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Overview

This style guide is published by the UC Denver Office of Marketing and Creative Services. It is intended to be a fluid document and to serve as an editorial guideline for copy pertaining to the university.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Definitions

An *abbreviation* is a shortened or contracted form of a word or phrase used to represent the whole.

Examples: SPA, CCD, NCAA

An *acronym* is an abbreviation that is read as a word.

Examples: SMART Registration System, CAM, NASA

General Rules

Use abbreviations and acronyms in moderation.

When using uncommon abbreviations or acronyms (ones that people outside of your field of study, school or department will not recognize) define them on first use—spell out the abbreviation or acronym followed by the abbreviation or acronym in parenthesis.

Example: The College of Arts and Media (CAM) is sponsoring an art exhibit at the museum next month. Exhibits hosted by CAM are free to all students.

NOTE: If the abbreviation or acronym is not used after the first mention, **do not** abbreviate it.

Common-knowledge abbreviations and acronyms do not need to be defined on first use.

Examples: GPA, GMAT, ACT, SAT

Use of Articles (a, an, the) with Acronyms and Abbreviations

Use the article that you would use when speaking.

Examples: an MA degree, a PhD degree

In general, if the acronym or abbreviation is used as a noun, no article is necessary.

Example: The theater production is sponsored by CAM and CLAS (not the CAM and the CLAS).

Degrees

Do not include periods when abbreviating academic degrees: BA, BFA, MA, PhD, MD, etc.

Abbreviated Courtesy Titles

Use a period with abbreviated courtesy titles (Dr., Ms., Mr., Sen., Gov., etc).

When appropriate, it is preferred to use degrees instead of courtesy titles; degree names are more accurate. Do not use both.

Example: John Smith, DDS vs. Dr. John Smith (Dr. is a relatively general title); **not** Dr. John Smith, DDS

State Abbreviations

Only use the two-letter postal abbreviations in mailing addresses.

Use Associated Press (AP) state abbreviations. The list of abbreviations is as follows:

Alabama	Ala.	Kentucky	Ky.	North Dakota	N.D.
Alaska	Alaska	Louisiana	La.	Ohio	Ohio
Arkansas	Ark.	Maine	Maine	Oklahoma	Okla.
Arizona	Ariz.	Maryland	Md.	Oregon	Ore.
California	Calif.	Massachusetts	Mass.	Pennsylvania	Pa.
Colorado	Colo.	Michigan	Mich.	Rhode Island	R.I.
Connecticut	Conn.	Minnesota	Minn.	South Carolina	S.C.
Delaware	Del.	Mississippi	Miss.	South Dakota	S.D.
District of Columbia	D.C.	Missouri	Mo.	Tennessee	Tenn.
Florida	Fla.	Montana	Mont.	Texas	Texas
Georgia	Ga.	Nebraska	Neb.	Utah	Utah
Hawaii	Hawaii	Nevada	Nev.	Vermont	Vt.
Idaho	Idaho	New Hampshire	N.H.	Virginia	Va.
Illinois	Ill.	New Jersey	N.J.	Washington	Wash.
Indiana	Ind.	New Mexico	N.M.	West Virginia	W.Va.
Iowa	Iowa	New York	N.Y.	Wisconsin	Wis.
Kansas	Kan.	North Carolina	N.C.	Wyoming	Wyo.

United States / United States of America

Use periods when abbreviating United States (U.S.).

Do not use periods when abbreviating United States of America (USA).

Only abbreviate United States when it is used as an adjective.

