Western Washington University Writers Guide

This style guide for writers is published by the Western Washington University Office of Communications and Marketing to assist those who are writing on behalf of Western. The guide is meant to promote clarity and consistency in official campus communications, including press releases, brochures and other marketing materials, website content and more.

The WWU Writers Guide includes standards for grammar, punctuation, inclusion and the spellings of common campus names. We typically follow The Associated Press Stylebook, AP style, with a few exceptions as noted. Those who write frequently on behalf of the university may consider picking up a copy of The AP Stylebook.

We’ll update the guide regularly. Please let us know if you have questions or suggestions: mary.gallagher@wwu.edu or 360-650-3617.

For information about other branding and graphic standards at Western, visit www.wwu.edu/brand.
abbreviations and acronyms
Spell out on first reference and use only abbreviations or acronyms that readers will easily recognize.

Generally, include the periods in two-letter abbreviations such as U.S. and a.m. Abbreviations with three or more letters generally have no periods. CFPA, ATUS. However, Associated Students is AS on second reference, per their own style.

A few abbreviations and acronyms are so well-known on campus that they may be used on first reference, and have their own entries in the style guide.

academic areas
Don’t capitalize the names of majors, minors and other areas of instruction except for proper nouns: engineering, English, linguistics, computer science, French.

Capitalize the official names of university offices, divisions, departments, programs, etc.: the Engineering Department, the Neuroscience Program

academic and administrative titles
Capitalize titles when they appear before a person’s name: President Sabah Randhawa, Associate Professor Nicole Larson. Do not capitalize titles that appear after a name: Sabah Randhawa, president of Western Washington University; Nicole Larson, associate professor of engineering and design.

An exception: Capitalize a named professorship as in Karen Stout, Bowman Distinguished Professor of Leadership Studies, or Art Sherwood, David Cole Professor of Entrepreneurship. Shortened titles are often appropriate, such as in headlines or tabular material: Bowman Professor, etc.

Academic Coordinating Committee
ACC on second reference if the primary audience is likely to be familiar with the abbreviation.

academic degrees
Capitalize official names of academic degrees. Western awards the following degrees:

- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Arts in Education
- Bachelor of Fine Arts
- Bachelor of Music
- Bachelor of Science
- Bachelor of Science in Nursing
- Clinical Doctorate in Audiology
- Master of Arts
- Master of Business Administration
- Master of Education
- Master of Fine Arts
- Master of Music
- Master of Professional Accounting
- Master of Science
- Master in Teaching

Shortened forms, such as bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, doctorate, etc., are lowercase and acceptable in all references. Avoid abbreviations such as M.A. or B.S. in text in favor of the more descriptive bachelor’s degree in mathematics, etc. MBA is acceptable in all references.
**Academic Instructional Center**
*AIC* on second reference. The building includes the Psychology Department, the Communication Sciences and Disorders Department and the Speech Language Hearing Clinic.

**Academic Instructional Center West**
*AIC West* on second reference. The building includes lecture halls and computer labs and is joined to the Academic Instructional Center by a sky bridge.

**academic rank**
Not all faculty members are professors. If you must use a faculty member’s academic rank, ask them, or check the [online campus directory](#).

**Academic Technology and User Services**
Widely known on campus by its abbreviation, *ATUS* is acceptable on first reference for on-campus audiences.

**Academy for Lifelong Learning**
The Outreach and Continuing Education program offering academic and cultural programming for retirees may be referred to as *ALL* on second reference.

**accessible parking**
Use instead of *handicapped parking*. See [inclusion](#).

**Accounting Department** or **Department of Accounting**

**Active Minds Changing Lives**
Western’s tagline. Capitalize the first letter of each word. No commas; do not italicize. For more information about Western's branding style, see [www.wwu.edu/brand](http://www.wwu.edu/brand)

**active voice**
Avoid passive verbs and sentence structures. Passive: *It is estimated by astronomers that there are at least 500 billion galaxies in the observable universe.* Active: *Astronomers estimate there are at least 500 billion galaxies in the observable universe.*

**addresses**
Always use figures for the address number. With numbered addresses, use the abbreviations *Ave.*, *Blvd.* and *St.*, as in *516 High St.*

Always spell out similar words such as *alley, drive, road, terrace, circle*, etc. *214 Highland Drive, South Garden Terrace*.

Abbreviate compass points in numbered addresses. *135 S. Garden Terrace*.

For more information, see the “addresses” entry in the Associated Press Stylebook

**ADMCS**
Outdated name. Former abbreviation for what is now **Enterprise Application Services**.
Admissions, Office of
Admissions Office is also acceptable.

Administrative Computing Services
Outdated name. Use Enterprise Application Services. EAS is acceptable on second reference if your audience is likely to be familiar with the abbreviation.

administrative divisions
Capitalize the official names of Western’s administrative divisions:

   Academic Affairs
   Business and Financial Affairs
   Enrollment and Student Services
   University Advancement
   University Relations and Marketing

Administrative Services
Administrative building located on 32\textsuperscript{nd} Street, near the Sehome Village shopping center.

