Business TV Lounge (also the Living Room - in Student Center)
  Fallon Room (in Student Center)
  Foster Room (in Student Center)
  Lancer Landing (Student Center)
  Multipurpose Room (Sheehan Hall)
  Pulse on Dining (in Sheehan Hall)
  Seven Hills Lounge (in Wasylean Hall)

theater, misc.
Fuller Theater
Mary Cosgrove Dolphin Gallery
Speech-Language-Hearing Center

bullets

Bullets are graphic devices that separate items in a list. In bulleted lists within text passages, follow these guidelines:

- Don't use commas or semicolons at the end of each item.

  If an item in the bulleted list is a complete sentence, capitalize the first word and put a period at the end of the sentence.

- If the item is a not a complete sentence, then the first word should be lowercased. Don't place a period at the end.

- Don't mix sentence and non-sentence items in a bulleted list.

C

capitalization

Avoid unnecessary capitalization by following these guidelines:

- Academic degrees—See **academic degrees**

- Capitalize the official names of departments and centers: the Occupational Therapy Department; the History and Political Science Department; the Center for Business and Industry. Do not capitalize "the department" or "the center."

- Capitalize specific courses: Introduction to Biology; Fundamentals of Accounting II.

- Do not capitalize majors and minors, except for proper nouns: He is majoring in criminal justice and earning a minor in Spanish.

- Capitalize the names of specific buildings and rooms: We are meeting in the Blue Lounge in the Student Center.

- Capitalize the word "University" only when it refers specifically to WSU.

- Capitalize formal titles that precede a name: Director of Research Donald Bailey.

  Do not capitalize titles that follow a name within text: Donald Bailey, director of research.

Do not capitalize titles that don't precede a name: The president is busy.

Do not confuse a job function with a title: well-known illustrator Cory Jones.

- Capitalize the official names of documents and forms: Declaration of Independence, Financial Aid Certification Sheet, WSU Scholarship Application. Do not capitalize references that do not use the formal name: He filled out the financial aid form.

- Capitalize proper nouns and words derived from them (SPECIFIC persons, places, and things). These include names of deities, religions, religious followers, sacred books; particular places; nationalities and their languages, races, tribes; educational institutions, departments, degrees, particular courses; government departments, organizations, political parties; historical movements, events; specific documents; specific electronic sources; trade names. *(Adapted from* A Writer's Reference *by Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers.)*

Capitalization style for publication headlines, headings, and subheadings:
- You may choose the capitalization style for headlines, headings, and subheadings in your publications. Whatever format you adopt, be sure it's consistent throughout the publication. In all instances, follow this basic rule:
  ◊ Always capitalize the first word.

- The Marketing Office capitalizes most words in the headlines, headings, and subheadings of its publications, including the WSU website, based on the *Chicago Manual of Style* guidelines.

- In the majority of instances, both units of a compound, hyphenated word in a title should be capitalized. The following exception applies:
  ◊ Articles, prepositions, coordinating conjunctions (and, but, for, or, nor), or modifiers such as "flat" or "sharp" following musical key symbols aren't capitalized.

    Ex: Visual and Performing Arts Capstone Event to Feature Concerto No. 1 in B-flat Minor

Chandler H. Lancer
The Worcester State University mascot commissioned by the athletic director in 2016. Chandler reflects Worcester State's address; the H. stands for Harlow Russell, the first principal of the historic Normal School, WSU's first incarnation; and Lancer has long been the name of our athletic teams.

class years
Insert a **reverse** apostrophe to replace the first two numerals of alumni class years. Designate year of graduation as follows:

Mary Smith '68 (undergraduate degree)

Mary Smith '68, M.S. '80 (undergraduate and graduate degree)

Mary Smith, M.S. '80 (graduate degree only)
Mary (Smith) Pauley '68 (Her last name was Smith at time of graduation.)

Mary (Smith) '68 and James Pauley (Only the wife is a graduate.)

Mary (Smith) '68 and James Pauley '65 (Wife and husband are graduates.)

James '65 and Mary (Smith) '68 Pauley (Husband and wife are graduates.)

Microsoft Word users: If you type an apostrophe and then begin typing the last 2 digits of a class year, Microsoft Word assumes you are starting to put it in single quotes. However, if you hit the space bar after the last digit, Word automatically reverses the direction of the apostrophe.