Example: U.S. history; history of the United States

Commonly Used UC Denver Acronyms and Abbreviations

AHEC: Auraria Higher Education Center

BUS: The Business School

CAM: College of Arts and Media

CAP: College of Architecture and Planning

CON: College of Nursing

CCD: Community College of Denver

CCHE: Colorado Commission on Higher Education

CLAS: College of Liberal Arts and Science

ENG: College of Engineering and Applied Science

ITS: Information Technology Services

LSC: Lawrence Street Center

MSCD: Metropolitan State College of Denver

NCA: North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

OAA: Office of Academic Affairs

SEHD: School of Education and Human Development

SODM: School of Dental Medicine

SOM: School of Medicine

SOP: School of Pharmacy

SPA: School of Public Affairs

UCH: University of Colorado Hospital

UCCS: University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

VCAF: Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance
VCASA: Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs

Addresses and Telephone Numbers

General Rules

Use abbreviations for Ave., Blvd. and St. with numbered addresses. Spell out and capitalize them when referencing a formal street name without a number.

Examples: She lives at 123 Main St.

The building is on Lawrence Street between 10th and 14th.

When referencing two street names without a numbered address, spell out the type of street but do not capitalize it.

Examples: 14th and Lawrence streets

Abbreviate compass points when used with a number address. Spell out compass points in other uses.

Examples: He works at 4321 E. Main St.

He drove down East Main Street.

Always use figures for an address number.

Spell out and capitalize *First* through *Ninth* when used as street names. Use figures and two letters for 10th and above.

Examples: 4200 E. Ninth Ave.

4300 E. 10th Ave.

Use capital letters and periods with no space when abbreviating post office box (P.O. Box).

U.S. Postal Service addressing guidelines

www.usps.com/send/preparemailandpackages/labelsandaddressing/usingthecorrectaddress.htm

Campus Addresses

Spell out building names.

When referencing a specific room, write the building name followed by a comma and the room number (North Classroom, 301).

Campus mail addressing guidelines

<http://ucdenver.edu/admin/budget/camps/mail/address.htm>

Telephone Numbers

Do not put parenthesis around the area code: 303-315-3716, 202-456-1111

The “1” is not necessary when writing long-distance or toll-free telephone numbers.

Capitalization

General Rules

Proper nouns and official names are capitalized.

Common nouns and informal forms of official names are not capitalized.

Academic and Nonacademic Units and Bodies

Capitalize only the official and complete names of colleges, schools, departments, divisions, offices and official bodies.

Examples: Department of Modern Languages; Center for Education Policy Analysis; Office of Admissions; School of Education and Human Development; Board of Regents

Do not capitalize informal and shortened versions of the abovementioned names.

Examples: the modern languages department; education policy analysis center; admissions office; school of education; regents

Committees, Groups, Centers, Programs, Initiatives and Institutes

Avoid capitalizing a committee, center, group, program, institute or initiative unless it is officially recognized and formally named.

Example: search committee, admissions committee

Capitalize the official, proper names of long-standing committees and groups and formally developed programs and initiatives.

Examples: Blue Ribbon Commission, Executive Committee of Faculty Assembly

Course Titles

When referring to official course titles, use initial caps. Do not use quotation marks, italics or any other formatting with course titles.

Examples: It is recommended that English majors take Introduction to Literary Studies during their freshman year.

When referring to a course using the course title and course number, use commas to set off the course title.

Example: Six students who registered for CMMU 4760, Computer Mediated Communication, were placed on a waiting list because the course was full.

Degrees / Programs of Study

Capitalize degree abbreviations.

Example: He has an MA in music.

Do not capitalize degree names when spelled out.

Example: She earned a bachelor of science degree from UC Denver.

Do not capitalize major names, minor names or programs of study.

Example: He studies biology and math, but his minor is music.

Job Titles

Capitalize a job title if it immediately precedes a name.

Example: Professor Ann Jones; Chancellor M. Roy Wilson

Do not capitalize titles that follow names or stand alone.

Example: John Smith, professor in biology; the chancellor of the university

Publication and Presentation Titles

Capitalize the first word, last word and all words that are more than four letters in length of publication titles (includes books, newspapers, magazines, movies, etc.). See the *names and titles* section of this style guide for more rules.

Capitalize the first word, last word and all words that are more than four letters in length of titles of articles, chapters, episodes, etc.

Schools and Colleges / Department Names

Capitalize only the official and complete names of colleges, schools, departments, divisions and offices.