Advanced Materials Science and Engineering Center
AMSEC is acceptable on second reference, but use care with external audiences who may not be familiar with the acronym.

adviser, advisor
In general usage, adviser, with an e, is one who gives advice or guidance. But advisor, with an o, is also acceptable, given its widespread use in academic settings. Ensure all spellings are consistent. Adviser is recommended for most external audiences: Materials produced for external audiences by University Communications and Marketing will use adviser.

ages
Always use figures.

alum, alums
May be used in very informal settings. See alumna, alumnae, alumnus, alumni.

alumna, alumnae, alumnus, alumni
An alumna is one woman who attended; alumnae is a group of women;

An alumnus is a man who attended; and alumni is a group of men -- or a group that includes at least one man.

Western considers all former students to be alumni. Not all alumni are graduates.

Note that none of these terms are inclusive of those with non-binary genders. Other alternatives might be former students or alumnx.

See class years.
Alumni House

American Cultural Studies Program

AmeriCorps

a.m., p.m.
See times.

ampersand
Do not use as a replacement for and in text.

The ampersand may be used in the names of colleges at Western if space is limited, such as in titles and headlines. *College of Sciences & Technology*, etc.

Ampersands are acceptable when they are part of a formal name or composition title: *the Hacherl Research & Writing Studio, AT&T*.

annual
An event that has been held for at least two consecutive years. There is no such thing as *first annual*.

Anthropology Department or Department of Anthropology

apostrophe
See possessives and class years

Aramark
The company that provides food service at Western. Locations are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buchanan Towers Station</td>
<td>Subway at The Atrium (Arntzen Hall)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairhaven Commons</td>
<td>The Atrium (Arntzen Hall)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshens Fresh Food Studio (Carver)</td>
<td>The Haven Market (Arntzen Hall)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller Market</td>
<td>Underground Coffeehouse (Viking Union)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oath Pizza (Arntzen Hall)</td>
<td>Viking Commons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridgeway Commons</td>
<td>Viking Union Café</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock’s Edge Café (Student Rec Center)</td>
<td>Viking Union Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starbucks</td>
<td>Zoe’s Bookside Bagels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Archives Building
See *Goltz-Murray Archives Building*.

the Armory

Arntzen Hall

Art Annex

Art and Art History Department or Department of Art and Art History
Asia University America Program

AUAP is acceptable on second reference, but use care with external audiences who may not be familiar with the abbreviation.

Associated Students

Acceptable on first reference. Use full name, Associated Students of Western Washington University, when needed for clarity for off-campus audiences. Use AS on second reference.

athletics

Capitalize Western Athletics when referring to Western’s intercollegiate sports programs. Do not capitalize the names of athletic teams, except in titles, graphics, etc. Western has 15 varsity teams:

- men’s basketball
- men’s cross country
- men’s golf
- men’s soccer
- men’s track and field
- men’s indoor track and field
- women’s basketball
- women’s cross country
- women’s softball
- women’s rowing
- women’s golf
- women’s soccer
- women’s track and field
- women’s indoor track and field
- women’s volleyball

ATUS


B

Back2Bellingham

Outdated name. See WWU Alumni Weekend

Behavioral Neuroscience Program

biennial

Occurring once every two years, as in biennial budget. Two-year budget is also acceptable.

Biology building

Biology Department or Department of Biology

Birnam Wood

black

When an individual’s race is relevant to mention in a story, ask how they describe their own identity. See inclusion.
board of directors
Capitalize only when part of a formal name. The WWU Foundation Board of Directors. The question is up to the board of directors.

board of trustees
Capitalize in all instances when referring to Western’s governing board, or when part of the official name of another organization’s governing board. See trustee.

Bond Hall

bookstore
Western Associated Students Bookstore; bookstore on second reference.

Border Policy Research Institute
BPRI on second reference.

Bremerton
See Western Washington University at Bremerton.

Buchanan Towers

bus, buses
Transportation vehicles. Busses are kisses.

Business and Economics, College of
CBE on second reference

C

Campus Services building
Administrative building that includes the Student Health Center and the University Police Department.

Canada House

Canadian-American Studies, Center for
catalog

Career Services Center

Carver
Academic building that includes Carver Academic Facility, Carver Gymnasium, WECU Court at Carver Gymnasium, classrooms, offices and labs.

Center for Community Learning

Center for Pacific Northwest Studies
Archival collections covering the region from Alaska to Northern California to the Rocky Mountains, with
a particular focus on northwest Washington, the Olympic Peninsula, British Columbia and Alaska. Part of Western Libraries and located in the Goltz-Murray Archives Building. CPNWS is acceptable on second reference.

Center for Service-Learning
Outdated. See Center for Community Learning.

CEO
Acceptable in all references to chief executive officer.

chair
Title of the head of an academic department at Western. Capitalize when used before a name. Do not use chairman, chairwoman or chairperson.