Mac users: Type option-shift-close-bracket to change the direction of the apostrophe.

collections

The Dennis Brutus Collection (located in the library)

The Milton Meltzer Collection (located in the library)

Worcester State University Archives (located in the library)

commas

Avoid four common comma errors by following these rules:

- Place a comma before and after a state name that follows a town or city name:

    Ex: Worcester, Mass., is home to several colleges and universities.

- Place a comma before and after the year when it is part of a complete date within text. Do not use a comma if only the month and year are given.

    Ex: On September 11, 1874, Worcester Normal School was founded.
    He was born in February 1987.

- Place a comma before and after academic degrees that follow a name.

    Ex: Caroline Harper, M.B.A., Ph.D., is the guest speaker.

- Do not use a comma before or after Jr. or Sr., or Roman numerals such as I, II, or III with a comma in a name.

D

dialogue

not dialog

E

email

The *Chicago Manual of Style* has dropped the hyphen in email in all instances.

emerita, emeritae, emeritus, emeriti

denotes individuals who have retired, but retain their rank or title

> **Ex:** Professor Emerita Sylvia Johnson is visiting us today.
> Professors Emeritae Sylvia Johnson and Gloria Jones are visiting us today.
> Professor Emeritus John Johnson is visiting us today.
> Professors Emeriti John Johnson and Jim Jackson are visiting us today.
> Sylvia Johnson and Jim Jackson, professors emeriti, are visiting us today.

extension

For internal-only materials, it is appropriate to use ext. before a person or department's phone number. Always use the full phone number, 508-929-XXXX, for external/off-campus materials. Don't abbreviate the word extension with an x.

> **Ex.** For more information about the program, call Bob Jones at ext. 1234.

F

faculty/staff

Faculty and staff are collective nouns that may take a singular or plural verb, depending on whether the writer is referring to the group as a single unit or to the members of the group.

> **Ex: Singular**
> The faculty is voting on the matter next week.
> Our staff is very efficient.
>
> **Plural**
> Our adjunct faculty are very dedicated.
> Our staff are working on many projects at the moment.

first-year/freshman
> Use first-year instead of freshman when referring to students in their first year of college.

fiscal year
> The 12-month period is six months ahead of the calendar year: July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019. In writing, write fiscal year out first, then use FY in subsequent references. The fiscal year began in July for FY2018-2019.

H

health care
> The *Chicago Manual of Style* doesn't have a preference for either healthcare as one word or health care as two words. WSU's health-care educators prefer health care as two words. Therefore, the Marketing Office has adopted this style.

home page
> lowercase; two words

honors
> Use lowercase and italicize *cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, and *summa cum laude*.

hyphens
> Remember the first hyphen when using successive compound modifiers.
>
> > **Ex.**   We accept both part- and full-time students.

I

inaugural
> Use in place of "first annual" to refer to the first event/program. See **annual**.

internet
> The *Chicago Manual of Style* now considers internet to be generic when used alone or in combination with other generic terms; therefore, it can be lowercase in all instances.

L

Lancers
> the official name of Worcester State University's athletic teams

M

months

Spell out months when used alone. Abbreviate only (but not necessarily) when used with a specific date. (January is my favorite month. She was born Dec. 6, 1966.) Don't abbreviate April, July, June, March, and May.

Jan.	Aug.	Oct.	Dec.
Feb.	Sept.	Nov.	

N

namings

Naming opportunities enable donors to make a lasting impact and to enjoy immediate and perpetual recognition on the WSU campus. On first usage, give the full name. In subsequent references, use its shortened name, if necessary.

Albro Lancer Lounge, Wellness Center

George I. Alden Trust Teaching Award (Alden Teaching Award)

The Honorable John J. Binienda Center for Civic Engagement (Binienda Center)

John P. Brissette Competition Gymnasium

Dennis Brutus/Merrill Goldwyn Center for the Study of Human Rights

Charter Business TV Lounge, Student Center (Charter Lounge; also the Living Room)

Class of 1957 Classroom, Education Department (room 221 Sullivan Building)

John F. Coughlin Field (Coughlin Field)

Mary Cosgrove Dolphin Gallery

DeFeudis Fitness Center, Wellness Center

Dowden Hall

Edna P. Spencer Student Lounge, third floor, Wasylean Hall (Spencer Lounge)