Example: Department of Biology, School of Dental Medicine

Do not capitalize informal or general references.

Example: biology department, dental school

Seasons and Semesters

Do not capitalize semester names or seasons.

Example: spring semester, spring 2008, fall commencement

Structures and Places

Capitalize the full, official names of buildings and places on campus.

Capitalize the word campus when using the proper names of the UC Denver campuses.

Example: Downtown Campus, Anschutz Medical Campus

If listing both, capitalize the plural form of campus.

Example: Downtown and Anschutz Medical Campuses

University

Do not capitalize university unless using the complete proper name of the university. See the *university references* section of this style guide for a list of proper names.

Examples: He is a senior at the University of Colorado Denver.

There are more than 1,000 university alumni in the Denver metro area.

NOTE: This rule also applies to schools, colleges, departments, centers, institutes, etc.

Commonly Used Proper Nouns

www.cudenver.edu/Resources/StyleGuide/Pages/ProperNouns.aspx

Dates and Time

Dates

Always spell out names of months when standing alone, with specific years and when space allows.

Examples: She graduated in December 2002.

If necessary, only use abbreviations when used with a specific date.

Example: She graduated on Dec. 14, 2002.

Always use numerals as dates. Do not add suffixes (th, st, etc.) to numerals.

Do not use a comma to separate the month and year when there is not a specific date.

When using a specific date in running text, use a comma after the year.

Example: She graduated on Dec. 14, 2002, from the University of Colorado Denver.

Use four digits when referencing a specific year (2008).

When referencing a range of years, it is acceptable to use a two-digit year (2008-09).

The year is not necessary if the date referenced occurs in the current year.

If using numerals for the month, day and year (only recommended for informal documents) the format is as follows: MM/DD/YYYY, MM-DD-YYYY or MM.DD.YYYY.

Time

Use figures for time, except for noon and midnight.

Use a colon to separate hours and minutes. Do not add a colon and zeros for on-the-hour times

Example: 10 a.m., not 10:00 a.m.

Specify the time of day by using a.m. or p.m. (lower-case letters with periods and no spaces between).

Avoid redundancies like 10 a.m. in the morning.

Formatting Guidelines

Use of Bold, Underline and Italics

Use bold and/or italics to emphasize important words or small groups of words.

It is not recommended to bold/italicize entire sentences or paragraphs.

It is not recommended to use both bold and italic.

Use italics and initial caps for publication titles (books, newspapers, magazines, movies, etc).

In general, do not underline words or phrases.

Do not underline web addresses in copy unless it is an active hyperlink.

Use of all CAPS

Do not use all capital letters for emphasis.

UC Denver Graphic Identity Usage and Standards

Coming soon

Brand Promise

Changing lives. Saving lives. Building futures.

Hyphenation

Hyphenate compound modifiers—two or more words that modify the same noun.

Examples: world-class university, full-time student

Hyphenate phrases to avoid ambiguity.

Example: small-business owner, special-education teacher, etc.

In general, do not hyphenate words with prefixes and suffixes (non, pre, wide, etc.).

Examples: nonresident, prearrange, campuswide

Hyphenate to avoid triple consonants and double vowels.

Examples: pre-election, pre-establish, pre-existing, pre-eminent

Exceptions: cooperate, coordinate

Hyphenate if the word that follows a prefix begins with a capital letter.

Example: un-American

Lists

Vertical Lists

Use vertical lists for lists that are long or contain items on several levels.

Use vertical lists for quick-reference items or for visual prominence.

Use numbers when items on a list follow a specific order.

Use bullets as visual markers for each item.

If the introductory statement is a complete grammatical sentence, end it with a colon.

List items do not begin with capital letters and do not carry closing punctuation unless they are complete sentences.

Example: Include the following documents in your application:

- completed application
- personal essay
- three letters of recommendation

If the introductory statement is not a complete sentence, use the punctuation mark that's appropriate for the context (comma, semicolon, dash, or nothing).