Chemistry building
Use Morse Hall

Chemistry Department or Department of Chemistry

city of Bellingham

City Hall
Capitalize when referring to a specific city’s city hall, even when the city isn’t mentioned: The lecture will be at City Hall.

class years
If it’s relevant to include the year someone graduated, set off class years by commas. Kessa Volland, ‘04, said…. Include the class year only once, but it doesn’t have to appear on first reference.

More information, such as type of degree or major, may be included in the text.

Western considers all former students to be alumni. For alumni who did not earn a degree, it may be appropriate to include a class year that reflects their senior year.

(Typography tip: In Microsoft Word, type any character before the apostrophe to get the “curly quote” to point in the right direction. Then delete the extra character. So, Kessa Volland, x’04 → Kessa Volland, ’04.)

co-
Retain the hyphen when using co- to form nouns, adjectives and verbs that indicate occupation or status. co-editor, co-teach. See prefixes.

colons
Colons introduce lists, dialogue and clauses that provide examples, detail and illumination.

When the colon introduces an independent clause in a sentence, capitalize the first word after the colon. Theatre Professor Rich Brown encouraged you to dig down and access your muscle memory: He knew that you could get to these emotional places if you dug deep enough.
Use a colon to introduce lengthy quotations of complete sentences. *Tucker frequently gets the worried question: “When is Mount Baker going blow? We’re all toast when it does, right?”*

**College Hall**

**Communications Lawn**
The name of the lawn bordered by the *Communications Facility* and the *Academic Instructional Center*. Often referred to by the abbreviated *Comm Lawn* in informal settings. For external audiences, consider providing a description of where it is, rather than the name alone.

**Community Learning, Center for**

*commas*

Do not put a comma before the conjunction in the last item of a series unless it’s needed for clarity.

Use a comma after *said* when introducing a quotation that is a complete sentence.

Use a comma after introductory phrases or words. *After four years of academic Russian, I was not as fluent as I thought I should be.*

But a comma may not be needed if the introductory phrase is short and the meaning would remain clear. *During the summer it was brutally hot.*

Use a comma before conjunctions (*and, or, but, nor, for, yet, so*) that link two independent clauses. *The bus driver didn’t seem too concerned, but eventually he heeded his passengers’ pleas and stopped the bus.*

If a conjunction is followed by a dependent clause, don’t use a comma. *Russian students came to WWU to audit classes and tour the area.*

Use a comma for most figures greater than 999, except in street addresses, room numbers, years, telephone numbers and SAT scores.

For more information, see the “comma” entry in the Punctuation chapter of the AP Stylebook.

*commencement*

Capitalize only when referring to a specific ceremony. *Spring Commencement was held at Civic Field.*

**Commissary**

**Communications Facility**

**Communication Sciences and Disorders Department** or **Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders**

**Communication Studies Department** or **Department of Communication Studies**

**Compass 2 Campus**
composition titles
Put quotation marks around the titles of books, computer games, movies, operas, plays, poems, albums and songs, radio and television programs, podcasts, lectures, speeches and works of art.

Do not put quotations around the titles of the Bible or titles of books and other works that are primarily reference materials, such as catalogs, almanacs, directories, dictionaries, encyclopedias, gazetteers, handbooks and software titles. Also, do not place in quotes the names of newspapers or magazines.

Do not use italics.

Computer Science Department or Department of Computer Science

Consultation and Sexual Assault Support
If your readers are likely to be familiar with the acronym, CASAS is acceptable on first reference, but include the full name if needed for clarity.

contractions
They’re perfectly acceptable when it’s appropriate to maintain a conversational tone.

course titles
Capitalize specific course names when used in text. Next quarter she’ll take Sustainable Marketing.

General course descriptions are lowercase. She’ll take courses in marketing and environmental science.

cum laude
Do not capitalize the Latin honor for those who graduate with high GPAs. Click here to see how graduation honors are awarded.

D

dashes
En dashes, which are the width of the letter “n,” are used to denote ranges of numbers or dates. The lecture will be 3–4:30 p.m. It’s also acceptable to use words instead of dashes, as in 3 to 4 p.m. See range of time, days or dates

Em dashes, which are the width of the letter “m,” are used to indicate a strong parenthetical phrase, an abrupt change in thought, or an emphatic pause. Use sparingly. All grew up in the South, the son of an agricultural entomologist—a bug scientist—at the University of Georgia.

dates
For specific dates, abbreviate Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec., and set off years with commas. Dec. 27, 2016, was his birthday.

Do not abbreviate days of the week.

When a phrase lists only a month and a year, do not separate the year with commas. December 2016.
days of the week
Do not abbreviate. Monday, Tuesday, Friday

dean
Capitalize only as a formal title before a name.

decades
Use an apostrophe to indicate numerals that are left out. The ’20s. The 1990s.

“Curly quotes” should point toward the missing characters, in this case, to the left.

