



Discovery. Diversity. Distinction.

Editorial Style Guide

Based on Associated Press (AP) Style

March 2014

These guidelines will help bring stylistic uniformity to the university's many publications, presentations and websites. The styles used on campus are based largely on the Associated Press Stylebook. For questions not covered below, please refer to Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.

Academics/Departments/Divisions

Names

Capitalize full name or shortened form:

Department of Anthropology
Anthropology Department

Lowercase *department* when used alone:

The Economics Department is one of the best known at Fresno State. The department offers a range of courses.
a department
departments

Titles

Titles are capitalized only when they precede a person's name:

President Joseph I. Castro or Dr. Joseph I. Castro, president of Fresno State. ... The proposal presented by the school deans and department chairs is subject to approval by the president.
Exception: the President of the United States.

Finance Professor John Doe
Dr. John Doe, professor of finance.

University

Capitalize "university" when it refers to Fresno State:

California State University, Fresno was founded in 1913. Today the University is known throughout the state for its excellent academic programs.

Do not capitalize college, school or department when used in the general sense or second reference:

The College of Arts and Humanities is known for excellence. The college has many community partnerships.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Spell out the name of an organization on first reference, followed by the abbreviation or acronym if the organization is going to be referred to again. Do not use abbreviations or acronyms that the reader will not quickly recognize. Acronyms do not need periods: *CATI, IBM*.

Avoid the alphabet soup syndrome. *For example, avoid using KSOEHD when referring to the Kremen School of Education and Human Development.*

Academic Degrees

Abbreviate with periods with no spaces in between:

Ph.D., Ed.D., M.S.W., B.A., M.S.

Ampersand (&)

Do not use the ampersand in place of and, except in charts, graphs and tabular material or when it is part of a formal name: *AT&T*.

California State University, Fresno

California State University, Fresno is the official name, and Fresno State is the informal name. Either may be used in any written context.

Do not use the following:

CSUF

FSU

Fresno State University

Cal State Fresno

CSU Fresno

Chair

Use the term chair to designate the head of an academic department or committee rather than chairman, chairperson or chairwoman. Capitalize chair when used as part of a formal title before a name:

Academic Senate Chair Dr. Louise Professor said ...

Lowercase all other instances.

The chair of the Academic Senate, Dr. Louise Professor, said ...

Disciplines, majors, programs

Lowercase the names of disciplines, majors and undergraduate and graduate programs:

astronomy and astrophysics program

biology

courses in sociology

sciences courses

literature major

master's program in chemistry

M.S. program in history

Capitalize disciplines when part of the department name:

Department of Sociology

Sociology Department

Capitalize disciplines when used to indicate a course:

Anthropology 101

Capitalize proper names within the names of majors and disciplines:

Armenian studies

French literature

Latin American studies minor

GPA

Acceptable in all references for grade point average.

Months/Dates

Spell out the entire name of each month when using it alone or with a year. If stating a month and a year after it, do not separate them with a comma:

October 1990. However, Jan. 6, 1996, is correct when the full date is used.

When a month is used with a specific date (e.g. Jan. 6), abbreviate only Jan., Feb., Aug. Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec.

March, April, May, June and July are not abbreviated.

Do not use "th" in dates, (e.g. June 15th). Write it as June 15.

Percent sign (%)

Do not use the percent sign (%) in place of percent, except in charts, graphs and tabular material.

Seasons and semesters

Do not capitalize seasons and semesters:

We are looking forward to summer vacation after the spring semester.

Plurals and gender

Alumni

Use *alumnus* when referring to a man who has attended a school. Use *alumna* for similar references to a woman. Use *alumni* when referring to the plural form of both sexes and *alumnae* when referring to the plural form of women.

He is a Fresno State alumnus.

She is a Fresno State alumna.

The two women are Fresno State alumnae.

Members of the Class of 2014 are Fresno State's newest alumni.