List items do not start with capital letters and have no closing punctuation.

Example: The final report outlined the company's

- increased fundraising efforts
- stabilized employee retention
- increased recruitment efforts

Numbered Lists

Numbered items begin with a capital letter.

Do not use closing punctuation unless the item is a complete sentence.

Series

Separate items in a series with a comma. Do not use a comma before the conjunction.

Example: The students came from California, Colorado, Maryland and Nebraska.

If the series contains lengthy elements or elements that require separation with a comma, use semicolons to avoid confusion. Use a semicolon before the conjunction in a series.

Example: Faculty conduct research in molecular and cellular pathology and toxicology; drug delivery systems; protein structure and delivery; cancer, heart, lung and blood diseases; and alcohol and drug abuse.

Names and Titles

Names with Degrees

Use a comma to separate a person's name and his or her degree.

Example: Jane Smith, MA, graduated in May.

Do not use a comma to separate a person's degree from the year it was earned.

Example: Jane Smith, MA '96, was elected president of the foundation.

Names with Initials

Use periods and spaces to separate initials and names.

Example: J. S. Smith; J. Smith

Names with Job Titles

Capitalize a person's job title if it immediately precedes his or her name.

Example: Professor John Smith; Chancellor M. Roy Wilson

Do not capitalize titles that follow names or stand alone.

Example: John Smith, professor in biology; the chancellor of the university

Names with Suffixes

Do not use commas before and after suffixes that follow names (Jr., Sr., I, II, III, IV).

Use periods with Jr. and Sr.

Publication and Presentation Titles

Use italics and initial caps for publication titles (books, newspapers, magazines, movies, etc).

Examples: Stories about the university have appeared in *The New York Times*.
UC Denver programs are consistently ranked by *U.S. News & World Report*.

Use quotation marks and initial caps for titles of articles, chapters, episodes, presentations, etc.

Example: Professor Doe's article "Life in the Mile-High City" was published on May 1, 2007.

Numbers

General Rules

Spell out numbers under 10 (one through nine).

Example: Students were divided into four groups of nine.

Use figures for numbers 10 and up.

Example: There was one group of 10 students.

Spell out a numeral at the beginning of a sentence.

Examples: Nine students earned an *A* on the exam.

Twenty-five faculty members retired this year.

Do not spell out numerals that identify a calendar year.

Decimals

Decimals should not exceed two places in textual references, except for in special circumstances.

Be consistent with the number of decimal places used—if one number has two decimal places, all numbers should have two decimal places (2.25, 2.50, etc.).

Millions and Billions

Use figures with million or billion in all uses.

Example: More than 1 million people access the Internet every day.

Percentages

Always use numerals when referencing percentages.

Example: Close to 9 percent of students are from foreign countries.

Spell out *percent* unless it is included on a quick-reference list.

Proper Nouns

Commonly Used Proper Nouns

This list of commonly used proper nouns is a starting point and is in no way inclusive to the entire university. It is intended that this list will be updated on a regular basis as additional proper nouns are submitted via the UC Denver Editorial Style Guide website.

A, B, C

Academic Advising Center
Academic Affairs, Office of
Academic Success and Advising Center
Admissions, Office of
Anschutz Cancer Pavilion
Anschutz Medical Campus
Area Health Education Center
Arts & Media, College of
Auraria Campus
Auraria Campus Police Department
Auraria Early Learning Center
Auraria Events Center/Student Recreation Center
Auraria Foundation Board

Auraria Higher Education Center
Auraria Library
Auraria Media Center

Bard Center for Entrepreneurship Development
Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics, Department of
Business School

CAM Records
Campus Village at Auraria
Career Center
Cell and Developmental Biology, Department of
Center for Dependency Addiction and Rehabilitation
Chemistry, Department of

Civil Engineering, Department of
Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering,
Department of
College of Architecture and Planning
College of Arts & Media
College of Engineering and Applied Science
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
College of Nursing
College Opportunity Fund
Colorado Community College
Communication, Department of
Community College of Aurora
Community College of Denver
Science, Department of
Copper Nickel
Correspondence and Extension, Department of
Courtyard Theatre
CU Building Annex
CU Foundation
CU on the Horizon
CU Online

