

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.

A

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:

<i>Bachelor of Arts</i>	<i>Master of Arts</i>
<i>Bachelor of Arts in Education</i>	<i>Master of Business Administration</i>
<i>Bachelor of Fine Arts</i>	<i>Master of Education</i>
<i>Bachelor of Music</i>	<i>Master of Fine Arts</i>
<i>Bachelor of Science</i>	<i>Master of Music</i>
<i>Bachelor of Science in Nursing</i>	<i>Master of Professional Accounting</i>
<i>Clinical Doctorate in Audiology</i>	<i>Master of Science</i>
	<i>Master in Teaching</i>

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.wvu.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 32nd 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:

Buchanan Towers Station

Fairhaven Commons

Freshens Fresh Food Studio (Carver)

Miller Market

Oath Pizza (Arntzen Hall)

Ridgeway Commons

Rock's Edge Café (Student Rec Center)

Starbucks

Subway at The Atrium (Arntzen Hall)

The Atrium (Arntzen Hall)

The Haven Market (Arntzen Hall)

Underground Coffeehouse (Viking Union)

Viking Commons

Viking Union Café

Viking Union Market

Zoe's Bookside Bagels

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

women's softball

men's cross country

women's rowing

men's golf

women's golf

men's soccer

women's soccer

men's track and field

women's track and field

men's indoor track and field

women's indoor track and field

women's basketball

women's volleyball

women's cross country

ATUS

Widely known abbreviation for **Academic Technology and User Services**. Acceptable on first reference for on-campus audiences.

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 to 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

EOO 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.wvu.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.

exclamation point

[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**

Highland Hall

History Department or Department of History

Honors Program

Humanities and Social Sciences, College of
CHSS on second reference

Humanities building

Huxley College of the Environment

Consider *Huxley College* on second reference to avoid confusion with Aldous Huxley.

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

K

Karen W. Morse Institute for Leadership

L

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.

M

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 Wolpov 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
grade point averages
mathematical uses
recipes

temperatures
decimals
percentages
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/theirs, 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 Wolpov 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

Capitalize 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

Capitalize 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 announcement 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