Technology

Email

Do not hyphenate *email*. However, a hyphen should be used with *e-book*, *e-business*, *e-commerce* and *e-portfolio*.

Internet

Always capitalize: *She surfed the Internet.*

Technology terms

Here are the correct spelling and capitalization rules for some common technological terms:

BlackBerry, BlackBerrys
cellphone
download
eBay Inc. (use EBay Inc. when the word begins a sentence)
e-book
e-book reader
e-reader
e-portfolio
Facebook
Google, Googling, Googled
hashtag
IM (IMed, IMing; for first reference, use instant messenger)
Internet (after first reference, the Net)
iPad, iPhone, iPod (use IPad, iPhone, or IPod when the word begins a sentence)
LinkedIn
social media
smartphone
Twitter, tweet, tweeted, retweet
YouTube

URL usage

In most instances, "http" is unnecessary in addresses: www.fresnostate.edu.

website

The term website is one word in all cases and lowercased unless it's the start of a sentence. Other uses:

World Wide Web
webmaster
webcast
webpage
the Web
the Net

Punctuation

Use quotation marks with titles of books, poems, plays, films, speeches, songs, works of art, subjects or lectures and magazine articles. Do not use them with newspapers or magazines. Do not italicize:

Newsweek
The Fresno Bee
"The Star-Spangled Banner"
"Mona Lisa"

Use apostrophes to form the plural of single letters but not figures or multiple letters:

She earned four A's.
The early 1920s
The temperature is in the low 20s.

Put the period inside brackets or parentheses when a complete sentence is enclosed in the brackets or parentheses. When the parenthetical expression forms only a part of the sentence, put the period outside the bracket or parenthesis:

(The day was too cold for football.)
The day was too cold for football (or skiing).

Always put the period and comma inside quotation marks. Put other punctuation marks inside when they are part of the quoted material:

"I saw the play," he said.
He said, "I saw the play."
"Did you see the play?" he asked.
Should I see "King Lear"?

Capitalize room, highway, etc. when followed by a number or letter.

Thomas Administration, Room 118
Interstate 5

Capitalize specific regions, but not the points of the compass:

Central California, Central Valley, Midwest, the Pacific Northwest
Head west for 10 miles to reach the campus.
He moved from the Midwest to the Central Valley.

Commas

Do not put a comma before the conjunction in a simple series:

Researchers are hardworking, innovative and creative.

Street addresses

When giving a numbered address, use the abbreviations Ave., Blvd., and St. and spell out Drive and Circle.

The Jefferson Family Medicine Center is at 1315 Jefferson Ave.

When only a street name is given, spell out all words:

The center is at Cedar Avenue and Herndon Avenue ... or at Cedar and Herndon avenues.

Telephone numbers

Use figures with periods: 559.278.5000

Numerical References

As a general rule, write out numbers from one to nine; numbers 10 and up are left in numerical form. Use commas in numbers higher than 999. Use numerals, however, when referring to sections of a book, units, grade point averages, ages, percentages and scores:

"See page 6 ... A GPA of 3.0 ... A total of 5 percent ... Game 2 of the World Series ... Also, 9 units must be taken in residence at Fresno State."

Spell out ordinal numbers first through ninth. Numbers above the 10th ordinal may use figures:

First, second, 10th, 23rd, 31st (never 10th, 23rd, 31st).

Academic years

Academic years should be written 2013-14.

Time of day

With the exception of noon and midnight, use figures and lowercase letters. Always use the word "to" to separate times that denote the beginning and end of an event. Do not capitalize a.m. and p.m. (always use periods):

The class began at noon and ended at 1 p.m. John Smith skipped the class because he worked from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. He went to bed at midnight.

Registered Trademarks

The symbol ® or TM is placed immediately after the trademark, either in superscript or subscript. If you don't have the appropriate symbol keys in your word processing software, then using the symbols in parenthetical form is also permissible, (i.e., (R) or [TM]).

For more information or questions, please contact:

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