D, E, F

Dean, Office of the
Dental Medicine, School of
Dependency, Addiction, and Rehabilitation, Center for
Dermatology, Department of
Downtown Campus

Education and Human Development, School of
Electrical and Computer Engineering, Department of
Emmanuel Gallery

Family Medicine, Department of
Financial Aid, Office of

G, H, I

The Given Institute

Health Insurance Office, Student
Human Resources, Office of

Immunology, Department of
Infectious Disease, Division of
Institutional Planning, Office of
International Admissions, Department of
IT Services Help Desk

J, K, L

John F. Kennedy Center for Developmental
Disabilities

(Kenneth) King Academic and Performing Arts
Center

Liberal Arts and Sciences, College of

M, N, O

Medicine, School of
Medicine, Department of
Microbiology, Department of
Military Science, Department of
Modern Languages, Department of
Music, Department of
Music and Entertainment Industry Studies,
Department of

Neurology, Department of
Neurosurgery, Department of
Ninth Avenue Campus
Ninth Street Historic Park

Ob/Gyn, Department of
Office of Laboratory Animal Resources
Ombuds Office
Ophthalmology, Department of
Orthopaedics, Department of
Otolaryngology, Department of

P, Q, R, S

Pathology, Department of
Pediatrics, Department of
Pharmacology, Department of
Pharmacy, School of
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Department of
Physiology and Biophysics, Department of
Preventive Medicine and Biometrics, Department of
Public Affairs, School of
Psychiatry, Department of

Radiation Oncology, Department of
Radiology, Department of
The Regency
Research 1 (building on Anschutz Medical Campus)
Research 2 (building on Anschutz Medical Campus)
Reserve Officers' Training Corps

School of Dental Medicine
School of Education and Human Development
School of Medicine
School of Pharmacy
School of Public Affairs
St. Cajetan's Church
Starz FilmCenter
Student and Community Counseling Center
Student Debt Management, Office of
Student Employment Office
Student Government Association
Student Life, Office of
Student Services Center
Surgery, Department of

T, U, V

Tivoli Student Union

Undergraduate Experiences, Office of

University Benefits Advisory Board
University of Colorado
University of Colorado at Colorado Springs
University of Colorado Denver
University of Colorado Foundation
University of Colorado Hospital
University Council, Office of
U.S. Department of Education

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Veterans Affairs, Office of
Visual Arts, Department of

W, X, Y, Z
Writing Center

Punctuation

Comma

In a series or list, do not use a comma before the conjunction.

Example: The students came from California, Colorado, Maryland and Nebraska.

Do not use a comma to separate two independent sentences; use a semicolon.

Example: The snow started to fall during the night; the morning commute was awful.

Use a comma before a conjunction when it connects two independent sentences.

Example: A typical master's degree takes two years, but many universities offer accelerated master degree programs.

Do not use a comma before a conjunction connecting a dependent clause to an independent clause.

Example: Some people complete their master's degree in one year because of the program's structure.

Colon

Use a colon to introduce lists.

Example: Include the following documents in your application: completed application, personal essay and three letters of recommendation.

Capitalize the words immediately following the colon only if it is the beginning of a complete sentence or proper noun.

Example: The professor promised this: If every student earned a *B* on the exam, there would be no final report due at the end of the semester.

Use a colon to introduce long quotes.

Do not use a colon with a verb.

Example: Incorrect

Admission requirements are:

Correct

Admission requirements: -or- The admission requirements are as follows:

Semicolons

Use a semicolon in a series or list when items in the series are long or contain material that must be set apart by commas.

Example: Faculty conduct research in molecular and cellular pathology and toxicology; drug delivery systems; protein structure and delivery; cancer, heart, lung and blood diseases; and alcohol and drug abuse.

Use a semicolon to connect two independent sentences without a conjunction.