Decision Sciences Department or Department of Decision Sciences

degrees
Use an apostrophe in bachelor’s degree, a master’s degree, etc. Capitalize formal names of degrees, Master of Science, Bachelor of Arts. Note: associate degree. See academic degrees, doctor.

Design Department or Department of Design

Disability Access Center

disAbility Resources for Students
Outdated name. See Disability Access Center.

distances
Always use figures. She ran 3 miles.

diversity
See inclusion.

doctor
The formal title Dr. is generally reserved for medical doctors, surgeons, optometrists, dentists, osteopaths, podiatrists, veterinarians, etc. If it’s necessary to mention someone’s educational credentials, explain in context: Mark Bussell, who holds a doctorate in chemistry, ...

dorm, dormitory
The preferred term for student housing at Western is residence hall.

double spaces between sentences
Don’t do it. One space is enough.

E

earth
Lowercase except as the proper name of our planet, Earth.

East Asian Studies, Center for
East Asian Studies Program
Economics Department or Department of Economics
Edens Hall
Edens Hall North
Elementary Education Department or Department of Elementary Education
email
no hyphen.
em dash, en dash
See dashes.
emerita, emeritus, emeritae, emeriti
Capitalize only when part of a formal title before a name.
Energy Studies, Institute for
Engineering and Design Department or Department of Engineering and Design
Engineering Technology Building
Use on second reference for Ross Engineering Technology Building.
English Department or Department of English
Enterprise Application Services.
EAS is acceptable on second reference if your audience is likely to be familiar with the abbreviation.
Environmental Science Department or Department of Environmental Science
Environmental Studies building
Environmental Studies Department or Department of Environmental Studies
Equal Opportunity Office
EEO on second reference, if your audience is likely to be familiar with the abbreviation.
equal opportunity statements
Required by federal law in all print and online versions of university publications that are made available to students, applicants, employees, program participants and the public. This includes catalogs, handbooks, applications, magazines, newsletters, brochures, posters and job advertisements.
See the guidelines and statements here: www.wwu.edu/eoo/guidelines-for-eo-and-aa-statements.shtml
Ethnic Student Center
Everett University Center
Location of Western’s academic programs at Everett Community College.
Avoid overuse. Place exclamation points inside quotation marks when they are part of the quoted material.

Extended Education
Outdated. See Outreach and Continuing Education

F

Facilities Management
For on-campus audiences, FM is acceptable on second reference.

Faculty titles
Not all faculty members are professors. If you must use a faculty member’s academic rank, verify it by asking him or her or checking the online directory.

Faculty Senate

Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies
Fairhaven College on second reference. Not Fairhaven, to avoid confusion with the residence hall, dining hall, or district.

Fairhaven Complex
Residence hall

Fairhaven Commons
Dining hall and community center

Fairhaven Courtyard

Family Connection Newsletter

Finance and Marketing Department or Department of Finance and Marketing

Financial aid
Capitalize the formal names of specific grants, scholarships and loans. Pell Grants, the Elyse C. Alper Scholarship for International Studies.

Financial Aid Department
Includes the Financial Aid Services Center, the Scholarship Center and the Student Employment Center.

Fine and Performing Arts, College of
CFPA on second reference

Fine Arts building

First-year Experience Course
Stand-alone course taught in small sections for first-year students.
First-year Interest Group
A cluster of three courses, including a small seminar, available to first-year students. For internal audiences, FIG on second reference.

Fraser Hall

freshman, freshmen
All students who enter Western directly after high school are freshmen, regardless of the number of college credits they obtained through Running Start or other programs. First-year students is also acceptable.

FTE
May be acceptable on first reference for full-time equivalent. Consider rephrasing for clarity: The equivalent of 3.6 full-time positions.

G
gender
When writing about individuals, ask which gender pronouns they use for themselves, and use them in the story. See inclusion.

General University Requirements
GUR is acceptable on second reference for audiences who are likely to be familiar with the abbreviation. Use care for other audiences; consider descriptive terms such as general education requirements for graduation.

Goltz-Murray Archives Building
Archives Building on second reference. Houses Western’s University Archives and Records Management, the Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, and the Northwest Regional Branch of the Washington State Archives.

Geology Department or Department of Geology

Global Engagement, Institute for
Formerly Center for International Studies

Global Connections
A summer youth program for international students in grades four through six who come to Western for language enrichment and other activities.

Global Learning
Study abroad programs designed and led by WWU faculty members. Offered by Western’s Institute for Global Engagement.
GPA, grade-point average
Both are acceptable in all references. GPAs normally have two numbers after the decimal point, 3.25, 4.15.

grades
Use capital letters with no quotation marks, A, B, C etc. For plurals, add ’s, A’s, B’s, C’s etc. Also, Pass, No Pass, Incomplete, Withdrawal, etc.

Graduate School
Capitalize when referring to Western’s Graduate School.

Grandparents U

Great Northwest Athletic Conference
GNAC on second reference.