Fairlawn Foundation Activities of Daily Living Laboratory (nursing lab in Ghosh Center)

Fallon Room

Foster Room

Fuller Atrium, Wellness Center

Fuller Theater

Ghosh Science and Technology Center (Ghosh Center)

The Dr. Lillian R. Goodman Nursing Department

James B. Kenary III Business Administration and Economics Faculty Office Suite (Business Administration and Economics faculty offices)

Kevin D. Lyons Baseball Diamond (Lyons Baseball Diamond)

A. Barbara Pilon Seminar Room (Pilon Seminar Room)

Helen G. Shaughnessy Administration Building (Shaughnessy Building)

Sheehan Hall

Dr. GB and Lexi Singh Simulation Center (Singh Simulation Center)

Sullivan Academic Center (Sullivan Building)

Tyrus, Dante and Daniel Vescio Memorial Lounge, Wasylean Hall (Vescio Lounge)

Wasylean Hall

non-traditional
Use a hyphen.

numbers
- Spell out one through nine in printed material; use numerals in digital communication.

- Spell out numbers at the beginning of a sentence.

- Use numerals in percentages (2 percent; .06 percent), money (6 cents, $2), and units of measure (6 million, 3 credit hours).

- Use numerals in sports scores (2 goals, 4 assists).

- Don't add an apostrophe when making numerals plural. (He rolled three 11s in a row. The 1920s were a turbulent decade.)

O

OneCard
: one word; capitalize the o and c

online
: one word; no hyphen

P

phone numbers
: See **extension.**

professor
: Don't abbreviate, as in Prof.

S

schools
: School of Humanities and Social Sciences
School of Education, Health, and Natural Sciences

scienctific names
: Italicize each word in a scientific name and capitalize the first name.

> **Ex:** The student's research focuses on the radiophile, *Rubrobacter radiotolerans*.

seasons/semester
: Always lowercase seasons and semesters.

> **Ex:** The 2013 fall semester.
> **Ex:** Register tomorrow for spring 2014.

social media
: Capitalize and spell social media sites in accordance with their official names:
Facebook, Foursquare, Google+, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Snapchat, Tumblr, Twitter, and YouTube.

T

teachers college

There is no apostrophe in Worcester State Teachers College.

telephone numbers

Don't put parentheses around area codes. See also **extension**.

time

Use a.m. and p.m.; 12 noon; 12 midnight. Use 1 p.m., not 1:00 p.m. For time spans, use from 1 to 2 p.m. or 1-2 p.m.; 1 a.m. to 2 p.m.

titles

See **capitalization.**

U

union names

AFSCME American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees – classified employees

APA Association of Professional Administrators – non-exempt employees

MSCA/MTA/NEA Massachusetts State College Association/ Massachusetts Teachers Association/National Education Association – faculty union

United States

Spell out the name when referring to the country as a noun. "U.S." is acceptable only when used as an adjective.

Ex. There are more than 4,000 colleges and universities in the United States.
Ex. An estimated 253 million cars and trucks travel on U.S. roads each year.

V

voice mail

two words

W

web

The *Chicago Manual of Style* now considers web to be generic when used alone or in combination with other generic terms; therefore, it can be lowercase in these instances.

website

Website is one word.

website address/uniform resource locator (URL)

When adding a website/page address to a document, the entire address you see in the browser bar is not always necessary to reach the site/page. Many Worcester State University websites/pages have short URLs or which help to make a site more marketable and memorable. ***Over 2 billion people are online! Don't forget to include the appropriate website URLs in your communication to internal and external audiences.***

> **Ex.** **www.worcester.edu/about** or **worcester.edu/about**
>
> **www.worcester.edu/graduate** or **worcester.edu/graduate**
>
> **www.worcester.edu/myWSU** or **worcester.edu/myWSU**
>
> **www.worcester.edu/calendar** or **worcester.edu/calendar**

Always test all URLs before having them printed on your materials. If you do not know if a WSU page has a short URL, would like to request a short URL for your office/department web page, please contact the Marketing Office via worcester.edu/marketingsupport.

Worcester State University

Use Worcester State or the acronym WSU only after Worcester State University has been spelled out and clearly identified.

> **Ex.** Worcester State University has been selected to participate in a national initiative on civic learning and democratic engagement. WSU has been named one of 70 colleges and universities in the nation as a Lead Institution by NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, the leading voice for the student affairs profession.