Example: The paper is due next week; she submitted it today.

Dashes

Use an *em dash* (longer) to mark a break in thought.

Example: He will travel to Europe this summer—if he passes all of his classes.

Use an *en dash* (shorter) to indicate a range (it replaces the word through).

Example: 1–10

Do not insert spaces on either side of dashes.

Hyphens

See the *hyphenation* section in this style guide for usage and rules.

Periods

Use a period at the end of a sentence.

See the *abbreviations and acronyms* section of this style guide for more rules pertaining to periods.

Quotation Marks

Punctuation always goes inside quotation marks.

Example: Professor Smith said, “Classes are cancelled next week.”

Tricky Grammar / Usage

Affect / Effect

Affect, as a verb, means to influence.

Example: The winter weather negatively affected traffic.

Affect, as a noun, is used in psychology to describe an emotion.

Example: The student’s affect remained stoic as he was expelled from the university.

NOTE: Affect is rarely used as a noun.

Effect, as a verb, means to cause.

Example: Hiring new faculty effects changes in the curriculum.

NOTE: Effect is rarely used as a verb.

Effect, as a noun, means result .

Example: The effect of the poor test scores was a higher grade curve.

Due to

Use *due to* only when the phrase can be substituted with *caused by*.

Avoid using *due to* in place of because. If used in place of because, the phrase should follow a form of *to be* and must modify a noun.

Example: Instead of writing “He resigned due to personal problems,” write “His resignation was due to personal problems.”

Farther / Further

Farther refers to a physical distance.

Example: She walked farther into the city.

Further refers to an extension of time or degree.

Example: He will further explore his degree options.

i.e. / e.g.

i.e. is an abbreviation for “that is” and is always followed by a comma.

Example: Students who attend the evening lecture will receive extra credit, *i.e.*, five points on the next exam.

e.g. is an abbreviation for “for example” and is always followed by a comma.

Example: There are many options for students interested in drawing (*e.g.*, art, graphic design and architecture).

More Than / Over

Use *more than* when referring to numerals or amounts.

Example: More than 60 students failed the exam.

Use *over* when referring to spatial relationships

Example: The car drove over the bridge.

That / Which

Use *that* in essential clauses—those that are important to the meaning of the sentence—without commas.

Example: Professor Smith returned the test that we took last week.

Use *which* with nonessential clauses and set off the clause with commas.

Example: Professor Smith administered a pop quiz today, which prompted groans from all of the students.

Who / Whom

Use *who* as a pronoun referencing humans and animals with a name. It is never the object of a sentence, phrase or clause.

Example: Who is the guest of honor at the award ceremony?

Hint: Use *who* when you could replace it with he or she: Who is the guest of honor? He is the guest of honor.

Use *whom* when someone is the object of a verb or preposition

Example: With whom will you be attending the dinner?

Hint: Use *whom* when you could replace it with his or her: With whom will you be attending the dinner? I'll attend the dinner with her.

Trademark and Registered Marks

A trademark is associated with a brand, symbol or word; there is no legal registration required to use a trademark.

The federal registration symbol (the circle-r) is used with goods or services that are officially registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

When using the name of a federally registered item or service, use the circle-r (®) mark on first use.

University References

University of Colorado Denver
UC Denver
UCD (for alumni publications)
Downtown Campus
Anschutz Medical Campus
Auraria Campus
University of Colorado at Boulder (CU-Boulder)
University of Colorado at Colorado Springs (UCCS)
University of Colorado system

Word List

Preferred Style of Commonly Used Words

advisor
campuswide
first-professional degrees
fundraising
health care
semester hours (not credit hours)
U.S. News & World Report
universitywide

World Wide Web

Web References

e-mail is hyphenated
Internet is a proper noun and is capitalized
online is one word
Web site (not Website, web site or website)
web: not Web
World Wide Web is the formal, proper name for the web and is rarely used; when used, however, treat as a proper noun

Web Writing Style Guide

Coming soon