Green Energy Fee
Outdated name. See Sustainable Action Fund

H

Hacherl Research & Writing Studio
Part of Western Libraries and the Learning Commons, provides assistance for students in research and writing. Located in Western Libraries on the second floor of Haggard Hall. The ampersand is part of the official name and should not be spelled out.

Haggard Hall
Contains part of Western Libraries and the Spanel Planetarium.

handicapped parking
Use accessible parking. See inclusion.

Harrington Field
Acceptable in all references for the Robert S. Harrington Field.

Harry Potter Room
Use Wilson Library Reading Room for the name of the large room in Wilson Library, fourth floor central.

Haskell Plaza

headlines and subheads
Capitalize the first word and proper names.

Health and Community Studies Department or Department of Health and Community Studies

Health and Human Development Department or Department of Health and Human Development

Higginson Hall
Hyphen
Use hyphens to join compound modifiers, words that belong together to describe the noun that comes after: small-business owner, good-natured person

Do not hyphenate a modifier that’s preceded by very or an -ly adverb.

And don’t overdo it. No need to add hyphens to a two-word modifier that is so common it’s unlikely people will misunderstand it. income tax return, heart transplant surgeon

I
illegal (n.), illegal immigrant
Avoid. Use undocumented. Or, with their permission, note they have registered for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals status. See inclusion.

inclusion
While the language of inclusion is a moving target, strive to be as inclusive as possible in your writing. In general, be mindful to avoid language that may unintentionally rely on stereotypes.

Describe a person’s identity regarding gender, race, ethnicity, ability or sexual orientation only when it’s relevant to do so. And use the language the individual uses when describing themselves.

Opt for neutral alternatives to gendered language or rewrite the sentence to form a plural.

Not: Every student must turn in his final by 10 a.m.

Not: Every student must turn in his/her final by 10 a.m.

Use: Students must turn in their finals by 10 a.m.

When writing about individuals, use the gender pronouns they use for themselves. If the individual uses a pronoun that might be unfamiliar to many readers, briefly explain in the text. See this chart from Trans Student Educational Resources for examples.
Mention a person’s sexual orientation or transgender identity only if it’s relevant, the person identifies as such, and they grant permission to include it. Always ask if their sexual orientation or transgender identity is alright to mention in the story – the audience may include those to whom the individual hasn’t come out. More information: the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association stylebook or the GLAAD Media Reference Guide.

When a person’s race or ethnicity is relevant to the story, always ask how they describe their own identity. Do not hyphenate noun or adjective forms of ethnic classifications such as African American, Asian American, etc. If people use the term black, ask if they capitalize it and follow their preference. If people identify as Native American, American Indian or First Nations, ask if they would also prefer to be identified by specific tribal affiliation or heritage. If they use a non-gendered format, such as Latino/a or Latinx, consider explaining it in the story if readers are unlikely to be familiar with the term.

Avoid illegal (n.) or illegal immigrant to describe people in the U.S. without legal documentation. Use undocumented students or undocumented immigrants, or, with their permission, specify that they have registered for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals status, DACA on second reference.

When information about someone’s disability status is essential, always ask the individual what language they use. Many people, but not all, prefer to place the emphasis on the person, not the disability: people with disabilities, not the disabled. More information: Guidelines for Writing About People with Disabilities from the ADA National network and the Disability Language Style Guide from the National Center on Disability in Journalism.

To learn more, review the large collection of media guides curated by UNITY: Journalists for Diversity.

Finally, only groups of people, not individuals, can be described as diverse.

Intensive English Program
IEP on second reference, for audiences who are likely to be familiar with the abbreviation.

international students
Not foreign students.

International Studies, Center for
See Global Engagement, Institute for

internet

IDEA Entrepreneurship Institute
Use acronym on first reference. If needed for clarity, include full name, InterDisciplinary Entrepreneurship in Action, later in the text.

J

Journalism Department or Department of Journalism
Karen W. Morse Institute for Leadership

Law, Diversity and Justice, Center for Leadership Studies Program

LEADS
Acceptable on first reference for Western’s student leadership program. The full name is Leaders Engage in Action, Discernment and Skills Building and may be included later in the text if needed for clarity or detail.

Learning Commons
A collection of student academic support services located in Western Libraries. Includes the Hacherl Research & Writing Studio, the Tutoring Center, the Teaching-Learning Academy, the Center for Service-Learning, the Digital Media Center, the Student Technology Center and more.

Liberal Studies Department or Department of Liberal Studies

Linguistics Program

lists
Use a colon to introduce a bulleted list. Capitalize and put periods at the end of list items that are complete sentences.

Mail Services is making some procedural changes in mail collection:

- Place all outgoing mail–campus mail and U.S. Postal mail--inside the blue zippered bag.
- Call ext. 3770 or email Mail.Services@wwu.edu if the items are too large to fit in the bag.
- Call ext. 6543 with questions.

Also place periods after items if the introduction combined with the list item make a complete sentence.

To learn more about living, working or studying abroad:

- Check out the International Jobs and Internships Workshop Jan. 9 at 4 p.m.
- Get insider tips at How to Navigate the International Opportunities Fair Jan. 25 at 4 p.m.
- Visit the International Opportunities Fair Jan. 26 to learn about 50-plus organizations.

Do not use semicolons at the end of bulleted list items or place the word and at the end of the next-to-last list item.

logo
See Western’s logo and usage guidelines at www.wwu.edu/brand.
magna cum laude
Do not capitalize the Latin honor for those who graduate with high GPAs. Click here to see how graduation honors are awarded.

majors/minors Lowercase except for proper nouns or adjectives. She majored in mathematics and English and minored in East Asian studies.

Management Department or Department of Management

Manufacturing and Supply Chain Management Program

Master of Arts, Master of Science
See academic degrees.

Master of Business Administration
MBA is acceptable in all references. See academic degrees.

Mathematics Department or Department of Mathematics

Mathes Hall

MBA
No periods. Acceptable in all references to Master of Business Administration. See academic degrees.

Memory Walk

midnight
Not 12 a.m. Midnight is part of the day that is ending, not the day that is beginning.

Miller Hall

millions, billions
Use the following format: 3 million, $4.8 billion, 1.25 million. Do not go beyond two decimal places.

minority, minorities
Avoid. Consider using people of color or traditionally underserved groups instead. See inclusion.

Modern and Classical Languages Department or Department of Modern and Classical Languages

months
When used with a specific date, abbreviate Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec., and set off years with commas. Dec. 27, 2016, was her first day on the job.

When a phrase lists only a month and a year, do not separate the year with commas. December 2016.
See dates.
Morse Hall
Use instead of Chemistry Building. The full name of the building, Karen W. Morse Hall, may be used in some circumstances, such as in stories about the building itself or about Karen Morse.

Music Department or Department of Music

Music Library
Affiliated with Western Libraries.

N

named professorships
Capitalize named professorships as in Karen Stout, Bowman Distinguished Professor of Leadership Studies, or Art Sherwood, David Cole Professor of Entrepreneurship. When shortened titles are appropriate, Bowman Professor, etc., is acceptable.

Nash Hall

NCAA
Acceptable in all references for National Collegiate Athletic Association.

Western is a member of NCAA Division II. On second reference, NCAA II is acceptable.

New Student Services/Family Outreach
NSSFO is acceptable on second reference only for audiences who are likely to be familiar with the abbreviation.

non-
Generally no hyphen unless it comes before a proper noun. See prefixes.

noon
Not 12 p.m.

Northwest Center for Holocaust, Genocide and Ethnocide Education
Outdated name. Use the Ray Wolpow Institute for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity.

numbers
In general, spell out one through nine (as well as first through ninth).

Use figures for 10 or above or whenever preceding a unit of measure.

Also figures for:

ages credit hours
academic course numbers dates
addresses dimensions
distances  temperatures
grade point averages  decimals
mathematical uses  percentages
recipes  fractions larger than one

Spell out fractions smaller than one.

See “numerals” in the Associated Press Stylebook for more guidance.

O

off campus, off-campus (adj.)

Old Main

Old Main Quad
The lawn bordered by Old Main, Wilson Library and Edens Hall.

on campus, on-campus (adj.)

online
No hyphen. Preferable to on the web or on the internet.

Outback Farm

Outback Pavilion
A small amphitheater located near Outback Farm

Outdoor Center, Associated Students
AS Outdoor Center is acceptable on second reference, and later, Outdoor Center.

Outreach and Continuing Education
Formerly known as Extended Education

P

Pacific Northwest Studies, Center for

parentheses
Place the punctuation outside parentheses containing a sentence fragment (like this).

The closing punctuation goes inside parentheses containing a full sentence. (Sentences that need many parenthetical phrases should be rewritten.)

Parks Hall
PEHR
Outdated. See Health and Human Development Department

people
Not persons

Performing Arts Center
PAC on second reference

Performing Arts Plaza
See Virginia Wright Plaza.

personal pronouns
Use the personal pronouns (she/her/hers, he/him/his, they/their/their, etc.) that the person uses for themselves, regardless of perceived gender expression or sex assigned at birth. See inclusion and this chart from Trans Student Educational Resources.

Philosophy Department or Department of Philosophy

photo captions
Use present tense and full sentences.

Physical Education, Health and Recreation
Outdated name. Use Health and Human Development Department

Physical Plant building

Physics and Astronomy Department or Department of Physics and Astronomy

p.m.

Police Department, Western Washington University
WWU Police or University Police on second reference

Political Science Department or Department of Political Science

Port Angeles
See Western Washington University at Port Angeles.

possessives
Plural nouns ending in s: Add only the apostrophe.

the dogs’ barking

Singular nouns ending in s: Add ‘s, unless the next word begins with s.

the alumnus’s book, the alumnus’ story.

Singular proper names ending in s: Add only the apostrophe.

Rhys’ camera
For more guidance, see “possessives” in the AP stylebook.

**post-baccalaureate**

*post-bacc* may be acceptable on second reference in informal settings and with audiences who are likely to be familiar with the term.

**Poulsbo**

See Western Washington University Center at Olympic College Poulsbo

**prefixes**

Generally do not hyphenate when using a prefix with a word starting with a consonant.

Exceptions:

- Use a hyphen if the prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows begins with the same vowel (*pre-election, re-equip* (*cooperate* and *coordinate* are exceptions to this rule).)
- Use a hyphen if the word that follows is capitalized. Use a hyphen to join doubled prefixes.
- Use a hyphen when using *co-* to form nouns, adjectives and verbs that indicate occupation or status. *co-editor, co-teach.*
- Use a hyphen when using *pro-* to indicate support for something.

**Professional Staff Organization**

*PSO* is acceptable on second reference for audiences who are familiar with the abbreviation.

**professor**

Not all faculty members are professors. If you must use a faculty member’s academic rank, verify it by asking him or her or checking the online directory.

**provost**

Full title is *provost and vice president for Academic Affairs.* Capitalize when used before a name.

**Psychology Department** or **Department of Psychology**

**Public School Employees of Washington**

*PSE* is acceptable on second reference, but use care to avoid confusion with Puget Sound Energy.

**Q**

**quarters**

Lowercase. *winter quarter, fall quarter.*

**quotation marks**

Put quotation marks around direct quotations, dialogue and *composition titles.*

Periods and commas always go within quotation marks.
The dash, semicolon, question mark and exclamation point go within quotation marks when they are part of the quoted material only.

R

RA
Acceptable on first reference for Resident Adviser if readers are likely to be familiar with the abbreviation. Use care for external audiences. See adviser, advisor

range of time, days or dates
The preferred format is to spell out to and through in body copy when referring to a range of time or days of the week. The word from usually can be omitted. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or Finals week is Monday through Friday.

Ray Wolpow Institute for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Crimes Against Humanity
Formerly the Northwest Center for Holocaust, Genocide and Ethnocide Education.

Recreation Center
Use Wade King Student Recreation Center on first reference. Student Recreation Center or, informally, Student Rec Center, is acceptable on second reference.

Red Square

residence hall
Preferred to dorm or dormitory when referring to student housing.

ResTek
For on-campus audiences, acceptable on first reference for Residential Technology Services.

Ridgeway Complex
Includes residences Ridgeway Alpha, Beta, Delta, Gamma, Kappa and Sigma as well as Highland Hall. The Ridge is acceptable on second reference for on-campus audiences.

Ridgeway Commons

Rose Garden

Ross Engineering Technology building

RN-to-BSN Program

S

Science and Engineering, College of
CSE on second reference; formerly College of Sciences and Technology
Science, Math and Technology Education Program
*SMATE program* on second reference

Science, Math and Technology Education building
*SMATE building* on second reference. *Science Lecture Hall*, as the building is labeled on some maps, is also acceptable.

SEA Discovery Center
Western’s science education center and aquarium in Poulsbo.

Seattle
See Western Washington University at North Seattle College.

seasons
Names of seasons are lowercase unless part of a formal name.

Secondary Education Department or Department of Secondary Education
serial comma
Use only when needed for clarity.

Service-Learning, Center for
Outdated. See Center for Community Learning

Shannon Point Marine Center
*SPMC* or *Shannon Point* on second reference.

Small Business Development Center
*SBDC* on second reference.

Sociology Department or Department of Sociology
spaces
Use one space between the end of one sentence and the beginning of a new sentence.

Spanel Planetarium
Acceptable on first reference for the Dr. Leslie E. Spanel Planetarium, located in Haggard Hall.

Special Education and Education Leadership Department or Department of Special Education and Education Leadership
state
Lowercase, *state of Washington*.

state names
Spell out when used in body copy. It’s not necessary to include the state name for cities and towns in Washington, but consider including the name of the county or other geographical descriptors for communities that may be unknown to your readers. *After graduation, she moved to Colfax in Whitman County.*
Steam Plant

Student Employment Center

Student Health Center

Student Outreach Services
SOS is acceptable on second reference.

Student Recreation Center
Acceptable on second reference for Wade King Student Recreation Center. Student Rec Center is also acceptable on second reference in informal setting.

Summer Session
May also be referred to on second reference as Summer @ Western.

Summerstart

Sustainable Action Fund
Formerly Green Energy Fee

Sustainability, Office of

T

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages Certificate
TESOL Certificate on second reference

Teaching-Learning Academy
TLA on second reference. Part of Western Libraries and the Learning Commons.

Technology Development Center
A collaborative space for technology research and industry partnerships, located on the Bellingham waterfront.

telephone numbers
Use the format 360-650-3350. For on-campus audiences, it’s acceptable to list a four-digit extension, as in ext. 3350.

theater
Use this spelling unless theatre is part of a proper name, such as Theatre and Dance Department or Mount Baker Theatre. Always verify the proper names of venues.

Theatre and Dance Department or Department of Theatre and Dance

they
If someone uses the singular they as a personal pronoun, use they when referring to them in a story.
Ask first. Pair **they** with a plural verb. See **inclusion** and this **chart** from Trans Student Educational Resources.

The singular **they** may also be appropriate when the gender of an individual is unknown, but rewriting the sentence might be a better bet.

**times**
Use figures except for noon and midnight. Format: 4 p.m., 2:30 a.m.

**titles**
See **composition titles**

**toward**
Not **towards**

**trustee**
Capitalized only as a formal title before a name. See **board of trustees**.

**U**

**unique**
It’s only **unique** if it’s the only one of its kind, with nothing like it anywhere else. Not to be confused with **unusual, rare, distinctive, noteworthy**, etc.

**university**
Capitalized only when part of a proper name. Lowercase when it stands alone, even when it’s used in place of Western Washington University.

**University Advancement**
The division includes the **Western Washington University Foundation** and the **Western Washington University Alumni Association**.

**University Communications and Marketing**

**University Relations and Community Development**
Outdated name. Use **University Relations and Marketing** division.

**University Relations and Marketing**
Division includes Community Relations, **University Communications and Marketing, Web Communication Technologies, Small Business Development Center** and **Washington Campus Compact**.

**URLs**
Don’t include http:// or www in a URL unless needed for clarity – or required by the site. Always test the URL first.

If the URL won’t fit on one line, break it before a slash or period. Avoid lengthy, complicated URLs in printed material.
If the URL appears at the end of a sentence, place a period after it.

V

veteran
Anyone who has served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. If someone’s veteran status is relevant to the story, ask them.

vice president
No hyphen.

Victor E. Viking
The mascot of Western Athletics.

Viking Band

Viking Commons

Viking Launch

Viking Union

Vikings
Not Lady Vikings or other diminutives when referring to women’s athletic teams.

Virginia Wright Plaza
The name of the plaza located between the Performing Arts Center and the Viking Union. It’s commonly known on campus as the Performing Arts Plaza, so it might be helpful to readers to describe the location: The concert will be in the Virginia Wright Plaza next to the Performing Arts Center.

Visitors Center

voicemail

W

Wade King Student Recreation Center

Washington, state of
Not Washington State, to avoid confusion with the name of the university.

Washington Campus Compact

Washington State Legislature
Also, capitalize Legislature when used alone but referring to the Washington State Legislature.

Washington State University
Web Communication Technologies

*WebTech* may be acceptable on first reference for campus audiences.

**website**

*web* is lowercase in all instances, such as *webpage*.

WECU Court at Carver Gymnasium

**Western Alert**

Western’s official emergency communications system that includes text messages, social media messaging, emails and voice annunciation in buildings.

**Western Card**

Official name of Western’s ID card.

**Western CEDAR**

Western’s digital, open-access institutional repository that includes faculty research pages, masters theses and graduate research, academic journals and peer-reviewed series, conferences and events, student and university publications and more. The acronym *CEDAR* is acceptable on second reference—it stands for Contributing to Education through Digital Access to Research—but be sure to explain what it is to external audiences.

**Western City Center**

**Western Washington University Alumni Association**

*WWU Alumni Association* or *Western Alumni Association* are also acceptable.

**Western Washington University Foundation**

*WWU Foundation* or *Western Foundation* are also acceptable.

**Western Libraries**

The official name of the library at Western. Located in *Wilson Library*, *Haggard Hall* and the *Goltz-Murray Archives Building*. See *Wilson Library*

**Western on the Peninsulas**

Comprised of Western locations in Bremerton, Poulsbo and Port Angeles

**Western Outdoor Orientation Trips**

*WOOT* is acceptable on second reference.

**Western Washington University**

Use *Western Washington University* on first reference. *Western* is preferable on second reference. *WWU* may be used later, for variety. Not *Western Washington*.

**Western Washington University at Bremerton**

Also acceptable: *Western Washington University, Bremerton* or *Western Washington University in Bremerton*. 
Western Washington University Center at Olympic College Poulsbo
WWU Center at OC Poulsbo on second reference.

Western Washington University at North Seattle College
Also acceptable: Western Washington University, Seattle or Western Washington University in Seattle.

Western Washington University at Port Angeles
Also acceptable: Western Washington University, Port Angeles or Western Washington University in Port Angeles.

Western Washington University Foundation
Western Foundation or WWU Foundation on second reference.

WesternOnline
-wide
Generally, no hyphen, as in worldwide, nationwide. But exceptions include campus-wide, university-wide.

Wilson Library
Building that houses part of Western Libraries

Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies Program

Woodring College of Education
Woodring or Woodring College on second reference.

WOOT
acceptable on second reference for Western Outdoor Orientation Trips

work-study
Hyphenate.

World Issues Forum

Writing Center
See Hacherl Research & Writing Studio.

WWU Alumni Weekend
Formerly Back2Bellingham. Typically held the third weekend in May.

Y

Youth Programs